

# Waterbeach Community Primary School



## Attendance Policy

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## **IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE**

Waterbeach Community Primary School (WCPS) aims to work together with parents\* and the Attendance Officer (AO) to ensure that all children registered at our school attend every day and on time unless absence is unavoidable e.g. chronic health issues, exceptional circumstances.

Regular attendance at school is vital. Without it, the learning process becomes fragmented and unsatisfactory; put simply: absence means missed learning and potentially reduced attainment. It is a legal requirement that pupils of compulsory school age (term after child turns five) receive full-time education and this, with the exception of those educated at home or elsewhere, means regular attendance at school. Permitting an absence from school without good reason is an offence and irregular attendance leads to pupils missing important lessons and therefore not fulfilling their true potential. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% (persistent absence) each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning. Absence can also place children at risk and may result in them being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Therefore, staff and governors take the issue of attendance very seriously and will do all possible to consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all of our pupils. All members of the school staff have a safeguarding responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and lateness; with the Head teacher having overall responsibility in the monitoring of attendance and lateness of every pupil including those within specific and identified groups such as service families, young carers, PPF, SEND, FSM and CIC.

We aim to create an ethos in which attendance and punctuality are recognised and valued by the whole school. Outstanding attendance by pupils is recognised and celebrated throughout the academic year, with individual recognition at the end of each term through attendance badges presented during an assembly. However, this is done in a low key way as we wish to ensure that those absent through genuine illness do not feel they should have been in school rather than prioritising their health and recovery.

\*Throughout the policy the term parent(s) can, if appropriate, refer to carer(s) of any pupils.

## **AIMS**

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parent(s) in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- ensure parent(s) are aware of their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends WCPS regularly and punctually as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996

School attendance is subject to various education laws and legislation and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and guidance produced by the Department for Education. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

We provide 190 days of school per year recorded as 380 sessions (morning and afternoon sessions), 175 days of the year are available for holidays non term time. We expect pupils to be in school during these sessions and to be well presented, comfortable and ready to learn. Every day we start school promptly at 8.45am and finish at 15.15pm. There is a 45 minute lunch break.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school between 8.40am and 8.45am. Children are able to enter the school from 8.40am onwards and should make their way directly to their classroom. Pupils should not arrive before that time as we are unable to provide adult supervision. Doors are closed at 8.45am. Pupils who are not present in class when the teacher opens the register at 8.45am are late; however, if they arrive in class before the register closes at 9.05am they will be marked present using the late code, L. If pupils are later than 8.45am, they should enter school via the office with a parent signing them in via the pupil sign in system. Any pupil arriving after 9.05am without an unavoidable reason will be marked absent using the late code, U.

Any child who leaves school during the lunch break for a lunch at home, following pre-arranged home permission - usually in the form of a letter - is expected to return to their playground by the end of lunchtime.

Registration of pupils is considered to be a very important time. Registration has several aspects: it is a time for pupils to mark the official start of their learning for the day, it helps pupils realise the importance of punctuality and it is a legal requirement. Additionally, registration of pupils is the best way to ensure their safety during the day.

For these reasons, we treat registration very seriously and expect pupils and their parents to do the same.

## **REGISTRATION**

- Pupils are registered electronically at the start of the school morning (8.45am) and at the start of the school afternoon (12.45pm/13.15pm dependant on year group)
- The register will remain 'open' for 20 minutes from these times, during which, if a pupil arrives 'late' they will be marked as present for the session but by using the 'L' code.
- Any pupil who arrives after the register has 'closed', will be marked as absent for the session using the 'U' code and will lose the mark for the whole session.

Parents are expected to;

- Ensure their child arrives on time for registration.
- Inform the school of any illness. Parents may on occasion be asked to provide evidence in relation to the absence in order for the absence to be authorised. In situations where a recurring illness/medical need significantly affects attendance and access to education across the academic year, parents will be invited by letter to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the situation and the implementation of possible support strategies.
- Inform the school of any medical appointments during school time. Parents may on occasion be asked to provide evidence in relation to the absence in order for the absence to be authorised. An am/pm session could be unauthorised if a pupil is absent for a longer period than the appointment warrants.
- Inform the school of any other reason for absence.
- Inform the school of any reluctance to come to school so that any problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

School response when managing attendance;

In cases where this does not happen school has a safeguarding responsibility and once the registers have closed, will ring every contact, starting with priority 1, until a reason for the absence is known. Voicemail messages will be left if possible requesting parents to contact the school regarding their child(ren)'s absence. Text/email messages may be used if appropriate. If there is no response by phone it may be necessary to visit the home and carry out a welfare check in order to ascertain the whereabouts of the child(ren). If there is no response at a home visit a slip indicating the visit will be left requesting information on the absence. No response to an enquiry regarding a child's absence will be considered unexplained and will be recorded as unauthorised.

