



TOOTING PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

**This policy was agreed on 1st November 2016.
To be reviewed in Autumn Term 2017/18.**

Tooting Primary School Attendance Policy

Tooting Primary School recognises that:

- Most students attend school regularly to learn, to socialise with friends and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and prosperity of the community.
- There is a clear link between students' achievement and their level of attendance at school. We want all the students to achieve the very best they can and for this they need to be in school regularly.
- Late arrival disrupts the education not only of the student who is late but also of others in the class.
- It is the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children attend the school where they are on roll.
- Some students and their parents/carers may need to be supported at times in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.

Tooting Primary School expects that:

All students will:

- Arrive by 8.40 am, appropriately prepared for the day, and register at 8.50
- Attend school regularly, and for the whole school day: EYFS, 3.10pm and Years 1-6, 3.15pm

All our students' parents/carers will:

- Ensure their children attend school every day unless they are too ill to attend or there is an acceptable reason for absence.
- Ensure their children arrive on time, prepared and equipped for the day.
- Communicate with school about their children's progress and attend meetings such as Parents' Evenings and attendance contract meetings.
- Inform the school by 8.30am if their child will be absent from school on **0203 700 0790**

Attendance Target:

We will expect average attendance to be between 96-100%. Between 90-96% will require follow up from the class teacher and Head of Inclusion. Under 90%, follow up will also involve the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

SIMS:

The school will use SIMS software as a registration and communication tool. This ensures that all children are entered electronically onto class registers and then monitored by the School Administrator Officer (SAO). The system allows the school to contact parents/carers if children are late or absent from school, ensuring first day call monitoring.

Strategies to support improved attendance

- Each week in the Monday assembly the class with the highest attendance will be read out. The winning class has a 'space rocket' displayed on our attendance display.
- Every half term, children who attain 100% attendance will receive a certificate for good attendance.
- At the end of the year, any child who has 100% attendance will receive a gift voucher as a reward from the school.

The partnership between parents/carers and school

Under section 36 of the Education Act 1944, parents, or those who have care or parental responsibility for a child of compulsory school age, are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education. While parents/carers are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend

school it is the responsibility of the school to support attendance through serious consideration of problems which lead to non-attendance.

Parental responsibility includes ensuring that children arrive at school on time and are properly attired and in a condition to learn. Parents/carers need to see themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children.

The format of registers and the symbols used to record presence or to distinguish between different categories of absence are approved by the DfE. Tooting primary School is operating in accordance with these arrangements, ensuring that there is consistency of practice and that teachers are operating to the same rules. The manuscript registers are kept in ink and corrections made in such a way that the original entry and the correction are both clearly distinguishable.

Categorising absence

Illness, medical and dental appointments

Section 199 of the Education Act 1993 provides that no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. If the school is satisfied the absence is as a result of illness the absence must be treated as authorised.

If the school has reason to doubt the validity of an explanation further information may be requested from the parents/carer. Where the school continues to be dissatisfied the absence should be treated as unauthorised.

Leave for medical or dental appointments may be given, and the absence authorised, where confirmation has been received from the parent/carer.

Where a pupil is present for registration but then has to attend an appointment, or where a pupil returns from an appointment after registration, the school need take no action other than to record in the school office, for the purposes of emergency evacuation, that a pupil is leaving or returning to the site.

Persistent Absence

Any child whose attendance falls below 90 % during a term is considered to be a persistent absentee. Parents/Carers will be informed and asked to come to school to discuss ways forward.

Lateness

Late arrival is actively discouraged.

The school gates are opened at 8.40am and children are supervised as they enter the premises. The school day begins at 8.50 a.m. and a child is deemed late if they arrive after 9.00am. If a child arrives after 9.15am they could be marked as having an unauthorised absence (Dfe regulations).

If a child is late they are asked to go to the office. The office staff records this information in a specific book. If late three times in a month parents/carers are contacted by letter and requested to contact school. In responding to lateness the school will take into account the individual circumstances of each case. The school may take disciplinary action against the parents/carers where their child persistently fails to arrive on time without valid reason and seek a meeting with parents/carers.

In recognition of local circumstances, such as bad weather, schools may keep their registers open for a reasonable period. The Secretary of State would regard a period of thirty minutes as being reasonable.

Minding the house, looking after brothers or sisters

Explanations such as minding the house, looking after other children, or shopping trips within school hours will not normally be acceptable reasons for absence.

Special occasions

It is for the school to determine whether an absence in this category should be authorised or not and will depend on the circumstances of each particular case.

In considering individual cases the school will examine the nature of the event, its frequency, whether advance notification was given and the overall attendance pattern of the child.

Family bereavements

The school will respond sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend funerals or associated events and has the discretion to authorise such absences.

Collecting Children from school

As a school it is vital that we are aware of who is collecting children from school. If for any reason there is a change to routine when collecting a child, it is important that parents/carers inform the school during the day. If someone arrives at school to collect a child and we do not know who it is, we will call the priority contact we have for the child to clarify the collection is authorised.

Family holidays and extended trips overseas during term time

Under Regulation 12 of the Education Regulations 1981 there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted for the purpose of an annual holiday during term time. Parents/carers should not expect that the school will agree to family holidays during term time. No parent/carer can demand leave of absence for the purposes of a holiday as of right. Because we believe that absence from school adversely affects pupils learning, absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised absences of longer than ten days will be reported to Wandsworth LA or Graveney Trust and there is provision for penalty notices to be issued

Days of religious observance

Section 199 of the Education Act 1993 provides that an offence is not committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is absent due to participation in a day of religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong. Such absences are classified as authorised.

Traveller children

The position of Traveller families is recognised by section 199 of the Education Act 1993 which protects parents/carers from conviction if they can demonstrate that they are engaged in a trade or business which requires them to travel from place to place, the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits or where the child has attained the age of six years they have made at least 200 attendances, i.e. 200 sessions or half days, during the preceding twelve months.

Public performances

Regulation 11 of the Education Regulations 1981 provides that leave of absence from school may be granted to enable a pupil to participate in approved public performances.

Off site activities

During school activities where a full class is participating, registers will normally be called off-site and pupils marked present or absent as usual. Where smaller groups are absent at the point of registration but engaged in activities expressly authorised by the school, the activities will not be regarded as absences but will be marked in the register with an appropriate symbol.

Where an activity is of a more individual nature the school can authorise absence at its discretion.

Excluded pupils

Where a pupil has been temporarily excluded they should remain on the school roll and the period be treated as authorised absence.

Where a pupil has been permanently excluded the absence should be treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. On conclusion of that process, if permanent exclusion is confirmed, the pupil should be removed from the school roll.

Missing from school

If after 5 days the school is unable to confirm why a child is not at the school, the school will contact the LA EWO.

Moving to another school mid year

If a parent/carer decides to move a child out of the school during the year for whatever reason they must inform the school that they intend to do this. The school also needs to know which school the child will attend so we can contact that school and ensure that all safeguarding procedures are in place.