TRURO SCHOOL

PREP SCHOOL

Pupil Attendance Policy (Prep)

A copy of this policy is published in the following areas:
The school's website
Link in staff handbook
Staff shared area
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Truro School Prep Pupil Attendance Policy

The Department of Education guidance on attendance can be found here:

Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026)

Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (Feb 2023)

Introduction

In order to fulfil our ambition of inspiring pupils to thrive – personally, spiritually, academically, socially and physically – and to ensure their ambitious and sustainable engagement with a broad and holistic education, it is imperative that every child attends school regularly to benefit fully from their education.

Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and children with poor attendance records tend to achieve less in all stages of their school lives.

Consistent and regular attendance is a requirement of the School. In exceptional circumstances such as prolonged illness, recuperation or compassionate circumstances that result in extended absence, the school will provide work and facilitate a pupil's return to full-time education within an agreed timeframe. This is at the Head's discretion.

The Government expects all schools to:

- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working in partnership with families to remove them.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Be particularly mindful of pupils absent from school due to mental or physical ill health or

their special educational needs and/or disabilities and provide them with additional support.

In addition to these School responsibilities, there is also an expectation that:

- Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school .[1]

- All pupils should be punctual to their lessons and other timetabled School activities.

School Day

Pupils are registered at the start of the morning and during the afternoon session each day.

All pupils are required to be in their form rooms by 08:35 to be registered by their form tutor.

All pupils are registered again after lunch each day, and sign out either with their form teacher at 3:40pm or at the end of the club or activities they are taking part in.

Pupils who remain on site after 3:40pm must either sign in to an after-school activity or join the Homework Club in the computer suite.

Notifying the School of illness

If your child is unwell or will be absent from school, please contact the office on 01872 272616 by 0900 each day of your child's absence. If the school has not heard from a parent or guardian, we will always telephone in order to ascertain your child's whereabouts.

The School may request reasonable medical evidence in cases where clarification is needed to accurately record absence in the attendance register or if there is genuine or reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. In most cases, a parent's notification of illness will be that evidence and can be accepted without question or concern.

Late arrival

Pupils are registered by their form tutor at 08:35am. It is essential that if a pupil arrives late, they sign in at the main reception prior to going to their class.

Exceptional leave

Requests for exceptional absence for any planned appointment or event should be made as far in advance as possible in writing to the Headteacher's PA email: prephead@truroschool.com. All

[1] Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Department for Education, 2026, Paragraph 9.

requests will be considered by the Head. We do ask for as much notice as possible and supportive acceptance if for any reason we feel that permission should not be granted. Pupils will only be granted leave to be absent from school in exceptional circumstances.

Requests for leave of absence on compassionate grounds or in exceptional circumstances should be made in writing and in advance of the proposed absence when possible. Absence in exceptional circumstances does not include birthdays, family holidays, days out as a special treat or other family celebrations.

In relation to absences for religious observance, the School will treat absence as authorized when it is due to religious observance on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the family belongs. Where necessary, the school may seek confirmation from that religious body that the day has been set apart for religious observance.

Whilst it is preferred that absence in term time is avoided, each request will be considered individually and decisions made based on several criteria including:

- The stage the pupil has reached in their educational career
- Whether there are compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement
- The pupil's academic record
- The unique nature of the absence
- If the request is to participate in a co-curricular activity such as sport or drama, the level of representation will be considered

In relation to request for absence for a holiday or recreational reasons in term time, these should not be expected to be recorded as authorised.

Provision of work during absence

For authorised absences of 5 days or fewer, the usual expectation is that the pupil will take responsibility for catching up with missed work on their return to School.

For authorised absences longer than 5 days, the form tutor will assist the pupil in catching up with missed work.

In the case of unauthorised absences, there is not an expectation that the School will provide work.

Working together to improve attendance

The Department for Education (DfE) expects every pupil attending school to maintain an attendance level of approximately 90% and above; any figure below this is deemed "poor attendance".

There is clear evidence from national data of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement. Of pupils who miss less that 5% of school nationally, 73% achieve five A* to Cs (9-4s), including English and maths. Truro School expects pupils to outperform national outcomes in academic terms and views regular attendance as one contributing factor to that ambition for our pupils.

Department for Education guidance states that where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to one day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools are

expected to sensitively consider the reasons for absence and put additional targeted support in place. Truro School endorses this guidance.

Parents / guardians / carers of pupils can expect to be contacted by the School when attendance falls below 92% so that the reasons for frequent absence can be better understood and any relevant help and support provided. Parents / guardians / carers can expect the School to remain in contact to discuss attendance whilst it remains below 92%.

The Truro School Parent Contract states that “the Head may in his or her discretion require removal of said child where a child's attendance or progress is unsatisfactory and, in the reasonable opinion of the Head, the removal is in the School's best interests and/or those of your child or other children”.