A copy of attendance, absence and administrative codes can be found in Appendix 1.  
A copy of the welfare check slip can be found in Appendix 2.

### **TERM TIME LEAVE**

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will NOT** be authorised during assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 attendance regulations (Appendix 1), holidays during term time **will NOT** be authorised.

The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- In **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a period of leave of absence.
- Where parents request leave of absence in term time due to exceptional circumstances they should notify the school well in advance to ascertain whether the school would view the reason for absence as valid or not. An application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, preferably no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date and prior to any booking or monies committed. Notification of absence is essential and enables the Headteacher to make considered decisions when authorising absences. Individual cases will need to be judged on their merits and fine judgements will have, on occasions, to be made. Parents will be informed of the Headteacher's decision by letter.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, the Attendance Officer may be notified and a Penalty Notice may be issued. If parents are not satisfied that the penalty notice has been referred appropriately they should discuss the case with the school.

If the school suspect Term Time Leave has been taken but the parent/carers have not informed the school we will send a suspected holiday letter to all parent/carers giving them an opportunity to clarify the reason for absence and provide supporting evidence. Failure to respond or provide supporting evidence for an authorised absence may result in a referral to the Local Authority for unauthorised leave from school.

A copy of the request for term time leave form can be found in Appendix 3.

A copy of the authorised and unauthorised term time leave decision letters can be found in Appendix 4.

A copy of the suspected holiday letter can be found in Appendix 5.

## **AUTHORISED ABSENCES**

The Department for Education has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences:

- When a child is ill or receiving medical attention;
- Days of religious observance notified in advance;
- Absence due to family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, serious illness).

There are other absences, such as “Approved Sporting Activity” that can be authorised and there will be events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school and professional discretion will need to be used in these cases about whether the absence can be authorised. The specific circumstances potentially encountered by military families, young carers, SEND and children with medical needs will be considered on a case by case basis.

We expect absences to be kept to a minimum: routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged **out of school hours wherever possible**.

## **UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES**

Unauthorised absences are those where:

- No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parent(s)
- The reason for the absence does not fall into one of the categories of authorised absence above.

The following activities are examples of what would be classified as **unauthorised**:

- Holiday
- Minding the house
- Caring for relatives
- Awaiting repair people
- Shopping
- A birthday or family celebration.

There are clearly some grey areas. The guidance makes it clear that only **truly exceptional** occasions should be classified as authorised.

Government guidelines make it plain that, in the final analysis, it is the **school via the Headteacher** that judges whether an absence is authorised or not. **A note from home therefore does NOT automatically make an absence valid/justified/authorised**. The Headteacher will make decisions as to whether an absence is authorised or not. It is the Headteacher’s prerogative to request that the parent(s) certificate short-term illnesses and to request a doctor’s notification in the case of long-term illness.

## **PENALTY NOTICE/PROSECUTION**

The Penalty Notice is a fixed sum of £60 per child, per parent (if paid within 21 days), rising to £120 (if paid after 21 days but within 28 days). After 28 days parents could be prosecuted for the offence of “irregular attendance” and could be subject to a fine of up to £1000.

Prosecution in a magistrates court could result in a fine up to £2500, a community order or a term of imprisonment of up to three months for each parent. A parenting order could be imposed.

The Education Act considers each responsible adult providing day-to-day care as a “parent”.

## **SCHOOL MONITORING ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

### **IF A CHILD’S ATTENDANCE FALLS BELOW 96%**

- The Headteacher will write to the parent(s) to inform them that their child(ren)’s attendance has fallen below 96%.
- If attendance does not improve the Headteacher will invite parent(s) to a meeting to discuss the situation and ways in which the school can support the family in getting the child(ren) to school every day.
- Attendance targets of 90%+ will be set to show improvement over a set monitoring period
- If the child(ren) continue to be absent (unauthorised) during the monitoring period and fail to reach 90%+ attendance, the Headteacher may refer the family to the Attendance Officer and this may result in a penalty notice and/or prosecution.
- After the set monitoring period, attendance will still be carefully monitored and referral could be made if required due to;
  - 8 unauthorised sessions over an 8 week period
  - 90% and below mostly unauthorised over a longer period
  - At least 3 consecutive school days unauthorised over a 4 week period due to term time leave.

