

The Policy

Policy Aims

- Attendance registers are kept and attendance and punctuality is monitored to ensure that positive attendance patterns are established from the outset of the programme.
- The school should achieve, as a minimum, an attendance rate of 75% (as a group average), should have the ambition of 90% actual attendance and puts in place effective interventions when there is a concern around individual or and that effective interventions are put in place if this is not achieved.¹
- We recognise that whilst national guidelines exist for minimum attendance figures for individual students, with the nature of TWT's student intake sometimes these figures may not immediately be met. TWT believe that continuously supporting students to improve their attendance is key; if a student arrives to us with an attendance average of 60% from their referral school, an immediate increase of at least 15% may be unlikely. However, TWT will work with all involved to steadily increase this number until it reaches the target figure. There is of course no 'one size fits all' number for this approach, and as such, individual learners require individual planning and implementation techniques.

Policy Implementation

For the 2021/22 academic year, the TWT school day starts at 0930 Monday to Friday. If students arrive after 0930 they will be marked as 'Late'; how late the student is (in minutes measured from 0930) will be recorded on SchoolPod MIS. Students have until 1000 to arrive before they are marked at 'Late After Registration Closes'; this will result in a 'U' code being entered into the register, and this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

PM registration is taken at 1230 Monday to Friday. There is no Late mark for PM registration, only a 'U' code for students that arrive after that time from any off-site activity.

In achieving those aims these principles of good practice should be followed:

- **Establish good habits early** - help individuals to establish good regular attendance and good behaviour from the start, involving parents/carers/guardians in the process (i.e. at the point of contract).
- **Early intervention** - prompt intervention is needed where there is poor behaviour or unexplained absence, so that it is clear that these behaviours will not be accepted. There is a clear scale of intervention when learner attendance falls below 75% (Appendix B).

¹ In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic both nationally and internationally, TWT will be constantly reviewing this policy to ensure fairness to all involved whilst remaining robust and accountable. As the COVID-19 pandemic's effect on education is in a constant state of flux, not all amendments to statutory attendance and punctuality issues will result in published TWT policy amendments. Instead, changes will be minuted in SLT and governor meetings.

- **First day response** - establishing a first day response can be a positive and proactive measure and visible demonstration of The Write Time's vigilance, its care and concern for a learner's safety and well-being.
- **Rewarding achievements** - positive recognition of individual learner or groups of learners in good behaviour and attendance.
- **Supporting behaviour management** - using a range of behaviour strategies to maintain and improve high standards of behaviour and discipline.
- **Working with parents/carers** - project staff should encourage parents/carers to support good attendance and behaviour through home-project agreements, meetings, etc.
- **Involving learners** - learners can help to re-enforce behaviour policies/strategies by active involvement in anti-bullying/harassment policies.
- **Identifying underlying causes** - through regular review of the learners' progress i.e. tutorials, frequent contact with parents/carers, other agencies, monitor absence patterns and investigate.

Completing Attendance Registers

The school is required to take a register twice a day, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon. The register shows whether the young person is present, engaged in an approved activity off-site or absent.

As the school's register is taken electronically via Schoolpod MIS this should be printed off on a monthly basis and a hard copy stored where it is readily accessible.

All attendance register data is kept on Schoolpod MIS unless a technical failure prevents access to Schoolpod. In the rare event of this occurring then:

- registers can either be kept in a bound format or on single pages and must be completed in either black or blue ink.
- staff must ensure the original entry in a register and any subsequent correction must be clearly distinguishable.
- both the original entry and the correction should be preserved so that, on retrieval, the entries appear in chronological order – this means that correction fluids must not be used on the register.
- Paper-based attendance data must be transferred to Schoolpod MIS as soon as is practically possible.

If a young person is absent the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised by marking it with the appropriate code - see below.

Authorised absence is where the Head teacher has either given approval in advance for a young person to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences must be treated as unauthorised. Parents may not authorise absence whether in advance or retrospectively.

A young person can legally leave the school on the last Friday in June in the school year in which the young person reaches 16 or 18. However, TWT delivers Functional Skills qualifications up until the end of the Croydon school term dates and students are expected to attend these sessions and exams.

Monthly attendance monitoring meetings occur between the Headteacher and Head of Quality to examine absence trends, the success of attendance interventions, and student lateness.

It should be noted that sending a young person home (other than due to illness), at any point in the day, constitutes a fixed period exclusion and should be marked as such on the register.

For the correct annotation of the Register: See Appendix A - DfE codes

Appendix A: DfE Absence and Attendance Codes

Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes:

Registration Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed

Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Code B: Off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

Code V: Educational visit or trip

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education.

Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Code M: Medical or dental appointments

Code R: Religious observance

Code S: Study leave

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.
- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

Attendance interventions

Once a student's attendance falls below 75% due to unauthorised absence the following interventions shall be carried out.

1

4 UNAUTHORISED SESSIONS

A school awareness letter to be sent along with a copy of the students attendance report. This is to highlight to the family that their child has fallen below schools expectation on attendance and to remind family that they are legally responsible to ensure their child attends school.

2

8 SESSIONS

Letter to be sent requesting a meeting with parents to discuss reasons for poor attendance. The meeting is an opportunity for all parties to come up with an action plan to support the student/family to improve attendance. This should be reviewed in a timely manner

3

16 SESSIONS

A court warning letter to be sent to families when steps 1 & 2 have failed to improve attendance for the student.

4

22 SESSIONS

A referral to be made to local authority due to all interventions failing to improve the students attendance

Illness

ILLNESS CONCERN 10 AUTHORISED SESSIONS

Letter to be sent home once a student acquires 10 sessions of authorised illness. This will state that parents must provide evidence of any future absence due to illness if the absence is to be authorised.

Child missing education

CME 5 & 10 DAY THRESHOLDS

After 5 days of absence with no communication or refusal to attend school a home visit should be done.

After 10 days of absence with no communication or refusal to attend school a referral to Local Authority should be made (CME)