The role of the School Attendance Champion

The School Attendance Champion is the Prep School Deputy Head, James Frewer jaf@truroschool.com. The School Attendance Champion has overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in School and liaising with students, parents and external agencies as appropriate.

They are responsible for:
• Setting a clear vision for attendance
• Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence;
• Maintaining a strong grasp of absence data to focus the collective efforts of the school
•Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress on attendance, including the efficacy of the School’s strategies and processes
• Ensuring all teaching and non-teaching staff know the importance of good attendance
• Appropriately resourcing for attendance support

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) is a term referring to reduced or non-attendance at school by a child or young person.

Rather than the term ‘school refusal’, the term EBSA recognises that this avoidance has its source in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues. A growing body of analysis suggests that EBSA should not be thought of as a deliberate act of defiance, but instead as a complex issue inextricably linked with mental health and wellbeing.

This guidance applies to pupils displaying social, emotional or mental health issues that is affecting their attendance. It is not only for pupils who have a diagnosed mental disorder, or a disability or special educational need.

As well as working on universal approaches to mental health and wellbeing, Truro School recognises the importance of developing a planned process around EBSA for children and young people who require more targeted support.

The possible interventions in cases where EBSA is being displayed are:

1. In the early stages of a possible EBSA being identified and a pupil’s attendance is at or below 90%, a member of staff (normally the form tutor/class teacher) may meet with the

pupil and call home. If the pupil is not in School, a phone call home may be made. Any conversations would aim to sensitively communicate the School's high expectations for attendance and identify any potential risk factors that might be contributing to EBSA. Any reasonable adjustments or support put in place should ensure that the time the child spends in school is prioritised (DfE, Feb 2023). These will need to consider the individual circumstances of the child, mindful of safeguarding responsibilities as set out in KCSIE (2026). A Return to School Action plan may be required at this, or any other, stage of a pupil displaying EBSA.

2. If attendance does not improve, the likely next step would be a meeting with parents and pupil. Any actions or reasonable adjustments would be agreed by all parties and followed up in writing.

3. If attendance does not improve, the likely next step would be a meeting with parents to further assess the pupil's EBSA and barriers to attendance, consider the risk factors contributing and review current reasonable adjustments. It would be reiterated to all that the priority must be working towards fully integrating the pupil back into School. A prolonged period of absence may heighten anxiety about attending in future (DfE, Feb 2023).

4. If attendance does not improve, a home visit may be considered, organised with parents' prior consent. There would be further assessment of risk factors contributing, review of reasonable adjustments, barriers to attendance. It would be reiterated to all that the priority must be working towards fully integrating the pupil back into School. A prolonged period of absence may heighten anxiety about attending in future (DfE, Feb 2023). An Early Help referral may be appropriate at this stage; **however, we reserve the right to make an Early Help or MARU referral at any point and would consult with parents before doing so unless doing so is perceived to put the child at greater risk.**

Responsibilities of pupils

Pupils have a responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well and to arrive at School in time for registration (morning and afternoon) each day during term time.

Responsibilities of the School

The School has a legal responsibility for taking and maintaining an accurate School Register of all pupils twice each day throughout term time: once at the beginning of the morning session and once at the start of the afternoon session. Every entry in the Attendance Register must be preserved for a period of six years after the date on which the entry was made. The Attendance Register is recorded on iSAMS which maintains its own backup procedures for school data.

Registration Procedure

Form Teachers have primary responsibility for registering the children in their class in the morning and afternoon. It cannot be overstated how important it is for registers to be completed accurately and promptly. All pupils are registered electronically on iSAMS. The morning registration will be taken once the bell has rung at 8.35 am. The afternoon registration session takes place at 2pm, immediately after the Prep School children have returned to class from their lunch break and the register should be conducted by the Form Teacher or the Specialist Teacher who is taking the lesson after lunch. Form Teachers must register children following the absence code. Only children who are actually in the classroom at the time of registration should be marked as present,

even if the teacher has already seen the pupil in school earlier in the morning. If a pupil is absent, the class teacher must identify the code to be entered in the School Register on iSAMS.

Code	Description
/	Present am
\	Present pm
A	In school out of lesson activity
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
C	Other authorised circumstances
C1	Leave of absence - regulated performance or employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence - part time timetable
D	Dual registration
E	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
I	Illness
J1	Leave of absence - Interview for employment or transfer
K	Attending alternative provision arranged by the LA
L	Late (before registers close)
M	Medical/Dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
P	Participating in a sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend - lack of access arrangement
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examination
T	Travelling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late (after registers close)
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
X	Not required to attend - non-compulsory school age pupil
Y1	Unable to attend - normal transport not available
Y2	Unable to attend - widespread travel disruption
Y3	Unable to attend - unavoidable partial closure
Y4	Unable to attend - unavoidable full closure
Y5	Unable to attend - criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend - public health guidance /law
Y7	Unable to attend - unavoidable other than Y1 - Y6
-	All should attend / No mark recorded