



Tittensor CE (VC) First School Attendance Policy 2020

This policy is guided by the Department for Education document: 'School Attendance : statutory guidance and departmental advice' October 2014

Principles :

- Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.
- Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.
- This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.
- All children should be in school , on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable

School Responsibilities :

- We will promote positive behaviour and attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials and will recognise good attendance appropriately
- We will work with parents to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance and will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Workers where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.
- We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all pupils through ensuring parents and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern.

Parents or Carers Responsibilities :

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment :

- The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams - The research is based on data from all schools in England going back several years.

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



- The results are very clear – missing even small amounts of time from school can have a significant effect on achievement - For example, at the end of the 2012/13 Academic year 94% of pupils who were present all the time achieved 5+ GCSE A* - C or equivalent. Where attendance dropped to between 85 and 90% only 75% of pupils achieved these results. This equates to an absence of around 1 week per year during Years 10 and 11 and clearly illustrates the impact of attendance on attainment.
- The same pattern is also seen at primary school level, where pupils missing up to just 14 days of school in key stage 2 (normally age 11) are a quarter less likely to achieve level 5 or above in reading, writing or maths tests than those with no absence.
- Some Important Facts
- There are 190 school days each year and 175 other days for shopping trips, birthday treats, non-urgent appointments and holidays.
- One day a week absence is the equivalent over a school career of 2.5 whole years of education missed.
- 10 days holiday leave a year is the equivalent of two whole terms of education missed.
- 15 minutes of lateness a day equals one whole year of education missed.

Admissions Register :

- Our School keeps an admission register which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details including those of their parents and of their previous school.
- Our school keeps a record of attendance register entries for at least 3 years and inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register.
- A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they ;
 - Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
 - Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
 - Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
 - 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; or,
 - Have been permanently excluded.

Elective Home Education :

If our school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority via Entrust at enquiries@entrust-ed.co.uk of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

Procedures for Registration:

- Registers open in the morning at 8:45am. Children are marked *present* or *absent*.
- In the afternoon, registers open at 1pm for KS2, KS1 and Reception. Registers close 5 minutes after opening.
- If pupils arrive after the close of registration, they are given a *late* mark.



ABSENCE

If your child is unable to attend school or nursery for any reason please telephone or e-mail the school office to let us know. If your child has sickness or diarrhoea we ask that he/she does not return to school for 48 hours as this type of illness can be very infectious.

COVID-19

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new **continuous** cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Children must stay at home and you should follow the most recent COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection guidance.

PUNCTUALITY

The school day begins promptly at 9:00am and we ask that children arrive promptly (from 8:45am onwards) to ensure a positive start to their learning. Please ensure your child is not late for school. Children who arrive late are asked to report to the school office on arrival. Any late attendance is recorded on the end of year school report to parents. **Where staggered times are in place due to COVID-19, children will only be marked late when they arrive in school after 9.10am.**

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning would be issued. This has now changed to 10 marks, and late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued. You are therefore encouraged, where possible, to ensure your child attends school on time.

However, if your child is late, you must inform the school of the reason(s) why, as we may be able to offer you some form of advice or support.

Requesting a leave of absence in term time

From 1 January 2018, any period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. Your head teacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by your head teacher to the local authority.

The Headteacher can now request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when students are taken out of school for 5 or more days holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation

Absence due to illness

When your child is unwell, it can be hard deciding whether to keep them off school. Whether you send your child to school will depend on how severe you think the illness is.

When deciding whether or not your child is too unwell to attend school, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
- Would I take a day off if I had this condition?

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



Think carefully before keeping your child away from school for medical reasons. If they wake up saying they are unwell, consider whether the symptoms they have mean they need to stay at home. Do not keep your child away from school 'just in case' when they could be in class learning with their friends.

If you are unsure of whether to keep them off, how long they should be off for or when to send them back, then there is a useful link on our website 'should my child go to school?'

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Yourchildatschool/Pages/Illness.aspx> which links to the NHS information and guidelines. Please send your child to school as much as you possibly can and be assured that **if they are unwell we will look after them here and send them home if necessary.**

We usually ask parents to provide a written note, or telephone call, explaining your child's absence from school. In most cases, this should be sufficient evidence for us to authorise the absence.

