



Caring, Achieving, Making a Difference Together

Templemoor Infant and Nursery School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Committee	Resources and Safety
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Templemoor Infant and Nursery School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

'Every Day Counts'

1. Introduction

Templemoor Infant and Nursery School recognises that punctual and regular school attendance are central to raising standards in education and contributes significantly to pupil's progress. Absence from lessons can result in children falling behind in their learning and may also put their safety at risk. Children with regular poor attendance are vulnerable and more likely to underachieve in both primary and secondary school.

The school will use every opportunity to convey to pupils and their parents or carers, the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and an essential component of our safeguarding practice. We expect the school and parents to work together in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality.

This Attendance and Punctuality Policy reflects our statutory responsibilities.

2. Aims

- To actively promote and encourage **100%** attendance for **all** children.
- To actively reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- To ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- To ensure that every child is safe and their right to education is protected.
- To provide a positive and welcoming environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school, including children, parents, teachers and governors.
- To ensure that all children take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school.
- To ensure the well-being and safety of children at Templemoor Infant and Nursery School.
- To monitor and analyse attendance and challenge non-attendance ensuring a consistent approach throughout the school.
- To act early to address patterns of absence.
- To work with families to identify barriers/ causes of poor attendance and agree solutions.
- To liaise with external agencies to support families.
- To communicate our policy to all stakeholders (parents, governors and staff).

Equality and Inclusion

All children will be dealt with in the same manner. Allowances within this policy will be made for children with severe disabilities or illnesses who require additional time off for appointments or medical reasons.

Our Rights Respecting Ethos

At Templemoor Infant and Nursery School we are a Rights Respecting School. We adhere to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and we believe that every child has the right to be treated as an individual and protected from harm. Whilst celebrating the diversity of our school community we will also ensure that every child is treated equally and supported to be safe, happy and to achieve their potential both academically and personally.

This policy reflects our commitment to supporting children to have their right:

To have all adults doing what is best for them (Article 3)

To be looked after and kept safe (Article 19)

To learn and go to school (Article 28)

To be protected from doing things that could harm them (article 36)

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

There are legal obligations on:

1. The parents/carers to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register.
2. The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school.
3. The Local Authority to provide education and enforce attendance.
4. The Government, who expects schools and the Local Authority to:
 - Reduce absence, including persistent absence.
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
 - Ensure parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and are punctual.
 - Ensure all pupils are punctual and attend school regularly.

Definition of "Parent"

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' to include:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Dealing with difficult issues on attendance, particularly those relating to safeguarding.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Revising and amending this policy as required.

Sims Administrator for Attendance (Office Staff)

Office staff are responsible for:

- Conducting and recording the outcome of first day calls when a child does not arrive at school and when no reason has been received.
- Contacting parents who have not reported their child absent before 10.00am each day (either via email and/or telephone). If there is no information about the child's whereabouts by 10:30am the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead is notified.
- Monitoring weekly attendance data for all Year groups.
- Checking the school's answer phone and taking messages from parents/carers about a pupil's absence.
- Informing the Headteacher of any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality.
- Producing weekly/termly/yearly attendance/ absence data for the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) to analyse.
- Recording reasons for absence and updating class registers.
- Implementing the daily checking of electronic registers after the morning and afternoon registration sessions.
- Maintaining SIMS attendance records in line with this policy.
- Maintaining clear communication channels with the SLT regarding attendance.
- Overseeing the admission and induction of new pupils.
- Supporting the Headteacher with the promotion of excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring staff are following the registration systems and structures in this policy.
- Reminding parents/carers of school procedures when parents have not complied.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Ensuring first quality teaching everyday, with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs.
- Completing the daily class attendance and punctuality register with the pupils.
- Keeping accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through SIMS.
- Taking a formal register of all pupils twice a day. This should be done on SIMS or on a paper record when SIMS is not available.
- Reminding children and parents about the importance of good attendance
- Following up on pupils' absence by ensuring reasons for absence are sought and plausible
- Providing a safe and welcoming environment which encourages attendance and promotes pupils' well-being.
- Establishing effective communication links with parents/carers and working collaboratively to meet the child's needs.

