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Attendance Policy

(Primary)

#SG29(B)

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# Statement of intent

Three Counties Academy Trust (TCAT) believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a trust-wide approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

* Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits
* Ensuring equality and fairness for all
* Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils
* Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance
* Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, including those within and outside TCAT, as well as other agencies
* Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
* Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils
* Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support

The TCAT Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is Mr R Jones, and he can be contacted via rjones@tcat.school. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the Education Welfare Officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

Specifically, this policy, SG29(B), details our approach towards attendance for pupils in our primary provisions. For our secondary pupils, please refer to policy SG29(A).

# 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* Education Act 1996
* Equality Act 2010
* The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
* The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
* Children and Young Persons Act 1963
* DfE (2024) ‘Working together to improve school attendance’
* DfE (2024) ‘Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024’
* DfE (2016) ‘Children missing education’
* DfE (2023) ‘Providing remote education’
* DfE (2024) ‘Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance’

This policy operates in conjunction with the following TCAT and school policies and documents:

* Complaints Policy and Procedures
* Children Missing Education Policy
* Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
* Behaviour Policy
* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
* Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
* Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
* Education Welfare Officer Home Visit Policy
* Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

# 2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

**Absence:**

* Arrival at school after the register has closed
* Not attending the registered school for any reason

**Authorised absence:**

* An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
* Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
* Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
* An absence due to a family emergency

**Unauthorised absence:**

* Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
* Truancy before or during the school day
* Absences which have never been properly explained
* Arrival at school after the register has closed
* Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
* Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
* Leaving school for no reason during the day

**Persistent absence (PA):**

* Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

**Missing education**

* Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

# 3. Roles and responsibilities

The Trust Board, and where delegated the Local Governing Body for the school, has overall responsibility for:

* Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the TCAT
* Promoting the importance of good attendance through TCATs ethos and policies
* Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role
* Working with the SLT via the Executive Headteacher and EWO to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals
* Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation
* Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in TCAT’s Complaints Policy and Procedures
* Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
* Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated

The Headteacher/Head of School and where delegated a member of their SLT is responsible for:

* The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school
* Appointing a member of the SLT to the Attendance Officer role for the school
* Ensuring all parents are aware of TCAT and the school’s attendance expectations and procedures
* Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence

Staff are responsible for:

* Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too
* Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently
* Modelling good attendance behaviour
* Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated
* Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day

The EWO working with the Attendance Officer is responsible for:

* The overall strategic approach to attendance in school
* Developing a clear vision for improving attendance
* Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions
* Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement
* Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance
* Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance
* Informing the LA of any pupil’s name being deleted from the admission register unless exceptions apply

Parents are responsible for:

* Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details
* Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number
* Updating the school if their details change
* The attendance of their children at school
* Promoting good attendance with their children

Pupils are responsible for:

* Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school
* Arriving punctually to lessons when at school

# 4. Attendance expectations

TCAT and our primary schools have high expectations for pupils’ attendance and punctuality and will ensure that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to:

* Attend school every day they are required to be at school, for the full day
* Attend school punctually
* Attend every class lesson

The school day will start at the time designated by the Headteacher/Head of School and published on the school website.

Registers will be taken at appropriate points of the school day but as a minimum will generate an am and a pm mark.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

At TCAT we seek to see attendance rates at 96% or higher for primary age pupils, and employ a banded approach to attendance classification as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **% Attendance** | **Description** |
| 100% | Outstanding |
| 99.00-99.99% | Excellent |
| 98.00-98.99% | Very Good |
| 95.00-97.99% | Good |
| 93.00-94.99% | Requires Improvement |
| 90.00-92.99% | Poor |
| 0.00-89.99% | Very Poor |

These attendance descriptors are used consistently across TCAT when referring to pupil attendance, for example in periodic progress reports to parents and carers.

