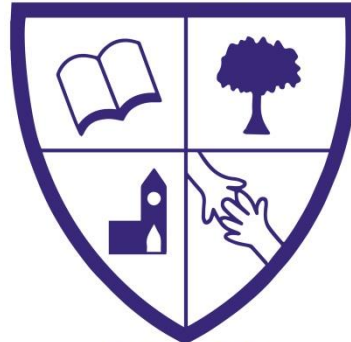


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Attendance Policy

Compiled by:	Craig Wheatley
Presented to staff:	3rd May 2018
Presented to Governors:	3rd May 2018
Presented to Parents/Carers:	4th May 2018
To be reviewed:	Every 2 years or sooner if required
Review dates:	November 2020, June 2021, November 2021, May 2023, Oct 2024,
Amendments:	May 2023 - No amendments Feb 2024 - Lateness paragraph amended and appendix 1 added. Oct 2024 - Amendments to Penalty Notices

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Attendance regarding COVID-19 will be monitored in line with Government guidance.

Principles

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why the cause of each absence is always required. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an exceptional reason - illness or other unavoidable causes.

Legally, in England and Wales, the only current exceptions where a child can miss school lawfully are when the child is **too ill to attend**, or if the **parent has had advance consent, in writing, from the school**, which means that the absence would be recorded as "authorised".

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider exceptional and for which authorised absence has NOT been given.

Absence during term time

Amendments to the 2006 Education Regulations (England) remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

In order to have consent from the school, a written application must be made in advance addressed to the head teacher of the school. **Only in exceptional circumstances** will a head teacher be able to authorise absence during term time, including:

- acute family trauma
- terminal illness or death of an immediate family member
- if an immediate family member serves in the Armed Forces

The decision of when to grant an authorised absence, and for how long, ultimately lies with the head teacher. In England, head teachers must submit details of each child's attendance to the local authority and can make recommendations where attendance is low or absence is unauthorised.

From 19th August 2024, the Department for Education announced national changes to fixed penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence in term time. The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

The changes are:

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19th August 2024 will be

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charged at a new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent, for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days, with no option for a discounted rate.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).
- Only penalty notices issued for absences taking place after 19th August 2024 will count towards the above thresholds.

Please note,

- It is the Department for Education who decides when and how many absences will result in a fixed penalty notice (see paragraph above) and NOT the school. Please note that none of this money is allocated to school.
- The word "holiday" does not refer simply to a break away or vacation but to any request for absence during term time.
- Families may still be liable to receive a fixed term penalty from the Local Authority if they accrue unauthorised absences over a prolonged period of time.

Procedures

Illness and other legitimate reasons

If a child is unfit for school, parents should contact the school as soon as possible, in person, by telephone, email or by letter. **Messages from other brothers or sisters cannot be accepted.** Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for medical appointments which must be in school time, but a copy of the appointment letter must be provided.

If a child is absent in the morning register we need to know the reason why **before 09.30 am**. If you do not contact us, we will try to contact you via the emergency numbers that you have given us. It is the family's responsibility to ensure ALL emergency contact numbers held by school are up to date.

Children with minor illness, such as a headache or tummy-ache, should still come into school, but any bought of vomiting or diarrhoea should be treated at home with lots of fluids. Children should stay off school and only return 48 hours after their last episode. Please see the "Minor illness and attendance" document on the website for more details.

Appendix 1, at the end of this policy, also gives some advice for the most frequently asked questions about sickness absence.

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Monitoring

School regularly monitors attendance of all children and will contact the parents of any child with attendance below 90% in order to inform them of this and to work together to hopefully improve this.

Child missing Education (CME) and Persistent Absence (PA)

School are aware that CME and PA can be an indicator of a child at risk or increased vulnerability. In line with the Local Authority practice, we will inform and work with the Inclusion Officer in any instance of CME and / or PA.

Lateness

Children who miss the start of the day may miss work or vital information and news for the day delivered by their class teacher. Late arrivals also disrupt other pupils. Pupils may be embarrassed by arriving late and this may encourage further absence. There is also an administrative burden on the school.

Children must attend before 08.55 am in the morning and 1.10 pm in the afternoon to be given a mark for the session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. The school gates will be open at 08.45am. Teachers will open their classroom doors at 08.50am for children to enter school. Classroom doors will be closed at 08.55am. Children arriving after 08.55am should enter school using the main school entrance and sign in using the Inventory system. These children will be marked as late in the register. Arriving more than 30 minutes after the start of the session without good reason or prior notice will be counted as unauthorised absence.

Collection after school - parents are to inform the school office by telephone if they are going to be late collecting their child. Children may wait at the school office until an adult arrives and signs them out.

Lateness occurring on several occasions will result in a discussion with the child by the teacher regarding the reason for the lateness and methods that could be employed to avoid recurrence. Further persistent lateness will be brought to the attention of the head teacher who will arrange to meet with the parents to discuss resolution.

If the matter is still not addressed successfully then the school will contact the Local Authority agencies appropriate to the situation - this may be the Education Welfare Officer or Social Services who will offer support to the child and family.

Appendix 1: Additional guidance: Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance

The Head Teacher may only grant leave of absence for **exceptional circumstances**. Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time are as follows:

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- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation.
- The death or terminal illness of a close relative, only if Head Teacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.
- Out of school programs such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.
- Religious observance - The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs";

This is not an exhaustive list and the Head Teacher will consider each case individually.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional

- Repeat applications for the same or similar reasons.
- Absence for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Holidays taken in term time due parental/carer work commitments.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost.
- Attending the wedding or funeral of non-immediate family members. Even for the wedding/funeral of an immediate family member, proof that the circumstances are exceptional would need to be provided by the family.

This is not an exhaustive list and the Head Teacher will consider each case individually.

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Appendix 1.



Should I keep my child off school?



Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek



SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

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