## **SCHOOL MONITORING ATTENDANCE SYSTEM**

After an initial letter (Letter A) acknowledging reduced attendance through illness if applicable, the school follows an attendance monitoring system for notifying parent(s) of poor attendance:

- Letter 1 is sent to notify parent(s) that a child(ren)’s attendance has dropped below acceptable levels. Parents will be reminded of their legal duty and of the schools expectations.
- Letter 2 is sent if there is no improvement in attendance. It notifies the parent(s) of ongoing concern and contains a request for them to meet with the Headteacher for a parent contract meeting (PCM) to discuss issues and barriers to attendance. Letter 2 also notifies parent(s) that the Head Teacher has the right to unauthorise any absence due to frequent illness without the support of medical evidence. Parents will be reminded of potential action if attendance remains irregular. This letter is sent to both parents separately if applicable.
- Letter 3 is sent setting out attendance targets over a set monitoring period. It reiterates the need for medical evidence for absence due to frequent illness. It notifies parent(s) that Attendance Officer involvement may be requested and a penalty notice issued and/or prosecution considered if attendance does not improve. This letter is sent to both parents separately if applicable.

For children whose attendance is below 90%, due to absence prior to any current monitoring period, a letter informing parents of their child's attendance is sent for information purposes.

At the start of each academic year a letter summarising the monitoring system is sent to all parents for information purposes. Parents of children with attendance well below 96% in the previous year are also sent a letter outlining the school's expectations for their child's attendance in the forthcoming year and actions required.

Should punctuality become an issue the Headteacher will write to the parents to inform them offering help to address any associated issues. If lateness becomes significant the parent(s) will be requested to meet with the Headteacher to discuss solutions. If there is no improvement a referral to the Attendance Officer may be made from which a penalty notice and/or prosecution could result.

In situations where a recurring illness/medical need significantly affects attendance and access to education across the academic year (absence consecutive or summative), parents will be invited by letter to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the situation and the implementation of possible support strategies.

Allocation of work, if appropriate, will be dependent on the number of days consecutively absent as follows;

Up to five days absence – Assumption that not well enough to be able to complete work and recovery paramount at this point. If capacity to complete work then access to work available on the website.

Six – ten days absence - If capacity to complete work then access to work available on the website.

Eleven – fifteen days absence - If capacity to complete work then catch up work sent home by teacher.

Sixteen or more days absence – Meeting to be arranged to assess the situation, to create bespoke program of work as applicable and discuss re-introduction strategies.

A copy of these letters can be found in Appendix 6.

At any point the school may suggest completing an Early Help Assessment (EHA) form, with the parent(s) of pupil(s) who require support due to wider family issues that are impacting in various ways including on attendance. This would dispense with the formal letter process, providing a supportive rather than punitive measure. An EHA will be offered at the meeting scheduled in Letter 2 with the parent(s) decision being recorded. If an EHA is completed the school will allow appropriate time for attendance improvements to be made.

Completion of an EHA will not happen without prior communication with the parent(s) of a child.

## **ADMISSIONS/LEAVERS - CHANGING SCHOOLS**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school or do Elective Home Education (EHE) that they inform Waterbeach Community Primary School as soon as possible and complete a request for removal/deletion from the school roll. A pupil will not be removed/deleted from the school roll until the following has been received/confirmed dependant on the situation;

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate
- Attendance at the new school

- Written confirmation of intent to pursue EHE

A pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school or EHE reporting procedures will be followed as appropriate. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information and/or the admission process to a new school does not proceed adequately, the family will be referred to the Attendance Officer for a Child Missing in Education (CME) investigation. This may well include seeking assistance from Health, Social Care and Police colleagues or liaison with other external agencies.

New admissions notified to the school will be added to the school roll once the place has been accepted by the parent(s) and the child has actually started. Places offered but not accepted or where a pupil does not start will be investigated and if required a CME referral made.

A copy of the request for removal/deletion from the school roll can be found in Appendix 7.



## APPENDIX 1

### ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS 2006

#### ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE CODES

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting data/statistics through the School Census System and reporting to the DfE. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence.

