

## **Whole School Attendance Policy**

**Date of Policy: March 2017**

**Review: March 2018**

All policies at Tacolneston & Morley CE VA Primary Schools Federation should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our Safeguarding Policy and our vision, aims and values as Church of England Schools.

**Executive Head Teacher: Mrs Laura Green**

**Chair of Governors: Mr Peter Jackson**

Tacolneston and Morley CE VA Primary Schools Federation is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and we embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the Federation will set attendance/absence targets.

The Federation will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

### **Promoting attendance**

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance. We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

**Any child collected during the school day and leaves the school site must be signed out. If they subsequently return to school they must be signed back in.**

### **Leave of absence in term time**

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorize the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

Holidays in term time- From 1st September 2013, amendments to the 2006 Regulations in Education, allowing head teachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in 'special circumstances' of up to ten school days leave per year, came in to force. The amendments make it clear head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Consequently, holidays in term time will be treated as unauthorised unless in exceptional circumstances e.g. A one-off significant family event.

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The school has adopted the Wymondham Cluster of Schools Holiday Absence policy -see Appendix.

### School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Head Teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### Registers

The School will use a computerised system for registering pupils and keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

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## **Lateness**

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40 am for Tacolneston and 8:50am for Morley. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Pupils arriving after 9.00 a.m. but before registers close (the end of the registration period) will be marked as present but coded as late before registers close.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be:

Tacolneston: 1:00pm and close 1:20pm

Morley: 1:15pm and close 1:35pm

## **First Day Absence**

Parents are expected to contact school during the first day of absence. The school operates 'first day calling.' If there has been no contact from parents/carers, the School Business Manager will telephone to establish the cause of the absence. Information is then passed on to the class teachers who transfer information to their registers.

## **Third Day Absence**

If a pupil is still absent after three days, and there has been no contact, a letter asking parents to contact the school that day is sent home.

## **Continuing Absence**

If a pupil continues to be absent, with no contact from parents, a second letter will be sent stating that if there is no contact from the parents / carers, the school will pass their information across to the Children's Service Attendance Team for them to investigate the absence.

## **Ten Day's Absence**

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Service Attendance Team for the local area. [*This is a legal requirement*]. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

## **Absence Notes**

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

## **Frequent Absence**

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of any emerging attendance concerns. Attendance data is analysed each term by the head teacher and the school quickly picks up on any child developing a pattern of absence. The school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

The school will monitor those pupils whose attendance is heading towards 90%. A letter is sent to parents (see below), where appropriate, explaining the school's concerns with regards to low attendance. The school will speak with the parents to identify any reasons for the absences.

If the problem appears to be a medical one, the school may request supporting medical evidence e.g. sight of prescription or appointment card. The school may also refer to Norfolk Children's and Young Peoples Help Services (school nursing service) and a health assessment meeting is offered to the child/parents. A referral form is completed.

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In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Support and Enforcement Officer. A Fast Track to Attendance Panel Meeting is arranged for parents to meet with teachers and School Attendance Support and Enforcement Officers to identify the reasons for absence and to work together to improve strategies. Referral to Fast Track is 9 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 6 week period or 10 consecutive sessions.

## **Persistent Absence [PA] 90%**

Any pupil with attendance below 90% over the school year is known as a persistent absentee, whatever the reason for the absences. Pupils whose attendance level falls below 90%, and where there has been unauthorised absence, a fast track meeting is set with parents. An action plan is set up by the Head Teacher or Attendance Support and Enforcement Officer. The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance and include systems such as an FSP.

## **Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. However, parents will be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

## **A Welcome Back**

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

## **Attendance Awards**

The school will use the following system to reward pupils: Pupils with over 96% attendance for the year are rewarded with prizes in a presentation assembly

## **Categorisation of Absence**

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

### **1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

### **2. Authorised absence**

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

### **3. Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

**Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.**

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

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If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

### **Record preservation**

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

### **Register Security**

The registers will be stored within the school management system.

