

Monday 1 September 2025

The Toot Hill Approach to Attendance

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you are probably aware, the government has stressed the importance of high attendance over the last few days. It is therefore timely to remind you of our approach to attendance to support your child to succeed at Toot Hill.

In August 2024 government changes to unauthorised absences (Stricter Enforcement and Parental Responsibility) were put into place. **We are now writing to provide further guidance on what we mean by 'unauthorised absence'.**

We know that a strong school community is one where all children are present in school, on time, every day. By attending every day, your child will experience an exceptional number of educational opportunities across a broad variety of lessons and alongside this have the time to build relationships with those around them.

We do understand that each family's circumstances are unique, and you may sometimes be unsure as to whether your child should attend school. If you are ever unsure then please make sure that you communicate with student services and the pastoral team who can support and offer advice around this. To support parents and carers with understanding the differences in absence, we have compiled a key list of what counts as unauthorised absence and advice on how we can work together to support your child:

Reasons for Unauthorised Absences

What will be counted as an unauthorised absence?	What can be done to help in this situation?
Colds, coughs, headaches, nausea, hay fever, sore throats, migraines (unless diagnosed), period pains, cold sores or conjunctivitis, feeling sick/unwell	- Please check the NHS guidance: "Is my child too ill for school?" - Let school know your child is feeling ill so we can monitor them in school, if the illness is minor. - Please give them doses of recommended medicine before school, for mild illnesses. - If your child has been diagnosed with migraines by your GP, please let school know. - If your child feels unwell in school, they should report to Student Reception and a trained First Aider can support them (children must never use their phones to contact parents to say they need picking up).

No communication at all from a parent or carer	- Parents and carers have a duty to call in and explain their child's absence. - For family emergencies, please ensure you contact us about your situation, and we will offer support.
Unevidenced medical appointments (doctors, dentist, etc.)	Ask for a letter/email to confirm your child's appointment. You can send in a screenshot of appointment confirmations.
Holidays	Please always book holidays during the school holidays only.
Feeling tired after a weekend sports fixture, other extracurricular event or enrichment activity	Inform the school that your child is tired. We can monitor and support in school.
Physical injuries that could be catered for in school	If your child has a physical injury, contact school for support on how they can attend.
Your child refuses to attend school	- Call our Attendance Officer immediately and we can offer support. - If your child is experiencing friendship issues, or is worried about a past incident, send them to school and let us know. We can best support your child when they are in school.
Head lice and nits	Please treat your child's hair with a medical shampoo and call school to let us know.
Low mood or anxiety	- Call our Attendance Officer immediately and we can offer support. - If your GP, or other medical professional, has expressed concerns about your child's mental health please contact school for support.
Sunburn	Please apply appropriate after-sun cream and give doses of appropriate medicine. Contact us if you need further support.
Unevidenced and unagreed sporting/musical activities	All external sporting/music activities must be evidenced and agreed by the head/deputy head.
More than one day for religious observance	- Children are granted 1 day for religious observance. - Further absences would be unauthorised.
Lack of uniform or item is missing or broken	- We are able to provide your child with spare uniform for the day/week to ensure they do not miss learning. - If you require financial support, we can help. Please contact your child's Head of Year/Class Teacher to enquire about what support can be provided.
Collecting students from school without a valid reason	- School will contact you if it is felt that they need to be collected. For example, an injury that needs to be assessed by a medical professional. - If your child feels unwell in school, they should report to Student Reception and a trained First Aider can support them (children must never use their phones to contact parents to say they need picking up). School will contact you if they feel they are too unwell to be in school.

With the students at school, we talk about our key notion of 'Everybody Attends Every Day', whilst recognising and supporting students that are improving their resilience in attending school. A key theme running through the above guidance is 'Contact us for support'. Whenever there are circumstances beyond your control that affect your child's attendance, we will always be here to support and guide you

If you have a question about your child's attendance data during the year, then please contact student services studentservices@toothillschool.co.uk

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Eardley', written in a cursive style.

Dr C Eardley
Head Teacher