# 5. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 9:30am on the first day of their child’s absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent via telephone call or text message as soon as is practicable on the first day that the pupil does not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

* Ascertain the reason for the absence
* Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken
* Identify whether the absence is authorised or not
* Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, TCAT and the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of Persistent Absentees (PA), arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Family Support Worker and/or the Education Welfare Officer. The school will inform the LA, on a monthly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil’s attendance drops below 85%, the Family Support Worker and/or Education Welfare Officer may arrange a formal meeting with the pupil and their parent.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

The attendance reporting structure will be as follows:

1. Class Teacher
2. Attendance Officer or Designated member of Associate Staff
3. Headteacher/Head of School
4. Education Welfare Officer

# 6. Attendance register

TCAT uses Bromcom to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

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

TCAT will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

* # = Planned whole school closure
* / = Present in the morning
* \ = Present in the afternoon
* L = Late arrival before the register has closed
* C = Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
* C1 = Leave of absence granted by the school for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
* C2 = Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
* E = Suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision made
* I = Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
* M = Medical or dental appointments
* R = Religious observance
* S = Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
* T = Parent travelling for occupational purposes
* G = Unauthorised holiday
* N = Reason not yet provided
* O = Unauthorised absence
* U = Arrived after registration closed
* D = Dual registered at another school
* B = Attending any other approved educational activity
* J1 = Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
* K = Attending education provision arranged by the LA
* P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
* Q = Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
* V = Educational visit or trip
* W = Work experience
* X = Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
* Y1 = Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
* Y2 = Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
* Y3 = Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
* Y4 = Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
* Y5 = Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
* Y6 = Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
* Y7 = Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
* Z = Prospective pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will still be marked as absent in the register using the most appropriate absence code.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

The school will share its daily attendance data with the DfE directly from the management information system.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

# 7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the Headteacher/Head of School – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Headteacher/Head of School (as designated by the Executive Headteacher/CEO), taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil’s education into account. The Headteacher/Head of School’s decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents and will not deny any request without good reason.

**Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the Headteacher/Head of School in writing at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil’s previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher/Head of School will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school, in line with TCAT policy, is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

* Immediately before and during assessment periods
* When a pupil’s attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
* Where a pupil’s authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

**Medical or dental appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child’s absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

**Performances and activities, including paid and unpaid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school’s absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the Executive Headteacher/CEO who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

* For not less than six hours a week; and
* During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
* On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
* For not more than five hours on any such day

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher/Head of School to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher/Head of School will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil’s attendance would fall below 95%. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher/Head of School will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

**Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution**

The school will usually grant leave of absence where an application has been made in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the leave is to enable the pupil to attend an interview for employment or admission to another educational institution, e.g. university or college.

**Study leave for a public examination**

The school may grant leave of absence for a pupil to study for a public examination and the leave has been agreed in advance with a parent who the pupil normally lives with.

Study leave will not be granted by default once tuition for the examination syllabus is complete and will be used sparingly. Provision will still be made available for pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise. No study leave will be granted before June 1st in any examination year.

**Pupils subject to a part-time timetable**

In very exceptional circumstances and where it is in a pupil’s best interests, the school will grant leave of absence to accommodate for a pupil on a part-time timetable. In such circumstances, the days on which the pupil is expected to attend school will be agreed in advance. In line with LA guidance, part-time timetables will be set for a maximum six-week period and have regular review points with increasing attendance at school built into the provision.

**Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance.

The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil’s parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request. Pilgrimages would not be permissible under religious observance guidance.

**Parent travelling or occupational purposes**

If a pupil is travelling with their parent as a result of the parent’s trade or business and is therefore unable to attend, the school will assure itself that this is a genuine reason. Proof will not be sought without genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. The parent will be encouraged to ensure that the pupil can attend a school where they are travelling to and be dual registered at that school.

