



Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service

Attendance Policy

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Aims

The Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service will actively seek to encourage all students to achieve a full attendance record. We will celebrate, at regular intervals, individual students achieving full attendance and improved attendance and attendance information will be provided in the student's reports and on request with all absences, authorised and unauthorised, being reported to parents/carers.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to attendance through our whole Service culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- To improve the overall attendance of students at the TMBSS
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled at the earliest opportunity
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend the Service
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
- To monitor patterns of absence and take action to seek improvement if appropriate
- To identify authorised and unauthorised absence and take appropriate action.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and Service
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and other services and agencies
- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

Our learners are often those who have become acutely dis-engaged from learning and as such are often those who have very poor records of attendance. We have a commitment to actively pursue each student's attendance by a system of daily phone calls at close of register. If we have 3 consecutive non-attendances without contact from parent/carer, or without an adequate explanation, then we would follow the absence procedures within this policy.

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the Service is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from the Service without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometime reluctant to attend the Service. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between TMBSS, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never a good idea to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by TMBSS, NOT THE PARENTS, as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness of the student or unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which TMBSS does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained

Parents are expected to contact the Education Centre at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the Service may invite the parents to an Attendance Review Meeting in order to try and resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of improving the child's attendance have failed, the Service may then refer the case to the Local Authority and Education Welfare Officers (EWO) who will engage with the process and a range of approaches can be used to resolve the attendance issues. If the attendance problems persist the EWO's can issue court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance across the Service's policies and ethos
- Making sure Service Leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Service
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Executive Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Governing Body committee – School Development and Performance has responsibility for the monitoring of attendance across the Service

The Executive Headteacher

The Executive Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the Service
- Monitoring absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Working with the Local Authority for issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Weekly attendance meeting with the Education Welfare Officer

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the Service
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging for Service staff to make calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Supporting the Family Support Worker in delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Greg Portman and Lisa Bloomer.

Family Support Worker

The Family Support Worker is responsible for:

- Communicate regularly with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to students and families
- Work with families to help them understand and fulfil their legal responsibilities in relation to attendance at school
- Work with families, students and TMBSS Centres to reduce persistent absence and raise level of attendance
- Working with Centre staff to identify students whose attendance is a cause for concern and undertake home visits as and when required
- Be able to produce and interpret various data for maximum impact on raising levels of attendance
- Advise Centres on strategies to be used to improve student attendance
- To monitor Service attendance data and advise relevant staff of trends and concerns

The Family Support Worker is Jodie Prophet and can be contacted via admin@tmbss-shropshire.org.uk.

Education Centre Administrators

- Responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the Service system
- Liaise with the Education Welfare Officer
- Follow up all student absences following Service policy
- Providing weekly attendance reports to Service staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Education Centre Link Senior Leader and Centre Manager

Local Authority Education Welfare Officer

- Visit the Service at least once a week.
- Review and monitor registers to identify children with less than 90% attendance.
- Meet with staff members to discuss student case management.
- Undertake casework with individual children.
- Deliver group work to students with poor attendance or punctuality tailored to the Service's requirements.
- Review coding of registers each term to inform on trends, including audit of children educated offsite.
- Develop and implement strategies to address specific areas impacting on whole Service attendance.
- Use a range of interventions including Fast Track and statutory interventions to address the absence of individual students.
- Advise on the processes around leave of absence in term time (LATT).
- Early help child assessments where absence is the primary concern and act as lead professional in cases where this will not compromise any legal intervention.

- Contribute to safeguarding procedures in respect of children with attendance issues to include attendance at early help meetings (EHPM), child protection conferences and Core Groups.
- Provide a comprehensive annual attendance action plan and interim attendance reports to evaluate attendance each term.
- Staff training around record keeping and managing school attendance.
- Undertake and advise on the legal work required to administer enforcement responsibilities; including training and provision of prosecuting officers.
- Give advice and carry out procedural tasks in respect of child employment, elective home education and children missing education.

Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time or 100% of a bespoke targeted timetable
- Call the Service to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the Service with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend the Service every day on time or 100% of a bespoke targeted timetable.

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students onto this register.

The attendance register is taken by the Centre Administrator on a morning session and again in the afternoon.