We currently **authorise five days illness per academic year (10 sessions) before requesting medical evidence** for any future absences. This will remain the same for the time being but we will now also **request medical evidence for illness absence if your child has more than three separate bouts of illness.** Evidence may be a bottle of prescribed medicine, a doctor's appointment card (Your GP receptionist can provide this free of charge), a photocopy of a log of any telephone consultations or a specific letter from a doctor. Failure to supply evidence, if it has been requested, will result in an unauthorised attendance mark.

Legal Note

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The Educational Social Worker aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence
- Use of a Penalty Notice or formal warning of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence will be restricted to one notice/warning per parent of a pupil per academic year
- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion

Clarification on Penalty Notices

Penalty notices are issued if your child has ten sessions (five days) of unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absences can be for holiday, medical appointments and illness without requested proof, lateness and any other reason deemed unacceptable by the headteacher or Educational Welfare Officer. The cost of a penalty notice is £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 per parent, per child, if paid after 21 days and before 28 days. If a second penalty notice is issued within a two year period a fine is not issued, but you will be summonsed to appear in court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If you are summonsed under Section 444(1) of the

Tittensor CE (VC) First School

Act this carries a maximum fine of up to £1000. If you are summoned under Section 444(1)(A) of the Act, this currently carries a maximum penalty of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment



Register Codes used at Tittensor CE (VC) First School

Codes

Code	Description	Less
/	Present (AM)	/
\	Present (PM)	\
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg.)	B
C	Other authorised circumstances	C
D	Dual registration	D
E	Excluded	E
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	G
H	Family holiday (agreed)	H
I	Illness	I
J	Interview	J
L	Late (before registers closed)	L
M	Medical/Dental appointments	M
N	No reason yet provided for absence	N
O	Unauthorised Abs	O
P	Approved sporting activity	P
R	Religious observance	R
S	Study leave	S
T	Traveller absence	T

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O	Unauthorised Abs	O
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R	Religious observance	R
S	Study leave	S
T	Traveller absence	T
U	Late (after registers closed)	U
V	Educational visit or trip	V
W	Work experience	W
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Y
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	X
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	-
7	Illness due to Covid 19	7
8	Self-isolating due to Covid 19	8
9	Shielding due to Covid 19	9

Further information can be found on Staffordshire County Council website:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/Attendance/home.aspx>



Do you know how many days *you* have been away from school this term?

Before the end of each term each pupil will know which Zone you are in. It will depend on how many days you have been away from school.

Over 95% attendance puts you in the Green Zone. Well Done! This means that you are making the most of the opportunities on offer at school; you get the chance to join in as much as possible and make lots of friends.

You have the best chance of doing well at school because you don't miss any work and you get to do all the fun stuff too.

Under 95% but more than 85% attendance and you'll be in the Amber Zone. Your attendance might be a little lower than the other children because you have been ill or have had a holiday during school-time. You don't want to miss out so try to come to school as much as you can. If you do you'll soon be into the GREEN ZONE.

If you have had a lot of time away from school your attendance may be less than 85% and you could be in the RED Zone. If you're in the RED Zone you could be missing lots of important and fun things at school. You could get into the AMBER ZONE if you tried really hard not to have a day off and came into school everyday, next term.



Thinking of booking a holiday in term time?

Something to consider:

If you are away from school for a week you will miss approximately:



5 hours of numeracy



5 hours of literacy



10 hours of science, ICT, P.E, art, geography, history, D&T, R.E. and music.

- If you have a holiday of two weeks during term time and also a one week period of sickness in one year you will miss:

15 hours of literacy, 15 hours of numeracy, 30 hours of other subjects!

