

# TUTSHILL CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

*'Love One Another, Know Ourselves, Believe and Grow'*

Date: Autumn 2023

Review Date: Autumn 2024

### **Ethos**

The school strives to achieve the highest level of academic, social and spiritual development in a safe, caring and inclusive environment. We encourage respect and tolerance for each other, supported by our Christian values.

### **1. Objective**

Tutshill C of E Primary School 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. Woolaston Primary School is committed to:

Following the framework set in Section 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

*Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision, or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their child at home).*

*A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between 1 January and 31 March they are of compulsory school age on 31 March; if they turn 5 between 1 April and 31 August they are of compulsory school age on 31 August. If they turn 5 between 1 September and 31 December, then they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.*

*Parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices are interventions available to promote better school attendance and behaviour. Good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects. These measures are permissive and it is for individual governing bodies and local authorities to decide whether to use them. In exercising these powers governing bodies, head teachers and local authority officers should have regard to their safeguarding duties.*

### **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

- The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Tutshill C of E Primary School.
- The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Tutshill C of E Primary School.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the attendance policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.

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- Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.

*Children are expected to attend the school each day the school is open to pupils. This is classed as regular attendance.*

### **Registration**

Gates open at 8.40am and children will enter school from the playground, the school gates close at 8:45am promptly. Children arriving after the gates close and arrive through the office will require the accompanying adult to fill out a late slip advising reason for late arrival and school lunch requirements. The School Register will be taken electronically at 9.00am.

### **Morning**

Registration is taken at the beginning of each morning at **9.00am with pupils being marked present or absent**. The register should show whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Children arriving after 9.00am are marked as late. Registers officially close in the office at 9.30am. A child arriving at school after this time will receive an absent mark for the session.

### **Afternoon**

Registration is taken at the start of the afternoon session at 1.00pm for KS1 and KS2 with pupils being marked present or absent.

If irregular attendance of a registered child is causing concern, the school will call the Inclusion Officer at Gloucestershire County Council to help them carry out their responsibilities.

### **Reporting Absences**

Responsibility for informing the school of the reason for their child's absence lies with parents/carers. This notification should be before 9.15am on the first day of absence. Reasons given can be by way of notes, personal contact, telephone calls or by email and, in the case of illness; the nature of the illness should be specified. The school will endeavour, if possible, to telephone the home of an absent child if no message has been received. Parents/Carers need to report the child's absence at every 48hour period to the School Office to Mrs Rebecca Stackhouse Attendance Officer, unless previously agreed with the Headteacher.

## **3. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **Tutshill defines "absence" as either:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9.15am.
- Not attending school for any reason.

### **Tutshill defines an "authorised absence" as:**

- Hospital Consultancy which unavoidably falls during school time for which the school has granted leave due to evidence being presented.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.
- Child illness notified to school by 9.15am

### **Tutshill defines an "unauthorised absence" as:**

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.

- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9.15am.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- Failing to notify the school of a child illness.

### **Tutshill defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:**

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

### **Training of staff**

- At Tutshill C of E Primary School we recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, the Headteacher/Attendance Officer/SBM will receive training in identifying potentially at risk pupils.
- Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction.
- Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.
- School staff are aware of the School Early Help, and this can also be used to support attendance. Please see School website.

### **Pupil expectations**

- Pupils will be expected to attend school every day.

### **Absence procedures**

- Parents/carers must contact the school by 9.15am on the first day of absence.
- A phone call/email will be made to the parent/carer of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- In the case of an absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer in the first instance.

### **Contact information**

- Parents/carers must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details; it is parents/carers responsibility to do so.
- If you have not notified school by 9.15am and the school has cause to be concerned by lack of contact, the Attendance Officer will call all named individuals on the school contact list to ascertain the reason for absence. Should this prove unsuccessful, within our safeguarding remit, the Attendance Officer and Headteacher will conduct a home visit. Should this still not satisfy our safeguarding responsibilities, police will be notified to conduct a welfare check.

