

Attendance, Punctuality and Absence Policy

Date	Review Date	Headteacher	Chair of Governors
Sept 2023	As required	Mrs S Reay	Ms L Winton

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school.

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Statement of Intent

Clipstone Brook Lower School believes that good Attendance is essential to facilitate teaching and learning. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We understand that barriers to Attendance are complex and that some pupils find it more challenging than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school and strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. The routines children develop around Attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good school attendance. Good Attendance is essential because: statistics show a direct link between educational achievement and absence levels. Regular attendees make better progress, both socially and academically. Regular attendees find school routines, school work, and friendships easier to maintain. Regular attendees find learning more satisfying. Regular attendees find transition points easier to manage.

Irregular Attendance and lateness can have a significant impact on achievement. The consequence can mean that children can get behind in work, lose the thread of the learning unit

being taught, become de-motivated and not feel part of the school, lose friendships, and be anxious about returning to school.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good Attendance and recognise the impact our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

Promoting and modelling high Attendance and its benefits.

Ensuring equality and fairness for all.

Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils, and parents.

Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

Building solid relationships with families to overcome barriers to Attendance where possible.

Working collaboratively with other schools in the area and other agencies.

Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude, to any SEND they may have, either by regular Attendance at school or otherwise.

Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The Headteacher oversees and reviews the school's attendance processes and monitoring.

The Family Worker meets with identified parents and carers to discuss ways to improve Attendance in a supportive way and sets targets for improvement.

The office team is responsible for the administration of Attendance.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2023'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education
- DfE (2023) 'Providing remote education

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Checking that the school is monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.

- Checking that the school promotes the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Checking that attendance training is in place for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set realistic goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data termly.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy where relevant.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring that Children Missing Education procedures are in place and are regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.

Staff are responsible for the following:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgment and knowledge of individual pupils to decide whether welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, take the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
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The family worker and office staff, where relevant, are responsible for the following:

- Communicating with pupils and parents concerning attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil deleted from the admission and attendance registers (Office manager)

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to school.

Parents are responsible for the following:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school and provided details regarding absence in a timely manner.

- Providing medical evidence if requested.
- Requesting leave of absence in a timely way and completing a school request form.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason which has not been granted.

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has **granted leave**
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has **granted leave**
- An absence due to a family emergency- the school should be informed as quickly as possible to **grant leave** of absence.

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which **have not** been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at **8:40 am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by **8:35 am**. Pupils will have a morning break for 15 minutes and a lunch break at which will last an hour – pupils will be expected to have returned from each break and be ready to recommence learning at the stated times.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

The morning register will be marked by **8:40 am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

The morning register will close at **8:55 am**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.

The afternoon register will be marked by **1:20 pm**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

The afternoon register will close at **1:25 pm**. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before **8:55am** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide a full explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day. Please contact attendance@clipstonebrooklower.co.uk

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by **the close of the morning register** to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by **telephone call** as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
 - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
 - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
 - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school MIS system.
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- **On the third day absence**, if your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, the school is required to consider currently implementing the Child Missing in Education procedures as set down by Central Bedfordshire Council. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends, wider family and making a home visit. **Following ten days' absence**, the school have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the Child is Missing Education. Staff from the Access and Inclusion Service will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. As stated in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future.

Where a pupil is absent for more than **three** school days in a row, or more than **10** school days in **one term**, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).

The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness and persistent absence (PA) is a concern.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will inform the LA, on a **half termly** basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below **90 percent**, the attendance officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parents. In the first instance, this is likely to be with the school's family worker to identify shared actions to reduce absence, or in cases where absence continues to be a concern (85% or below), a meeting with the attendance officer from the LA and with the headteacher.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such

- as:
- Children in need
 - LAC
 - Young carers
 - Pupils who are eligible for FSM
 - Pupils with EAL
 - Pupils with SEND
 - Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school.

These include:

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support where possible. The family worker will lead weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support by making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- The family worker will need to discuss with the SENCo whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils who have rates of absence of over 50 percent, and will work with the LA and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Attendance Register

The school uses **Integris** to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register **at the start of each school day** and **at the start of the afternoon session**. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for **three years**.

Punctuality (drop off and pick-up)

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. The start of school is an imperative part of learning to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late, they can miss time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing. This may then lead to possible further absence.

