



# Tudor Grange Academies Trust

Pupil Attendance

and

Punctuality Policy

**Approved October 2021**

**To be reviewed October 2022**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole of the Tudor Grange Academies Trust (TGAT) community, thus enabling and encouraging all on roll at the Academies to achieve excellence. Attendance has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils and the standards thereby achieved by the Academy. Securing good attendance is a fundamental responsibility within our duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children in our schools (*DfE, Working Together to Safeguard Children*).
- 1.2. To enable pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time every day that the Academy is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable, as poor attendance results in pupils making less progress.

## **2. Rationale**

- 2.1. Parents/guardians of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (Section 444) to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age and students who attend the Academy for post-16 education attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from the Academy is an offence and parents may be referred to the Local Authority if their child's attendance is poor.
- 2.2. Attendance is important and statistics will be regularly reviewed by the Principal/Head of School and senior leaders.
- 2.3. TGAT aims to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all pupils. Excellent attendance and punctuality will be recognised.

## **3. Aims**

- 3.1. To achieve 100% attendance of pupils within TGAT.
- 3.2. To improve pupils' attainment, engagement and wellbeing through good attendance.
- 3.3. To work with parents/guardians:
  - to ensure their child attends school regularly;
  - to ensure their child is punctual to the Academy and individual lessons;
  - to support and encourage their child by attending parents' evenings and other events;
  - to contact their child's tutor in the first instance to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance;
  - to work in collaboration with the Academy to resolve any issues that are impacting their child's attendance and achievement.
- 3.4. To make sure attendance and punctuality is a priority for everyone associated with TGAT including parents, pupils, staff, and governors.

3.5. TGAT will challenge the attitude of those pupils, parents and staff who give a low priority to attendance and punctuality.

#### 4. Registration

4.1. The following documents specify the statutory requirements and provide guidance with regards to completing and maintaining an attendance register:

- The Education Act 1996 – section 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and any subsequent amendment
- DfE School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures
- DfE School Attendance Guidance for maintained school, academies, independent school and local authorities August 2020
- DfE Children Missing Education statutory guidance for local authorities September 2016.

4.2. Schools have a statutory duty to keep two legal documents:

- an admissions roll;
- an attendance register which must be kept accurately.

4.3. An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.

4.4. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with statutory requirements and government guidelines. Registers must be taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Pupils are expected to be on time for both registration sessions. On each occasion the school must record whether a child is present, absent or present at an approved educational activity. No pupil should be marked present unless actually in the room when the register is called.

<b>NAME OF ACADEMY</b>	<b>AM REGISTRATION TIME</b>	<b>PM REGISTRATION TIME</b>
<b>TGAS</b>	<b>8.35 AM</b>	<b>2.00PM</b>
<b>TGAW</b>	<b>8.35 AM</b>	<b>1.55PM</b>
<b>TGAR</b>	<b>8.50 AM</b>	<b>1.25PM</b>
<b>TGAK</b>	<b>8.30 AM</b>	<b>2.55PM</b>
<b>TGSA</b>	<b>8.55AM</b>	<b>Primary: 1.00PM Years 7 &amp; 8: 1.15PM, Years 9,10 &amp; 11: 12.35PM</b>
<b>RSA</b>	<b>8.45 AM</b>	<b>2.15PM</b>
<b>YEW TREE</b>	<b>8.55AM</b>	<b>1.00PM</b>
<b>MEON VALE</b>	<b>8.45AM</b>	<b>3.00pm</b>
<b>ST JAMES</b>	<b>8.45AM</b>	<b>EYFS: 12.30PM, KS1: 12.45PM KS2: 1.00PM</b>
<b>HASELOR</b>	<b>8.55AM</b>	<b>1.00PM</b>
<b>PERDISWELL</b>	<b>8.55 AM</b>	<b>REC-Year 5: 1PM Year 6: 12.45PM</b>

- 4.5 Every half day of absence has to be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised, and the regulation codes must be used.

Authorised absence is where the Principal/Head of School has either given approval in advance for any pupil (age 4 – 19) who attends the Academy to be absent, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. Examples of authorised absence include days of religious observance, illness and medical appointments (where possible these must be arranged after school), all of which require written confirmation from a parent/guardian.

Unauthorised absence is when the justification is not acceptable or when a reason for the absence has not been received. Excessive lateness will also be recorded as unauthorised absence. Examples of unauthorised absence include shopping, birthdays or child minding.

- 4.6. Spaces must not be left in the register. It is the responsibility of the member of staff taking the register to ensure the register is complete at tutor time, and for all lessons. In the event of the electronic registration system failing, a paper register must be taken and be submitted to the person within the school responsible for updating electronic registers.
- 4.7. Pupils must not mark the register in any circumstances because it is a legal and auditable document.
- 4.8. All registers will be checked and absences monitored on a regular basis. This is a collective responsibility, involving Tutors/Class Teachers, Senior Leaders, Administrators and the Attendance Welfare Officer. TGAT has a procedure in place to resolve absences within two weeks and unexplained absences in 3 weeks.
- 4.9. If a pupil is absent from school their parent/guardian should contact the Academy on the first day of absence and maintain regular contact throughout the absence.
- 4.10. Reasons for absence, either verbal or supported by written notes from a parent/guardian, may not always be accepted as a satisfactory reason for the absence. If this is the case, the Academy will make formal representation to the parent/guardian in writing to challenge the reason for absence they provided.
- 4.11. In exceptional circumstances the Academy will request further evidence of a pupil's illness. This request will be put in writing to the pupil's parents/guardians.
- 4.12. Parents/guardians are advised to make appointments for a dentist, doctor or optician outside school core hours whenever possible.
- 4.13. If a pupil is absent from school and no reason has been received and no contact can be made with the parent/guardian, and there is a cause for concern, the Attendance Welfare Officer or a nominated member of staff will make a home visit. If there is no response from the home visit and the concern persists the matter will be raised immediately with the safeguarding team.
- 4.14. If a reason for absence has been received and there is a concern regarding that reason, the Attendance Welfare Officer or a nominated member of staff will make a home visit. If there is no

