

# TORMEAD

## PUPIL ABSENCE

***This whole school policy also applies to the Early Years Foundation Stage***

### **Introduction**

1. All girls are expected to attend every session of the school term unless they are ill or the School has authorised their absence. Throughout this policy the word 'parent/ parents' should be taken to mean either parent(s) or those *in loco parentis*.

### **References**

2. This policy has been drawn up with regard to the statutory guidance *Children Missing Education* (DfE 2016).

### **Other Policies**

3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's:
  - First Aid Policy
  - Missing Pupil Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy
  - Supervision of Pupils Policy

### **Types Of Absence**

#### *Illness At Home*

4. If a girl is too ill to come to school, parents, should inform the School before the start of the school day at 8.25am. If a girl is absent frequently owing to illness, the School may ask for medical guidance to make sure that the right support is given. Should a girl need to take medication following an illness, this should be arranged via the Health Care Lead in the Senior School or the Class Teacher/ Junior School Secretary in the Junior School.

#### *Illness At School*

5. If a girl becomes unwell at School, she may only leave once permission has been given by a member of staff; girls should not contact their parents directly to request collection. In the Senior School, permission may only be given by the Health Care Lead or a qualified First Aider; in the Junior School, permission must be given by the Class Teacher, Junior School Secretary or School Health Care Lead. The member of staff giving permission should make the appropriate office staff aware that they have given permission. Parents (or emergency contacts, if necessary) will then be contacted by the School to arrange collection.

#### *Medical/ Dental Appointments*

6. The School will automatically authorise absence for routine or emergency medical or dental appointments. As much notice as possible should be given. In the case of emergency appointments, parents of Senior School girls are encouraged to make direct contact via text or email to inform their daughter (girls are permitted to check their phones/ iPads for texts and emails at break and lunchtimes); Junior School parents should ask the Office to pass on a message to their daughters.

#### *Other Circumstances*

7. Permission for absence on any other grounds should be sought, in writing, from the Headmistress.

#### *Unauthorised Absence*

8. If a girl is absent without good reason or permission, this will be recorded as unauthorised. If necessary, the procedures outlined in the Missing Pupil Policy will be followed and action taken accordingly.

#### *Long Term Absence*

9. Tormead is committed to supporting any girl who is absent from School on a long-term basis, defined as a period of more than five working days.

10. The Form Tutor or Head of Year should contact parents or guardians on or before the fifth consecutive working day of absence and put arrangements in place to support the girl. These may include arrangements for sending work home and providing a named contact (usually the Head of Year) in school to facilitate communication. Appropriate procedures will be put in place for girls who are taking public examinations.
11. The School will do all that is possible to ensure that any girl is reintegrated smoothly. There will be appropriate discussion between the School, the girl and her family to assist this process, but at all times the welfare of other girls will also be considered.

### **Methods of Communication**

12. Our recommendation is that parents use electronic notification via the Parent Message Centre where possible. This is the most convenient method for all concerned: it allows the School to process the information efficiently and it avoids parents needing to write an individual signed note to confirm each of their daughter's absences.

<b>Method</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Signed Note Required</b>
Parent Message Centre	Personal log-in	No
Email	Senior School Office: <i>absence@tormeadschool.org.uk</i> Junior School Office <i>juniors@tormeadschool.org.uk</i>	Yes
Telephone	School Office: (01483) 575101 Junior School Office: (01483) 796073	Yes

<b>Type of Absence</b>	<b>Notification Method</b>			<b>By</b>
	<b>PMC</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Tel</b>	
Illness at Home	Y	Y	Y	8.25am
Routine Medical/ Dental Appointment	Y	Y	Y	ASAP
Emergency Medical/ Dental Appointment			Y	ASAP

The School asks that notice of future absence be given as early as is practicably possible.

### **Parent Message Centre**

13. Instructions for setting up an account with the PMC are sent to all parents upon joining the School. Being password protected, the PMC allows the School to dispense with the requirement of a signed note to cover absences and is therefore the most convenient method to use.

14. In creating an account, parents will be asked to complete a form confirming that their password is known only to them and that they accept responsibility for keeping it private. Please note that each parent needs to sign the form.
15. Electronic notification can only be used for illness on the day or for notification of future medical appointments; emergency medical appointments and requests for extraordinary absence follow the existing systems.
16. Please also note that we cannot accept electronic notification of absence without a signed copy of this form. Regardless of whether or not parents have signed this form, absences reported by telephone or email must still be covered by a signed note

### ***Girls Leaving During The Day***

#### *Junior School*

17. Please see Supervision of Pupils Policy for girls in Reception. All Junior School girls in Years 1-6 should wait in the Junior School reception to be collected and signed out by a parent, guardian or appropriate adult (of which the school should be made aware). No girl is allowed to leave school unaccompanied during the day.

#### *Years 7-11*

18. All girls in Years 7-11 must sign out in the Wellbeing Centre before leaving during the school day. Staff should already be aware of the reason for their early departure; if this is not the case, then they will contact parents to establish it.
19. We would normally expect girls in Years 7-9 to be collected by a parent, guardian or other appropriate adult (of whom the School should be made aware) from the Wellbeing Centre. However, they, as well as girls in Years 10 and 11, may be permitted to leave unaccompanied, if permission has been given by their parent(s) and they are deemed well enough to do so.

#### *Sixth Form*

20. During the day the Sixth Form are permitted to leave the School premises if they are not expected in a lesson, pastoral period or assembly. They must sign out and in using the biometric terminals in the Sixth Form Common Room. For girls in the Lower Sixth, this privilege applies after the first half term at the earliest (i.e. when appropriate)
21. If a girl needs to leave School for reasons of ill health, she must have obtained permission from the Health Care Lead or a qualified First Aider. She must sign out using the biometric terminals in the Sixth Form Common Room. The School will not allow a Sixth Former who seems very unwell to leave the premises unaccompanied. We require that a parent either picks her up or grants permission to allow the girl to leave the premises unaccompanied.

### **Children Missing Education**

22. Tormead recognises that a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect; office staff will report to the DSL any cases of prolonged absence (five continuous days). In these instances, if a girl's absence from school still gives cause for concern after the steps of the Missing Pupil Policy have been followed and/or contact made with parents, the DSL will make contact with the appropriate local agencies. Should a girl fail to attend school regularly or be absent without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, the local authority will be informed, regardless of whether or not local agencies have already been informed. The School will provide a named contact to liaise with the agencies to participate in supporting the absent girl and attending any necessary reviews or other meetings.

External agencies might include:

Education Welfare Service South West Area	(01483) 517179
Surrey Police	(01483) 571212
Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	(0300) 470 9100

23. The School will inform the local authority of any case where a girl is to be removed from the admissions register where the girl:

- has been taken out of school by her parents and the School has received written notification that she is being educated outside the school system eg. home education
- has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school
- has been certified by the school Health Care Lead as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age (girls must attend school up to the last Friday in June in the academic year of their 16th birthday), and neither she or her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age
- is in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the School does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the School at the end of that period
- has been permanently excluded

The local authority will be notified as soon as the grounds for removal from the register are met, and no later than removing the girl's name from the register.

24. In line with local procedures, the School will also notify the local authority whenever a girl's name is removed or added to the admissions register at both standard and non-standard times for all girls of compulsory school age. This information will be sent immediately a pupil is taken off roll for leavers and within five school days for joiners, sending a new form for each data return.

#### **Review**

25. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Executive Group (EG) and made available to parents via the website.

**Date of Last Review:** 27 March 2019