The school day begins at 8:40 am. All pupils are expected to be in class by 8:40 am for morning registration is at 8:40 am and this closes at 8:55 am. All lateness is recorded daily and the book held in the office. Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with the Department of Education guidance. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non- attendance or lateness be necessary. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an unauthorised absence. If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive a code M for authorised absence. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentist appointments should be made outside of school hours or during school holidays. Evidence of medical appointments may be required where this is a frequent occurrence.

Pupils who are consistently late, are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness are unauthorised absences and maybe be subject to legal action (see Section 6 for further detail). Parents/carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted by the family worker to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved.

Please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies including both the Police and Children's Social Care.

Parental Absence Requests

Parents/ carers will be required to request absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason and in line with government expectations.

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances for up to 10 days. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents/ carers to complete a leave of absence request where possible, at least **four weeks** prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school which will be no more than 10 days. The school is **not** likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays. **Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:**

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10 percent** for any reason in the prior year or current year and the pupil's absence is defined as a persistent absentee.

Unauthorised Leave

If term-time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions of absence reaches the thresholds in Central Bedfordshire Council Penalty Notice Code of Conduct (10 sessions of absence during 12 school weeks), parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice or other legal action in accordance with the code (see Section 6 for detail).

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time. For national guidance refer to: 1 School attendance, 2016, located at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance

Unauthorised absences are likely to include:

- parents allowing their child/ren permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained

The school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

Causes for Concern

If absence or lateness continues to persist, parents/carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and agree mutual support where possible. If support requested is not appropriate, or if parents/ carers fail to engage in these meetings, and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in any 12-week period, the school will ask Central Bedfordshire Council to issue parents with a Penalty Notice. Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

If your child misses 39 or more sessions of absence across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as a **persistent absentee**. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child, by creating gaps in their learning and can in some cases point towards potential safeguarding issues.

Penalty Notices

Central Bedfordshire Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices states that where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12-school week period, the school may request a penalty notice be issued. The code of conduct is a statutory document that ensures that the powers for this legal sanction are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority. Penalty Notices can be issued when a pupil has taken holiday during term-time and the absence has not been authorised by the school, providing the school has taken into account DfE guidance to inform its decision-making where the school believes that the sanction will lead to an improvement in attendance, e.g. persistent late arrival at school; parents' failure to attend/cooperate at a parenting contact meeting.

Parents and carers will be alerted about the possibility of a penalty notice being requested for unauthorised absence, via a letter to the parent/s. If more than one parent has parental responsibility, both parents will receive a Penalty Notice. In situations where there is more than one pupil in a family with irregular school attendance, multiple penalty notices can be issued to the same parents during the year. However, this action must be subject to careful consideration and co-ordination.

Legal Action taken under Section 444 (1) and (1a) Education Act 1996

Where the school has tried to address a pupil's unauthorised absences but the measures taken have been unsuccessful, it can then refer on to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer. If there is either no improvement in the attendance nor satisfactory evidence provided for the absences following their intervention, then it is likely legal action at Magistrates Court will be initiated.

Sanctions available to the court are as follows:

- a fine of up to £2,500 a conditional discharge – you will be given a set amount of time in which to improve your child's attendance. Should you fail, Central Bedfordshire Council may bring a further prosecution against you and, if found guilty, you will be sentenced for both offences.
- an absolute discharge – the case is proved but you will not be subject to a penalty, although you will receive a conviction
- a community order such as unpaid work, curfew or tagging imprisonment - for up to three months.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education: · For not less than six hours a week; and

- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Parents can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will be impacted on if absence continues to occur. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the head teacher, and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching. The regulations related to children participating in public performances are separate to those around authorising leave of absence, and the head teacher can authorise this absence.

For further advice and guidance on Child Employment and Performance Licences contact

Religious observance

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** advance. The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance or days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least **two weeks** in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes. When the child is travelling the school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised by using the T code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school, although may offer support to the pupil whilst they are away. Please note that pupils must have attended 200 sessions in a rolling 12-month period to be able to use travelling for work purposes as a defence against prosecution. For further advice and guidance on attendance and Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families, contact Central Bedfordshire Council on 0300 300 4953. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration at two schools is allowed.

SEND and health- related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate. Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 10 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes where possible and dependent on staffing availability.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out where possible
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons where possible.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs in the context of staff availability.

Leave during lunch times

Parents may be permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunch times with permission from the headteacher – it is at the headteacher's discretion as to whether a pupil will be allowed to leave the premises.

