

Appendix A - Academy Specific Information

Name of Academy / School:	Towcester C of E Primary School
Name of Person at the Academy with Responsibility for Strategic Approach to Attendance:	Sally Beaton- Headteacher
Name of Member of Staff to Contact regarding Absence on a Day-to-Day Basis:	Please contact school office.
Name of Member of Staff to Contact for More Detailed Support on Attendance:	Please contact school office.

Vision and Values:

We will send the children out, as Noah did the dove (Genesis 8:8-12), having nurtured and prepared them for life. Knowing that they are valued they can fly and take the values of the school out into the world.

'If we live by the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.' (Galatians 5:25)

At Towcester C of E Primary School, we believe that the foundation of securing good attendance is that the academy is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

In order to achieve our vision, our children need to be consistently and regularly attending the academy. Therefore, underpinned by our Christian values, the academy is committed to creating the culture of a calm, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. For the academy's most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Such a culture will ensure our pupils get the most out of their academy experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

Times:

Registration session opens:	8.50 am
Register closes:	9.00am
Afternoon Session start time:	1.00pm

Promoting and Incentivising Good Attendance:

In our academy we are consistent in encouraging good attendance. Members of staff are visible on the school gates each day to welcome the children and encourage good attendance. A robust reporting and monitoring system is in place to ensure target families are identified early and safeguarding responsibilities are met.

Governors play an active role in monitoring and challenging the school in its attendance figures and actions.

We celebrate positive levels of attendance within our school community for pupils that achieve 100% attendance. A randomly drawn winner is rewarded with an attendance badge during our weekly Celebration Worship.

When a pupil's attendance improves, the academy sends out a positive praise letter to acknowledge the effort that pupils and parents have made in improving this.

Process for Notification of Unplanned Absence:

If a pupil cannot attend school for an unplanned reason, parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am. An answer phone facility is available between 8.00am – 4.00pm.

Pupils absent from school are considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory reason has been given by parents and accepted by the school. When a reason is provided for absence, the child's electronic record is updated with the reason and an appropriate authorised absence code.

However, on occasions, absences may still be deemed as unauthorised despite parents contacting school. This may include absences for birthdays, trips, unauthorised holidays, and parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.

Procedure for Dealing with Unexplained Absence:

If school does not receive an explanation for absence, the following steps are taken:

- Parents/carers will be contacted on the first day of absence and asked to provide a reason. This text will be logged in the child's system. If no reason is given or parents cannot be contacted and the child returns to school the following day, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The absence will be risk assessed and trained school staff will decide whether to contact the CME officer is needed.
- If school staff are unable to make contact, a home visit is made on day 2 of the absence period. A red card alert will be left/posted. If there is no answer at home address the school will attempt to contact any additional contacts held by the school.
- The family and contacts will be telephoned daily until contact is made.
- Unannounced home visits will be carried out for pupils who are absent, and parents have not been in contact with school. This may happen on Day 1 of the absence if the child is recognised as 'at risk' for safeguarding or well-being reasons, or they are being monitored by the attendance officer for poor attendance.
- After 10 days, a referral will be made to the Education Inclusion and Partnership Team (EIPT). In some circumstances, such as safeguarding concerns, this may be sooner. The

school works with the EIPT to trace the child and decisions are made jointly to remove the child from role if required.

Procedure for Lateness:

All pupils should arrive at school between 8.40 and 8.50am. The school gates to the main playground are opened at 8.40am, with members of staff on duty each day, and close at 8.55am.

Registration begins at 8.50am. Registers stay open in classrooms until 9.00am.

Pupils arriving between 8.50am and 9.00am are not considered late but will need to enter school via the school office.

Pupils arriving between 9.00am and 9.20am, will be classed as present but late (Code L).

Pupils arriving after 9.20am will be marked as 'Late after register close' (U), This is classed as an unauthorised absence.

In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.

Parents will be informed if punctuality is a problem in case they are unaware of this, having themselves left home before their child is expected to go to school.

If a pupil is late due to exceptional circumstances, no action will be taken. If a pupil is frequently late with the same or similar explanation, school will speak to parents to identify any issues that are causing the pupil to arrive late at school.

In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, the school may keep the register open for a longer period.

Procedure for Requesting Leave of Absence:

When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours but we acknowledge that this is not always possible. Notification to the school of these appointments should be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

When a parent requests an absence for their child, they complete a 'Leave of Absence' form detailing the reasons for the requested absence. This form is reviewed by the Headteacher and the Attendance Officer to decide if the absence is authorised or unauthorised. A meeting with the parents may be requested if clarification or discussion is required.

PDET's 'Guiding Principles for Authorising Term-Time Absence' (January 2018) is consulted when deciding if a request for absence should be authorised or not. This guidance follows the legislation that came into effect on 1st September 2013 stating, "Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances." The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.

All requests for absence are followed up with a letter/email explaining the authorised/unauthorised decision made.

If parents choose to take unauthorised holiday/time away during term time, a copy of the Local Authority guidance on fixed penalties is included with the email. A referral to the EIPT may be made if there are 5 or more days of unauthorised absence over a 6-week period. A fixed penalty notice may be issued (£120 per parent per child).