

Trimley St Martin

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



The Government expects

Schools and local authorities to:

- reduce absence including persistent absence;
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents to: perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

Link Governor/committee:

Policy adopted on:

Chair of Governor's signature: _____

Head teacher's signature: _____

TRIMLEY ST MARTIN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Introduction

Trimley St Martin School acknowledges there are clear links between:

Attendance and attainment

Attendance and safeguarding

Trimley St Martin is committed to providing a high-quality education for all its' pupils. By attending school every day and on time children and young people can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Trimley St Martin encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that ***“parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly”***.

Aims & Objectives

At Trimley St Martin School we are committed to ensuring attendance is at the forefront of all we do. The whole school community - pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors - have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. We will communicate our clear vision for attendance, which will be underpinned by our high expectations and focus on our core school values. We recognise that this can only be achieved by promoting and encouraging regular attendance through our school's vision, values, ethos, and policies. We achieve this by supporting pupils, parents, and carers to reduce barriers to school attendance.

All pupils are expected to attend school every day that the school is open except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. Better than 96% attendance is considered good and is our school target.

Regular school attendance is a major factor in ensuring that pupils are safe, achieve well and develop socially and emotionally. By regularly attending school, it prepares pupils for their future, whether that be further education or employment. High achievement depends on good attendance.

Research informs us that pupils who do not attend school regularly are more likely to not achieve as well, compared to their peers who did attend regularly.

- At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. Moreover, the overall absence rate of pupils not meeting the expected standard was higher than among those meeting the higher standard (4.7% compared to 2.7%).
- At KS4, pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 in English and maths had an overall absence rate of 8.8%, compared to 5.2% among those achieving grade 4. The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grade 9 to 4 was over twice as high as those achieving grade 9 to 5 (8.8% compared to 3.7%).¹

Registration Procedures

Registration is an important part of the school day. Trimley St Martin School acknowledges that attendance registers are legal documents, may be presented as evidence in a Court of Law; therefore, all staff undertake to mark registers accurately at all times. The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day: once at the start of the day and once at the start of the afternoon session.

Registers at Trimley St Martin Primary School are taken at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions (9.00am and 13.00pm).

AM registration

Trimley St Martin School will be open to all pupils from 8.45am and the morning registers will be taken at 9.00am, pupils who arrive after this time will need to report to reception, and sign in as late (L code). The registers will close 15 minutes after the session start time at 9.00am across the school, anyone who arrives after this time will be marked as unauthorised (U code). We will conform to the time on the clock in reception to meet the times listed above.

PM registration

Afternoon registration will be taken at 13.00pm. Pupils who arrive after this time will need to report to reception and sign in as late (L code). The registers will close 15 minutes after the session, anyone who arrives after this time will be marked as unauthorised (U code). The school day finishes at 15.30pm.

1. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4/2018-19>

School's Responsibilities

All Trimley St Martin Primary School staff place a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Trimley St Martin Primary School staff are responsible for ensuring that pupils have good attendance by:-

- applying the attendance policy consistently throughout the school;

- ensuring that attendance registers are kept accurately;

- differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence (a letter or message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence – only the school can decide whether the parent's explanation justifies authorising the absence);

- analysing attendance data periodically throughout the year to identify patterns and trends. Using this data to identify and support pupils and specific cohorts whose attendance is of concern;

- responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care;

- contacting parents when they are concerned about a pupil's absences, and recording the contact;

- consulting with the Education Welfare Service if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern;

- promoting regular school attendance (for example, by contacting parents on the first day of absence if parents have not contacted the school);

- acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual pupils and classes.