### **Attendance Targets**

The school will set attendance targets each year. The school will make use of the attendance data available on the Norfolk Schools site when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

### **Tacolneston**

2016 % Total Attendance (Primary - Full year) 97.13 (National 96)

2015 % Total Attendance (Primary - Full year) 96.62 (National 96.1)

### **Morley**

2016 % Total Attendance (Primary - Full year) 97.3 (National 96)

2015 % Total Attendance (Primary - Full year) 96.7 (National 96.1)

### **2017 TARGET Tacolneston and Morley CE VA Primary Schools 96%**

### **Action Plan**

If attendance becomes a concern across the school, the school will produce an action plan to show how the school will set about achieving its attendance targets.

## Appendices

### **The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part VI Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

### **Register and Admission Roll keeping.**

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

### **Attendance Targets**

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007

### **Guidance documents on attendance.**

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

### **Request for Absence in Term Time**

Below is a list of examples of allowable absences and those which will now be classed as unauthorised absences.

#### **Allowed absence**

Sickness/illness

Emergency and planned medical appointments (Parents are requested to make to make routine appointments outside school hours)

Hospital scheduled appointments /treatment

Day/s for specific religious observance

School is closed due to unforeseen circumstances

#### **Allowed absence in exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the head teacher)**

Family bereavement or close friend bereavement

Other compassionate grounds

Family wedding/civil partnership taking part on school day–not travelling to a wedding unless it is abroad.

Family crisis

Examinations off site

Educational Opportunity – Sport & Performance (e.g. drama)

Attendance at an event at the request of a public organisation

Visit to a new school

Family re-location visit

#### **Absences not allowed under any circumstances**

Family holiday

Family trips

Leaving school early to travel to an event

All requests for absence due to exceptional circumstances must be made by completing the Application for Leave of Absence form which can be downloaded from our school website.

The Head Teacher will then review each request and decide if it meets the criteria for authorisation. Parents should keep their copy of the authorisation in case they are required to prove their child has authorised absence during term time.

For absence relating to illness of five days or more, schools may request a doctor's note to confirm the absence.

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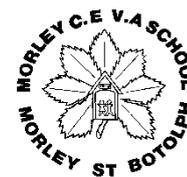
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**Executive Head Teacher: Mrs Laura Green**

20.2.17

## ATTENDANCE – ACADEMIC YEAR 2017/18

Dear Parents,

Child Attendance: %  
School Average: %

You will be aware that the law requires all parents to ensure their child attends school regularly. Research has shown that children often do not catch up on work missed, which can have serious consequences for their learning and progress. The Government is very clear that all schools must aim to have the highest attendance possible for all of their pupils in order for them to achieve their maximum potential.

When a child's attendance stands at 90% this equates to half a day off each week, which would be over 19 days missed each academic year; 85% equates to a day and a half each fortnight, which would be over 29 days missed each year. The Local Authority has introduced a system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% or less with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period will meet the criteria for possible legal intervention involving the County Council.

This letter is for your information only and is intended to make you aware of the attendance information that both the school and county has access to.

The school has a duty to monitor the attendance of all children and limit the amount of absence a child has during an academic year. Whilst I appreciate that the above absence percentage may include genuine cases of illness, an authorised leave of absence, medical appointments or lateness, it is still teaching and learning time that the children have missed.

With your child's current attendance being below 90% this is flagged as a Persistent Absentee and this is raised with the School Attendance Support and Enforcement Officer. In order to support you with your child's attendance I would like to offer you an appointment on *[enter date and time]* to discuss this and how we can improve the attendance and any actions to improve the attendance so your child does not miss out on their learning.

Please do not hesitate to contact school if you wish to discuss this further. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss any strategies required to support *[child's name]* attendance at school.

Yours sincerely,  
Laura Green

### Absence Information

- All parents must complete a leave of absence form to apply for any leave of absence in school term time.
- All requests will be considered on an individual basis and subject to the cluster policy and school's attendance policy
- Schools may decide to apply a fixed term penalty notice in line with Norfolk policy.



We want to give your children the best chances in life.

Tina Bell, our Parent Support Adviser, is available to support parents/carers with any family issues which may affect your child's attendance e.g. health, bereavement, separation.

Tina can be contacted on 07595 221240 or 01953 609783.

