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**Attendance Policy**

*A policy for all stakeholders*

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*In this policy:*

* *Create Partnership Trust is referred to as the Trust*
* *The Board of Directors (Trustees) is referred to as the Board*
* *Children refers to pupils in our Trust schools*

#### The policy applies to all schools in the Trust.

**Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA)** Article 28

*"*You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.”

# Rationale

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

* [School Admissions Code 2021](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2)
* [School Admission Appeals Code](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents).

Attendance and PA’s (Persistant Absence) are exceptionally important . Primary national pupil attendance was around 96% pre COVID. This means that a child needs to attend school for at least 177 out of 190 days to meet national expectations.

As a result all schools in the Trust are working in partnership with the Washwood Heath Multi Academy Trust who provide four days training a year for our Attendance Team.

We have adapted the WHMAT approach at Create Partnership as an example of best practice; Create Trust have very clear and detailed systems and procedures in place to manage absence and attendance across the school.

The Trust has put the following procedures in place considering the most recent publication of the DFE: *Working together to improve school attendance*paper.

**The Strategic Approach**

The Trust adopts the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework, this is modelled on the work of Professor Katherine Weare. The emphasis is on developing a school culture and climate which builds a sense of connectedness and belonging to ensure all children can attend school and thrive.  The approach ensures we prioritise building solid working relationships with children / parents prior to any escalation.  The staged approach we use ensures we identify triggers early that can lead to poor attendance issues such as; mental health issues, lack of trust, communication and relationship breakdowns and the possible lack of networking opportunities both internal (in-school) and external (external agencies).

# Aims & Objectives

* Increase school Attendance and reduce Persistent Absence to meet set targets.
* Ensure Attendance is well managed within the school, with the appropriate level of resources allocated.
* To create an ethos in which good Attendance is the norm and every child aims for excellent Attendance
* To ensure Attendance and Punctuality is a key priority for school
* To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing relevant attendance data – proactively implementing targeted support programmes regarding school attendance
* Enable the school / Trust to make informed use of Attendance data to target interventions appropriately, focusing on the key demographic groups highlighted in the 2022 DFE paper.

**Objectives**

* Create an ethos within the school in which good attendance is recognised as the norm and every child/young person aims for excellent attendance.
* Make attendance and punctuality a priority.
* Set focused targets to improve individual attendance and whole school attendance levels.
* Embed the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks with respect to promoting attendance and punctuality.
* Record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise absenteeism.
* Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing relevant attendance data.
* Provide support, advice and guidance to; parents, children and young people and develop mutual cooperation between home and the school in encouraging good attendance and in addressing identified attendance issues.
* Demonstrate through the use of rewards that the school recognises good attendance and punctuality are achievements in themselves

# Key Processes

The register is taken at the start of the morning and afternoon session of each school day. On each occasion a record is made of whether a pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved educational activity
* Absent due to authorised or unauthorised reasons
* Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The schools follow up any unexplained absence to:

* Ascertain the reason.
* Ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken.
* Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
* Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the schools’ electronic register, or management information system.

Only the Headteachers, Executive Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absences. If there is no known reason for the absence, then the absence must be recorded, in the first instance, as unauthorised.

A whole school attendance letter signed by the Headteacher is sent to all parents at the start of each school year to inform them about the Fast track process. (appendix 5)

# Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Examples of unauthorised absence can be found in appendix 2.

Occasionally if a pupil has a high level of absence (often recorded as illness) where internal monitoring and review meetings have not been effective at improving a pupil’s rate of attendance, parents may be asked to provide medical proof of any absences in order for the school to authorise them. (appendix 7)

# Authorised Absence from School

Authorised absences are permitted by the school and include:

* Illness: The Trust has a 48hr policy for Sickness and Diarrhoea when parents are expected to keep their child off school to prevent the spread of any infection. An NHS fact sheet is sent to parents giving advice about when to keep children at home. (appendix 4)
* Hospital, doctors, dentists or optician’s appointments. (Appointment time and travel time only). Although parents may offer a reason for a child’s absence, it is the responsibility of the school to decide whether the absence is authorised.

Children must be in school before and return to school soon after their appointment. Evidence must be provided for each individual medical appointments in the form of an appointment letter, doctor’s note, or prescription for any medications received. Proof of evidence must be one appointment per card. Doctors are not to be asked for appointment letters as proof.

Where possible, parents are encouraged to make appointments after school or during the holidays.

# Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining a pupil’s absence are logged by the attendance manager and are kept for the academic year. If there are attendance issues concerning a particular pupil that may require further investigation, these notes may be retained for a longer period.

# First Day of Absence Call

On the first day of absence, parents/carers are asked to contact the school to provide a reason for their child’s non-attendance. The school can be contacted by phone, written note, letter or email through ParentMail. Parents are expected to indicate the reason for absence and to give an indication of the amount of time to be taken off school. Once the school has been informed of the child’s absence, a subsequent phone call is made on the third day of absence to establish when the child will return to school. If school has not been made aware of the reason for a child’s absence, a first day absence call is made by a member of the Attendance Team to establish contact. School makes every effort to contact the parents calling relatives, neighbours, the schools of siblings etc. to establish the whereabouts of the absent pupil and to ensure their safety. If school has been unable to contact parents by the end of the first day, a home visit is made by members of the Attendance Team.

#### **If school is unable to contact parents and there are concerns about safeguarding, the school contacts the Children Missing in Education (CME) which is part of the Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH) at any point in this process to ensure the safety of the child.**

# Five Days Absence

School makes every effort to make contact with parents about the whereabouts of the child by telephone calls and/or home visits etc. to family members. Once school has exhausted their investigations it is a requirement by Birmingham City Council that any pupil who is absent from school, without an explanation, for 5 consecutive days is reported to the Children missing in Education Team (CME), although this is often sooner if school has concerns. Parents receive notification of this by letter.

# Frequent Absence

Frequent Absence often means a child’s attendance is below the expected figure of 96% but above the Persistent Absence (PA) figure of 90%. It is the responsibility of all staff to bring to the attention of the attendance team, any emerging punctuality or attendance issues. Parents are notified by letter about the school’s concerns and support is offered. In cases where no improvement is seen, a meeting takes place with a member of the attendance team. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absence, the school attempts to resolve the problem through meetings with the parents and child. Children who are developing worrying trends in attendance may be placed on the vulnerable children list and the ‘Signs of Safety and Well-being Three Houses form’ completed which ensures that the voice of the child is heard. One of three actions is undertaken:

* initiate simple reasonable adjustments to address the child’s unmet safeguarding needs
* develop a school focused action plan with the child, Parent /carer as appropriate
* initiate a multi-agency Early Help Assessment (EHA) & Our Family Plan (OFP)

Internal monitoring takes place which may include attendance report cards for the child alongside rewards for improvement and regular contact meetings with a member of staff.

If the problem appears to be a medical one, the school seeks advice from the school nurse. Absences which cannot be evidenced are registered as unauthorised.

#### **If, after conversation with the child, a serious safeguarding concern is indicated, school follows the child protection procedures as indicated in ‘Right Help, Right Time’.**

# Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent Absence is a term used for children who have attendance of 90% and less. A member of the attendance team meets with the parents and a School Attendance Review Meeting (SARM) is held to agree an Attendance Agreement Plan (AAP) (appendix 9). The Three Houses activity is carried out with PA children as part of the SARM process to ensure parents know and understand their responsibilities and are working with the school to improve their child’s attendance. PA children are discussed at Safeguarding Panel Meetings and The Early Help process followed.

Absences which cannot be evidenced are registered as unauthorised. If there is no improvement, then FastTrack is actioned.

# Fast-Track on Attendance

In extreme cases if a pupil has an attendance of less than 90% where 10 days or more have been unauthorised and the SARM has not had a positive impact, a process called ‘FAST-track’ may be started to address these persistent unauthorised absences. As part of safeguarding it is the duty of each school to investigate pupils’ absences.

**FAST-track** is a process designed to raise individual and whole school attendance by the use of legal action which ensures parents/carers fulfil their legal responsibilities. It is a process whereby parents are given a time frame in which to improve their child’s attendance or legal action is initiated by the school and undertaken by Birmingham City Council. FAST-track challenges the notion that unauthorised absence is acceptable. It raises the awareness of parents, pupils and the community of the importance of school attendance and the negative impact of absence. It also demonstrates the ability of the Local Authority to use statutory powers to bring about change. FAST-track utilises section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007.

