



ATTENDANCE POLICY v1.7

Town Close School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel welcome and valued.

A high level of school attendance is essential for a child to achieve their full educational potential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents must apply in advance in writing for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

Requests for leave of absence should be made via the school portal. The decision as to whether to grant the request rests with the Headmaster and the Head of the Pre Prep or any member of the SLT in their absence.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school during morning or afternoon registration must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). All unexplained absences will be recorded using the code N (unauthorised) until written confirmation is received. Only the Headmaster, the Head of Pre Prep or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absences that are not due to medical reasons.

Registers

In the Pre Prep Department registers are taken by form teachers in the morning and the afternoon. In the Prep Department registers are taken by the form teachers in the morning and by the subject teachers in the afternoon. The registers are taken online using iSAMs. If the system is unavailable, paper registers are completed and sent to the appropriate office. In the Prep Department, the pupils are registered for each lesson that they attend. Prep pupils are also registered on entering the dining room for lunch.

Lateness

Morning registration takes place at 8.25am. Any pupil arriving after this time should go to the Front Office (Prep) or Pre Prep office. They will be marked as Late (L) if they arrive before the registers close and (U) if arrival is after registers close.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.30pm in Pre Prep and 2pm for the Prep department.

First Day of Absence

Parents should email the relevant school office by 8.30am if a child will be absent. Please email prepsec@townclose.com for Prep children and preprepsec@townclose.com for Pre Prep children. If a child is absent without explanation the School secretaries will make contact to confirm the child's whereabouts and request written confirmation of the absence.

Continued Absence

Day two to twenty – school continues to make enquiries to establish why the pupil is not attending

- Continue efforts to contact all parents, family members and emergency contacts by all available telephone numbers and email addresses.
- Undertake a visit to the family home to establish whether the family still reside at the property (this should be conducted by 2 members of staff or with the local Safer Schools Officer linked to the cluster/area).
- Contact siblings' schools to see whether siblings continue to attend, or they hold information as to the families' whereabouts.
- Checks with members of school-based staff who the child or parent may have had contact with e.g. SENCO, School Nurse, etc.
- Checks with other agencies with known involvement who may information regarding the whereabouts of the child.
- If ongoing risk assessment suggests the child may be at risk of harm, school's Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact Norfolk Police and/or Children's Advice and Duty Service.

School establishes one of the following during enquiries

Outcome	Action
Parent is failing to ensure regular attendance.	Follow school attendance procedures.
Family have moved and new address within local area is gained.	Follow school attendance procedures.
Confirmation that child is attending a new school, being electively home educated.	Off roll notification form can be submitted and pupil can be removed from school roll.
Family have moved and new address outside local area is gained but no new school identified.	Telephone consultation with CME Team to establish whether removal from roll can be agreed under reasonable distance grounds.

Family believed to have moved but new address has not been established.

Telephone consultation with CME Team to establish whether any further enquiries can be made by the school or CME Team to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Written absence records

Written notice of absence received from parents, usually via email, are saved digitally in pupils' files in Records Shared.

Frequent Absence

Within the School, it is the responsibility of the Data Administrator to raise concerns over repeated absence or lateness to the Attendance Lead (Melanie Harries, DSL and Head of Pre Prep). The Deputy Head (Pastoral) in the Prep Department and the Head of Pre Prep will also be made aware of any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the School will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible, by working with parents/carers and seeking outside help where needed.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

Unauthorised Absence (N) - This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or if the School is not satisfied with the reason. The Government codes which are relevant to Town Close are:

N = No reason yet for absence

G = Family holiday not agreed

U = Late after the registers close and without a satisfactory reason

Authorised Absence (there are a selection of codes for this, depending on the reason for absence) - This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

M = medical appointments or illness

H = agreed family holiday

R = religious observation

Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note that pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This includes field trips, educational visits and sporting activities.

The Government registration codes are as follows:

V = educational visit or trip

D = dual registration

B = educated offsite

We also use:

P = approved sporting activity

For onsite but out of class educational activities, we also use the following internal codes.

MU = music lesson
LS = Learning Support lesson
OG = Off Games

Record Preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Computer registers are preserved as electronic back-ups once a month and are available for each month.

Legal Reference

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states: The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable -

- (a) To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) To any special needs he/she may have
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that applies to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Children Missing Education

Refer to the policy: Procedure for Pupil Registration and Children Missing Education

Last reviewed: November 2024
Next review: November 2025