# 8. SEND and health-related absences

TCAT recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with TCAT’s SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, TCAT will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any Education Healthcare Plan (EHCP) or Individual Health Plan (IHP) that have been implemented. The SENCO will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil’s non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child’s lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the TCAT’s Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, TCAT will:

* Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days
* Provide the LA with information about the pupil’s needs, capabilities and programme of work
* Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return
* Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs
* Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, TCAT will consider:

* Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments
* Incorporating a pastoral support plan
* Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire
* Identifying pupils’ unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework
* Using an internal or external specialist
* Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable
* Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes
* Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out
* Temporary late starts or early finishes
* Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence
* Small group work or on-to-one lessons
* Tailored support to meet their individual needs

# 9. Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

* There is a lack of access arrangements
* Transport normally provided is not available and the school is not within walking distance
* There is widespread disruption to travel
* Part of the school premises is closed, and the pupil cannot be practicably accommodated
* The whole school site has been closed unexpectedly
* The pupil is in criminal justice detention
* Public health guidance or law legislates that attendance is respectively not advised or prohibited
* Any other avoidable cause makes attendance impossible

The use of the seven ‘Y’ codes for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes. Code Q will be used in circumstances where there is a lack of access arrangements.

# 10. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil’s learning.

Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the Headteacher/Head of School is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

* In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken
* If any further truancy occurs, then the school working with the Education Welfare Officer, will consider issuing a penalty notice
* A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school

# 11. Absent pupils

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school and are collected by a parent or an individual designated in advance by the parent. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

* The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the Headteacher/Head of School, and DSL where different, immediately following a swift and timely check to confirm the absent status
* The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search
* A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher/Head of School
* The following areas will be systematically searched:
	+ All classrooms
	+ All toilets
	+ The library
	+ Any outbuildings
	+ The school grounds
* Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted
* The parents of the pupil will be notified immediately upon discovery of the absence using the emergency contact numbers provided
* If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted
* The absent pupil’s Class Teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing and utilising information from other staff accounts
* If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
* When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
* Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The Headteacher/Head of School will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The Headteacher/Head of School will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. This will be minuted within SLT meeting minutes, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary and communicated to the Local Governing Body.

# 12. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Education Welfare Officer, supported by the Attendance Officer and SLT, will:

* Establish a range of specific, evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance
* Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work
* Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures
* Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
	+ Sending letters to parents
	+ Having a weekly tutor review
	+ Engaging with LA attendance teams
	+ Using fixed penalty notices
	+ Creating attendance clinics

TCAT and the school will use attendance data, in line with the ‘Monitoring and analysing absence’ section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

TCAT may acknowledge outstanding attendance in the following ways:

* Any pupil securing 100% attendance for their duration at a TCAT school receives a bespoke award in their final year for primary age pupils of a £10 book token
* Any pupil securing 100% attendance in a single year will receive a framed attendance certificate at end of year awards
* For pupils with medical conditions that would preclude them obtaining 100% attendance, those absences covered by a valid medical reason will not count against them allowing them to achieve 100% attendance on those days that they could have attended school
* For pupils with a fully authorised reason such as a performance absence or competition absence that would preclude them from obtaining 100% attendance, those absences covered by a valid authorised reason will not count against them allowing them to achieve 100% attendance on those days that they could not have attended school

Good attendance and punctuality may be rewarded in the following ways

* Pupils who achieve 100% attendance each term will receive an entry ticket into an end of year prize draw for a family day trip to a UK Theme Park or attraction
* For pupils on an Attendance Intervention Review (AIR) 2, improved attendance following intervention will be acknowledged. If 100% attendance is maintained for a two-week period following an AIR 2 then a small pre-agreed reward can be issued by the Education Welfare Officer or the Attendance Officer
* As with outstanding attendance, pupils with medical conditions that would preclude them obtaining 100% attendance for the points above and where those absences are covered by a valid medical reason will not count against them allowing them to achieve 100% attendance on those days that they could have attended school
* As with outstanding attendance, for pupils with a fully authorised reason such as a performance absence or competition absence that would preclude them from obtaining 100% attendance, those absences covered by a valid authorised reason will not count against them allowing them to achieve 100% attendance on those days that they could not have attended school

School trips and events will be considered a privilege. Where attendance drops below 90%, these privileges **may** be taken away. Specifically:

* Residential leisure/entertainment trips which are not linked to end of year arrangements and/or are not part of the accepted curriculum of study may not be permitted for pupils who fall below 90% attendance where the majority of non-attendance is designated as unauthorised

# 13. Working with parents to improve attendance

TCAT and the school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families and work to build trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. TCAT and the school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