### **Attendance Officer**

- If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the School Attendance Officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement.
- If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Attendance Officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices through Gloucestershire County Council.

### **Lateness**

- Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated.
- The school day starts at 8:45am.
- Registers are taken as soon as pupils arrive in the classroom. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not in school at registration.

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- Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.
- The register is taken in class. Any children arriving after this time will need to go through the school office where they must be signed in by an adult in the late book. They will receive a late mark (L, before registers closed) on their attendance record.

### **Term time leave**

- Holidays will not be authorised; however school must be made aware of the intention to be absent from school – please see the absence procedures
- At Tutshill C of E Primary School our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.
- The Headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- Applications must be made in advance, in writing, and the Headteacher must be satisfied by the evidence which must be presented. Without evidence, leave declined. Evidence examples are; medical appointment letters/screenshots from phone, formal invitations, music examinations. This list is by no means exhaustive.
- The Headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Term dates are sent to all stakeholders two years in advance.
- Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and are not guaranteed.

**If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.**

### **Payment of a Penalty Notice fine**

Any parent taking a child on holiday that has not been deemed an exceptional circumstance can expect to be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice. This could result in a fine to both parents/carers of £60 per child, if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid between the 21st day and the 28th day. If the fine is not paid the Local Authority would then proceed to court for the criminal offence of non-school attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. A Warning Letter will be issued to the parent/s carer/s that have the day –to- day care and responsibility to inform them that: **Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted**

### **Monitoring**

The Attendance Officer internally monitors attendance six times per year. Monitoring correspondence with parents will be reported at three points in the academic year; at the end of Autumn term, end of Spring term and end of Summer term. There are three categories of monitoring;

- Category 1: 97%-100%
- Category 2: 90%-96.9%
- Category 3: 89%-lower

As each case is different, the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case.

The school will always seek to work with and support parents to resolve issues potentially affecting attendance and therefore encourages parents/carers to contact the school with any concerns.

### **Religious observances**

- Tutshill C of E Primary School will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

### **Appointments**

- Where possible, it is requested that parents/carers will book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours or in school holidays. Parents/carers will be required to produce evidence of appointments.
- If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a parent/carer.
- Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

### **Young Carers**

- Tutshill C of E Primary School understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- Tutshill C of E Primary School will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- Tutshill C of E Primary School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.
- Tutshill C of E Primary School will support the children and will make referrals where needs and seek additional help.

### **School Rewards**

The class with 100% attendance will receive an attendance reward in celebration assembly. Children will receive a reward at the end of the academic year if their attendance is 100%. This will be delivered by the Headteacher, where possible.

The school website will be updated weekly for all stakeholders to look at the weekly termly attendance. Children with the highest attendance are able to wear their team colour at the start of the next term.

We appreciate some absences are unavoidable and all reasons will be taken into consideration when certificates given.

### **Parental Notes**

Legally, only the Headteacher can authorise absence, not parents or carers.

If the school is unable to accept the explanation, or if it is not forthcoming, the absence must be treated as unauthorised. In the event of the letter, a letter will be issued or a telephone call made by the school requesting an explanation for the absence – if an explanation is still not supplied the Inclusion Officer at Gloucestershire County Council will be contacted by the Headteacher or Attendance Officer and parents will be notified that this action has been taken.

### **Lateness**

Due to the disruption this causes, we actively discourage late arrivals. Arrival after close of registration, which takes place at 9.15am, is classed as unauthorised and is marked as such in the electronic register. The register is taken in class. Any children arriving after this time will need to go through the school office where they must be signed in by an adult in the late book. They will receive a late mark (L, before registers closed) on their attendance record. Persistent lateness will be investigated. Initially, the parent will be contacted; and called to

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meet with the Attendance Officer. Late arrival will be reported and kept in the child's school file.

