



Mount Tamar

Aspire – Adventure – Achieve

Attendance Policy

Version Control

Policy Prepared by: SLT

Document Name	Meeting Submitted	Summary of Changes	Date for next Review
Attendance Policy v1	ESLT March 2014	Policy Re-written	Bi-annual – Spring 2016
Attendance Policy v2	ESLT March 2016	Minor amendments	Bi-Annual – Spring 2018
Attendance policy v3	SLT spring 18	Addition of Mental Health and updated Aspire procedure	Bi-Annual – Spring 2020
	SLT spring 2020		Bi-Annual – Spring 2022

Mount Tamar School strives to provide a teaching and learning environment that will maximise the emotional health and well-being of all its pupils and staff and hence motivate regular attendance.

The school is aware that in order to safeguard pupils effectively, they need to be regularly attending school. (Please refer to Safeguarding Policy).

Consideration, however, should be given to the fact that some pupils arriving at Mount Tamar may have been out of school for some considerable period of time, or may have been on a negotiated "restricted timetable". In these cases, some gradual reintroduction may be the best way ahead. Such measures will form part of that pupil's profile.

Rationale

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children and young people to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards the school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children and young people. We will also make the best provision we can for those children and young people who, due to ill health, are prevented from attending. Under the Education (Student/Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the school is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records:

- which children and young people are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether the absence was: Authorised or Unauthorised

Children and young people's attainment and achievement depend on regular presence in school. Any absence leads to missed learning opportunities and other experiences, and may cause difficulties with social relationships. It may also lead to a threat to the welfare of our pupils or to opportunities for anti-social behaviour.

Only when a pupil is in school can a true responsibility be taken for safeguarding all the interests of the pupil. School attendance is seen as a 'whole school issue'.

Encouraging good attendance is the shared responsibility of the school, the Parent/Carer, the pupil, partners in the Local Authority and the Police. Parents/Carers have a responsibility to see that their children and young people receive appropriate education and it is the responsibility of the Local Authority, through its Inclusion, Attendance and Welfare Service, to ensure that this happens.

Aims, understanding and principles of good attendance

- To support school to maximise the achievement of all children and young people.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if children and young people are to benefit fully from academic, personal and social opportunities, which are offered to them within the school.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the school and encouraging children and young people to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.

• School will take appropriate action to promote good attendance. Understanding that non-school attendance is a safeguarding issue.

Other factors which affect attendance include:-

- Pupils who 'disappear' from home for periods of time,
- Frequent changes of address, coupled with frequent changes of telephone / mobile numbers (with a subsequent delay in arranging transport).:
- Attendance at a detention centre
- Being moved with one parent to a refuge
- Moved by Social Services for a temporary period
- Court appearances
- CAMHS Appointments
- YOT involvement
- Failure to engage
- Mental Health

In order to maximise the level of attendance the school uses the service and expertise of not only the EWO Service, but other agencies as well, such as School Transport, YOT (Youth Offending Team), Social Services, etc. A list containing telephone numbers and addresses of contacts is kept and continually updated. At KS4 the school has developed an extended curriculum involving partnership working with several providers, for example:

- Youth Service
- North Prospect Garage
- Blue Screen IT
- Street Factory
- Bike Space

We have developed our own offsite centres to better support those pupils who find it difficult to attend the main site.

We aim for the pupils to commit to the long term goals of school. Linking in with the want to do, succeed thereby developing their motivation and giving them hope?

As a school we support pupils with understanding why being at school is important for the immediate and for life after Mount Tamar. We aim to provide pupils with a variety of different employability experiences and opportunities with various partners. In having these experiences pupils develop a sense of self worth and motivation to aspire for their futures. It helps them see how and why being in school is important to their future.

Day to Day Attendance Issues

1. Our Offsite Centres contact reception daily with the attendance register either by email or telephone. If reception have not heard by 10.15 then reception phone the centre
2. Two registers are kept within school, one for attendance and one for admissions – via the Arbor
3. All class teachers or a Learning Support Assistant take the register each morning and afternoon after lunch on Arbor

4. The attendance register must distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil is absent without an explanation provided beforehand, e.g. Dr's appointment, interview etc. then a phone call is made by the office on the first day of absence. Any information regarding absence should be given to the School Receptionist.
6. If the pupil is a LAC then the Director of Inclusion is informed immediately and a telephone call is made to social services on the same day.
7. If no information is received by day 5 of absence, the EWO is contacted. Liaison with the EWO in these circumstances is in line with Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.
8. The EWO will usually then pay a home visit.
9. If there is an attendance issue with a certain pupil or family then a Plymouth Education Welfare Service Referral Form will be filled in and this will be emailed to the EWO to action.
10. During the monthly visit the EWO will check the attendance data and meet with the Director of Inclusion and act accordingly.
11. Pupil reports sent to parents should include information on the pupil's attendance record, showing the number of authorised and unauthorised absences.