Parents will submit a written request, outlining the reasons for their child to leave the premises during lunch time – this request will be submitted to the headteacher. The headteacher will consider the request and will invite the parent into the school for a discussion regarding any concerns, as well as the timely return of their child at the end of lunch time and their child's behaviour when not on the school premises. The headteacher reserves the right to grant or refuse a request and will inform the parent in writing of their decision within one week of the request.

Where permission has been granted, the headteacher will ensure a photo lunchtime pass is printed for the pupil and will include the pupil's name on the off-site register.

Pupils will leave the school premises within **10 minutes** of the start of lunch and will return no later than **5 minutes** before the end of lunch.

Parents will be required to meet their child **at the school office** when taking them off the premises the pupil will be signed out and back in using the lunch time register **at the school office**. No pupil will leave the premises before the member of staff **at the school office** has given their permission.

The headteacher reserves the right to withdraw their permission at any time – this may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns. Any decision to withdraw permission will be in writing, explaining the reasons for the headteacher's decision. If permission is withdrawn, parents will not be entitled to appeal the decision. Parents will be able to withdraw their request at any time by writing to the headteacher.

Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training

as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it.

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed

Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is **96 percent**.

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **July 2024 or sooner as required by changes related to government expectations**.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1- Trigger 1

Appendix 2- Trigger 2

Appendix 3- Notification Letter regarding a formal meeting with the Attendance Officer and Headteacher

Appendix 4- Failed to attend the formal attendance review mtg Target Letter

Appendix 5- Persistent Lateness (drop off and collection)

Appendix 6- Unauthorised Leave and issuing a fixed penalty notice

Appendix 7- Suspected unauthorised leave

Appendix 8- Traveller Absence due to travelling

Appendix 9 Legalisation

Appendix 1

Trigger Letter 1

Date

Dear...

We have noticed that your child <forename> attendance is currently below 90%, I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record so that you can view a detailed breakdown of your child's absence from school.

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.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or to myself, because together we can make a difference.

Yours Sincerely

School Family Worker

Appendix 2

Trigger Letter 2

Date:

Dear Parent

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

I have arranged a meeting on: at: to meet with you and find a positive way forward to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason, please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place. Unfortunately, we will be unable to authorise any further absences as illness from the date of this letter onwards unless satisfactory medical evidence is provided to support these absences. Medical evidence can take the form of copies of prescriptions, appointments cards or sight of medication. In certain cases, a letter from a GP or Consultant would be required so that extra support to help a child access their education because of a medical need can be arranged. I will be happy to discuss this with you and provide clarity if needed.

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.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance. Support can be offered through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). Please do not hesitate to contact me.

However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or myself, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

School Family Worker

Appendix 3

Notification Letter regarding a formal meeting with the Attendance Officer and Headteacher

Dear Parent,

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is still causing concern. Therefore, we need to meet with you urgently to discuss the situation.

You are required to attend a meeting with a member the Attendance Officer to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date: xxx

Time: xxx

Should «forename»'s attendance remains irregular; we may have to refer this matter to the Local Authority who could consider more formal action. This might result in a Penalty Notice Fine and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**, and a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

Absence due to self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but a child who is absent frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illnesses, medical information will be required.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support your child in making good progress, and I hope that you will work with us to improve «forename»'s attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be initiated.

If you have any queries before the meeting, these can be discussed with the family worker.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Reay
Headteacher

Appendix 4- Failed to attend the formal attendance review mtg Target Letter

Date:

Dear Parent

It was disappointing that you failed to attend the attendance review meeting which was due to be held at xxx on xxx at xxx.

As you did not attend the meeting, I am setting a target/s for xxxx which is as follows:

- 90% or above attendance target over the next 6 school weeks monitoring period (insert dates)
- Absences due to self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but a child who is absent frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illnesses, medical evidence will be required.
- Prompt communication when XXX will be absent. Parents should contact the school by xxx am as per the School Attendance Policy
- xxx
- xxx

If targets are not met or unlikely to be met within the six school weeks monitoring period, then the case is likely to be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement actions to be considered. The Local Authority could issue a Penalty Notice Fine, or initiate legal proceedings through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**. This may result in a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

It is important that if you have any questions or queries, you please email these to the school office for my attention. Support can still be offered through an Early Help Assessment (EHA) which our school family worker will be more than happy to assist with.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Reay
Headteacher

Appendix 5 persistent lateness letters- drop off and pick up

Date

Dear Parent

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

School Family Worker

Date:

Dear Parent

It has been brought to my attention that you have been late collecting your son/ daughter on a number of occasions. He/ She must be collected from school at 3:10pm or be booked into KidZ zone in advance.