***Working together we can achieve great things for your children.***

## WYMONDHAM CLUSTER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY



This policy has been developed by the Wymondham Cluster of Primary Schools. These are:

Ashleigh Primary School & Nursery  
Barford Primary School  
Barnham Broom Primary School  
Browick Road Primary School  
Morley Primary School  
Robert Kett Primary School  
Spooner Row Primary School  
Tacolneston Primary School  
Wicklewood Primary School  
Wreningham Primary School

This policy is agreed by the cluster schools' governing bodies

This policy has been adopted: March 2014  
Updated: Spring 2017

Review date: Spring Term 2019

## TACOLNESTON & MORLEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

The Wymondham Cluster of Primary Schools is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all children and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent attendance for all.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations state that Headteachers **may not grant** any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This came into effect from September 2013.

Exceptional circumstances in which a Headteacher or other designated professional may authorise absence, where the absence is requested:

- Medical, dental or optometric consultations that could not take place out of school hours – proof of appointment e.g. hospital letter/appointment card
- Religious observance;
- A one-off significant family event or circumstance;
- Representative or elite sporting, musical or drama activity approved by the school;
- Deployment of a parent/carer who is a member of HM Armed Forces.

Schools have to report all absences to the local authority.

An absence is defined as any time a child is not in school when the school is in session. Any absence will impact upon a child's learning

Having the correct information about the reason for the absence enables schools to accurately monitor a child's attendance and avoid unnecessary follow up action.

### **The Law:**

All children have a legal right to education.

All parents are legally responsible for ensuring their child receives an education.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on all parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education.

Parents who are seen to fail in their duty can be brought before the Magistrates Court where a maximum £2500 fine and/or 3-month prison can be imposed.

Absence from school can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

There is no good time to be absent from school. It is particularly important that children attend school in the first few weeks of the school year; this is the time when friendships are made and learning routines are established.

National statistics show 10 days absence in any academic year does have a negative effect on attainment

Your school is open for 190 days each year. This leaves 175 days for holidays, appointments, shopping and spending time together.

If your child has 10 days absence during the school year, means your child will only have 180 days at school and 185 days off.

If your child has 10 days absence, they can only achieve 94.74% attendance across the year.



***It affects their ability to succeed***



***It affects their ability to make friends***



Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL  
DURING TERM TIME**

**Please note: taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress**

Full name of child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Leave requested from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of school days \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for application: \_\_\_\_\_

**I/we have read the information on the reverse of this application and would like to formally request the leave of absence as shown.**

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Headteacher will consider your request for leave of absence following government guidelines and the following points

1. The child's previous attendance history
2. The child's stage of education.
3. The time of year (SATS or exams).
4. Whether the parents are restricted in terms of leave from their employer.

**Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been agreed/not agreed.**

Signature of Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note: Retain the original signed and completed forms in school records and ensure a copy is returned to the parent/carers of the student to confirm authorisation.**

## Leave of absence during Term Time

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is however, a discretionary power to allow leave of absence in exceptional circumstances during term time. This is not an entitlement and purely at the discretion of the schools head teacher. Schools should not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a student's education or if the absences are during school exam periods and SAT's.

Before completing this application we would advise that you consider very seriously how the absences will affect your child's education. National statistics show 10 days absence in any academic year does have a negative effect on attainment. Schools are not obliged to provide work for students taking leave of absence; however some schools may choose to do this.

The government advises that any refusal of leave of absence must be recorded as unauthorised by the school on the student's records. As you may be aware unauthorised absences may result in legal proceedings against you either through a Fixed Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

**Discuss with the school any request for leave of absence prior to making a booking. Your child's school may have a designated person for this. It is the parent/carers responsibility to ensure you receive confirmation from the school before the leave is taken. Do not assume permission is granted if you have not received written confirmation.**

## Fixed Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or the parent/carer has been unable to provide a reason for the absence, which is acceptable to the school.

**The school will discuss with the Local Authority any cases of unauthorised absence and whether the issuing of a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution to the offence and can be issued when it is felt that parents/carers are failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.**

**The penalty is in the form of a £60 fine per parent/carer per child payable within 21 days, this increases to £120 payable per parent/carer per child within 28 days. Failure to pay usually results in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.**

\*(Academic year =school year from September to July)