- If required, to work with external agencies/professionals to assist them in fulfilling all statutory duties (for example, child protection, identifying barriers to good attendance etc.)

Parents

We expect parents to:

- Agree to the main principles of the school's Attendance and Punctuality policy.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child.
- Notify the school by telephone or email before 8:45am on the first day of absence. Parents/carers must clearly state the reason for the absence and the expected duration of illness.
- Discuss any worries that their child might have about coming to school and informing their class teacher.
- Not let their child take time off school for minor ailments.
- Arrange medical and dental appointments after school hours or at weekends or school holidays.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school **on time every day**.
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down, if an urgent appointment has been made or if an emergency has arisen.
- Ensure that all family holidays are booked during school holiday time and **not** during term time.
- Promoting a good attitude to learning by ensuring their child attends school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Working in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child. This includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in their child's life that may have an impact on their learning or well-being.

5. Recording Attendance

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and again at the start of the afternoon session.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made as outlined in the school's 'Retention and Disposal Schedule'.

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm or 1pm in Reception.

Nursery: the register for the first session will be taken at 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.30pm.

6. Procedure to follow when a pupil is absent (unplanned)

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:45am or as soon as practically possible.

Daily Procedures	By whom	Outcomes/ Action
Parents ensure pupils arrive at school on time.	Parents/carers	

Parents inform the school (either by telephone or email) by 8:45am if their child is going to be absent on that day.	Parents/carers	Office staff update registration codes.
Pupils arriving late to school (after 9am) are registered at the main office.	Office staff	Absence mark on SIMS amended to a late mark.
Class teachers record attendance using SIMs at 8:55am and 1:15pm (1pm for Reception), or 9am and 12:30pm for Nursery.	Class teachers/ TA's or Supply staff	A paper register is used if SIMs is not available.
<p>First day of absence: In the absence of a note, email or telephone call from the parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By at least 10am – Phone call/ email sent out to parents whose child has an unexplained absence. • By at least 10:30am – DSL to be informed of any remaining unexplained absences. • DSL to try all contacts on record. • If unable to make contact, DSL to email parents regarding safeguarding concerns. • By at least 11:30am – If there is still no contact by parents, DSL plus one other member of staff to carry out home visit. • The situation may then be escalated to the police. 	Office staff DSL	Office staff to update attendance codes.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised absence unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

On the rare occasion of being provided with contradictory information* regarding the reasons for an absence, the school will seek clarification making best endeavours to establish the reason for the absence. The school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate forms of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

*This can happen when parents providing different explanations of absence to each other. It can also happen when a child provides a different explanation of the absence to the parent. Children will not routinely be asked why they have been absent however this information is often given by children in natural conversation with adults and their peers. The school reserves the right to ask a child about their absence if it deems this necessary in order to have an accurate understanding of the absence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

7. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that their child regularly attends the school at which they are registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that their child attends that school regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence.

Legally, every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**.

Types of Absence - Authorised

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness
- Medical or dental appointments that cannot be made outside of school times
- Hospital appointments
- Accredited Exam – ballet/music (extra-curricular)
- Approved educational activity
- An exceptional 'enrichment' opportunity (e.g. involvement in a public performance)
- Family Bereavement
- Exclusion
- Wedding – immediate family only – 1 day. Please note there are **no** exceptions for weddings abroad
- Religious Observance
- Other unusual/rare 'exceptional' occasions (the nature of such occasions will be determined by the headteacher on an individual basis)

Illness

In line with Health Protection Agency guidelines, a period of **48 hours** absence is required for any pupil with vomiting or diarrhoea, or 3 days with a positive Covid test result. Such absence due to illness is authorised.

Medical and Dental Appointments

Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence so long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Absence for Religious Observance

Where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. In line with local authority guidance, pupil absences of up to a maximum of 3 days per academic year may be authorised for religious observances. Parents/carers must apply for this leave in advance of the religious occasion using the appropriate leave of absence form.