##### Present at School

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

##### **Registration Code/\: Present in school / = am \ = pm**

Present in school during registration.

##### **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

##### Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an education nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

**Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site education activity are as follows:**

##### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

##### **Code D: Dual Registered – at another educational establishment**

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used for

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, but only when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

**Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved the school.

**Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

**Authorised Absence from School**

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

**Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:**

**Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

**Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

**Code H: Holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the legitimacy of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as

unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc rather than doctors' notes.

**Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

**Code R: Religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

**Code S: Study leave**

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

**Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at school.

**Unauthorised Absence from School**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

**Absence codes are as follows:**

**Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O: Absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

## **Administrative Codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

### **Code X: Not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

### **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

### **Code Z: Pupil on admission register**

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **WELFARE CHECK SLIP**

DATE

This is to inform you that as \_\_\_\_\_ is/are absent from school today and we have been unable to contact you to ascertain a reason, we have visited your home address.

Visits are made to hopefully make contact, check if a child/ren or their family requires assistance in anyway, and if possible, to facilitate getting the child/ren into school.

When you receive this message, it would be appreciated if you could call the school on the number above to confirm the reason for absence and, if appropriate, whether your child/ren will be coming to school today.

Thankyou.

**APPENDIX 3**

**REQUEST FOR TERM TIME LEAVE FORM**

Date: .....

**Request for Term Time Leave of Absence**

**To be submitted at least 4 weeks before you wish the absence to begin**

Child/Children's Names: .....

Class Teacher: .....

Sibling(s) Name(s) in another school: .....

Name of School: .....

I would like to request that my child be granted leave of absence from school on

...../...../..... to ...../...../.....

This term time absence is unavoidable because

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Signed: ..... Parent/Carer Date: .....

For Office use only:

A      UA

C      O      H      P      V      R      G

AA      UAA      % Att

Dear Parent/Carer

The revised guidance from the LEA advises schools that leave can only be granted at the discretion of the Head Teacher on the basis of exceptional circumstances, and that, as a general rule, leave for the purposes of a family holiday should not be regarded as an 'authorised absence'. The LEA recognise that the issue of term-time holidays can often be a difficult one, but schools are now being asked to ensure that the amount of teaching and learning time lost to 'in term' holidays is kept to a minimum. Headteachers are asked to deal with each request on an 'individual' basis and to take into account the following considerations;

- **The likely impact upon the child's educational progress and social stability**
- **The nature of the absence**
- **The timing of the period being requested**
- **The notice given by parents**
- **Any particular individual family circumstances**

In addition, the LEA strongly urges Headteachers not to grant authorised absence for 'long weekends' (i.e. absence on Fridays and/or Mondays). Leave of absence for some family events, such as funerals, weddings etc., may be granted but not for birthday/anniversary celebrations. Medical/dental absences are granted authorisation.

A Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority for single event absence of at least 3 consecutive school days where the absence is unauthorised as it is neither exceptional nor unavoidable. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

If 3 or more term time leave Penalty Notices are issued over a 3 year period then prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may be considered as an alternative to a Penalty Notice.

Where a parent takes a child out of school during term time for an extended period (20 days or more) not authorised by the school, prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may also be considered.

Please complete the attached request form giving as much information as possible and return it to the school office with at least four weeks' notice.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**APPENDIX 4**

**AUTHORISED TERM TIME LEAVE LETTER**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

**Request for Term-Time Absence**

Thank you for your request for a term-time leave of absence for                      on the .

I am able to authorise this absence, having taken into account the individual circumstances of the request.

This will bring your children's authorised absences during this educational year to:

Sessions:

Percentage attendance to date:

Yours sincerely

J GREEN

Head Teacher



**UNAUTHORISED TERM TIME LEAVE LETTER**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

**Request for Term-time Absence**

Thank you for your letter requesting term-time leave of absence for on the

While I understand your situation I am sorry to tell you that I am not able to authorise your request as it does not meet the Government guidelines for exceptional circumstances.

Should you still decide to continue to take your child out of school during term time please note that the absence will be recorded as a "G" denoting unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised term time leave absences are recorded a Penalty Notice fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

If 3 or more term time leave Penalty Notices are issued over a 3 year period then prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may be considered as an alternative to a Penalty Notice.

Where a parent takes a child out of school during term time for an extended period (20 days or more), not authorised by the school, prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may also be considered.

This will mean that will be absent for sessions.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

## APPENDIX 5

### SUSPECTED HOLIDAY LETTER

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I am writing about                      absence from school from     to                      .