### **Family Bereavements**

The school are sympathetic to reasonable requests for absence to attend events related to the above. They would be classed as authorised.

### **Implication of Children at Risk of Missing Education**

*(Including children missing education (CME), 10+ days' continuous unauthorised absence and part-time timetables).*

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

**The decision to issue a penalty notice, or prosecute a parent, is taken by the Local Authority and will be activated by the following:**

- the taking of holidays in term time where the school has not authorised the absence;
- persistent late arrival at school after the registers have closed and where the U symbol is indicated on the attendance certificate;
- overt truancy and /or in appropriate parentally condoned absence, further substantiated by investigation;
- following enquiries made after a truancy sweep where there are found to be additional unauthorised absences;
- where the Educational Welfare Service feel it is appropriate following a Pre – Court meeting.

**The school is under no obligation to issue a warning letter prior to notification of a penalty notice.**

### **4. Relationship to Other Policies**

Anti-Bullying Policy  
Behaviour and Discipline Policy  
Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy  
Complaints Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
RSE Policy  
Safer Recruitment Policy  
SEND Policy  
Staff Code of Conduct Policy  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Race Equality Policy  
Equal Opportunities policy

### **5. Health and Safety**

Refer to Health and Safety Policy

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## **6. Equality / Inclusion**

The school recognises that it has to make special efforts to ensure that all groups prosper regardless of their sex or gender, age, sexual orientation, marital or parental status or other family circumstance, race, ethnic or national origin, colour, creed, disability, it includes those with special educational needs; those who have difficulties accessing the school or services; those who speak English as an additional language; those who have frequent moves and lack stability leading to time out of school (e.g. children in care); those who as children are caring for others; who come from homes with low income and/or inadequate home study space; those who experience bullying, harassment or social exclusion; those with low parental support or different parent expectations; those with emotional, mental and physical wellbeing needs; those who exhibit challenging behaviour and those who come from ethnic minority groups including travellers, refugees and asylum seekers.

***Policy reviewed in accordance with DDA.***

**Document reviewed by Teaching & Learning Committee**

**Name: ..... (Convenor)**

**Signature: .....**

**Date: .....**

## Appendix 1

1.	The school Attendance Officer and Headteacher hold termly meetings to monitor children's attendance
2.	Parents will be approached informally, by email or telephone by the Attendance Officer to discuss why the child is not at school, and what steps can be made to improve attendance. 94-97%
3.	If a child falls in to the 90-94% a letter will be sent home. It will highlight the initial concern, asking the parents to make contact. After two weeks a second letter will be sent home if insufficient improvement has not been made, or a valid reason for absence, with evidence, e.g. a medical certificate/prescriptions/appointment cards has not been given in writing.
4.	If pupil attendance drops below 94% the Headteacher will speak to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help.
5.	If pupil attendance drops in between 90-93% a letter will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen. The letter will also have attached a leaflet outlining how parents can work with school and their child to improve attendance. The Attendance Officer will make a phone call home if applicable and arrange a meeting.
6.	If pupil attendance drops below 90% a letter will be sent home explaining that a pupil's absence is now being monitored and the parents are requested to attend an Attendance Improvement Meeting, AIM. Attendance will be monitored for two weeks. If attendance has not improved, parents will be required to attend a meeting in school. If parents are unwilling to co-operate, or genuinely unable to attend, the Headteacher will make contact with the family.
7.	If attendance has not improved within the two weeks monitoring period, or attendance has fallen rapidly, parents will be invited to either; a school attendance meeting with the Attendance Officer, Headteacher and a referred to the Education Inclusion Team. Provision will be discussed and targets will be set for raising attendance. This will be monitored over a further two week period.
8.	After the two week monitoring period, if targets are met, a letter will be sent home from the leadership team to congratulate the pupil and family. Monitoring and communication with the family will continue until attendance stabilises.
9.	Attendance levels under 80% will involve referral to Gloucestershire County Council Education Inclusion Team.