What the school expects of its Pupils:

- To attend regularly.
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day and ensure they arrive promptly to each individual lesson

What the school expects of parents/carers

- To fulfil their parental responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time. Parents/carers should be aware it is their responsibility in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient full time education suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have.
- To ensure that they contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend (within the first hour of the start of the school day).
- To ensure their child arrives on time
- To avoid medical appointments during the school day unless absolutely necessary.
- To contact the school whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To seek authorisation from the appropriate person within the school for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside of the school day.
- To ensure the continuity of their child's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period.

- Work in partnership with school to take an active interest in their child's school career, to reinforce school policies/arrangements on homework, behaviour and approach to learning, to attend parent consultation evenings and other meetings where necessary.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies (as and when appropriate) to resolve issues relating to non-attendance.

What parents/carers and Pupils can expect of the school

- To maximise attendance rates as one of their key tasks, with clear procedures to identify and follow up absence and provide a consistent approach in dealing with absence and lateness.
 - Inform and involve Governors.
 - To nominate a member of the senior leadership team to be the Attendance Lead for the school.
 - Identify a range of strategies to deal with absenteeism and punctuality.
 - Support parents in ensuring regular and punctual attendance.
 - To respond promptly to any issue which may lead to non-, or irregular school attendance.
 - Be sensitive to the needs of the individual parent/carer. This will be reflected in the ways in which attendance issues are addressed, e.g. school should recognise that some parents/carers have difficulty understanding written communications. (School will also recognise the reluctance of some parents/carers to come into school).
 - Be alert to critical times – e.g. return to school after a period of long term sickness, a return after a traumatic event (either at home or school) or during the period leading to a phased transfer.
 - Produce whole school Attendance Policies and Procedures which are consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parents/carers.
 - To provide a broad and balanced education which is motivational and relevant to all pupils, and is dependent on regular attendance at school.
 - The encouragement and promotion of good attendance.
 - Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and basic analysis of attendance data will be undertaken regularly.
 - First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a valid reason.
 - Prompt action on any problems identified.
 - Close liaison with the Inclusion, Attendance and Welfare Service and other services and agencies to assist and support parents/carers and Pupils where needed.
 - Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record through an annual report home and regular updates throughout the academic year
 - All staff will maintain high expectations in relation to attendance, all Pupils will be made aware that their presence is compulsory and that their absence is noted.
 - Systems of reward for attendance as well as achievement and sympathetic reintegration strategies for long-term absentees.
 - Provide effective primary/secondary liaison.
 - Referral to the Inclusion, Attendance and Welfare Service where school intervention has failed to secure an improvement in attendance. Schools will always refer to Inclusion, Attendance and Welfare Service where a child is a Persistent Absentee pupil and there are no acknowledged reasons for absence by the school. Discussions with Inclusion, Attendance

and Welfare Service may start at 95 per cent, 10 unauthorised sessions or 5 days' absence with no contact.

Strategies for promoting attendance

- The school will offer an environment in which Pupils feel valued and welcome. The school's ethos must demonstrate that Pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will always be taken. Early intervention is often the key to preventing more frequent absences.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to Pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that learning tasks match Student's/Pupil's needs.
- Attendance data will be regularly collected and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement and support and inform policy/practice.
- Good attendance will be praised appropriately and rewarded.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, parents' evening, etc) of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who have been absent for whatever reason for an extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored reintegration programmes prepared for them.
- The school will have regular meetings with the Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those Pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- School will regularly analyse their data so that early identification can be made of Student's/Pupil's absence and especially those who are persistent absentees (or in danger of becoming a persistent absentee – PA). A Student/Pupil is considered to be a PA if their attendance falls below 90%. Attendance plans will then be put in place by tutors for close monitoring and intervention.
- Good attendance will be promoted with children through attendance awards made termly and annually to Pupils with 100% attendance in assembly and class and those with the greatest improvement in attendance.
- Consider target setting for individual units, classes, pupils etc.