# Leave During Term-Time

Holidays during term time are actively discouraged. In accordance with the guidelines from Birmingham City Council, the Trust does not authorise any absence during term time for extra holiday and parents are reminded of the negative effect that absence during term time can have on a pupil’s potential achievement. If parents choose to take their child out of school for an extended period they must make a request for the leave of absence informing the school of the dates of travel, providing proof of booking date, date of departure and return flight details and an address and telephone number covering the period of absence from school. Parents are encouraged to minimise the disruption to their child’s education by not bridging the school terms. Parents meet with a member of the attendance team to discuss the detrimental effects term time absence has on both a child’s learning and social interaction within the classroom and with peers and they sign a home school agreement on when the child will return to school.

Where a child disappears on holiday without informing the Headteacher, the school carries out necessary investigations into their whereabouts. If this cannot be ascertained, letters are sent to parents regarding the leave denied process (appendix 11/12) and a referral is made to the CME. If a child has been taken out of school on holiday, parents may be prosecuted.

Absence is only authorised in the most exceptional circumstances. If parents request permission to take their child out of school during term time, where there are exceptional circumstances, a meeting is held with a member of the attendance team and an application form completed at least two weeks before they are due to depart. Parents must contact the school and allow the school time to consider an application before booking flights or leaving the country, even when unforeseen events occur (e.g. family bereavement).

Headteachers may, on rare occasions, judge that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term. A meeting is held with the Headteacher to discuss the application and the reason for the request for absence from school. Headteachers consider each application on its merit.

Examples of exceptional circumstances could include:

* death of child’s parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
* life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil
* parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
* leave for armed forces personnel who are prevented by operational duties to take their leave at any other time
* leave of absence already granted by a previous school or local authority (granted within the last six months and supported by documentation from the previous school)

If absence is authorised during term time, the Headteacher determines the number of school days a child can be away from school up to 5 school days. Headteachers are within their rights to turn down such applications and refuse authorisation for parents/carers to take their child out of school during term time.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always in the best interests of the pupil nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. School and school relationships can provide pupils with stability and care during difficult times.

All procedures to do with term time holidays are formalised with standard letters. (appendix 11/12). The local authority reserves the right, in line with the Birmingham Code of Conduct, to consider issuing a penalty notice where parents remove their children from school during term time without the authorisation of the Headteacher. Any child not returning from absence is referred to the CME before removal from the school roll.

**If a school is concerned that a child may be being taken out of school for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) procedures, the school follows the guidelines set out in the Safeguarding policy.** The Headteacher may use the information to seek advice from CASS about a referral to children's services.

# Punctuality

Pupils are encouraged to be on the school site 10 minutes before the start of the session ready for morning and afternoon registration. Any pupils arriving after the register has been taken are recorded as late and are registered with a late slip. Morning and afternoon registers close up to 30 minutes after the start of each session. Pupils arriving after this time are recorded as having an unauthorised absence and are recorded in the register with a code U (appendix 2).

In cases where a pupil arrives after registers have closed but with a valid reason e.g. an appointment with the doctor, dentist or hospital then the school enters the appropriate authorised code. Parents are required to provide written proof of such appointments.

Late pupils report to the school office to be registered and to receive a late slip which is passed to the class teacher on arrival in class. They are recorded as late.

If a child is late to school more than 7 times, a letter (appendix 13) is sent to parents informing them about their child’s poor punctuality and the need to improve. Further lateness is monitored and if no improvement is seen, a member of the attendance team meets with the parents to offer help to improve punctuality and to make it clear about the negative impact on their child’s education.

# Promoting Attendance

The school uses opportunities to remind parents/carers, that it is the parents’ responsibility to ensure that their child receives an education (appendix 3). This also forms part of the Home School Agreement. Classes with the best attendance and punctuality are rewarded in weekly school assemblies. Pupils with good attendance and those whose attendance and punctuality has improved receive certificates and rewards. Attendance figures are shared regularly with staff, pupils, parents and the Trust though newsletters and reports.

# Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice

The approach is evidence-informed and completely child-centred.  Each Foundation is supported by 5 Key Performance Indicators, these are used to ensure the school can embed the Foundations framework and understand the strategic direction regarding attendance improvement.

The framework allows the school to understand the whole school approach to supporting and improving attendance. We create welcoming environments to allow all children to gain a sense of belonging and ultimately achieve academically through regular school attendance.

The school policy is translated into practise through the processes and systems we follow. The escalated approach supports children at each stage, parents who do not engage with support understand why, at times, we must follow this process.

All staff receive attendance training to support the whole school approach, they understand their role in improving attendance. Certain staff are identified to engage in specialist training to continue to support families and children who work with external partners.