Family Bereavement

The school is sensitive to family requests for a child's attendance at funerals or associated events. The headteacher will offer the family advice over absence in this instance.

Term time absence for specific purposes (e.g. external examinations, elite sports, performing arts)

For authorisation of a single absence to be considered, a written request must be made in advance.

Approved Educational Activity

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

Types of Absence – Unauthorised

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Absence **will not** be authorised in the following circumstances:

- If no explanation is offered by the parent/carer.
- The explanation provided is unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, day off to celebrate a birthday, minding the house, day trip etc.)
- Family holidays in term time (see section 8 below).
- Where there are a number of sporadic absences and the attendance is declining.
- Where no medical evidence has been provided when requested.

If a pupil has an increasing number of authorised absences the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer, as this is classed as 'persistent absence'. Contact will be made with the parents regarding the absences.

The school may also make a referral to our Education Welfare Officer if there is a concern about a pupil's welfare or safety. Parents will be contacted to ascertain if further action needs to be taken. Parents are expected to co-operate with the school and attend any meeting when requested to do so.

8. Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time **are not authorised**. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together throughout the year, including weekends and school holidays. Parents/carers who wish to take their child out of school during term time for any reason other than illness or medical appointment, must complete an **Exceptional Leave of Absence** request in advance. This request can be authorised **ONLY** by the Headteacher. Only requests that the Headteacher deems as exceptional circumstances and backed up by relevant supporting evidence, will be authorised. Parents/carers who take their child out of school during term time without authorisation may receive an EPN (Education Penalty Notice) from the Local Authority. Please note that the ability to access a reduced cost of a holiday does not constitute an exceptional circumstance. A holiday rearranged due to the Covid pandemic does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

9. 'Exceptional Circumstances' Criteria

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not be reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is not possible to define all 'exceptional circumstances' therefore the circumstances of each leave of absence application will be taken into account on an individual basis. However, examples of what might be considered 'exceptional circumstances' for leave in term time, as agreed by Governors at Templemoor Infant and Nursery School are:

- Service personnel returning from or scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.
- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specified time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays i.e. in some cases a parent's employer might restrict holidays to a certain time period. This must be supported by documentary evidence from the employer.

- Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue. Evidence must be provided by qualified professionals such as a Doctor.
- An emergency situation that requires the child to be away from school.

Please note that that the ability to access a reduced cost of a holiday or where a holiday has been rearranged due to the Covid pandemic do not meet the school's exceptional circumstances criteria.

The Headteacher may take advice from the Local Authority when there are other factors which the Headteacher may consider constitute exceptional circumstances.

The school reserves the right to ask parents for written evidence where it feels this is required.

10. Sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE REFER TO 'FIXED PENALTY NOTICES IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS' (Appendix 2)

11. Persistent Absence

Persistent Absence is absence of 10% or more. An individual child is deemed to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if their attendance falls below 90% (regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised). If attendance falls below 90% a meeting will be arranged between the parent and a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Where persistent attendance continues to remain below 90% and an attendance meeting has already been held during the academic year, an additional meeting should be set up on this occasion with the Headteacher. Parents will also be informed at this meeting that the school will also require documentary medical evidence to support any future absences due to illness. A letter will be given which outlines the above.

If attendance continues to fall and is below 90%, the school will contact the Educational Welfare Officer and Elective Home Education Officer for involvement and advice.

12. Children Missing from Education (CME)

All children of compulsory school age, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to full time education which is suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. 'Children missing from education' are those who are not registered at a school, not

receiving a suitable education otherwise (i.e. Elective Home Education or alternative provision), are not regularly attending the school where they are a registered child or cease attending and/or their whereabouts or destination school is unknown. These children can be at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and in later life becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Information sharing between parents, schools, the community and the local authority is therefore crucial to ensure that these children are kept safe and are receiving the education they are entitled to. In accordance with DfE Statutory guidance, Children Missing Education (Sept 2016) the Local Authority has effective tracking and enquiry systems in place and an appointed named person to whom schools, other agencies and the public can make referrals regarding children who they believe are missing from education.

