



## **Attendance Procedures and Lateness / Punctuality Expectations**

Thomas Gainsborough School's attendance policy can be found on the Unity Schools Partnership Website in the policy section -

<https://www.unitysp.co.uk/policies/>

- <https://www.unitysp.co.uk/documents/attendance-policy/> (Attendance Policy)

Thomas Gainsborough School works in line with this policy and implements its own additional procedures for attendance and punctuality / lateness which are shown below.

The morning register will be called promptly at **8.45 am** during tutor time. Any student arriving after **8.45am** but before **9.15am** will be marked as late (no longer than 30 minutes after the calling of the register). Any student arriving after the registers have closed at **9.15am** will be marked with unauthorised absence for this lateness.

The afternoon register will be called promptly at **1.35 pm** at the start of lesson 3. Any student arriving after **1.35pm** but before **1.50pm** will be marked as late. Any student arriving after the registers have closed at **1.50pm** will be marked as unauthorised absence for this length of lateness.

**Please note that Thomas Gainsborough School like all schools in the Unity Schools Partnership will not authorise any term time holidays unless the circumstances are judged exceptional. The decision of the Headteacher or Deputy in absence is final.**

## Attendance

At Thomas Gainsborough School, we expect our students to attend daily and in a punctual manner. This will help us to achieve *Excellence: for each, for all*.

All stakeholders of TGS - students, families, teachers, student support, attendance support and governors are vital in working together mutually in ensuring outstanding attendance.

*"Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in secondary school" (Department for Education ).*

As well as academic benefits, consistent attendance also supports.

- The school values (Happiness, Respect, Confidence, Resilience, Positivity, Honesty)
- Self-Esteem
- Social interactions
- Reduction in anxieties (e.g. through missed work)
- Their commitment to future careers and work expectations
- Their reliability
- References
- Opportunities to develop socially and personally

If your child is ill or unable to attend, **please email us ([attendance@tgschool.net](mailto:attendance@tgschool.net)) or telephone (01787 375232 - Option 1) before 8.40am** to inform us of any absence. Please give the students name, tutor group and brief reason for absence, with an expected return date.

Thomas Gainsborough School operates a 'first day calling procedure'. This means if your child is absent at morning registration without our prior knowledge and we have not received any communication, then we will attempt to contact you. To support this process, please inform us immediately of any changes to your contact details.

As families are legally required to ensure that their children regularly attend the school, where attendance is not meeting our expectations, then we will use a range of measures to improve this. This can be through letters, parental meetings,

interventions from our early help offer (<https://tgschool.net/early-help-offer>), penalty notices or involvement of the school appointed EWO (Education Welfare Officer) as a small example. We will always look to support engagement with school. Letters sent are for supportive purposes and are part of our communication to make you aware of absence levels at an early stage. If you feel your child needs support, then please do contact at the earliest opportunity so we can assist immediately to ensure attendance is not affected.

Where positive attendance is evident, students will receive praise, merits, letters and certificates to recognise this.

### **Categorising Absence**

The school attendance team, including attendance administration officer will code the register for absences and the attendance team review student marks weekly. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Deputy Headteacher..

### **Punctuality and Lateness**

Students are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration and lessons on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Students who arrive after the register closes in the morning and during lesson 3 will be marked as unauthorised for that whole session as highlighted on page 1 of this document. A student who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence.

Students who have persistent lateness will invoke sanctions and loss of privileges at the school. For example this could be via loss of social times, direction to enrichment sessions to catch up on lost work, not representing the school in sporting or performance activities or attending The Prom. This list is not exhaustive and will be at the discretion of the Deputy Headteacher for individual cases of lateness and poor attendance.

**Post-registration truancy**

Post-registration truancy occurs when a student goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the student will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. TGS takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. Staff inform the Attendance Officer of a students' absence. The school site is searched and if not found parents are contacted. In the event of the parents not being contactable, the police are informed. Students, upon their return to school, are put into internal isolation.

**Holidays**

Families are also discouraged from term-time holidays and visits (please be aware there are at least 13 weeks of school holiday time in the year. Where these absences are not in line with the exceptional circumstances that can be granted leaves of absence, this period may be unauthorised or invoke a penalty notice. To request a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances, please complete the form which can be found at the top of this page under resources.

**Illness & Injury**

If your child becomes ill or injured whilst at school, they need to inform a member of staff. Staff will be best placed to support this, and the student services team will offer any medical support needed. Families will be contacted by student services if their child needs to go home. Students should not contact home if they are unwell. This is due to the school needing to be aware so they can support in the first instance and ensure there is no immediate issue that needs medical attention. This will also stop any distress being caused by a call home, especially if the issue can be rectified in school. Where a student contacts home and a parent/carer arrives at school to collect them without school communication, the absence will then be unauthorised.

## **School staff and Governors**

The governing body must make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at the school.

Staff who support attendance are as follows

- Tutor and Head of House
- Subject teacher and Leaders
- Attendance Administration Officer
- Learning Mentors
- Student Services Manager
- Assistant Headteacher - Student Support
- Deputy headteacher - Personal Development

## APPENDIX A

### Register Codes

1 CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending another establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances

## APPENDIX B

### REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES- Leave of Absence Form

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, as amended 2013 - Request for authorisation of a Pupil Absence Request for Exceptional Circumstances. **Please be aware that no term time holidays will be authorised.** Pupils absent from school for the purposes of going on holiday will be fined. The Headteacher's decision will be final.

Tutor Group:	Name of Student(s):
Date:	Name of Parent/Carer:
Dates (inclusive) of proposed absence:	
Please detail exceptional circumstances below:	
Signature of Parent/Carer:  Date Signed:	

*For school use only*

Approved:	Not approved:	% attendance within the current school year:
Reasons if applicable by school.		
Assistant Headteacher (Student Support) signature:		Date:

NB: Amendments to the 2006 regulations (2013) make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw pupils from school and, in law, must apply for permission in advance. The school will always want to discuss this with you personally. Please complete this form and send it to the Headteacher. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered by the school. This school will not authorise the request for absence from school if your child's attendance is below 90%. Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as 'Unauthorised Absence' and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued (see back of form for details of this).



**Exceptional circumstances are defined as:**

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- Exceptional significant family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis with you.

**The Headteacher will consider every above request individually, but the following will not meet the criteria set by the DfE:**

- Relatives coming to visit
- Holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Employers declining parents leave during school holidays.
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parent and does not meet the statutory defences mentioned below.

**Penalty Notices**

Through section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996, it has become possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices require each parent of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a penalty, currently £60.00 if paid within 21 days or £120.00 if paid within 28 days. If you do not pay the Penalty Notice, such cases you will be automatically summonsed to appear in Court for an offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 and can result in a criminal conviction recorded against you. Courts have a wider range of sentencing options, which could include a maximum fine of up to £1000. The only statutory defences to the offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons
- The LEA failed to provide transport when required to do so
- The absences were due to religious observance
- You had permission of the school or there was an unavoidable cause