

	<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>Attendance Policy</b>
<b>Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:</b>		Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher
<b>Date Approved by Local Advisory Board:</b>		November 2021
<b>Date of last review:</b>		May 2022
<b>Date of next review:</b>		May 2023

**It is the policy of The Taunton Academy that all students attend lessons. High standards of attendance are central to the school's objective in aiming for excellence in all aspects of school life. Strong and effective management, working in partnership with parents is essential in maintaining good levels of attendance.**

- Promote and encourage a level of attendance of at least 95% for all students, to maximize their educational potential.
- To reduce the number of persistent non attendees (students with less than 90% attendance).
- To support parents in ensuring that their child(ren) arrive at school on time and in correct uniform to maximize their educational potential.
- To maintain accurate attendance registers as required by law.

#### Key Points

- Effective monitoring of attendance is vital. (Appendix 1, 2 and 3)
- Registers must be accurate and kept in accordance with this policy.
- The appendices to this policy outline the names (Appendix 1) of everyone involved in ensuring good attendance. These include:
  - Parents
  - Students
  - Form Tutors
  - Heads of Year
  - Attendance Officer
  - Deputy Heads / Assistant Heads
  - Home School Liaison / Welfare Officer

- Education Safeguarding Services

### Attendance and Punctuality

Across the Trust, good, excellent, and outstanding attendance and punctuality are acknowledged and rewarded.

- Governors, directors, and staff within the trust recognize high correlation between achievement and attendance and strive to maintain high levels of attendance for all students.
- Parents have the responsibility to ensure attendance of their child(ren) at school. Unless there is a major health concern, attendance should rarely drop below 95%.
- We ask for the cooperation of all parents in helping the school to monitor their child's attendance closely, by following the procedures listed on the school website.

### Attendance Percentage Table

Attendance Percentage	Attendance Level
97% - 100%	Excellent
95% - 96.9%	Good
90% - 94.9%	Requires Improvement
89% or Less	Cause for Concern

### How to Report an Absence

**Absence line: 01823 348201**

**Email: [attendance@thetauntonacademy.com](mailto:attendance@thetauntonacademy.com)**

**Childs Individual Classcharts Profile**

### Reporting an Absence

**First day contact** is now an integral part of the school attendance policy. Students and parents should be aware that a student's absence will be noted, acted upon swiftly, especially those who are pupil premium or in care.

**If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided and is concerned for the welfare of the pupil, we will request a welfare check from the police.**

- All absences must be reported by 9.00am each day (and on every subsequent day) by either calling the absence line, emailing school, or reporting on classcharts. Parents are encouraged to do this as early as possible. Morning registration closes at 9.20am.
- Any students absent for 5 or more days, even if the school have been advised, may receive a visit from the Home School Liaison Welfare Officer.
- If you know your child is going to be absent, please let us know in advance. If your child has been absent due to a medical appointment, please send in a copy or email in a copy of the

appointment card/letter/screenshot. You can also attach SMS evidence/screenshot on your child's classcharts account.

- Any planned medical/dental absence should be notified by telephone or letter. Where possible, appointments should be made, out of school hours.
- Once the school has obtained confirmation the school will authorise the absence, if the reason given is considered appropriate e.g., illness, unavoidable medical/dental appointment etc. If the reason given is not appropriate the absence will be considered unauthorised, and the parent contacted. The school will follow up any absence which has not been notified to us with a call or unexplained absence email.
- Medical evidence **MAY** be required if your child has a prolonged absence of more than 3 days. Medical evidence **MUST** be produced if we have previously written to you stating that no further absence due to illness will be authorised without it (Appendix 3).

Examples of medical evidence (this is the responsibility of the parent to provide to the school directly):

- Screenshot of SMS information from medical organisation
- Medical appointment card/printed slip
- Medical / dental letter
- Copy of prescription showing name & date
- Prescribed medication with pharmacist label showing name & date
- Hospital discharge letter

**Please note: We never ask for 'doctors notes' so please do not approach your GP asking for this.**

### Punctuality

Arriving late to school and into lesson means that the late student will miss important input from teachers, therefore not fulfilling their potential. Morning registration closes at 9.20am.

If for whatever reason you know your child will be arriving late for school, please call the absence line as early as possible so we can note their absence correctly and be aware that they will be in.

### Lateness

There are negative results caused by students who constantly arrive late. These include:

- The loss of learning suffered by the student, which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school.
- If there is no good reason for being late this will count as an unauthorised absence. Raised levels of unauthorised attendance could result in a £60.00 fine.

Late arrivals are monitored, and the attendance officer will follow up with a phone call and will issue a detention where appropriate.

