



# Thringstone Primary School

*Believe and Achieve Together*

## Attendance policy

Approved by: Sarah Baxter

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### 1. Aims

At Thringstone Primary we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-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.

### 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.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### 3.1 The governing board

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

The designated governors for attendance are: Sarah Baxter and Ian Carpenter and can be contacted via the school office email: [office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk)

### **3.2 The headteacher**

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
- › Referring families to the Attendance Team at County Hall

### **3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

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 Cheryl Hammersley and can be contacted via the school office email: [office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk) or via the school number: 01530 222489

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

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

The attendance officer is Mrs. Smith and she can be contacted via the school number: 01530 222489 or email, via the school office: [office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk](mailto:office@thringstone.leics.sch.uk)

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9.15am.

### **3.6 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Forward emails/transfer call information to the attendance officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time. All children to be in school by 8.50am

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence and 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
  - If you are running late, please call the school office by 2.30 at the latest.

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 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:

- 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.

The register for the first session will be taken by 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15am The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

### 4.2 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 9.00am or as soon as practically possible by calling/texting the school office staff (see also section 7).

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.

### 4.3 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.

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.

### 4.4 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
- Where a child is repeatedly late, the Attendance officer will contact parent/carer, to discuss reasons for lateness.

### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call or text 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 Social Services
- 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 involve the attendance team at County Hall.

### 4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels three times a year.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 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 compassionate grounds, e.g. terminal illness. 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 or the school website: [www.thringstone.leics.sch.uk](http://www.thringstone.leics.sch.uk). 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

### **Holidays in Term Time**

- Parents have no entitlement to take their child on a holiday during term time. All requests for absence during term time must be made in advance and will be considered on an individual basis.
- In the first instance, parents/carers must complete an exceptional leave of absence request form and with relevant details.
- Parents/carers will be then asked to attend a meeting with our Attendance Officer to discuss the nature of the absence.
- We will then confirm the outcome of this meeting in writing.
- We have an obligation to review all requests and, should the absence still take place where permission has not been granted, the appropriate action may result in a fine.

## **5.2 Legal sanctions**

The local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

- Please communicate regularly with school if you are finding things difficult. All our staff, including our Family Support Worker/Attendance Officer (Mrs. Aileen Smith), Family Behaviour Support Worker (Ms. Lindsey Woodward) and School Counsellor (Mrs. Verna Hill) are here to help and support you.
- Wraparound Care is available for Breakfast Club (7.30am until 8.50am) and K and C Kids Cabin (3.15pm until 5.30pm or 5.00pm on a Friday).

Each half term, children with 100% attendance will be awarded a certificate in an assembly. Children with 96%+ attendance at the end of a term, will be awarded a certificate in assembly. Parents of children with 100% attendance at the end of each full term, will be invited to a celebration assembly.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

The school attendance officer, Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will monitor pupil absence on a weekly basis. Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. If a pupil's absence goes below 95% we may contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will insist on a meeting with the Headteacher to resolve. We may use Local Authority support to meet with parents. Further legal action may be taken.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. If a child is a persistent absentee (90% or below), and we have had no response by 9.30, we will record the absence as unauthorized and a member of staff may make a home visit.

If you are late collecting a child on a regular basis, then the matter will be referred to the attendance officer (Mrs Smith) in the first instance. If this continues to be an ongoing concern, we will offer a referral to Children and Family Wellbeing Service, who may be able to help with practical advice.

### **7.1 Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

## 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school ➤ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Positive behaviour for learning policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school

<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to halfterm/bank holiday/INSET day



## Exceptional Leave of Absence Application form

Name of pupil.....Year Group.....

Dates requested ..... to .....Total number of days.....

You are urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Following government guidelines, we can only grant leave for exceptional circumstances. Please note that an unauthorised leave of absence could result in a penalty notice being issued.

Applications to the Headteacher for term time holiday will be considered individually using criteria as detailed in our attendance policy.

### Reason for Request

Signature of parent / carer..... Date .....