TCAT will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

TCAT will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child’s legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher/Head of School in advance. TCAT and the school will regularly inform parents about their child’s levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Education Welfare Officer, SLT and the Family Support Worker will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. TCAT will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil’s experience in school, e.g. bullying, the Family Support Worker and Education Welfare Officer will work with the Headteacher/Head of School and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of TCAT and the school’s control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil’s family, the Education Welfare Officer and Family Support Worker will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children’s social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

# 14. Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

* Children in need
* Looked After Children (LAC)
* Young carers
* Pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)
* Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL)
* Pupils with SEND
* Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

TCAT and the school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of PA, in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

* Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning
* Meeting with the pupil and their parent to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having
* Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support
* Leading weekly check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support
* Making regular contact with the pupil’s parent to discuss progress
* Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate
* Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability

Each primary school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence over 30% and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, TCAT and the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with TCAT’s duty of care. TCAT will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard to the Executive Leader for Safeguarding and Inclusion in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

# 15. Legal intervention

TCAT will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils’ attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after four weeks, the Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Officer/SLT will consider:

* Holding a formal meeting with parents and the school’s point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team
* Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place
* Engaging children’s social care where there are safeguarding concerns

Where the above measures are not effective, the Executive Headteacher/CEO via the Education Welfare Officer will issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice, or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A fixed penalty notice may be issued in line with the LA’s code of conduct and the DfE’s ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ guidance.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, TCAT will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

# 16. Monitoring and analysing absence

The Education Welfare Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data weekly to ensure that intervention and support is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs and supply this data to the in-school SLT and Family Support Worker.

TCAT and each TCAT school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

* Each school’s cohort as a whole
* Individual year groups
* Year groups preparing for exams
* Individual pupils
* Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds
* Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM
* Pupils at risk of PA

The Education Welfare Officer will conduct thorough analysis of the above data on a half-termly, termly and full-year basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

* Patterns in uses of certain codes
* Particular days of poor attendance
* Subjects which have low lesson attendance
* Historic trends of attendance and absence
* Barriers to attendance

The Education Welfare Officer will provide regular reports to the SLT and Family Support Worker to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures in collaboration with the EWO. The Education Welfare officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The Local Governing Body and the Trust Board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

TCAT and the school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The Trust Board will ensure staff from different schools within TCAT regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

# 17. Training of staff

TCAT recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The Trust Board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

* The importance of good attendance
* That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
* The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
* TCAT’s strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
* TCAT’s procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The Trust Board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the Education Welfare Officer and Attendance Officers, and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

# 18. Deletions of names from the admission register

TCAT will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register of any TCAT school for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil’s name will never be removed for any other reason and TCAT is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

TCAT will make returns to the LA when pupils’ names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When TCAT is notifying the LA that a pupil’s name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

* Full name
* Address
* The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
* At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
* If applicable, the pupil’s future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
* If applicable, the name of the pupil’s other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
* The reason under which the pupil’s name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils’ attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

# 19. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. TCAT’s attendance target is 96% at primary level. Full details of TCAT’s absence levels can be supplied on request by the TCAT Education Welfare Officer, Mr R Jones rjones@tcat.school.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Executive Headteacher/CEO and TCAT Education Welfare Officer or earlier if national guidance requires it. The next scheduled review date for this policy is 31st August 2027.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

|  |
| --- |
| Signed by: |
|  | Executive Headteacher/CEO | Date: |  |
|  | Chair of Trust Board | Date: |  |

**Attendance Intervention Review**

**AIR 2 Parent/Carer Centred meeting**

**Attendees: date: .**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of pupil**  | **Current Attendance** | **Historical/contextual information** **SEND, PP, Health care plan…** | **Follow up required on:** |
|  |  |  | **monitor** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Comments and discussion Identified Barriers**  |
| **I have met with this pupil and parents/carers to discuss their current attendance,**  |  |
| **Outcomes and actions (if required)****monitor** |
| **Additional Single or Multiagency Involvement needed:****NA** | **Referral actioned****NA** |

**Attendance Reporting Structure**