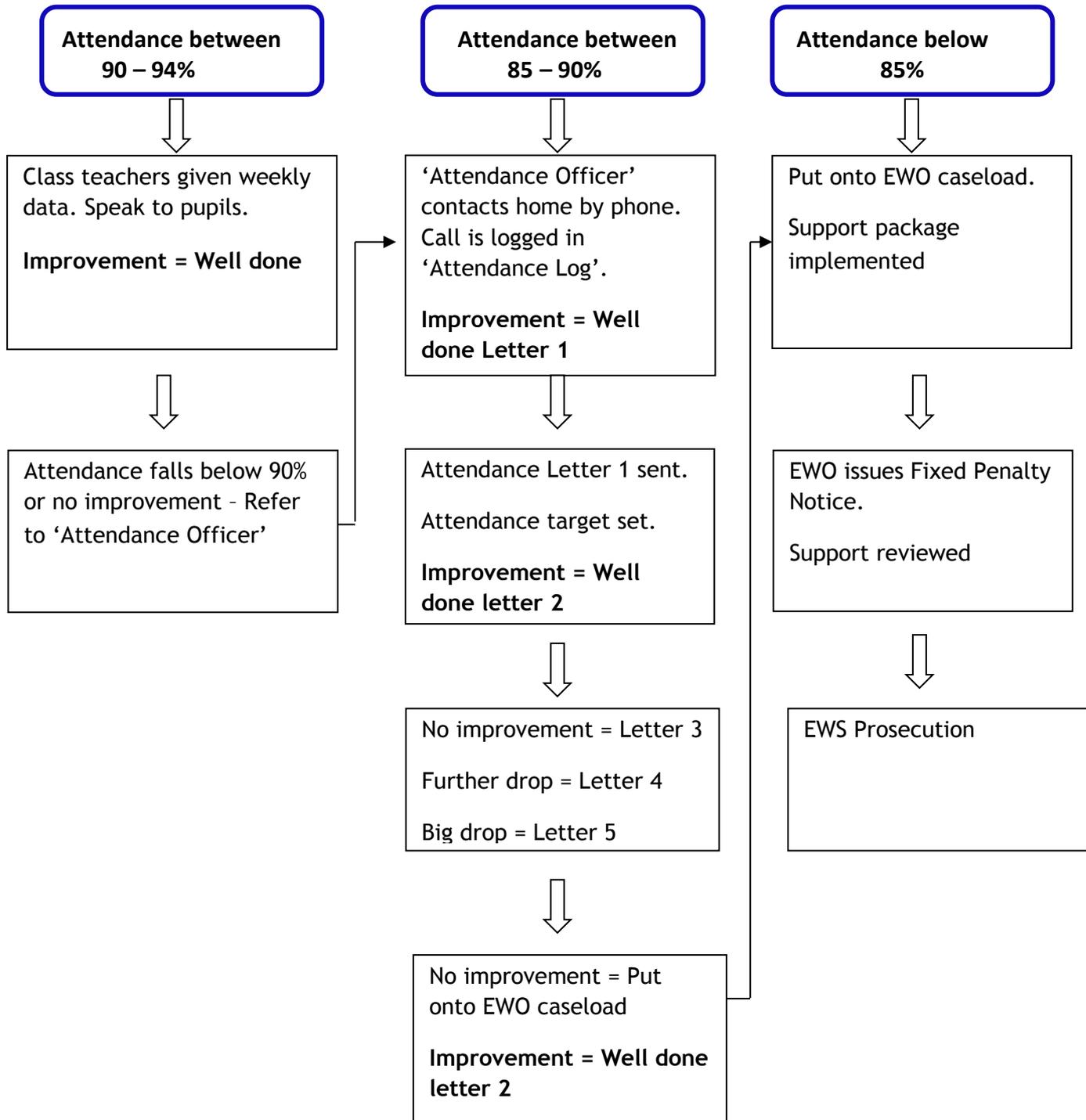
- Can you really achieve your best if you miss out on **60 hours of education** a year?

If you were to do this every year throughout your school life you would miss **36 weeks** of your education!

38 weeks = One School Year



Attendance Flow Chart





Refusing request for leave of absence during term time

Date

Dear Parent,

Thank you for your letter dated _____ requesting permission for _____ to be absent from school from _____ to _____.

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore pupils will only be given permission to take leave during term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application very carefully. Although I understand the reason for your request, I am unable to approve leave of absence in this instance as I do not consider it to be an exceptional circumstance. **Therefore, if your child is away from school during this period it will be recorded as an unauthorized absence.**

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorized. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct.

The Penalty Notice fine would be:

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21 – 28 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorized absence from school.

Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) is/are as successful as possible, is/are able to reach his/her/their full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her/their educational experience

Yours sincerely

**Miss G Craig
(Headteacher)**

Reason for Absence -Enquiry to Parent/Guardian



Date:

Dear Parent

Your child _____

was absent from school on _____

I would be grateful if you would let me know the reason for the absence by replying on this form and returning it to me as soon as possible. Should you not reply or give a satisfactory reason your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised and registered as such.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that parents are requested to contact the school on the first day of any absence before 9.30 am if possible.

Yours sincerely,
Miss G Craig
(Headteacher)

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Reply:

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer)

Date:

Tittensor CE (VC) First School

To the Parent/Carer of _____



Dear Parent/Guardian

Our Education Welfare Officer, has been into school to do a monthly check on the pupil attendance figures. Therefore, I am writing to you to inform you that your child's attendance is _____%, which is below the recommended figure of 95%. Please note that this could be due to a significant period of absence due to illness or a holiday from school. If this is the case and your child continues to attend school regularly, then obviously the percentage will rise. We will be monitoring all pupils monthly and will contact you again if there is no improvement.

