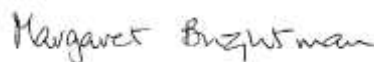
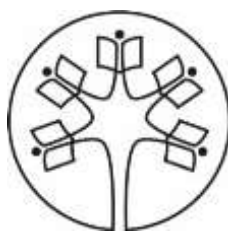




Torridon
Primary School

Attendance Policy

Adopted and signed on behalf of the school by the Governing Body Representative at the meeting on:	Autumn Term 2022
Name of the Governing Body Representative:	Margaret Brightman
Signature of the Governing Body Representative:	
Date signed:	
Last reviewed:	July 2022
Next review due by:	July 2024



TORRIDON PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

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1. Torridon Primary School Ethos and Code

Torridon is an inclusive school. We are committed to doing the very best that we can to make sure that every child succeeds. We have a shared responsibility to ensure that we are doing the very best for our children and aim to meet the individual needs of each child wherever possible.

At Torridon we aim to engender a passion for learning and the pursuit of excellence in every aspect of our work. We have the highest expectations for ourselves and all of our pupils, aiming for standards that exceed national expectations, both in the core subjects and across the wider curriculum.

We want every child to leave Torridon wanting and determined to make a difference to the world, and having the skills to do so. In order to do this, we believe that we have to enable the children to be emotionally intelligent, resilient and brave, and provide them with the academic foundation to enable them to be outstanding individuals in all aspects of their lives.

We want our children to:

- Be eager and enthusiastic learners
- Be confident in themselves as learners
- Understand themselves as learners, being proud of their successes and understanding the next steps in their learning
- Be emotionally intelligent
- Be resilient and determined to succeed
- Be responsible for their actions

We aim to achieve this by:

- Ensuring that children's achievement is at the heart of our school
- Valuing and celebrating children's social and cultural diversity
- Maintaining the highest possible expectations of every child
- Striving to ensure that every child succeeds
- Adopting a 'no excuses' attitude towards children's progress and attainment
- Providing opportunities for our children to develop academically, socially, morally, emotionally and spiritually in a safe and caring environment
- Working closely with parents and carers to ensure that we are providing the best possible education for our children.

2. Aims

At Torridon Primary School we are committed to promoting excellent attendance as part of our dedication to ensure quality educational provision to give our pupils the best start in life.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the whole school community (parents/carers, pupils, staff)
- Maintain an average whole school attendance of at least 97% in line with the national average

- Ensure parents and carers understand their legal responsibilities
- Ensure parents and carers are fully aware of school systems and procedures
- Provide appropriate advice, support and intervention that meets the needs of individual children, where there are attendance and punctuality issues, to bring about improvements.

3. Legislation and Guidance

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Under the Education Act (1996), parents and carers have a duty to ensure that all children of compulsory school age (i.e. the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday) receive efficient, suitable full-time education. Parents and carers have a responsibility to ensure this happens either by registering the child at a school or making other suitable arrangements. Once a child is registered at a school parents and carers are responsible for making sure the child attends regularly. If a parent or carer fails to ensure regular school attendance, then they are guilty of an offence which could result in prosecution.

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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [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.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 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 link governor for attendance meets once termly with the deputy headteacher, to monitor pupil attendance.

4.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

4.3 The attendance officer works with the head of inclusion to:

- Monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Report concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Work with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. All staff are responsible for reporting any concerns in line with safeguarding procedures and sharing these with the attendance officer as appropriate.

4.5 School office staff

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record these on the school system.

5. Recording attendance

5.1 Attendance register

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 once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08.55am and will be kept open until 9.05am. The register for the second session will be taken within ten minutes of the start of the afternoon session, and kept open for five minutes.

5.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent or carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7). Parents and carers can contact the school via email or by telephoning the school office and leaving a voicemail if applicable.

The attendance officer and office staff will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent or carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

5.3 Planned absence

We encourage parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment, as detailed above.

The pupil's parent or carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

5.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- If a child arrives late for school on more than five occasions in a half term, a letter will be sent to parents and carers (see appendix 5) and the child's attendance will be monitored on a weekly basis, by the attendance officer.

5.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer to ascertain the reason, by contacting the parent or carer by telephone on the first day of absence. If unable to contact the parent or carer. The school will contact the emergency contact for the child, as listed on our records, to gain an explanation for the absence.

- If the school have been unable to contact with the parent or carer, or emergency contact by midday, a home visit will be undertaken by two members of staff, including a member of the safeguarding team. If the school is still unable to make contact, it will consider whether further action is necessary. This may include a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. (MASH)
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence will be approved or not and record as appropriate
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

5.6 Reporting to parents

The school reports to parents at the end of the school year, details of the child's attendance and punctuality over the school year. Where attendance or punctuality have been identified as an issue, class teachers will discuss this with parents during the termly parent meetings in the Autumn and Spring Terms.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

6.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Flexi-schooling requests – all requests must be made in writing to the headteacher, outlining the reasons for the request.

6.2 Absence Intervention

- Attendance is monitored weekly by the attendance officer and head of inclusion. We offer support to families who are finding getting to school every day, or on time difficult, or for children who may be at risk of becoming disillusioned or school refusers. Where appropriate, we may refer to other agencies for additional support, with prior agreement from parents and carers.

