

# Tiverton Co-operative Learning Partnership

Bampton Church of England Primary School

Bolham Primary School

Halberton Primary School

Rackenford Primary School

Tidcombe Primary School

Two Moors Primary School

Bickleigh on Exe CE Primary School

The Castle Primary School

Heathcoat Primary School

St John's Catholic Primary School

Tiverton High School

Wilcombe Primary School

In conjunction with Devon Education Welfare Service

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## Attendance Policy

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### RATIONALE

To promote a joint approach to tackling poor attendance and poor punctuality throughout the Tiverton Learning Community area.

It is the aim of each school to ensure punctuality and regular attendance which will help to raise achievement and enable students to realise their full potential.

### PURPOSE

- 1 To provide a consistent message to pupils and parents/carers
- 2 To ensure continuity and progression in the learning process.
- 3 To ensure that a high standard of punctuality and attendance is achieved and maintained.
- 4 To provide a safe and secure environment for pupils.

### Legal Responsibilities of Parents in Relation to School Attendance (Section 7 Education Act 1996):

The parent of every child of compulsory school age must ensure that he/she receives efficient, full-time education suitable to:

- a his/her age ability and aptitude;
- and
- b any special educational needs he/she may have;

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For pupils registered at a school, this means that pupils must attend regularly and punctually; failure to do so may result in their parents committing a criminal offence.

## GUIDELINES

1. Absence can only be authorised by the school for:
  - a) sickness or other unavoidable cause (solely affecting that child)
  - b) days set aside for family religious observance
  - c) where LA school transport has not been provided to a child that is entitled to it
  - d) other reasons, approved by the school.
2. For all absences, there should normally be formal notification from parents. Only the Headteacher (or delegated members of staff) can authorise any absence and may refuse to do so, unless it is felt that the absence is justified by one of the reasons stated above.
3. There is no automatic entitlement for absence for holidays during term time (Amendment to the Education [Pupil Registration] [England] Regulation 2006), except for families serving in the Armed Forces.
4. In cases of unauthorised Term-time holidays, Headteachers should follow the Devon County Council protocol and apply directly to the Education Welfare Service to generate a Penalty Notice warning letter (without, necessarily, contacting the school's EWO). This should be done by completing Penalty Notice Certificate of Absence Form and returning it to:

Penalty Notice Officer, Babcock LDP, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Business Park, Exeter EX2 5TH
5. Schools will liaise closely with parents advising them as early as possible if there are cases of suspected unauthorised absence, and persistent lateness, or their child's attendance falls below 90%.
6. Late arrival should be actively discouraged. Separate registration codes are required for lateness prior to close of registration and afterwards. It has been agreed that registers should remain "open" for the first 30 minutes of the morning and afternoon registration period. (At the High school, afternoon registration is 'open' for 20 minutes). In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period. Late arrival during these periods will be coded as an 'Authorised Late' ('L').
7. Late arrival after the register is closed is an 'Unauthorised Absence' (coded 'U') which could provide grounds for prosecution. Where a pupil arrives after close of registration with a legitimate reason, the absence should be authorised using the appropriate code (for example due to an appointment with a doctor).

8. Parents have a responsibility to inform school of late arrival or other absence before 9.30 am on the day; or, for absences of longer than one day, before 9.30 am on the first day.
9. Where no satisfactory explanation for absences is received, parents will be contacted by the school.
10. The Education Welfare Officer will be notified in the following circumstances:
  - unauthorised absence by a student of more than 10 half-day sessions (in aggregate) in any one term
  - attendance of less than 90% by any pupil
  - where action taken at school level has failed to improve attendance/punctuality for a particular student
11. When a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and they also have 10 or more unauthorised absences, unless there are extenuating circumstances, they should be considered for "Fast-track to Prosecution".
12. Parents are to inform the school, in writing, if a child is to be removed from a roll. Details of the new school should be provided, if applicable.

If a child leaves a school to be home educated, then Form EWS 10 must be completed and returned to:

Georgina Bennet, Babcock LDP, 2nd Floor, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Exeter, Devon EX2 5GF

and to:

Irene Love, Babcock LDP, 2nd Floor, Milford House, Pynes Hill, Exeter, Devon EX2 5GF

When a pupil moves from school and no notification has been received from another school, the 'old' school should complete a 'Children Missing from Education' form (S2s) and return it to:

EMS Data Team, ScoMIS Office, Great Moor House, Bittern Road, Sowton Industrial Estate, Exeter, EX2 7NL

(Where the 'new' school is known, as a safeguard, the 'old' school should make contact with the receiving school to alert them to the move).

13. Schools will adopt a multi-agency approach in supporting children and their families to improve their attendance.
14. For Health and Safety reasons, schools need to be aware of where pupils are, particularly those leaving or arriving on the premises during a session. An appropriate recording system should be instigated.
15. Parents' meetings, and other occasions can be used to stress to all parents the importance and benefits of regular attendance and punctuality. Advantage should also be made of regular school to home newsletters etc.