- For Secondary Centres - The morning registration is recorded at 9.15am and the afternoon sessions are recorded at 12pm.
- For Primary Centres – The morning registration is recorded at 9.15am and the afternoon sessions are recorded at 1pm

On each occasion they record whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the Service of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the Education Centre.

In the event of a student absence the administrator will:

- Ascertain the reason
- If no contact has been made by the parent/carer at close of registration, a call will be made to the parent/carer to ascertain the reason for the absence
- If the administrator cannot make contact with the parent, and after 3 days of absence the Education Welfare Officer will be informed (excluding students on CPP or CIN – see procedure below)
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code (Appendix 1) to use before entering it on to the Services management information system (which is used to download data to the School Census)
- Update Schools Management System with reasons for absence.
- If we are unable to make contact with a parent/carer after 3 days a safe and well home visit will take place but each student will be looked at on a case by case basis and it may be that we do a safe and well check before the 3 days.
- If absence continues, we will consider involving an education welfare officer

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the Service has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the Service may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription,

appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the Service is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Children subject to a Child Protection Plan and Children in Need

Children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) and those who are identified as Children in Need (CiN) are some of our most vulnerable children. For all children, but specifically for those as described above, absence from school can be the first indicator that all is not well. For these children the usual attendance monitoring will take place with the following additional measures:

- These children will be prioritised when undertaking first day contact with parents
- The TMBSS system for addressing non- attendance will start when the attendance of these children falls below 95% in any half term period and the social worker will be informed.
- If children are absent and no contact is received from the parent/carer as to the reasons why or if the Service is concerned about the reasons given, they will inform the social worker.

Child Looked After

Children who are Looked After will follow the same procedures as children on a CPP or CIN plan.

On a weekly basis, the attendance marks for a Shropshire Child Looked After will be entered onto the ePEP system.

Safe and Well Checks

Safe and Well checks will be determined by the students RAG rating.

Red – Next Day

Amber – Day 2

Green – Day 3

A safe and well check will only be performed if there is no contact from parents / carers or if the contact received raises concerns as to the well-being of the student.

After the Safe and Well check a report will be input onto CPOMs including any further action required.

PLP and Bespoke Programmes.

On occasion, with negotiation with other stake holders, i.e. parents, schools and external agencies, TMBSS may make reasonable adjustments to students' programmes to support them in their placements.

TMBSS set and maintain high expectations for the attendance, engagement and punctuality of pupils who are anxious about attending school. It is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future.

It also recognised, that given the needs and challenges of young people, the school day can be a highly stressful, overwhelming experience that can exacerbate existing mental health challenges that can increase the frequency of emotional dysregulation. This is often recognised in Mental Health Professionals and Educational Psychologists advice and assessments for those students. This has a detrimental impact on students mental and emotional well-being, which then increases the frequency and intensity of negative experiences within education.

In developing a plan to support a students' positive engagement in their learning, through reasonable adjustments, TMBSS staff do take into account, the individual circumstances of the child, and always considerate of safeguarding responsibilities.

Any adjustments in programmes for students must include the following measures;

- Consideration of the safeguarding implications of not attending a full-time timetable for individual students
- Short periods of review to ensure that the bespoke programme continues to be appropriate and mitigates the impact of acute anxiety and mental health challenges
- A measured and considered plan which has the ultimate aim of achieving a return to a fulltime timetable

Where students are on a bespoke programme which includes half day sessions, providing they have accessed the half day session, and return the following day, no further checks are required.

If a student is on a bespoke programme which includes a full-day on a Personalised Learning Plan, and do not attend the following day, a safe and well check must be carried out.

As above; Safe and Well checks will be determined by the students' safeguarding RAG rating document.

Red – Next Day following the full-day PLP

Amber – Day 2

Green – Day 3

A safe and well check will only be performed if there is no contact from parents/carers or if the contact received raises concerns as to the well-being of the student.

After the Safe and Well check, a report will be input onto CPOMs including any further action required.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the Service in advance of the appointment by contacting the Education Centre by either letter, email or telephone call.

However, the Service encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of the Service for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Reporting to parents/carers

The Service will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via Education Reports and End of Year Reports.

