



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### INTRODUCTION

Thomas's London Day Schools aim to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. The School also has a duty of care towards children who are seen to be missing from education for any extended periods.

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' is understood to include carer and guardian.

### RIGHTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### School

Thomas's London Day Schools expect pupils to attend school regularly, to arrive on time and to be equipped and ready to learn.

- The School will encourage and acknowledge good attendance and punctuality.
- Attendance will be recorded by registration twice daily and in accordance with the guidelines contained in the Staff Handbook.
- Pupils' attendance records will be reported to parents.
- Patterns of attendance will be monitored and analysed to inform future practice.
- Unexplained and unjustified absences will be investigated.
- The School will work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern and will work with the local authority and other relevant services if necessary to resolve any issues.

#### Pupils

- Pupils will co-operate with their parents to ensure they attend school regularly and on time.
- They will be punctual for lessons.
- They will not leave school without permission.

#### Parents

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis.
- They are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school within the published term dates.

- They should ensure that their children arrive at school punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- They will familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy and work with the school to overcome any problems of their child's attendance or punctuality.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Registration**

- a) Registration will be carried out twice daily, at 8.45 in the morning and between 13.30 and 13.40 in the afternoon.
- b) Registers will be marked in accordance with the guidance contained in the Staff Handbook

### **Absences**

The School is responsible for deciding whether an absence is to be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

- Absence from school may be authorised if it is for one of the following reasons:
  - sickness
  - unavoidable medical/dental appointments (Parents should make every effort to make medical/dental appointments out of school hours)
  - days of religious observance
  - exceptional family circumstances e.g. bereavement.
  - visits to or interviews at future schools
- All absences must be explained by a parent or, in the case of a planned absence, permission requested in writing.
- Parents should contact the school on the morning of each day of absence, no later than 9.00am.

### **Holidays**

Holidays taken in term time adversely affect a child's education as much as any other absence. The effect on the child of missing the beginning or end of a term is far-reaching and any expectation on staff to accommodate such absences is unjust. The School takes a very strong line on pupils missing school for family holidays; authorised absence will not be granted for holidays taken during term time except in exceptional circumstances.

### **Long Term Absence through Illness**

In the case of long term absence due to illness the School will make every effort to support the child through providing appropriate work and guidance during the absence and will plan for successful reintegration on the child's return to school.

### **Children Missing from Education**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses are implemented for children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead will report to the local authority any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

In addition the school will inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- have been permanently excluded.

### **Lateness**

Pupils who arrive at school after the registers have closed must report to the school office before joining their class.

### **Following up Absences/Lateness**

- If a pupil is absent at morning registration and no notification has been received from the parent by 9.00am, the School Secretary will initially speak to the form teacher to check if they may be at any morning activity and if not, then try to make contact with the parent.
- If the School Secretary is unsuccessful in contacting the parent, she will call the emergency contact numbers and, if necessary, other relevant services.
- If a pupil is absent because of illness for five consecutive days, the School may request supporting evidence.
- If a pupil is persistently late or absent, the Headmaster/mistress will write to the parents in the first instance and will invite them to a meeting if the problem continues.
- When a pupil is persistently late or absent without good reason and the School's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer. In this case the School will write to the parents informing them of the referral.

## **STRATEGIES**

### **Promoting Attendance/Punctuality**

- The School will regularly promote to pupils and parents the value and importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Staff will set a good example by being punctual to registration and lessons.
- Staff will use the School's rewards and sanctions procedures to encourage punctuality.
- Parents will be kept regularly and fully informed of any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

- Individual cases where pupils experience attendance difficulties will be investigated by the Form Teacher/Mentor/Tutor and where necessary referred to the Head.

## MONITORING

- Attendance statistics will be collected and analysed weekly and reviewed as a whole each term to identify individuals or cohorts whose attendance causes concern.
- Persistent Absenteeism concerns those children who fall under the 90% attendance threshold during an academic year. In these cases, the DSL will contact parents to make them aware, and attendance contracts can be issued.
- Pupil attendance records generally form part of the information on senior school reference forms

## REFERENCES

This policy has been informed by:

DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2018)

DfE statutory guidance 'Children missing education' (September 2016)

**See also:** [Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy](#)

This policy will be reviewed annually			
Created: March 2010	By:	Jill Kelham, Vice Principal	
Latest Review: September 2018	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal	Changes made
Next Review: September 2019	By:	Joanna Copland, Vice Principal	

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Thomas's Attendance Register Codes

## ATTENDANCE POLICY APPENDIX 1



## THOMAS'S ATTENDANCE REGISTER CODES 2018-19

	Meaning	Examples of usage	Type of Absence
/	Present for morning	Pupil present in school at time of registration	N/A
\	Present for afternoon	Pupil present in school at time of registration	N/A
#	School Closed to Pupils	Half terms, holidays, bank holidays, school used as polling station. Also when year groups start on different days (eg Fulham Reception in Sept)	N/A
B	Educated Off Site	Eg physiotherapy sessions, Dyslexia Institute, Visits to Educational Psychologists or other SEND specialists.	Listed as present
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised leave of absence for exceptional circumstances not covered by other codes, eg compassionate – at a funeral / child performer All "C" absences need an explanatory note	Authorised
D	Dual Registration	eg in a hospital school but returning, so still on the school roll, or attending another school for a term	Authorised
E	Excluded	As stated, up to 6 consecutive days	Authorised
G	Family Holiday (NOT Agreed)	As stated	Unauthorised
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)	As stated	Authorised
I	Illness	Pupils sick at home (not appointments)	Authorised
J	Interview	School Visits, Open Days, external exams, school uniform days, travel to any of the former	Authorised
Late Button	Late (Before Registers Closed)	No L code used, just Late Button with Minutes (0 to 240)	N/A
M	Medical / Dental Appointments	As stated	Authorised
N	No Reason Yet Provided	As stated, although this should be followed up and code amended	Unauthorised
O	Unauthorised Absence	School not satisfied with pupil's reason for absence (similar reasons to C but not authorised). Also if no reason given for N after a period of time	Unauthorised
P	Approved Sporting Activity	Matches that take place outside normal games lesson times, eg a day tournament	Listed as present
R	Religious Observance	As stated	Authorised

U	Late (After Registers Closed)	As stated	N/A
V	Educational Visit or Trip	All school organised residential trips, including Daheim	Listed as present
X	Non-Compulsory School Age Absence	Reception half days for those born after 1st April	Authorised (not counted in statistics)
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Snow days, school closed due to unavoidable cause (gas leak) local or national emergency resulting in travel disruption that means pupils can't get to school	Authorised (not counted in statistics)
Z	Pupil Not Yet on Roll	Used for future classes, eg new Reception class lists in summer term	N/A

Codes **B**, **D**, **P** and **V** are listed as present for statistical purposes but in the event of a fire drill these pupils would be shown to be out of school