



THE SALTERNS ACADEMY TRUST: TRAFALGAR SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY



Author: G Pearse
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Summary of changes made:	Addition of legislation and guidance section and monitoring arrangements. Change from Attendance officer to 'attendance team'. Addition of 'Trafalgar TV and social media' rather than specific TV by student reception. Addition of detail to authorising term time absence section.				

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UNCRC

Article 28: (Right to education): The Convention places a high value on education. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education of which they are capable.

The 1996 Education Act states that it is the duty of parents to secure education of students of school age. Trafalgar School seeks to ensure that all its students receive an education which meets their needs and maximises opportunities for each student to realise his true potential.

Aims

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels valued and secure.

All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually. The Headteacher reports termly on attendance figures to Governors. The figures are also published in school and the school is set annual targets by the Local Authority, to which it is also accountable.

Legislation and Guidance

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.

Purpose

The school recognises that regular and full time attendance is essential if children and young people are to benefit fully from their school career. Optimum levels of attendance can only be achieved when responsibility is accepted and shared by all concerned: Governors, school staff, parents, students and the local community.

The school has a key responsibility in promoting good attendance. Portsmouth City Council is equally committed to supporting this in providing advice on improving attendance in conjunction with support for individual students.

To meet these aims, the school has established a system of rewards and incentives which recognise the efforts of students to maintain or improve their attendance and timekeeping. It will challenge and seek to improve the attitudes of those who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

Ethos

Trafalgar School will establish and maintain an ethos where all students and staff recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Good attendance will be celebrated publicly to regularly reinforce our high expectations.

Procedures

Statutory responsibilities:

- Schools must register attendance at the beginning of the morning and once during the afternoon sessions.
- The register shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site, or absent. The school must inform the LA, where a student is absent for a continuous period of not less than 10 days (specifying the cause if known), or where a student fails to attend regularly.

Schools must also:

- Distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences in their registers.
- Publish the percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences, and of the number of students involved, in annual reports and prospectuses.
- Include a statement of authorised absences in students' annual report.

In order to improve the overall attendance rate to at least the national average, the school will seek:

- To ensure attendance and punctuality are a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.
- To ensure the management framework defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To ensure that support, advice and guidance are provided for parents and students.
- To ensure that there is a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- To maintain positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To put in place a system of rewards and consequences.
- To establish and maintain an effective partnership with other services and agencies as appropriate.
- To ensure that the needs of the individual student are recognised when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.
- To contact parents at the earliest opportunity when their child is absent.

Attendance Incentives

Each House is encouraged to have good attendance by various means.

- During assemblies attendance is highlighted and the basic statistics for each House should be read out.
- Each House's statistics should be published on the attendance notice board by the Attendance Team.
- Regular updates should be published on Trafalgar TV and social media, indicating attendance news, such as the time and place of the attendance draws.
- During celebration assemblies, held each term, those with 100% attendance are announced and are awarded a certificate. In addition to this, they have the opportunity to win a voucher in the House team draw.

Registers

It is important to establish consistent, standardised registration procedures. The register is a legal document and may be used as evidence in a court of law. It should therefore be maintained neatly, in the case of paper registers, and accurately. Trafalgar School uses the SIMS computerised registration system. The original entry on 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. Where computerised systems are used, the attendance register must be printed at least once a month. At the end of each school year sheets must be bound into annual volumes and kept for at least three years. The governing body is legally responsible for the attendance register and must register with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Authorising 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 during term time is granted only 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
- 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.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mark Cathie, Assistant Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.