The table below indicates how frequent lateness can add up to a considerable amount of learning being lost. This can seriously disadvantage a child.

Minutes late per day	Teaching days lost in a year	Number of Lessons missed
5 mins	3 Days	15 Lessons
10 mins	6 Days	30 Lessons
15 mins	9 Days	45 Lessons

The strategies that The Taunton Academy will use to tackle lateness will include:

- Informing parents/carers when a student is regularly late, a call will be made to the parents by the Home School Liaison Welfare Officer.
- Detentions to be issued for either lunch time or after school.
- Use of penalty notices.

### Holiday/Term Time Leave

Holidays/leave of absence in term will not usually be authorised because they will affect a student's education. There is no automatic right to take children away from school for holiday. A leave of absence will only be given for exceptional circumstances. The school may request a penalty notice for over 10 sessions (5 days) of un-authorised absence where the student's attendance falls below 95%.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Emergency service / forces personnel / key workers with proof of enforced holiday period
- Force's personnel returning from or embarking on active service.
- Holiday industry employees with proof of this being the ONLY time period allowed by employer.
- A transcontinental leave request to see a terminally ill close relative. Please see the Somerset County Council website for more information.

**If a leave of absence in term time is requested the following procedure must be followed:**

- In advance of the holiday and in good time for the request to be actioned, parents should complete a 'term time leave' request form from the school and return it to the Attendance Officer (see example in Appendix 4 & 5).
- If the request is due to work commitments preventing time off at other times, then evidence from the workplace will be required in writing.
- Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be taken, these will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

### Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact our school's designated Safeguarding Lead (Appendix 1) for further information on the support available.

### Children Missing Education (CME)

Our school will add and delete pupils from roll in line with the law. The school will follow Somerset Child Missing Education process and make CME referral as appropriate.

### Exclusions / Suspensions

If the school decides to send a pupil home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an Exclusion/Suspension. The school will follow the current DfE's statutory guidance on exclusions/suspensions.

- Any exclusion/suspension must be agreed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the Headteacher.

- The school will notify the parent / carer of the exclusion/suspension. If the child is a Looked after child, the school will notify the pupils carer, social worker, and Virtual School. In other instances, where a pupil is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated Social Worker.
- The pupil must only leave via Student Services after signing out in the 'signing out' book. **NO** pupil will be allowed to leave Student Services and the school site without the school receiving direct parental confirmation.

### Pupils on Part-Time Timetables

Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

If, for any reason, our school is unable to provide a pupil with a full-time education due to the pupils needs, we will work with the pupil, parent, and any other agencies where appropriate, to come to a mutually convenient arrangement. Any part-time timetables will be for the shortest amount of time possible and regularly reviewed, whilst arrangements are made to support the pupil's return to a full-time timetable.

### Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

The trust follows DofE guidance and will take legal action against parents/carers who do not send their children to school regularly. We do try to work with parents to ensure that there are no barriers to school attendance. If strategies for supporting regular attendance do not work, the Trust will take legal action. In the first instance, a penalty notice will be issued. If this does not result in improved attendance the Trust works closely with the Education Safeguarding Services to ensure full attendance and adherence to procedures. At The Taunton Academy, regular attendance is classed at 95% or more. Attendance below this level could result in the issue of a Warning Penalty Notice, Penalty Notice, or referral to the Education Safeguarding Service at County Hall, Taunton.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold, currently 10 unauthorised sessions in 12 school week period, for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action, unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance. These are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is considered a more appropriate response to a pupil's irregular attendance.

#### **A pupils unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:**

- A Penalty Notice - The penalty is £60 payable within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution.
- Prosecution – Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and / or 3 months imprisonment.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>

## The Taunton Academy School Day - 2021/2022

<b><i>Warning Bell</i></b>	<b><i>8.45am</i></b>
<b>AM Registration / Assembly</b>	<b>8.50 – 9.20am</b>
<b>Period 1</b>	<b>9.20 – 10.15am</b>
<b>Period 2</b>	<b>10.15 – 11.10am</b>
<b><i>BREAK</i></b>	<b>11.10 – 11.30am</b>
<b>Period 3</b>	<b>11.30am – 12.25pm</b>
<b>Period 4 &amp; PM Registration</b>	<b>12.25 – 1.20pm</b>
<b><i>LUNCH</i></b>	<b>1.20 - 2.05pm</b>
<b>Tutor Time</b>	<b>2.05 – 2.15pm</b>
<b>Period 5</b>	<b>2.15 – 3.10pm</b>