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	Mrs Ross	01394 448313
Senior Leader for Attendance	Mrs Ross	01394 448313 office@trimley-st-martin.suffolk.sch.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs Ross	01394 448313
Attendance Officers	Mr Barnard Mrs Redbond	01394 448313 office@trimley-st-martin.suffolk.sch.uk
School absence reporting mechanisms	Mr Barnard & Mrs Redbond	01394 448313 http://www.trimleystmartinprimaryschool.com/sickness-absence-reporting.html
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs Mann	01394 448313

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

Parents/Carers have additional legal duties placed on them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. This means that any absences should only be a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

To support this, parents are expected to:

- Ensure their children attend the school every day that the school is open and on time;
- Ensure that their child returns to school as soon as possible after a period of illness;
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum and only in exceptional circumstances;
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school;
- Liaise with the school when they identify barriers to their child's attendance;
- Work with the school (and other agencies) to reduce all identified barriers to non-attendance;

- Notify the school by 09.00am on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day of absence, unless medical evidence is provided which defines the necessary length of absence; and
- Provide the school with a minimum of 2 emergency contact numbers and ensure that they are kept up to date with any changes.

Punctuality

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

To ensure that their children arrive to school on time.

The morning register will be called promptly at **9.00 am**. Any child arriving after **9.00am** but before **9.15am** will be marked as late (L). Any child arriving after the registers have closed at **9.15am** will be marked as unauthorised late (U).

The afternoon register will be called promptly at **13.00 pm**. Any child arriving after **13.00pm** but before **13.15pm** will be marked as late (L). Any child arriving after the registers have closed at **13.15pm** will be marked as unauthorised late (U).

To ensure children who arrive after the registers have been called are registered correctly they **MUST** report to the school office to sign in.

Absences

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

To notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:00am or as soon as possible.

Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office, emailing or via our website.

All pupils who are absent at either the AM or PM registration will be identified once the registers have closed. If we have not received a reason for the pupil's absence, we will initiate our absence procedures as follows:

- First day calling procedures will be initiated. A call will be made to the main contacts listed for the pupil to establish the reason why the pupil is not in school; If no contact is established and we have not received a suitable reason for the pupil's absence, we will contact all individuals listed as emergency contacts;
- If the school continues to be concerned, then a home visit may be conducted to establish the welfare of the pupil;

These procedures will continue to take place for each subsequent day of absence where the school has not been informed of the reasons why the pupil is absent from school.

If after 3 days of the absence, the school has not received satisfactory reason for absence the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed. They will then decide the appropriate next steps, which may include, conducting a home visit, liaising with Children's Services, requesting a safe and well check from the police or liaising with other key professionals.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will routinely make the attendance team aware of who their vulnerable pupils are, so that they can be informed of the pupil's first day of absence, and each subsequent day, this will allow the DSL to make an informed decision on the necessary response, this may include, conducting a home visit, liaising with Children's Services, requesting a safe and well check from the police or liaising with other key professionals.

Authorised Absences

Absences may be authorised by the Headteacher or other designated staff in the following circumstances:

- Leave has been granted by the school in advance for exceptional circumstances. An application must be made in writing on the prescribed form with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended circumstance wherever possible. Amendments have been made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. From 1st September 2013 Term-time absence will NOT be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances;
- The school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend. Medical evidence will always be required on the 6th day if a pupil has five consecutive days of absence from school due to illness and the school has reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. It may also be a requirement of any attendance support. All evidence should be passed to Mr Barnard or Mrs Redbond.
- The pupil has a medical appointment (code M) (although parents should endeavour to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand)
- There is an unavoidable cause for the absence, which is beyond the family's control, e.g., extreme weather conditions (code Y;)
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents) (Code R);

- The pupil is of no fixed abode, where their parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her/they/them to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she/they/them has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months (Code T);
- In other exceptional circumstances and for a very limited period which is at the discretion of the head teacher. (Code C).

Illness/Medical Absences

Parents/carers should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, parents/carers must notify the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, the pupil should not miss a whole day. If the medical appointment is during the school day, the pupil must sign out via the school office. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without a suitable adult arriving to collect them.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures (outlined above) will be authorised without the need for parents/carers to supply medical evidence. However, in line with Department for Education guidance, the school does reserve the right to request medical evidence, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or if attendance falls below 90%. Medical evidence may take the form of a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the pupil's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend a school-led attendance meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. Children may be referred to the EWO if further help or assistance is needed. As part of this support, we may seek consent from parents and the pupil as appropriate to make a referral to the appropriate agency and/or to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with "Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School".