Joint reasonable enquiries can then be made as quickly as possible by schools and the LA. Joint working arrangements are also in place with agencies and services such as, Housing, Health, the Police, and other local authorities.

In all instances where the schools have concerns a child might be missing from education the Headteacher or senior teacher will contact:

Phone: 0161 912 4810

Email: cme@trafford.gov.uk

Education of vulnerable children
2nd Floor
Sale Waterside
M33 7ZF

13. Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, parents have a duty to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice issued by the Education Welfare Officer.

14. Punctuality

Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

Children are expected to arrive punctually, ready for registration at 9a.m. The classroom doors are opened at 8:55am and locked from 9am and any children arriving after this time must enter school through the main entrance and be 'signed in' by a parent/carer.

Registers close at 9a.m. and children arriving after this time will be marked as 'Late' on the class register.

Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will make verbal contact with parents/carers. If the concerns persist, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will write to the parents/carers about punctuality, including a copy of the child's registration certificate, and stating the total minutes late over a determined period.

If there is no improvement, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer. In the event of persistent lateness, the school may make a formal referral to Trafford Attendance Services.

15. Promoting regular attendance through good practice

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents/carers, children and **all** members of school staff.

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Making the curriculum as exciting as possible.
- Providing and promoting a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued.
- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately.
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance e.g. by telephoning parents after the registers have been closed and no explanation given, on the first day of absence, to establish a reason for a child's absence.
- Ensuring that parents understand the school's attendance policy and procedures for reporting absence by issuing links in the newsletter promoting good attendance to all parents at least annually.
- Raising awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters, parents' evenings and other communications to parents.
- Approaching individual parents where there is concern about their child's attendance and/or punctuality.
- Issuing a termly letter to parents whose child's attendance falls below the school's target or whose punctuality is a cause for concern.
- Encouraging the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life.
- Regularly analysing attendance data and setting an annual attendance target.
- Rewarding and celebrating good and improving attendance through newsletters and certificates.
- Providing parents with attendance percentages for their child as part of the annual report.
- Constructively working with pupils and their families to ensure each child attends school regularly and punctually by establish an effective and efficient system of communication with parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.
- Securing the services of an Education Welfare Officer to work with the school to secure high attendance.
- Ensuring that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Ensuring good liaison where a change of school occurs.
- Working in partnership with Trafford Local Authority who have a statutory duty to enforce the law in relation to absence from school. This could include penalty notices or parental prosecution.
- Making this policy available on the school's website and provide paper copies on request.

16. School Attendance Strategies

- Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that all pupils feel that they can succeed.
- The importance of good attendance will be discussed at the meeting for new parents.
- A clear statement is in the school handbook about the high profile given to the issue of attendance.
- The Attendance and Punctuality Policy is available on the school's website.
- Newsletters used to remind parents about school policy and the rules about leave of absence in term time.

- Monitoring absence and punctuality each half term, to establish regular patterns of absence and to act on any findings by reporting to parents or to the Local Authority as appropriate. Particular attention is paid to vulnerable groups of children e.g. Looked after Children.
- Prompt investigation of any issues that may be affecting a child's well-being and attendance.
- Set challenging but achievable targets on an individual attendance plan (related to what is achievable for the individual child).

17. Reporting to Parents

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parents/carers at the end of the academic year as part of their child's annual report. Class teachers will report any concerns about a child's attendance to the child's parents at Parents' Evenings, which take place twice a year.

18. Data Analysis

The data which is extracted from accurate and up-to-date attendance registers will be used to support the more effective management of whole-school attendance matters. Such data can be used to:

- support and underpin the target-setting process (for individual pupils, year groups, identified cohorts, the whole school) in relation to overall attendance and unauthorised absence on a (half-)termly and yearly basis.
- identify individual children and particular groups of children who are or may be at risk of becoming persistent absentees.
- facilitate and encourage early intervention.
- identify particular types or patterns of absenteeism (for example, time lost to term-time holidays, regular absences on Mondays and/or Fridays, etc.)
- match attendance trends with attainment trends.
- identify possible inconsistencies in the implementation of school policy.
- report attendance matters to parents/carers.
- Pupil-level absence data is also published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

19. Safeguarding

Any attendance issues which may be related to safeguarding and child protection issues will be followed up in accordance with the schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

20. Conclusion

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole School.