From information received from other sources we believe that this was due to a family holiday. You have not followed the correct procedure for requesting leave of absence during term time.

We would be grateful if you could confirm the reason for the absence within 7 days of the date of this letter so this period can be recorded appropriately on the attendance register. However, if the absence was not due to a family holiday and it was due to illness, please provide medical evidence to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days                      absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised family holiday.

If unauthorised absences are recorded a Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

If 3 or more term time leave Penalty Notices are issued over a 3 year period then prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may be considered as an alternative to a Penalty Notice.

Where a parent takes a child out of school during term time for an extended period (20 days or more), not authorised by the school, prosecution in relation to Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may also be considered.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

## APPENDIX 6

### ATTENDANCE MONITORING SYSTEM LETTERS

#### LETTER A

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

Following a recent attendance review I understand that                    has had authorised absence due to illness and that you called the school to keep us informed. I would like to thank you for following the school procedure regarding attendance. We would just like to let you know how this has affected                    attendance which is currently at    %

As this letter is purely to inform you of the statistics you do not need to take any action, and I hope you understand that school has a duty to keep you updated.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**LETTER 1**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

Following a recent attendance review I am writing to advise you that school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to and as a result we are becoming concerned that is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

I will continue to monitor attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure we have been informed of relevant details, appointment information etc so appropriate support can be put in place if required.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which are having an influence on attending school regularly, or if you are concerned about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Support can be offered through completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) which school can assist with. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice fine being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

Enc. Record of Attendance  
School Attendance Leaflet

**LETTER 2**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I am writing to inform you that attendance is still causing concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance could affect progress and we need to meet with you.

Please could you attend a meeting with me to discuss this matter further on the date and time below. This meeting will give you the opportunity to explain the percentage of attendance and will help the school maintain an accurate picture. If you are unable to attend please let us know so that an attendance meeting can be rescheduled.

Date:

Time:

Should attendance remain irregular, the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Absence due to a self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance, but where there is absence frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illness, medical evidence will be required.

We look forward to meeting you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support our children in making good progress and I hope that you will work with us to improve attendance you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**LETTER 3**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I appreciate that you were able/I am sorry that you were unable to attend/rearrange the meeting scheduled for as requested in my letter dated

It was/has been noted that attendance is now at %.

Due to this the following targets need to be met;

- **attendance needs to show improvement to 90%+ over the next NUMBER week monitoring period - to**
- **Prompt communication with the school for any absence.**
- **Medical evidence is to be supplied to explain absences due to illness.**

Absence due to a self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but where there is absence frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illness, medical evidence will be required.

If targets are not met or are unlikely to be met within the monitoring period the case may be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement action to be considered, and could result in a penalty notice and/or prosecution.

Support can be offered through completion of an Early Help Assessment (EHA) which school can assist with.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**INFORMATION LETTER**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I understand that NAME has been absent from school. We would just like to let you know how this has affected NAME's attendance which is % at the end of TERM

This letter is purely to inform you of the statistics, and I hope you understand that school has a duty to do so.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

## SUMMARY LETTER

Dear parents/carers

### ATTENDANCE LETTERS

I would like to remind everyone about the three-letter attendance monitoring system that we follow. The Government have made it clear to all school leaders that the number one priority for schools is to ensure that children attend school in the coming year.

It is a statutory duty for parents to ensure that children attend school. In primary school, some children miss, on average, three weeks of school per year. That is half a year of school by the end of year 6. Consequently, the Government has put strict restrictions on schools with regards to the level of absence tolerated, and all attendance must be regularly monitored, and schools must answer for their data to the local authority and Ofsted.

Head Teachers cannot authorise holidays. **Please note that the Department of Education has now authorised the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. Previously there had to be evidence of historical absences but this is no longer the case and has been implemented nationally with effect from 1st September 2017.**

As a result of such monitoring requirements, we have developed an attendance monitoring system.