It is the duty of parents to bring their child/ren to school on time and that they are collected on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible disruption.

If you are experiencing any difficulties, please arrange a meeting with Mrs McShane, the school's family worker would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this. In the meantime, please read the school's statutory attendance policy available to access on the website.

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. This includes being collected on time. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Yours sincerely

Office Manager

Appendix 6- Letters informing parents of a fixed penalty notice

10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence within a 12-week period

Date

Dear Parent

I am writing to you with reference to the attendance of your child. The attendance register (copy enclosed) shows that their attendance currently stands at % with at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence from... to.... Your child's' attendance is exceptionally low and a significant course for concern which the Education Attendance Officer from the Local Authority has been made aware and I have been advised to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

In accordance with the school's attendance policy (which is statutory) I have now made a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with government legislation.

If unauthorised 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. Penalty Notices maybe issued where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12-school week period. The amount of the penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Reay
Headteacher

Unauthorised Leave

Date

Dear Parent

Thank you for completing the term time leave request form as per procedure.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 was amended in September 2013. The amendments made clear that Head teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

We have considered your application carefully and the reasons for the absence you have highlighted, however on this occasion we do not believe that the explanation provided can be justified as "exceptional circumstances".

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

If unauthorised 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. Penalty Notices maybe issued where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12-school week period. The amount of the penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Reay. Headteacher

Appendix 7- suspected leave of absence

Date

Dear Parent

I am writing about «forename»'s absence from school from <<date>> to <<date>>.

From information received from other sources we believe that this was due to term time leave. 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 exceptional circumstances but due to illness, please provide medical information to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days, «forename»'s absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised 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. Penalty Notices maybe issued where a child has had 10 unauthorised absences in a 12-school week period. The amount of the penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely
Mrs S Reay

Headteacher

Appendix 8

Traveller – Request for Work Leave

Date

Date

Dear Parent

Thank you for contacting me to say that «forename» will be absent from school from «date» as you will be travelling due to your work.

The law allows me to authorise «forename»'s absence if your trade or business means that you have to travel from place to place. However, you have not let me know when «forename» is likely to return to school. Unless you contact me during the next 10 school days to confirm a date, I will refer «forename» to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education.

After 20 days absence, there may be grounds to take «forename»'s name off the school roll and you will have to re-apply for a school place when you return.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Reay
Headteacher

Legislation

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

It is not statutory for schools to have an attendance policy.

The following pieces of legislation should be included in your attendance policy and referred to in your letters to parents

Section 7 of The Education Act 1996

Requires parents to secure the education of their children of compulsory school age. The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient fulltime education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational need he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7>

Section 576 Education Act 1996 Meaning of “parent”.

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

(a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or

(b) who has care of him,

(3) In subsection (1) “parental responsibility” has the same meaning as in the Children Act 1989.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/576>

Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Penalty notices for parents in cases of truancy

After section 444 of the Education Act 1996 (c. 56) (failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil) insert— “444A Penalty notice in respect of failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil

(1)(a) Where an authorised officer has reason to believe that a person has committed an offence under section 444(1), and

(b) that the school to which the offence relates is a relevant school in England, he may give the person a penalty notice in respect of the offence.

(2) A penalty notice is a notice offering a person the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence under section 444(1) to which the notice relates by payment of a penalty in accordance with the notice.

(3) Where a person is given a penalty notice, proceedings for the offence to which the notice relates (or an offence under section 444(1A) arising out of the same circumstances)

may not be instituted before the end of such period as may be prescribed.

(4) Where a person is given a penalty notice, he cannot be convicted of the offence to which this section shall be payable to local education authorities in England.

(5) Sums received by a local education authority under this section may be used by the authority for the purposes of any of its functions which may be specified in regulations.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/contents>

The notice relates (or an offence under section 444(1A) arising out of the same circumstances) if he pays a penalty in accordance with the notice.

(6) Penalties under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996

Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil. **(a)** If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/444>

Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996

(1A) If in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (1) the parent knows that his child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him to do so, he is guilty of an offence