We are committed to early intervention to support parents and avoid absence becoming persistent. Where a child's attendance falls below 96%, a letter will be sent to parents to make them aware of their child's falling attendance and the potential impact of this for the child and their learning. (see appendix 2) If attendance continues to fall to below 95%, a

further letter will be sent informing the parent that medical evidence will now be required for all instances of non-attendance at school due to sickness. See appendix 3

Persistent absence is classified as below 90%. All children whose attendance is below 90% are discussed by the safeguarding team, which includes the headteacher. A warning letter is sent to parents informing them that their child's attendance is being closely monitored. The letter also states the days/sessions missed in numbers as well as lost time and the opportunity for parents to come in and discuss this will be offered. See appendix 4

Should the child's attendance continue to cause concern, they may be referred to the local authority attendance officer. A Team Around the Family meeting will be offered and actions will be put in place to support improved attendance. The actions are reviewed by the attendance officer to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

The school is committed to working with other agencies such as children's social care and early help to ensure that children's needs are met. In some cases, it will be necessary to refer to the multi-agency safeguarding hub, in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Where children and families are already receiving support from early help or children's social care, the school will ensure that all relevant agencies are kept informed of attendance issues and the school will work closely with them, to support regular attendance and punctuality.

6.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

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

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 or withdraw the notice.

7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The school collects and stores attendance data on its management information system. This information is used to:

Track the attendance of individual pupils

Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and produce reporting for the governing board

Monitor and evaluate those children identified as in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum once yearly by the head of inclusion and attendance officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

<https://www.torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Behaviour-Policy-2021-2022-COVID19-1.pdf>

<https://www.torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Safeguarding-Policy-September-2021-1.pdf>

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered

J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Hazelbank Road, Catford, London, SE6 1TG

Headteacher: Manda George

Telephone: 020 8697 2762

E mail: admin@torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk

Date:

Dear

Re:

Date of Birth:

Attendance:

I am writing to make you aware that your child's attendance is currently %. This is below the expected attendance of 97%.

Children whose attendance is at 97% or better will almost certainly achieve their potential, leading to better life chances. They will also develop positive habits of regular school attendance in the future.

I appreciate that your child's absence may be due to a range of reasons. If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about this letter, or you would like support to discuss how to improve your child's attendance, please contact Lena Pennacchia, Head of Inclusion who will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Manda George

Headteacher



Hazelbank Road, Catford, London, SE6 1TG

Headteacher: Manda George

Telephone: 020 8697 2762

E mail: admin@torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk

Date:

Dear

Child's Name:

Date of birth:

Attendance:

I am writing to make you aware that your child's attendance is currently %. This is below the expected attendance of 97%.

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is addressed as poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older.

We wish to help you improve your child's attendance. If you would like to discuss any issues, please contact Lena Pennacchia, Head of Inclusion, who will be happy to meet with you to discuss.

We would appreciate your support to make sure that the attendance improves. **All absences due to illness will not be authorised without suitable medical evidence, it is your responsibility to provide this.**

The school will continue to monitor the situation, and should the attendance not improve you may be referred for a School Attendance Panel Meeting with the Local Authority Attendance Officer. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or legal action.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Manda George

Headteacher



Hazelbank Road, Catford, London, SE6 1TG

Headteacher: Manda George

Telephone: 020 8697 2762

E mail: admin@torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk

Date:

Child's Name:

DOB:

Attendance:

Dear:

I am writing to make you aware that your child's attendance has fallen to %. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective, 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 38 sessions or 19 school days school per year or half a day a week

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success and can also make it more difficult for children to develop friendships and social skills. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming. Poor attendance habits will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older.

We wish to help you improve your child's attendance and have arranged a meeting on . This will be an opportunity to meet with a member of the school's senior leadership team to look at how we can support you.

We would appreciate your support to make sure that your child's attendance improves. All absences through illness will not be authorised without suitable medical evidence, it is your responsibility to provide this.

I must remind you that the Education Act 1996 states that it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their child regularly attends the school at which they are on roll. A failure to do this could result in legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

The school will continue to monitor the situation, and should the attendance not improve you may be referred for a School Attendance Panel Meeting with the Local Authority Attendance Officer. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or Legal action.

Yours sincerely

Manda George

Headteacher

Appendix 5: Lateness and Punctuality Letter



Hazelbank Road, Catford, London, SE6 1TG

Headteacher: Manda George

Telephone: 020 8697 2762

E mail: admin@torridonprimary.lewisham.sch.uk

Date:

Re:

Date of Birth:

Attendance:

Persistent Lateness

Dear

I am writing to make you aware that _____ has arrived late for school on more than five occasions in the current half term. These are recorded when a pupil arrives at school after the start of the school day. A copy of your child's record of attendance has been enclosed for your information.

Should a pupil arrive at school before the registration period (9.05am) ends, this is coded as an L on the registration certificate. Should a pupil arrive at school after the registration period has ended, this is coded as a U. A U code is classed as an unauthorised absence and ongoing, persistent lateness, after the registration period has closed, can lead to statutory measures being used.

Persistent late arrival at school not only affects the pupil's learning, but also the learning of the rest of the pupils in the class. Should there be any ongoing reason why this lateness is occurring which, as a school we are not aware of, please do contact us to provide further information about this.

It is expected, that by highlighting the importance of punctuality to you, steps are taken to improve _____ timely arrival at school. Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter further, or if you would like to arrange to meeting, please contact Lena Pennacchia, Head of Inclusion who will be happy to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Manda George

Headteacher