We use data information to support children, this allows us to understand the groups, and individuals, who require specific programmes of intervention. Reviewing each programme allows us to understand the effectiveness of support and change what is not working.

Finally, we train and support all staff to understand the ‘root cause’ of concerns. Staff use the wider curriculum to allow all children to feel valued and accept themselves.  We celebrate attendance success and ensure children returning from long absence receive a planned transition.

**Foundation 1 – Whole School Thinking Culture and Climate**

*The school has a fully embedded ethos in which excellent school attendance is expected, developed and nurtured. The escalated approach to supporting attendance is built on foundations of belonging and connectedness.*

**Foundation 2 – Supportive Policies, Systems and Process**

*The approach to improving attendance is built on clear policies, systems and processes. This ensures continuous and sustainable improvement drives attendance practice.  The attendance policy is understood by all stakeholders and allows the school to set, and maintain, high expectations to improve the culture of attendance.*

**Foundation 3 – Professional Learning Staff Development**

*The school prioritises developing a team of attendance experts, with a shared vision and core purpose. The Attendance Leader delivers bespoke training to support all staff to fully understand their role in improving attendance.  External partnerships support attendance improvements through a multi-disciplinary approach for identified children and families.*

**Foundation 4 – Implement Targeted Programmes and Intervention**

*Data information and analysis direct resources proactively towards key demographic groups and identified individuals.  The expert use of data analysis informs decision making at all levels. The attendance process ensures the Attendance Leader understands the reason for attendance concerns, these barriers can then be successfully supported and removed.*

**Foundation 5 – Connect Appropriately with Approaches to Behaviour Management**

*Connecting and belonging drives the school approach to supporting attendance. All staff are supported to understand ‘deeper roots’ regarding poor attendance concerns.  The school has developed, and embedded, an effective rewards system to further drive attendance improvements and celebrate success.*

**DFE: Working Together To Improve Attendance 2022.**

The table below identifies how the 5 Foundations of Effective Attendance Practice will underpin the DFE 2022 paper in meeting the summary of expectations.



Each Foundation is underpinned by five Key Performance Indicators to ensure educational settings can monitor and measure progress against set actions. A bespoke action plan is the key driver to the success of the 5 Foundations and to support this process each educational setting will undertake a self-assessment questionnaire audit – ensuring all actions support identified development points. Part of the four-day programme will involve the educational setting undertaking a ‘deep dive’ review to measure progress towards the agreed KPIs and action plan.

## Appendix 1 – Categorization of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll, but not present in the school must be recorded within one of the following categories:

* 1. Unauthorised Absence
	2. Authorised Absence
	3. Approved Educational Activity

#### **Unauthorised Absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. Examples of unauthorised absences include:

* going shopping
* looking after other family members
* visiting relatives
* the weather
* children or parents getting up late
* children do not feel like coming to school
* another sibling is unwell
* collecting relatives from the airport
* holidays during term time

#### **Authorised Absence**

This is for those pupils who are absent from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act of 1996

#### **Persistent Absence**

Persistent Absence is a term used for children who have attendance of 90% and less. Parents are contacted to ensure they know and understand their responsibilities and an action plan is written to improve the attendance. This is monitored by the school. If there is no improvement, then FastTrack is actioned.

#### **Approved Educational Activity**

This includes types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

NB Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This might include:

* educational visits
* sporting activities
* most types of dual registration
* work experience placements

## Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The school uses a computer system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes are used to record attendance information Code | Description | Meaning |
| / | Present am | Present |
| \ | Present pm | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT dual registration) | Approved Education activity |
| C | Other authorised Circumstances (not covered by other appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) | Approved Education activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| G | Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (not medical or dental appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorised absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education activity |
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised absence |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education activity |

## Appendix 3 – Roles & Responsibilities

#### **Pupils are expected to:**

* attend school every day.
* be punctual
* be ready to learn

#### **Parents/Carers are expected to:**

* ensure their child attends school regularly.
* be aware of their legal responsibilities in relation to their child’s education and attendance.
* ensure they contact school on the first day of absence.
* inform the learning mentor if there are problems/worries that are causing their child to stay away from school.

