**St Trea’s**

**Primary School**



**Attendance Policy**

Date Ratified by BOG: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Review Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Board of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Live Well, Laugh Together, Learn Forever!***

**Attendance Policy**

**Introduction**

Regular school attendance is crucial in raising standards in education and ensuring that every child can have full access to the school curriculum and reach their potential.

St. Trea'swill strive to promote an ethos and culture which encourages good attendance and where each pupil will feel valued and secure.

We believe that this can be achieved by providing a caring, stimulating and happy environment for each child where they learn to the very best of their ability. We hope that by helping children realise their potential, celebrating their achievements, respecting their differences and encouraging mutual respect for others, we will foster self-esteem and provide a sound foundation for their future life. To achieve this we actively encourage the involvement of parents, our community and agencies who can support and enrich the pastoral and curricular provision for all pupils.

**Aims**

1. To improve/maintain the overall attendance of pupils at St. Trea's Primary School.

2. To develop a framework that defines roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance.

3. To provide advice, support and guidance to parents/guardians and pupils.

4. To promote good relationships with the Education Welfare Service.

**Role of the School**

* The Principal at St. Trea's Primary Schoolhas overall responsibility for school attendance; class teachers should bring any concerns regarding school attendance to her attention.
* The Board of Governors provide support by reviewing school attendance figures and targets and ensuring it is placed as an agenda item at each meeting.
* Teaching staff regularly monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils by ensuring that attendance is recorded at the beginning of morning and afternoon registration sessions.

To enable our school to accurately record and monitor attendance in a consistent way we will adhere to the guidance provided in the Department of Education Circular 2023/11 which can be found in the following link:

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/Circular%202023%2011%20for%202023%2024%20Academic%20Year%20-%20Attendance%20Guidance%20and%20Absence%20Recording%20By%20Schools.pdf>

St Trea’s PS is committed to working with parents/guardians to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

**THE MANAGEMENT OF ATTENDANCE**

**Responsibilities of Parents**

The duty of a parent, in relation to the education of their children, is found in the Education and Libraries (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 and says:

***“The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable to his/her age ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs he/she may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”***

If a child is reluctant to attend school, the Principal should be contacted to allow any issues to be quickly addressed. A reluctance to attend, leading to an absence supported by a parent, can give the impression that attendance does not matter and may lead to the development of a poor pattern of attendance.

**We expect the following from parents:**

* To ensure children attend school regularly and punctually (please note: lateness is recorded at registration and on your child’s attendance record)
* To ensure that children arrive in school well prepared for the school day, with all necessary items and to check that homework has been completed
* To contact the school by telephone on the first day of child’s absence giving the reasons and expected duration of the absence if known

**Authorised Absence –** where the school has been consulted and can approve the

absence.

Examples include:

* Illness
* Unavoidable medical/dental appointments during school hours
* Bereavement
* Exceptional family circumstances

**Unauthorised Absence –** where the school cannot approve the absence.

Examples include:

* Family holiday
* Pupil is kept off school unnecessarily
* When no written reason is provided
* Pupils who arrive at school after the morning register has been closed at 10.00a.m. and are too late to get a mark for the morning session ( See PUNCTUALITY below )

**Responsibilities of Pupils**

At St. Trea’s Primary School, we encourage children to take increasing responsibility for themselves.

**We expect the following from all our pupils:**

* That they attend school regularly
* That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day

**Responsibilities of Governors**

The Board of Governors has the ultimate responsibility for school attendance but on a day-to-day basis this is delegated to the Principal. The Board of Governors has a responsibility to monitor school attendance and the effectiveness of the school’s Attendance Policy and Procedures. The Principal reports to Governors on these matters.

**Responsibilities of the School**

**Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

* Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
* Contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason
* A bi-annual summary of the child’s attendance and punctuality ( mid-year and on the annual report)

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY**

It is the responsibility of the Principal to:

* Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy as part of the annual review
* Ensure that each member of staff receives the necessary training and support to enable them to carry out their responsibilities

**MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

The daily register is completed by the class teacher at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. If a child is absent for a morning or afternoon session only, this will be recorded. This information is then recorded electronically on the Department of Education’s system. Each month attendance levels are monitored on an individual and a whole school basis by the class teacher and the principal.

**Procedures for Dealing with Unsatisfactory Attendance or Punctuality**

Where the class teacher has concerns about the level or pattern of a pupil’s attendance or punctuality, they are discussed with the Principal. Where deemed appropriate the Principal will manage the absenteeism using the following procedures:

1. Contact the parent and arrange an appointment to discuss the issue in order to agree a strategy for improving attendance and/or punctuality. (parents will be contacted when pupil attendance is close to 85%)

2. Should such contact fail to resolve the issue, the school may refer the matter to the Educational Welfare Service for additional direction and support.

3. As a normal rule, any pupil whose attendance falls below 85% during the

school year, will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service.

A failure by parents to ensure their child’s attendance can ultimately lead to prosecution.

**EVALUATION OF POLICY**

The effectiveness of this policy and our procedures in monitoring and improving attendance levels is evaluated in a number of ways:

* Parents are given a summary of their child’s attendance mid-year and as part of the end of year report.
* The Board of Governors monitors the effectiveness of this policy through Principal’s reports on attendance at Governor meetings.
* The annual attendance figures are published in the Governors’ Annual Report to Parents.
* An officer from the Education Welfare Service regularly monitors attendance levels on a whole school and individual basis.
* The Education Authority receives information on pupil attendance as part of the annual audit.
* The Department of Education monitors the school’s attendance statistics as part of the Annual School Census.

This Attendance Policy has been prepared in consultation with the teaching staff. If any parent wishes to comment or discuss any issue within this policy, please speak to the Principal.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_