If you have any concerns about this letter or wish to discuss it in more detail, please contact _____ (Our Attendance Officer) or myself.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



Dear Parent/Guardian

Further to our last letter to you regarding your child's attendance percentage, I am writing to inform you that we are pleased that their attendance has risen from-----% to-----%. It is important that your child's attendance is above 95% and we will continue to monitor the situation until this figure is reached. Many thanks for your support. The more your child is in school the better progress they will make.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to inform you that I have had another meeting with the Education Welfare Officer, to monitor pupils' attendance. We have noticed that there has been very little change in your child's attendance. Last month the percentage was---% and this month the percentage is-----%. Please be aware that we are continuing to monitor this carefully and should there be no clear improvement by next month, we will need to move to a more formal stage of the monitoring process.

We do not want you to send your child to school if they are ill, but we do want to make you aware that their attendance percentage is well below the 95% recommended by the Department of Education.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this letter, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to inform you that since the last register check by our education Welfare Officer, we have noticed that your child's attendance has dropped slightly from-----% to-----%. This is a cause for concern as we were hoping that it would rise. The Education Welfare Officer carries out a register check every month and it is important that she sees an improvement in your child's attendance by next month. Obviously, we do not want you to send your child into school if they are ill, but if they are not attending for any other reason, then please do not hesitate to contact our Home Links Worker----- who can offer you support. She is in school on-----

It is essential that every child's attendance is at least over 92% and should really be 95% to 100%. If you have any questions regarding this letter, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher



Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to inform you that since the last register check by our Education Welfare officer, we have noticed that your child's attendance has dropped from-----% to-----%. This is a cause for concern and we hope that you will ensure that your child's attendance improves as quickly as possible. These register checks are carried out every month and if there is no improvement the Education Welfare officer will visit and may start gathering evidence for a Court prosecution. In addition, Staffordshire Education Welfare Department are now issuing fixed penalty fines for poor attendance/punctuality and unauthorised absence. Unless your child's attendance improves quickly you may be issued with a fine.

It is essential that every child's attendance is at least over 92% and should really be between 95 and 100%. If you have any questions regarding this letter then please do not hesitate to contact the school office and make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



Dear Parent/Guardian

Our Education Welfare Officer, has been into school to monitor the registers. He has noticed that your child has had _____ late marks during this school year. It is very important that your child is on time for school each day, so please ensure that your child is in school before _____ am. Your child's punctuality will continued to be monitored on a monthly basis so please ensure that there are no further late marks in future.

Yours sincerely

Miss G Craig
Headteacher



Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to you because the Education Welfare Officer, has been in school to do a register check. She has been looking at the number of late marks for your child since the last time it was checked. Last time your child had---- late marks and unfortunately they now have-----late marks. It is essential that you ensure that your child is in school before-----am so that they are ready to come into school on time when the bell goes at-----am. Over the next month your child's punctuality will be monitored very closely and we will expect to see a significant improvement during this period.

If you would like support in ensuring that your child is on time for school everyday, then we can arrange for Irene Welford, our Home-School Support Worker, to contact you. If you have any questions about this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Miss G Craig
Headteacher

Tittensor CE (VC) First School



To the Parent/Carer of _____

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Our Education Welfare Officer has been into school to do a monthly check on the pupil attendance figures. As a result of his visit, I am writing to you to inform you that your child's attendance is _____%, which is significantly below the recommended figure of 95%.

We note that your child has missed _____ school sessions due to 'illness'.

When deciding whether or not your child is too unwell to attend school, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
- Would I take a day off if I had this condition?

Think carefully before keeping your child away from school for medical reasons. If they wake up saying they are unwell, consider whether the symptoms they have mean they need to stay at home. Do not keep your child away from school 'just in case' when they could be in class learning with their friends.

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As your child has been absent due to illness in excess of 10 sessions, we must now request medical evidence for any future absences due to illness - Evidence may be a bottle of prescribed medicine, a doctor's appointment card (Your GP receptionist can provide this free of charge), a photocopy of a log of any telephone consultations or a specific letter from a doctor.

Tittensor CE (VC) First School

Failure to supply evidence may result in an unauthorised attendance mark.



If we are able to support you in any way with your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to contact us

Kind Regards

Miss G Craig

Headteacher