



# Tregony Community Primary School

Part of The Roseland Multi-Academy Trust

## Student Attendance Policy

(Non-Statutory)

Approved: Spring 2022

Next Review: Spring 2024

### Equality Impact Assessment - Policy Review

In reviewing this policy, we have tried to make a positive impact on equality by considering and reducing or removing inequalities and barriers which already existed. We have ensured that this policy does not impact negatively on the dimensions of equality.

**It is The Roseland Multi-Academy Trust's aim to always expect regular attendance.  
Regular and punctual attendance is vitally important in raising achievement and in developing the  
potential of all students.**

## **Introduction**

Regular and punctual attendance of students at school is, under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, a legal requirement. Parents are responsible for ensuring that any child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have (the term parent throughout this policy also refers to carer or legal guardian). It is also essential for students to attend school regularly in order to maximise the opportunities available to them.

For a student to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance. However, we do accept that illness is inevitable on some occasions. The Trust's attendance targets are for all students to achieve above 96% with attendance over 97% seen as excellent attendance. A level of attendance under 95% is not considered to be regular attendance. Any student with an attendance under 90% is deemed to be in "persistent absence". If a student falls or is close to falling into the persistent absence category, attendance actions are triggered. For example, one-to-one with students with the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer present, contact home by a member of staff, or invitation to parents to attend an attendance clinic with their child and the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer. These actions will be considered for all students and put in place to help and support the student and their family to improve attendance at school.

## **The Role of Parents**

Parents have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school, and that their child arrives and is collected on time. We expect all students to be in school by 8.50am in readiness for registration at 8.55am. It is a parent's responsibility to ring and inform the school by 9.30am as to why a student is absent and to provide any further information that the school needs. If no message has been received by 9.30am the school will telephone the student's first contact for confirmation of absence and reason. A follow up phone call may be made if the school deems this necessary.

## **Absence due to medical reasons**

When a student is absent from school due to ill health; a letter, telephone call, email (secretary@tregony.conrwall.sch.uk) or a personal visit to the school reception is required. Medical appointments during school time are discouraged. Where this is not possible, parents are requested to opt for appointment times at the start (before 10am) or end of the day (after 2.15pm) so that students do not miss a whole day of school. Evidence of a medical appointment should be provided whenever possible.

It is important to note that any student with an attendance level under 93%, or with repeated absences due to illness, will be required by the school (in conjunction with the Education Welfare Service) to provide medical evidence for any appointments or absences for medical reasons. Failure to do so will result in the absence remaining unauthorised on the school's register.

## **Understanding types of absence**

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the nature of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a legitimate reason.

These include:

- Illness
- Medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time – A 'Notice of Absence' form will need to be completed if time off school for an appointment is necessary (Appendix E).

- Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances. Please note that what is deemed as 'exception circumstances' is at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- Observation of religious festivals/celebrations.
- Covid isolation

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to Cornwall Council using sanctions and/or initiating legal proceedings.

These include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been authorised.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parent(s)/carer(s) and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never advisable to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending school. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Any student identified as having **attendance below 93%** will have all further absences **unauthorised** on school registers unless parent(s)/carer(s) provide evidence from a medical practitioner advising that the period of absence was necessary. In which case, providing the evidence is clear and concise in its content as to the nature of the condition preventing attendance, the absence for the evidenced period will be authorised.

Any child who has 10 sessions (5 days) or more unauthorised absences in one school year will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who may initiate statutory proceedings against the parent.

The procedure that is in place for working with students (and their families) who have low attendance is outlined in Appendix A.

### **Lateness**

A student arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her continuity of learning but also that of others. If a student arrives late for registration (registration begins at 8.55am) their teacher will record the lateness. The Headteacher may also request a discussion or send a letter to the parents of any child who persistently arrives late. Parents should be aware that in instances of late arrival after the close of the register at 9.05am, the morning session will be recorded as unauthorised; any accumulation of arrivals after the close of registration (unauthorised late) will be considered by the school for a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

### **Registers**

The register is an accurate reflection of a student's attendance and a legal document which may be used as evidence in court. The decision on whether or not to authorise a particular absence rests with the Headteacher. The class teacher will record the attendance of a child at morning registration and at the start of each lesson.