Unauthorised absence

A pupil's absence will be unauthorised when the school has not received an appropriate reason for the absence, or the absence was not granted prior to it occurring.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly, regardless of if it has been authorised or unauthorised. Parents / carers will be informed regularly of their child's attendance and will be offered support where there is a decline in attendance.

Lateness

Pupils are expected to arrive at school and register at each session on time. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help pupils as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. If a pupil misses the start of the day/lesson, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed, miss vital work and important messages from their class teacher. Lateness is also a pre-indicator to future absenteeism. We monitor lateness as part of our routine monitoring of attendance. Using this data to provide support to parents/carers and pupils where it is identified that a pupil is routinely arriving late.

Children who repeatedly attend school late after 9.15am or after 1.15pm will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer, who may invite parents to attend a meeting in school to discuss the persistent lateness. The school and/or the EWO may issue a fixed penalty fine in line with attendance policy and procedures.

Unexplained Absence

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority.

Regular monitoring of all pupil's attendance is carried out by the Education Welfare Officer. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support.

Reduced timetables

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a reduced timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs and only where it is safe to do so. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parents/carers. A reduced timetable will be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil. The arrangements will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

Term-Time Holiday Absences/Leaves of Absence

Leaves of absence during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. We will consider each application on an individual basis considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Parents/carers are expected to take their child(ren) on holiday during the 14 weeks school holidays to minimise the impact of their child(ren) missing their education.

Parents/carers requesting a term time holiday must complete a leave of absence request form in advance of the trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteacher.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

To obtain a leave of absence form from the school office.

<http://www.trimleystmartinprimaryschool.com/holiday-absence-request-form.html>

To complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence (ideally 4 weeks prior).

Fixed Penalty Fines & Court

A fixed penalty notice fine will be issued when 10 or more unauthorised absence sessions (not necessarily consecutively) have occurred (5 whole days in total).

If parents/carers choose to take their child(ren) on a term-time holiday without the Headteacher's authorisation, the child(ren)'s absences will be marked as unauthorised.

The penalty notice fine is £60 if paid within 21 days; please note this is £60 for each child, for each parent/carer (i.e. 2 children, 2 parent/carers = £240 fine) increasing to £120 between 21 and 28 days.

Second and subsequent unauthorised term-time holidays may be referred to the Local Authority for legal action. In these cases an Education Welfare Officer will be asked to investigate and will decide with the school what the best course of action should be.

Children missing education

Schools will inform the local authority when a pupil misses ten school days or more without permission. Where a pupil has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. All effort must be made to locate the child and/or family as this is a safeguarding matter.

This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. For children who are unable to attend school due to health reasons, refer to the Children with Health Needs who cannot attend school policy.

See statutory guidance regarding [Children Missing Education](#)

Role of the Education Welfare Officer

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, Section 12 requires schools to inform the LA of every pupil who has been continuously absent without a good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised). At our school referrals to the EWO service may occur after 10 continuous sessions of absence (5 school days) or where schools have identified a set pattern of unauthorised absences totalling 10 sessions (for example consistently missing school on Fridays for five weeks running).

The EWO's role is:

To investigate absence which exceeds more than 10%, and to hold meetings with these parents as required.

To ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.

To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school and Education Attendance Service.

Monitoring and analysing data

Mr Barnard and Mrs Redbond will monitor the data collated through the school's registers on a weekly basis. This will ensure that we are able to identify and provide support to pupils or cohorts whose attendance is starting to decline. They will also monitor attendance data on a half-termly, termly and a year basis to identify any patterns and trends which may start to develop. This allows us as a school to develop individualised strategies and interventions to improve school attendance.

The attendance data for individual pupils or cohorts and groups of pupils is regularly monitored to allow the school to identify any trends and patterns of non-attendance. We will routinely monitor the following cohorts and groups of pupils:

- Whole school;
- Individual Year groups;
- Boys / girls;
- Those with a Special Education Need or Disability;
- Those who are entitled to Pupil Premium;
- English as an additional language;
- Those who are Looked After;
- Those with a Social Worker;
- Those who are persistently and severely absent;
- Those who are persistently late.

In addition to these, other cohorts and groups of pupils will be monitored. Attendance data is routinely benchmarked against available local, regional, and national data.

REGISTER CODES

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

Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