response from the home visit and the concern persists, the matter will be raised immediately with the safeguarding team.

## **5. Lateness**

- 5.1. Pupils must attend registration on time to be given a present mark. Arrival after the start of morning registration but before the close of registration at 9.30am will be given an 'L' code and an appropriate sanction will be given in accordance to the Academy's Behaviour and Standards Policy. Where a pupil arrives after morning registration has closed they will be given an unauthorised absence 'U' code in the register. Afternoon registration will remain open for 20 minutes after the start of registration. Any pupil that arrives after the start of afternoon registration will be marked as 'L' Late in the register. Any pupil that arrives after the afternoon registers have closed will be marked as 'U' unauthorised absence.
- 5.2. It is the initial responsibility of the Class Teacher within primary schools and the Tutor and College Leader within secondary schools to address the issue of persistent lateness with the student and their parent/guardian. Pupils who arrive late without a genuine reason will be given a sanction in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour and Standards policy.
- 5.3. In the circumstances of a pupil being persistently late before the close of the register, the Academy's sanctions having no effect on the lateness and the parents/guardians failing to support the Academy by ensuring that their child arrives on time to the Academy, then the parents/guardians will be informed in writing that these late arrivals will be recorded as unauthorised absences and they will be made aware of the consequences of this action.

## **6. Poor attendance**

- 6.1. Those pupils whose attendance falls below 95% will be closely monitored and further action considered. Between 95% and 93% it is the responsibility of the Tutor/Class Teacher to discuss the matter with the pupil and the parent/guardian in consultation with the College Leader/Head of School and administrative staff. Attendance of 93% and below will require further intervention, and this will involve the Attendance Welfare Officer. All intervention must be documented.
- 6.2. If a pupil has three individual periods of absence in any period of six weeks, the Academy's Attendance Welfare Officer within secondary schools and Head of School within primary schools will contact the parents/guardians to discuss the absences. Recognition of a pattern of absence is vital. Liaison between Class Teacher and Head of School within primary schools, and Tutor, College Administrator and College Leader within secondary schools, with support from the Attendance Welfare Officer, will ensure a holistic approach to the cause for concern. Early involvement of the parent/guardian is paramount.
- 6.3. TGAT has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding a student's attendance at the Academy:
  - telephone calls to parents/guardians;
  - letters to parents/guardians;
  - home visits (these can be pre-arranged or cold call visits).
  - meetings with parents/guardians and pupils to discuss any issues;

- school mentoring;
- parenting/guardianship contracts;
- Pastoral Support Plan;
- Individual Educational Plan;
- Personal Attendance Plan.

6.4. If there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance following the Academy's interventions, the Academy will refer the matter to the Local Authority for advice and possible legal action.

6.5. The legal action to be considered, in full consultation with the Academy, is:

- to prosecute a parent/guardian for failing to ensure that their child regularly attends school according to the statutory requirement through the Education Act 1996, Section 444 (1 or 1A);
- application to a magistrate's court for an Education Supervision Order – to ensure that the child of compulsory school age and registered at a school attends regularly;
- application to a magistrate's court for a Parenting Order – to enforce regular attendance following a successful prosecution by the Local Authority;
- to issue a Penalty Notice of a monetary fine for irregular attendance and unauthorised leave of absence.

## 7. Leave of absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.

- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**

## **8. Overseas extended trips**

- 8.1. Parents/guardians may wish to take their child/children on an extended overseas trip during term time. Such visits may be particularly important to parents/guardians who want to ensure that their child/children meet members of their extended family overseas. Whilst it is important to recognise the educational and cultural significance of such visits, the Leave of Absence during term time rules (Section 7) also apply to these circumstances.
- 8.2. The Education Regulations 2006 state that where a pupil has been granted an extended 'Leave of Absence' and subsequently fails to return to school within 10 school days of the expiry of the agreed period of absence, and the failure is not due to sickness or any other unavoidable causes, his/her name may be deleted from the admissions register. This would only be considered following consultation with the Local Authority Children Missing Education Officer, and once the missing child's procedure has been followed.

## **9. Travellers**

- 9.1 There is provision within the legislation to permit Travellers to remove their child/children from full-time education whilst they are travelling, however this can only be done after the completion of 200 sessions (100 days) in an academic year. The parent/guardian should be encouraged to attend school and discuss the pending period of absence with the Tutor/College Leader/Class Teacher prior to removing the child. It is at the discretion of the Principal/Head of School whether or not to authorise this absence. Should permission be granted, 'T' will be entered into the student register system.