



Talent Education Trust

Attendance Policy

Approved by: Trust Board **Date:** 16th April 2024

Last reviewed on: January 2024

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Introduction – our aims

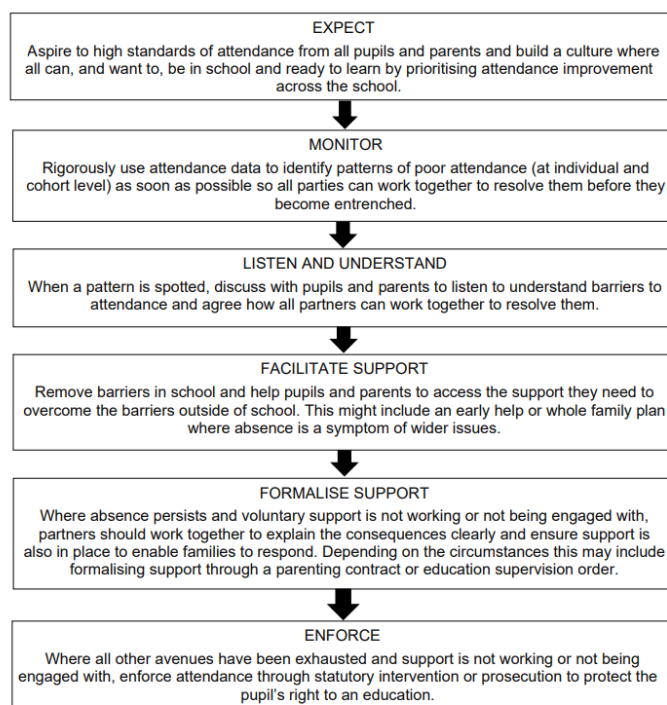
Our approach to improving attendance.

At APSOL, we believe children will get a well-rounded education if they attend school regularly, by participating in all the educational experiences and the broad curriculum offered at APSOL. We work in partnership with our families so that everyone places a high value in the education being provided including, academic, wellbeing, emotional and social.

Our attendance objectives

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- Is followed in accordance with the procedures in the flowchart below:



2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance 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.

Key members of staff

The Governing Board: Trustee committee for safeguarding and attendance

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
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The headteacher : Marta Correia

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
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The designated senior leader responsible for attendance: Freya Cioffi, Assistant Head for Inclusion/ SENCO

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Lucy Mathieson and can be contacted via email: lucy.mathieson@angloportugueseschool.org

The attendance officer: Susan Spinola, school office

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement.
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Susan Spinola and can be contacted via telephone number 0203 417 0905 or info@angloportugueseschool.org

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office: registers must be done at 9am and 1pm daily.

School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls/emails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer messages from parents to the Class teacher/ Head in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
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Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day and on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and keep the school up to date with child's wellbeing on each subsequent day of absence) and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day. Where these need to take place during the school day, parents provide the school office with a medical notification email/letter.

Pupils

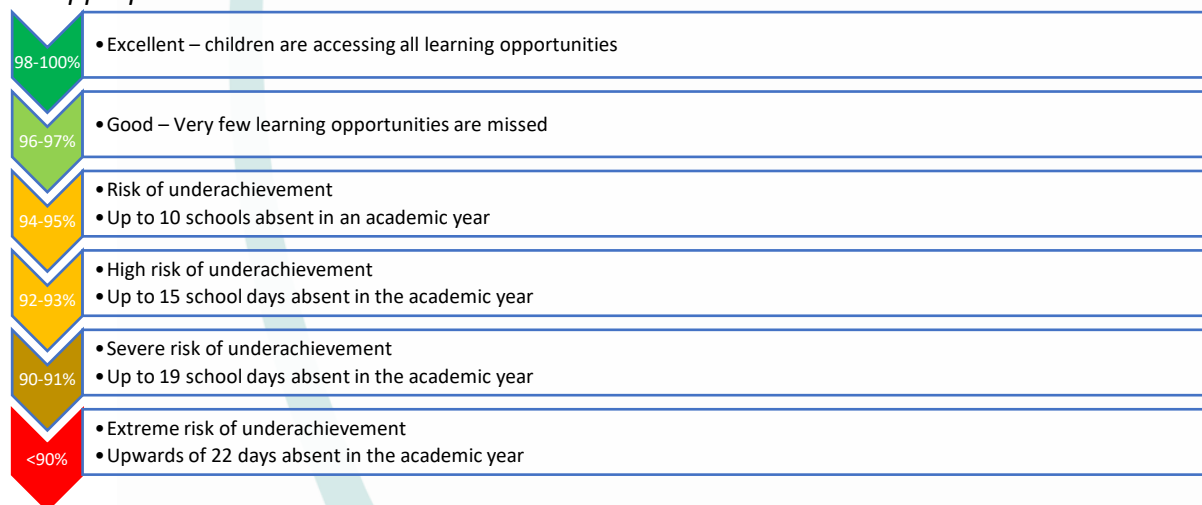
Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.