- **Letter A** – This is an individual reminder that your child's attendance is falling. We recognise that it may be because of illness but it lets you know the figure we have on our school system. It is usually sent out if periods of illness have resulted in attendance falling below 96% and it is only for your information.
- **Letter 1** – This letter is a clear reminder that, regardless of reason, your child's attendance is now below 96% and causing concern. It is written formally and is part of the evidence trail to ensure that school has followed a process. We know that most children will not need Letter 1 as absence is due to illness.
- **Letter 2** – This letter shows that your child's attendance has now fallen below 94% and absence is becoming/is persistent – there may be numerous reasons for this. It invites you to meet with me. This is an informal meeting so that we can go through your child's attendance record together. My experience of these meetings is that parents tell me about their child's illness or other reasons for their absence. Once I have had this face to face discussion, we talk about monitoring attendance in the immediate future and set attendance targets. This is individual for each case. Meeting together allows us to talk through the reasons for absence and for the school to offer support if required. It is easier to do this than continue to write letters.



- **Letter 3** – This letter is sent after a scheduled meeting, laying out the attendance targets of 90%+ required over a set monitoring period. If attendance continues to fall over this monitoring period, is mainly unauthorised and goes below 90%, school will refer to the Local Authority Education Welfare Team which may lead to a penalty notice and/or prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. In these final instances, actions are out of the school's influence.

This process has developed over the years to give parents multiple chances to improve children's attendance. All early letters sent out by school are done so as information. Attendance at school is important and I know that some parents may feel offended by these letters, but the system exists to ensure that all children have a fair chance to get a decent education. A child who has 95% attendance at the end of the school year has missed 10 days of schooling. We also understand that if your child has been ill for a while this absence is not in your control. Obviously, we do not want children to attend school if they are sick. If you feel worried about this, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Mrs Rutherford.

We know that every child's attendance can dip at certain times in their school career. It is our job to monitor this, talk to you and offer support or to enforce the statutory duty afforded us by the Government, if this is needed. The letters and meetings are meant as support and assurance for both sides.

We do hope that you understand that the system exists to support EVERY child and we know all cases are different. The letters are an important part of the system, as are the meetings and we ask for your support in ensuring fair provision for all our children.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

## EXPECTATION LETTER

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

This letter is being sent to you as a reminder of the importance of regular attendance at school.

In the last year your child's overall attendance was NUMBER%. This is well below the expected 96% and as a result we will be conducting enhanced monitoring for your child. This will involve asking you to:

- Call school when your child is absent
- Provide us with medical evidence when frequent absence is due to a medical reason including self-limiting illnesses.

In addition, we will:

- Check your child's attendance on a weekly basis
- Submit information for penalty notice consideration if attendance is consistently very low. This could lead to a fine and potentially to a court appearance.

I understand that this letter may feel alarming but it is important that we give you clear expectations for the coming years. We have your child's best interest in mind as we know that learning time lost cannot easily be regained.

I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**LETTER LATENESS**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I have noted during a recent attendance review that your child is beginning to show a pattern of lateness.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's education, I would welcome the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss this.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN  
Head Teacher

**MEDICAL NEEDS LETTER**

DATE

ADDRESS

RE:

Dear

I am writing to express concern at NAME's school attendance as it has fallen to NUMBER %, with recurring illness a major contributing factor. Clearly I do not wish NAME to be in school if they are unwell, and any absence due to illness is considered authorised, however, I am concerned that NAME is missing a significant part of schooltime. This is impacting on their ability to keep up with the social and academic learning opportunities within their year group and make the progress I would wish to see.

The school wishes to support you in improving NAME's attendance and I would appreciate it if you could attend a meeting with me, on the date and time below, to informally discuss the situation and see how we can work together.

Date:

Time:

The meeting will allow you to discuss any particular circumstances that school may not be aware of which are having an influence on NAME attending school regularly and help us understand any of your concerns.

It would be appreciated if you could inform the school office if you can attend or not.

Yours sincerely

J GREEN

Head Teacher

**APPENDIX 7**

**REQUEST FOR REMOVAL/DELETION FROM THE SCHOOL ROLL**

**Parental notice of child(ren) leaving the school and requiring removal from the school roll**

**Please complete as appropriate;**

**Name of Child(ren):**

**DOB(s):**

**Class(es):**

**Current Home Address:**

**Current Telephone Number:**

**Current E-mail Address:**

**Leaving Date:**

**Reason for Leaving:**

We are moving	Date: New Home Address: New Telephone Number:
We are moving abroad	Date: New Home Address: Country:
I have registered my child(ren) at another school	Start Date: Name of School: Telephone Number:
I am going to educate my child(ren) at home and have informed the school in writing	Start date:
Other:	

**Parent/Carer Printed Name:**

**Relationship to child(ren):**

**Parent/Carer Signature:**

**Date:**