## APPENDIX 1

### Post holders at The Taunton Academy involved with attendance

Position	Name	Email
Headteacher	Mr J Eddy	JEddy@thetauntonacademy.com
Deputy Headteacher	Mr A Reynolds	AREynolds@thetauntonacademy.com
Attendance Officer	Ms L Harper	LHarper@thetauntonacademy.com
Home School Liaison Welfare Officer	Mrs K Baines	KBaines@thetauntonacademy.com
School Medical Officer	Mrs L Keattch	LKeattch@thetauntonacademy.com
Director of Inclusion SENCo	Mrs K Mellish	KMellish@thetauntonacademy.com
Data Manager	Mrs C Haskell-Wood	CHaskell@thetauntonacademy.com
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Mrs J Webb & Mrs T Dixon	Safeguarding@thetauntonacademy.com
Transition Lead	Mrs A Vercoe	AVercoe@thetauntonacademy.com
Head of Year 7	Miss F Brace	FBrace@thetauntonacademy.com
Head of Year 8	Mr B Saddington	BSaddington@thetauntonacademy.com
Head of Year 9	Mr J Kerr	JKerr@thetauntonacademy.com
Head of Year 10	Mrs T Dixon	TDixon@thetauntonacademy.com
Head of Year 11	Miss E Smith	ESmith@thetauntonacademy.com
The Chair of the Local Governing Body	Mr C Ormrod	RDempsey@thetauntonacademy.com
Clerk to Governor's	Mrs R Dempsey	RDempsey@thetauntonacademy.com

#### The Taunton Academy Attendance Team

**Attendance Officer:** Ms L Harper - Tel: 01823 348201

Email: [Attendance@thetauntonacademy.com](mailto:Attendance@thetauntonacademy.com) or Email: [LHarper@thetauntonacademy.com](mailto:LHarper@thetauntonacademy.com)

**Home School Liaison Welfare Officer:** Mrs K Baines - Tel: 01823 348255

Email: [KBaines@thetauntonacademy.com](mailto:KBaines@thetauntonacademy.com)

#### **Main areas of responsibility:**

- Monitor's attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Work with teaching staff to maintain accurate registers.
- Working with students to improve punctuality.
- Promote positive attitude to attendance and punctuality by organising rewards for high attendance.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Assistant Head Teacher, Year Heads and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues/lateness.
- Co-ordinates requests for term-time leave of absence (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding team) and advises the Headteacher as requested.
- Carries out home visits and parent meetings to support parents and students in improving attendance.

## APPENDIX 2

### Attendance Information Sheet

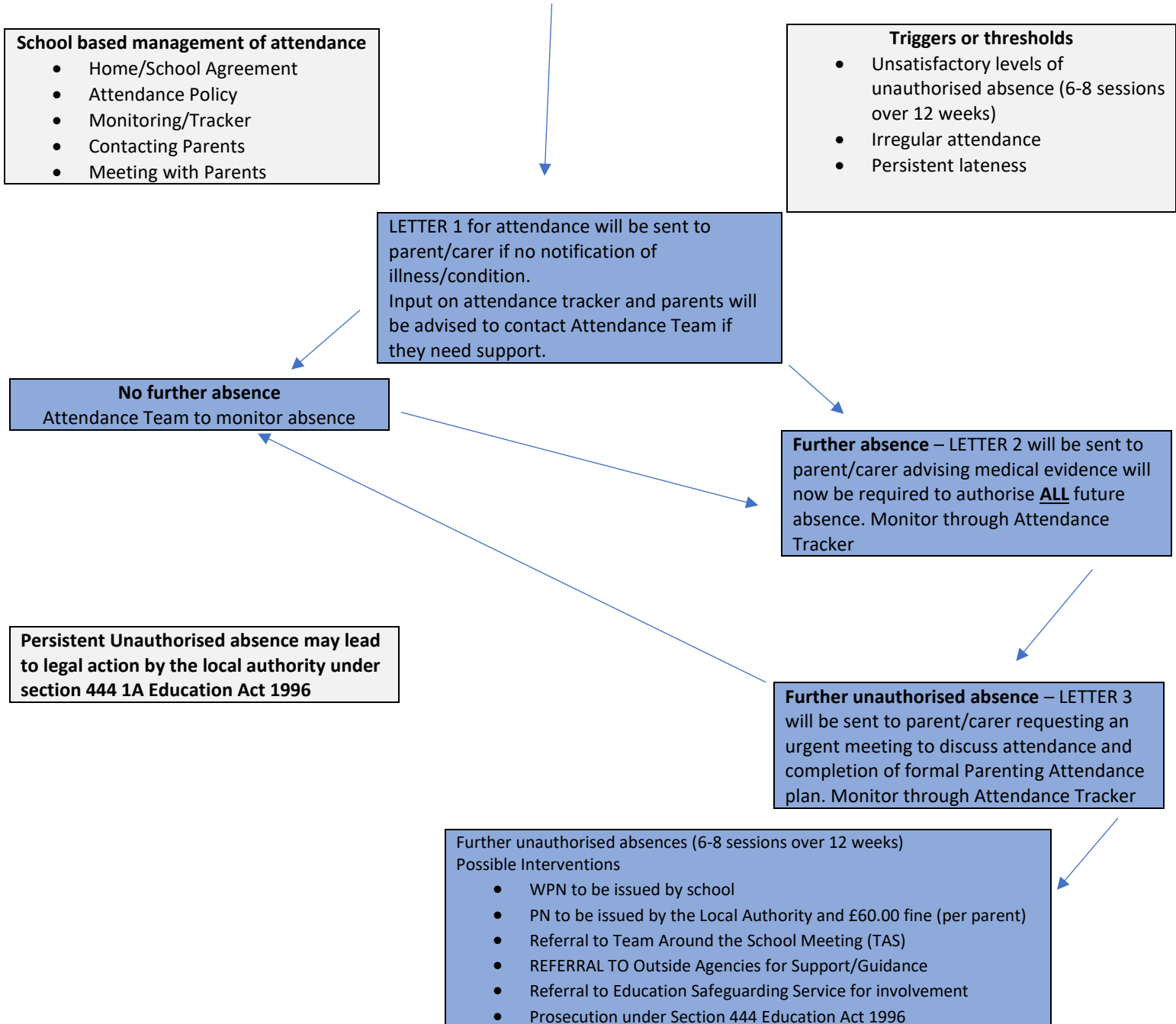
Attendance Percentage	Attendance Level
97% - 100%	Excellent
95% - 96.9%	Good
90% - 94.9%	Requires Improvement
89% or Less	Cause for Concern