Expectations and recording attendance

1.1 What we mean by 'good' attendance

Include your school's attendance target, recent attendance data and the chart below, if appropriate.



1.2 Why regular attendance is important

Pupils who attend regularly (every day) are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes, are safer from risks in the community, such as exploitation and crime, as well as successfully transitioning from primary to secondary school, secondary school to further education, and the world of work.

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age: Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9:10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1:10pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school admin staff (see also section 7).

Notification procedures for APSOL: parents must email or call the school by 9am on the day of absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents can contact the school office to request absence form.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (this means that if a child arrives after 9:30am, they are marked absent for the morning session).

Following up unexplained absence.

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's

emergency contacts, the school may contact the EWO, social services or police if there are concerns.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels termly communication /reports.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

Exceptional leave is **NOT**:

- Availability of cheap flights and/or holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Parent/carer work commitments
- Poor weather experienced during school holiday periods
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term, half term.

Exceptional leave **MAY** be:

- Grandparent or other close relative is seriously ill – and you must leave in an emergency
- Significant trauma in the family recently and a holiday will benefit the child – this must be backed up by a doctor's letter
- A one-off, never to be repeated occasion that can only happen at that time, eg family wedding/funeral.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- 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

How we promote and incentivise regular attendance

Our rewards system

Some suggested text:

We use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to improve, reward and incentivise attendance and address absences. We make sure these systems are inclusive and appropriate for all pupils. Given the age of our pupils, communicating attendance with a personalised approach has more impact.

Robust school systems provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give us an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst more vulnerable groups, such as:

- ***children who have a social worker, including looked-after children***
- ***young carers***
- ***children who are eligible for free school meals***
- ***children who speak English as a second language***
- ***children who have special educational needs and disabilities***

Tailored support

Our approach

We monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that interventions are delivered quickly to address absence (eg. register inspections, code analysis, cohort and group monitoring, punctuality, lesson attendance across subjects and benchmarking).

We celebrate progress and achievements in improving attendance with certificates.

We use attendance, pastoral and SEND staff who are skilled in supporting pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance.

We create action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families, for example, children's social care and early help services. We also commission or deliver interventions in-house to improve attendance.

We monitor the impact of any interventions, making adjustments if necessary and using findings to inform future strategy.

Where interventions fail to address attendance issues, we identify the reasons why and, where appropriate, change or adjust the intervention.

We follow the local authority's Code of Conduct and procedures and make referrals for statutory intervention when voluntary interventions have not resulted in improved attendance in-line with our expectations – **see Section 6.5**.

In-school support

At APSOL, where there are concerns about attendance, the school will meet with the families and determine whether additional support is needed to improve the child's attendance, for example: school attendance lead, school nursing, SENCO, LAC lead, DSLs, etc.

Other services that can help

Other services that the school commissions to support with this include: Education Welfare Service, social workers in schools, Early Help.

Formalised support

School attendance panels / inclusion panels and parenting contracts

Meetings are organised with families to discuss attendance and parenting contracts are issued.

School attendance panels (SAPs) are meetings which parents are invited to discuss attendance concerns as part of an early intervention approach to improving attendance.

Education supervision orders

Where a voluntary early help plan, or voluntary parenting contract has not been successful, an Education Supervision Order (ESO) may alternatively provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping, and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

The supervisor of an ESO will usually be a professional already working closely with the family – or member of school staff.

6.5 Penalty notices and the local authority Code of Conduct

The point at which Penalty Notices for absence and other sanctions will be sought if support is not appropriate (eg. for an unauthorised holiday in term time), not successful, or not engaged with.

Legal action will always be a last resort and the school and other professionals working with families should explore all avenues to engage parents and maximise the opportunities for support available to meet a family's needs first.

Information about the Council's Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices can be found here:

[Penalty Notice Leaflet](#)

[Wandsworth Code of Conduct](#)

Useful websites

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[School attendance and absence - childlawadvice.org.uk](#)

[Absence from school | Contact](#)

[Illness and your child's education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Behaviour and attendance | Parentkind](#)