Any unauthorised absence is damaging to a child's education as well as reflecting badly on the school. It also gives children the wrong messages about the importance of education which may lead to problems later in schooling. Good attendance and punctuality are important values for later in life.

Links to other Policies

The Attendance and Punctuality Policy is written in conjunction to and linked with the following:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- S.E.N.D. Policy
- Rights Respecting Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Retention and Disposal Schedule
- Exclusion Policy

Procedure for requesting a Leave of Absence during Term Time

Any applications for leave of absence **must** be made in advance using the 'Request for Exceptional Leave of Absence' form (Appendix 1) and any request can only be authorised where school accepts that there are 'exceptional circumstances'. The reason for the request should be given in detail.

Any parent/carer requesting leave of absence may be asked to make an appointment to see the Headteacher to explain the circumstances. Where parents/carers take children out of school without authorisation, parents leave themselves at risk of legal action.

The school will write back to the parent informing them of the decision that has been made by the Headteacher.

A copy of the request and school's reply will be kept in the pupil's file. Examples of circumstances that **will not** be authorised:

- Availability of cheaper holidays and cheaper travel arrangements.
- Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term.
- During the first term, when a child is just starting at school, as it is very important for the child to settle into their new class.
- During an assessment/test period – Phonics Screening Check, Key Stage 1 SATs.
- Rearranged holidays due to the Covid pandemic.
- When a child's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- We will also take into account the current attendance for each child when making a decision.

Request for **Exceptional** Leave of Absence



Children should be in school during term time.

As a result of the change to the law the Governors' policy is **not** to authorise any absence for holidays. This form may be used to request absence but it must only be for **exceptional circumstances**. The guidance from the Department for Education states:

"Headteachers have the discretion to grant leave, but they should only do so in exceptional circumstances. If a headteacher grants a leave request, it will be for them to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. This leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Parents can be fined for taking their child out of school during term time without consent from the school."

Name of child		Class	
First day of absence		Returning to school	
Total number of school days requested for absence			
Reason for exceptional leave of absence. Please give as much information as possible explain why the request is an exceptional one.			

I understand that:

- absence affects academic progress, which may prevent achievement of expected standards and targets.
- The law allows for absence to be granted only in exceptional circumstances.
- Any absence longer than that agreed will be classed by the school as unauthorised.
- This may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued by the Education Welfare Service for an unauthorised absence.

Signed (parent/carer)		Name		Date	
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Child's Current Attendance %			
Headteacher decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Authorised	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Authorised	Signed



FIXED PENALTY NOTICES IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced legislation that made provision for a Local Authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices. These notices require a fine to be paid by parents of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school.

A separate Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child who has unauthorised absence.

In what circumstances will Fixed Penalty Notices be issued?

A Fixed Penalty Notice **will** be issued in three situations:

- If a holiday is taken during term time without the authorisation of the Headteacher.
- If a pupil has unauthorised absence from school and their parent/carer fails to co-operate with the Education Welfare Officer to improve this situation.
- If a pupil has unauthorised absence from school and this does not improve following a warning letter.

What are the Penalties?

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is £60 when the payment is made within 21 days and £120 when the payment is made after 21 days but prior to 28 days. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at school.

Why has the government introduced this legislation?

The message of this new legislation is that it is really very important that every child attends school for as many of the 380 half day sessions of the school year as possible. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children do not take unnecessary time off school.

What must I do?

You should get in touch with the Education Welfare Officer as soon as possible, to discuss the reason for your child's absence from school. This may avoid the risk of a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to you.

Can I get help if my child is not attending school regularly?

The Education Welfare Officers support schools, parents and pupils so that high levels of attendance can be achieved. The Education Welfare Officer can be contacted through school.

Every school in Trafford is supporting the message that school attendance is a high priority. We hope that parents will help us to ensure that all children at Templemoor achieve the very highest levels of attendance at school.