### **Leave of Absence**

Amendments to the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force on 1 September 2013 stating that Headteachers may not grant any absence for holidays during term time. Headteachers will not be able to grant **any** leave of absence during term time unless there are '**exceptional**

**circumstances'**. It is the Headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

**All** leave of absence requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher in accordance with the school's policy (by completing Appendix B attached). Requests must be made at least two weeks prior to the date of the intended absence. Requests for leave of absence will be denied when:

- a. A request is not deemed as an "exceptional circumstance", ie a family holiday.
- b. A student's attendance is currently under 90% or where by granting the leave request this will result in their attendance being below 90%.
- c. A student is participating in any statutory assessments.
- d. The school has organised and planned specific activities to enhance the curriculum and learning experience for all, i.e. school residentials.
- e. The Local Authority has begun legal proceedings.
- f. A student is seriously behind with their work and not making required progress.

Each separate application from parents for an 'exceptional circumstance' leave of absence during term time will be considered on its own merit, outside of the stated conditions above. A letter confirming whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised will be sent to the parent. (Appendix C, Appendix D).

If a student is taken out of school after a request for leave of absence has been refused, or if there is evidence of a holiday that has taken place where no leave of absence request has been submitted, the matter will be passed to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

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**If a student has poor attendance and this has not begun to improve through communication and/or support in school, then the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Service for support to improve attendance.**

## Appendix B: Leave of Absence Form

**FORM TO BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL WITH A MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS' NOTICE**

Amendments to the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1 September 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant any absence for holidays during term time. Absence may be granted where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated. In these cases, it is the Headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Please ensure you detail below the exceptional reasons for requesting to take your child out of school and attach supporting documents where appropriate.

At The Roseland we work hard to support all students, and their families, to achieve their best within their studies and wider achievements. An important aspect of this work is ensuring that each and every student has excellent attendance. This is because students with poor attendance are vulnerable to falling behind and tend to achieve less. Absence has a serious effect on our ability to work together with you to ensure that your child reaches or exceeds their educational potential.

Requests for leave of absence will be denied when:

- a. A student's attendance is currently under 90% or where by granting the leave request this will result in their attendance being below 90%.
- b. A student is participating in statutory assessments
- c. A request is not deemed as an "exceptional circumstance", i.e. a family holiday.
- d. The school has organised and planned specific activities to enhance the curriculum and learning experience for all, i.e school residential.
- e. The Local Authority has begun legal proceedings.
- f. A student is seriously behind with their work and not making required progress.

Please complete a separate form for each child you are requesting leave for.

Name of Student .....	Date of
	Birth.....
	Tutor Group.....

Leave requested from date ..... to  
date.....

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school:  
.....

Do you have a sibling request in another school? If so, please state which school:  
.....  
.....

Reason for term time leave request. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.  
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Name of Parent /Carer:  
.....  
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Signature: ..... .....	Date: ..... .....
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**Absences taken which have not been agreed will be marked as unauthorised;** these will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or other action.

**For School Use:**

UPN..... Attendance .....%

Previous Leave this Academic Year - Yes/No No. of days: ..... Authorised: Yes/No Unauthorised: Yes/No

Arrange to meet with Parent - Yes/No Meeting/Telephone Call with/by: .....

Headteacher's signature ..... Authorised / Unauthorised Coding B H O P  
C G

## Appendix C: Letter of Acceptance of LOA

*Date*

*Address*

Dear

**Leave of Absence – Student Name (Tutor)**

Thank you for your recent leave request form.

I am able to confirm that your child's leave of absence has been authorised from *time on date to date*, for the purpose of *reason*.

Requests for leave are never taken lightly and are only granted in exceptional circumstances. In taking this decision I have considered *name's* overall level of attendance and the impact the leave may have on statutory examinations and tests.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs Kate Douglass  
Headteacher**

## Appendix D: Letter of Refusal of LOA

*Date*

*Address*

Dear

**Leave of Absence – Student's Name (Tutor)**

I am writing regarding your request to take *student* out of school on *date* until *date*.

The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for students in 'exceptional circumstances'. Here at The Roseland, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence. We therefore consider each request on its own merit, taking into account purpose, attendance history and study commitment.

Under the circumstances, we regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If *student* does not attend school on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If you decide to still take your child out of school, without permission, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to Cornwall Council who may decide to take legal action against you. A penalty notice can be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and / or custodial sentences.

The Roseland is committed to maximising the education of all its students and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

**Mrs Kate Douglass**  
**Headteacher**



Appendix E: Notice of Absence Form

**Notice of Appointment**

**This form is for notification of medical or dental appointments only.**

Please note, if you are requesting any other kind of leave you will need to complete a Leave of Absence form (available on our website).

Student Name	Tutor Group	Type of Appointment	Date of Appointment	Times Student Will be Absent from School

**Please ensure that you attach a copy of the appointment card/letter to this form.**

For Office Use Only

Recorded on SIMS

Appointment approved & acknowledged

If the appointment is over more than one 24 hour period, it will need to be approved by the Headteacher.