Approval for term-time absence

The Executive Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Executive Headteachers discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

There is no definition of **exceptional circumstances** - any application will be considered and looked at on an individual basis. The request needs to be made prior to the booking. It is recognised that on occasions a child will significantly benefit from leave of absence. These are factors that will be taken into account - but are not exhaustive:

- It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life
- It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event
- The event cannot be organised outside of the school term
- The event is necessary to the health and wellbeing of the child
- Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school
- The child will not be disadvantaged by not being in school for the period of the event

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student’s parents belong. If necessary, the Service will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision
- Further evidence may be required to support the request
- If a student is on a shared placement, the responsibility for a decision will sit with the Headteacher of the **home school**. However, TMBSS will be happy to provide evidence to support the application or otherwise.

Targeted timetables

In consultation with the Local Authority, TMBSS will occasionally decide in consultation with a parent/carer/LA officer that a targeted timetable will operate for an agreed fixed term period. These arrangements are, for example, put in place following an exclusion to reintegrate a student back into an education centre. These timetables would only be negotiated through Support Programmes, Annual Reviews or Attendance Support Meetings with a LA officer in attendance or through re-integration meetings. On acceptance of these timetables a Reduced Timetable Proforma (Appendix 3) will be completed and signed by parents/carers. They must have an agreed date for the return to fulltime education with arrangements kept under review.

Students on Dual Registration

Students at TMBSS are often categorised as Dual Registration students so they are on roll in both schools, with TMBSS acting as the host school.

For the sessions they are scheduled to attend at TMBSS, AM and PM session attendance is recorded in the TMBSS system. If the student is scheduled to attend sessions at the main school, it will be recorded as a ‘D’ (see appendix 1).

TMBSS will inform the main school weekly, by emailing an attendance report, of the student’s attendance within an Education Centre.

If a student is attending at another school, TMBSS staff will contact the school to confirm the attendance of the student on a daily basis.

Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Executive Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Attendance monitoring

- Centre Administrators send a weekly attendance report to the Senior Leadership Team which details the student's reasons for absence.
- The Executive Headteacher and Head of School meet on a weekly basis to look at each Centres attendance reports and see if there any issues around a student's attendance. Individual student issues are then addressed with the Link Senior Leader and Centre Manager.
- The Executive Headteacher and Head of School meet the Education Welfare Officer on a weekly basis. The Education Welfare Officer reviews every Centre on a rolling programme every half term. Attendance concerns are identified and appropriate action is agreed.
- Centre Managers review each student in their Centre weekly and RAG rate attendance concerns. These are then discussed with the link senior leader.
- Weekly Agenda Item for the Senior Leaders meeting where concerns and support are discussed and actions agreed.
- The Family Support Worker meets the Education Welfare Officer on a half termly basis (or more frequently depending on need) to discuss students who have attendance issues and arrange the next steps that need to be taken to address the issues.
- Attendance targets are set, monitored and reviewed as part of the Service Development Plan.
- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the Service and at an individual student level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Executive Headteacher presents attendance data to Governors on a termly basis

Student-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

Analysing attendance

The Service will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The Service will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to Service leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The Service will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the Service (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Improved attendance is celebrated with individual students

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Student from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody LA Transport issues
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2

TMBSS Education Centre

Personalised Learning Plan			
Name:	DOB:	Form:	Current % Attendance:
<p>Part timetables guidance: Legally children are required to be in receipt of an efficient full-time education. Whilst there is no clear definition of 'full time' it is expected that children will be provided with education throughout the normal school day - 2 sessions a day for 190 days a year. In using part time timetables the following must be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apart from medical conditions (where evidence from a medical practitioner supports that a full day attendance is not possible) part timetables should be implemented only in very limited circumstances • Such part time timetables should have clearly defined objectives • Be for a specific and limited period of time • Part time timetables should not, other than in very exceptional cases, be implemented without written parental agreement • Once tried as an alternative measure they should rarely be used again • Coding for such programmes should reflect the period the child is not in school – CODE C to be used. 			
Reasons for considering part time attendance:			
Please detail any further actions required			By Whom
Timetable agreed for the period from		to	Total hours in school per week
To be reviewed by			
On:			
Signed _____ Parent(s)/Carer(s)			
Signed _____ School Representative _____ Position			
Total hours in school must be completed. Code C must be used.		Headteacher's signature:	

Please send a copy of this form to: Inclusion Service – inclusion@shropshire.gov.uk