We would like to remind you about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Missing lessons makes it hard to catch up and students must work harder when they return. Students attend school for 190 days per year; there are 175 non-school days a year for holiday, cultural experiences, and family time. Any child with attendance of 90% or below is classed as PA (persistently absent) by the government. Every school is required to take action to work with families to improve attendance and it is useful to know the interventions we use at The Taunton Academy to ensure this is achieved.



# APPENDIX 3

## Students Attendance 95% or Below



## APPENDIX 4

### TERM TIME LEAVE

#### **ADVICE FOR PARENTS: Please read carefully the information below**

Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and came into force on 1 September 2013.

The amendments made it clear that Headteacher may only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave must be made in writing to the Attendance Officer and Headteacher in advance.

There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education. However, from discussion with the DofE and professional associations it is suggested that exceptional leave may include:

- Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad
- Key Worker, Police, Fire Service Staff being told when they can or cannot take leave.
- If a close family member has a terminal illness and it may be a last chance to be together, especially if the family member lived overseas

#### **Somerset County Council (SCC) supports schools:**

- In expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school regularly. Any absence from school will impact on educational achievement, success in later life and longer-term health and well-being.
- In ensuring the law is upheld. Parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where they are on roll. Schools must explain their stance on term time leave in their attendance policy so that parents/carers are clear on expectations and potential consequences, such as any unauthorised absence including taking term time leave not agreed with the school, can result in legal action being taken including Penalty Notices and court prosecution.

#### **SCC cannot override a school's decision not to authorise any term time leave. There is no right of appeal.**

Taking a child on holiday in term time interrupts the learning of the pupil and teachers must spend time helping children catch up when they return. Parents should arrange holidays during the 13-week school holiday periods. Schools are open 190 days which leaves 175 days of the year for holidays.

NB. If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in a penalty notice being issued or legal action taken for poor attendance.

Attached are suggested forms schools may wish to use when asked by parents/ carers for term time leave. Schools may wish to develop their own request forms.

# APPENDIX 5

## TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST FORM

To: The Taunton Academy

I wish to apply for term time leave for my child(ren):

Name	Tutor/Year Group
1.	
2.	

To be authorised absent from.....To.....

Number of school days..... for the purpose of a holiday at.....  
(please specify location)

<p style="text-align: center;">This holiday is believed to arise from “exceptional circumstances because” (please provide details below)</p>
--

**Signature Parent/Carer**..... **Date**.....

**Print Name**.....

This form must be returned to the school’s attendance officer as early as possible before the holiday dates requested (minimum 4-weeks’ notice)

### OFFICE USE ONLY

AGREED/REUSED Signed.....

If refused, reason to go in reply letter