Signed.....  
(Headteacher or Designated Attendance Officer)

Authorised YES / NO  
Date:



**THE PARENT/CARER/LEGAL GUARDIAN OF: \*\*\*\***

Dear

**RE: FORMAL WARNING IN RELATION TO YOUR FAMILY HOLIDAY REQUEST**

I write in response to your recent request to be permitted to \*\*\*\* on a family holiday during term-time from xxxxx to xxxx

New government guidelines, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, prevent Head teachers from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday during term-time does not fall under the category of 'exceptional circumstances' and I am therefore unable to grant leave of absence for your family holiday request.

As a result, I must inform you that, should you disregard my decision and \*\*\*\* have absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday, Leicestershire County Council may be advised of this matter and may be requested to issue Penalty Notices in line with their policy.

The parent(s) of any child who has absences recorded as a result of an (unauthorised family holiday/persistence absence) will each be fined £60 which must be paid within a 21-day period. Failure to pay the fine(s) within this timescale, will result in the fines being doubled to £120 which will need to be paid within 28 days of the original fine being issued. If the fine(s) remain unpaid after the full period of 28 days has expired, parents may face legal action under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

It is hoped that you will take serious consideration of the information outlined above and reconsider your plans to take a family holiday during school term-time.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher





Date

Address

**LETTER OF CONCERN - ATTENDANCE**

\*\*\*\*\*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dear

I am writing to advise that the attendance of \*\*\*\*\* this academic year is \*\*\*\*\*%. This means that \*\*Name\*\* has missed \*\*\*\* sessions which is the equivalent of \*\* days.

There is clear evidence of attendance under 96% negatively effects a child's performance and success. The government expects all children to have attendance of 96% or above each academic year.

We will be monitoring \*\*\*\*\* attendance and expect to see an immediate improvement. If you need any support with \*\*\*\*\* attendance please contact the school office so we can work together in ensuring the best outcomes for \*\*\*\*\*.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher





**Thringstone  
Primary School**

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Date

Address

**FURTHER LETTER OF CONCERN - ATTENDANCE**

Pupil Name

Dear

Further to my previous letter dated ----- in which I expressed concern regarding ----- attendance, I am disappointed to see that ----- attendance has dropped to ----- . As you are aware regular attendance at school is essential and should be no less than 96% each academic year.

Parents and carers are responsible by law for making sure that their children attend school regularly, are on time and are not absent without good reason.

In view of your child's current level of absence I would like to invite you to a meeting in school. A Senior Leader or the Attendance Officer from the school will be contacting you to make an appointment to meet. In the meeting we will discuss the reasons for the absences and then together we will draw up a plan of action to remedy the situation.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Date

Address

**FURTHER LETTER OF CONCERN - ATTENDANCE**

\*\*\*\*\*  

---

Dear

I am writing to inform you that despite the school supporting you to improve \*\*\*\*\* attendance I have no option other than to refer the matter to the local authority.

Further to my previous letter dated \*\*\*\*\* in which I expressed concern regarding \*\*\*\*\* attendance, I am disappointed to see that \*\*\*\*\* attendance has dropped to / remained at/ not improved. As you are aware regular attendance at school is essential and should be no less than 96% each academic year.

In the absence of any contact regarding any difficulties I will be left with no alternative but to refer \*\*\*\*\* attendance to the pupil services court team at Leicestershire County Council for legal action to commence under section 444 of The Education Act 1996; failure to ensure regular attendance of your child. You will receive documentation in the next few days from the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher





# Thringstone Primary School

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Date

Late Arrival at School

Name:

Dear ,

I am writing to inform you that xx has been late xx times this academic year, during the period up to and including xx.

I do appreciate that slow traffic and other factors can contribute to children being late for school but please be aware it can be distressing and disruptive for children when they are late. It may also impact on their first lesson.

Therefore, can I remind you of the importance of punctual attendance at school and request that you ensure that your child arrives at school on time in the future. Pupils are expected to be in class ready to start learning by 8.50am.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix 8



**Thringstone  
Primary School**

*Believe and Achieve Together*

Date

Persistent Lateness – arrival  
Name:

Dear ,

I am writing to inform you that «Forename» has been late xx times to date this academic year, during the period up to and including xx. I am disappointed to see xxx's punctuality has not improved since I wrote to you last.

Therefore, can I remind you of the importance of punctual attendance at school and request that you ensure that your child arrives at school on time in the future. If no improvement is made you will be invited to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Attendance Officer to discuss ways we can help support you regarding punctuality.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