#### **School is expected to:**

* provide a welcoming atmosphere and a safe learning environment.
* address any concerns that pupils or parents/carers may highlight pertaining to attendance.
* keep accurate records of morning and afternoon registration.
* monitor each child’s attendance and punctuality.
* make first day absence calls when a child has failed to attend and no reason has been given by parent/carer.
* make home visits on the first day of absence if parents/carers have failed to make contact with the school in that time.
* promote good attendance through assemblies and focus weeks.
* encourage good attendance with certificates and rewards each term for individual pupils
* reward classes with the best attendance & punctuality each week. These achievements are announced in phase assemblies.
* acknowledge and reward pupils with 100% attendance for the academic year.
* meet with parents in school to discuss attendance concerns weekly and address any issues that may arise from that meeting.
* monitor individual pupils’ attendance and punctuality.
* Enter into an Attendance Agreement Plan to evidence that parents are working with school to improve their child’s
	+ Persistent Absence
* Liaise with the Court Officer from the Education Welfare department to monitor and improve the attendance of persistent absence pupils
* Action the FASTRACK and Extended Leave BCC procedures to address parents of pupils where there has been no improvement with persistent unauthorised absence.

## Appendix 4 – Is your child too ill for school?

**It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell.**

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about [managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases). These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

If you do keep your child at home, it's important to phone the school or nursery on the first day. Let them know that your child won't be in and give them the reason.

If your child is well enough to go to school but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, let their teacher know.

**Other illnesses**

Follow this advice if your child does not have coronavirus symptoms or they had a test and it was negative (they do not have coronavirus).

**Coughs and colds**

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor [cough](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cough/) or [common cold](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/common-cold/). But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly.

**High temperature**

If your child has a [high temperature](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/fever-in-children/), keep them off school until it goes away.

**Chickenpox**

If your child has [chickenpox](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chickenpox/), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

**Cold sores**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a [cold sore](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cold-sores/).

Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

**Conjunctivitis**

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have [conjunctivitis](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/conjunctivitis/).

Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

**Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Your child should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people if they have [symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/) and they either:

* have a high temperature
* do not feel well enough to go to school or do their normal activities

If they have mild symptoms and they feel well enough, they can still go to school.

**Ear infection**

If your child has an [ear infection](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ear-infections/) and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

**Hand, foot and mouth disease**

If your child has [hand, foot and mouth disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hand-foot-mouth-disease/) but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off.

Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

**Head lice and nits**

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice.

You can treat [head lice and nits](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/) without seeing a GP.

**Impetigo**

If your child has [impetigo](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/impetigo/), they'll need treatment from a GP, often with antibiotics.

Keep them off school until all the sores have crusted over and healed, or for 48 hours after they start antibiotic treatment.

Encourage your child to wash their hands regularly and not to share things like towels and cups with other children at school.

**Ringworm**

If your child has [ringworm](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ringworm/), see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.

It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

**Scarlet fever**

If your child has [scarlet fever](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scarlet-fever/), they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks.

Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

**Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [slapped cheek syndrome](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/slapped-cheek-syndrome/) because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious.

But let the school or teacher know if you think your child has slapped cheek syndrome.

**Sore throat**

You can still send your child to school if they have a [sore throat](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sore-throat/). But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.

A sore throat and a high temperature can be symptoms of [tonsillitis](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/tonsillitis/).

**Threadworms**

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have [threadworms](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/threadworms/).

Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend a treatment.

**Vomiting and diarrhoea**

Children with [diarrhoea or vomiting](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/) should stay away from school until they have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least 2 days (48 hours).

Page last reviewed: 1 April 2021
Next review due: 1 April 2024

## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 5 – Whole School Letter

**School Attendance**

**A very important message for all Parents/Carers**

Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

Greet Primary School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance. **We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.**

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

do not achieve well in exams

find it difficult to maintain friendships

are more likely to become involved in crime

miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

How does your child compare?

|  |
| --- |
| Attendance during one school year |
| 95% |
| 90% |
| 85% |
| 80% |

|  |
| --- |
| equals this number of days absent |
| 9 days |
| 19 days |
| 29 days |
| 38 days |

|  |
| --- |
| which is approximately this many weeks absent |
| 2 weeks |
| 4 weeks |
| 6 weeks |
| 8 weeks |

|  |
| --- |
| which means this number of lessons missed |
| 50 lessons |
| 100 lessons |
| 150 lessons |
| 200 lessons |

Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher**,** within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. ***Headteachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.***

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue) family holidays (unless authorised by the Head teacher by pre-arrangement) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

It is a parent’s legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

**Issuing penalty notices**: Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.

**Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence**: Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) - court can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.

**Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence**: Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) - court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

**Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record.**

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If your child’s level of absence is of serious concern, the school will offer advice and support to improve attendance. After this, any unauthorised absence may result in the School and the Local Authority taking legal action.

If you have concerns about your child’s school attendance please contact the school urgently. They may be able to assist you or even offer you an Early Help Assessment.

Again, we would like to thank those parents who make sure their child is attending school regularly and are therefore benefiting fully from their educational opportunity.

Yours sincerely



## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 6 – Letter of Concern

##

Date

Name

Address

Dear Parent

**Re: Child’s full name, D.O.B. Year Group**

I’m writing to you to express concern about **«ChildFirstName»** attendance in school. As you may be aware, it is the legal responsibility of parents to ensure children attend school regularly.

We work with parents to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work.. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

* do not achieve well in exams
* find it difficult to maintain friendships
* miss out on social events
* are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel that your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently and to inform the school. If there are other difficulties affecting your ability to ensure your child attends school regularly, which you may need support for, we may be able to help and offer an Early Help Assessment so please contact us urgently to arrange a meeting.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child’s attendance please contact the school. If you call and there is no one available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

##

## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 7 – Medical Evidence Letter

##

Date:

Name

Address

Dear (Parent’s name)

**Re:**

Your child’s poor attendance at school this year is causing serious concern as ***he/she*** has been absent for ***number*** of sessions out of a possible ***number*** of sessions and this will make it much harder for your child to achieve good results in their school work. ***Most/All*** of the absence has been due to illness or for medical reasons.

It has been decided that due to the high level of your child’s absence, **the Headteacher will no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by medical evidence**.

I have to advise you that we monitor all pupils with poor school attendance and will take action when absence is unauthorised; this may lead to prosecution.

Therefore, should your child have any further sessions of absence because of illness or medical reasons you are strongly advised to provide one of the following which may enable the Headteacher to authorise your child’s absence:

* Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
* Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
* Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
* Medication prescribed by a GP
* Copy of prescription
* Print screen of medical notes
* Letters concerning hospital appointments
* Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP ‘sick’ notes are not required. Please do not request these from your GP.

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996 Section 444).

We work with parents to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

* do not achieve well in exams
* find it difficult to maintain friendships
* miss out on social events
* are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel that your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently.

If you have other concerns about your child or difficulties you may need support with, please contact the school who may be able to assist in the form of an Early Help Assessment.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child’s attendance please contact me. If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely

 Headteacher



## Appendix 8 – SARM

##

Date

Parents Name

Address

**FAST-track to Attendance**

**Invitation to a School Attendance Review Meeting**

Dear (Parent’s name)

**Re: Child’s full name - D.O.B. Yr group at Greet Primary School**

There have been continuing difficulties concerning the attendance of your (child’s name) at Greet Primary School.

To assist you, the school have tried to engage with you to offer additional support such as Early Help to improve «ChildFirstName»’s attendance and prevent the need for legal action.

In an attempt to resolve issues regarding attendance, a School Attendance Review Meeting has been arranged at **Greet Primary School on appointment date and time.**

(Child’s name) should be in school and can join us for the meeting. If (child’s name) is not in school please bring (child's name) with you.

It is very important that you attend. Your co-operation is essential.

This meeting is an opportunity for you to discuss any matters of concern. If you now require Early Help, you must attend the meeting after which an assessment can be arranged.

Failure to attend this meeting and further unauthorised absence could result in you being prosecuted in court and/or a penalty notice being issued.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Section 444, Education Act 1996).

Please contact me urgently on the telephone number provided if you are unable to attend. If I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 9

##

Date

Name

Address

**Fast-track to Attendance**

**Formal Warning Notice**

Dear Parent’s name,

**Re: Child’s full name – D.O.B. Year Group at xxx Primary School**

DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER. TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION

Your child, «ChildFirstName» has been identified as having poor attendance at «SchoolName».

To assist you, the school have tried to engage with you to offer additional support such as Early Help etc.; have invited you to attend a formal School Attendance Review Meeting; and have provided you with advice to improve your child’s attendance.

Despite this, there is now a significant amount of unauthorised absence. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that: *‘If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence’.*

**This is a formal warning notice advising you that the Local Authority may consider issuing a penalty notice/taking legal action against you should there be any further unauthorised absence.**

To avoid this you **must** prevent any further unauthorised absence. You are reminded that you need to provide medical evidence in order for the school to authorise any illness absences. Details of the medical evidence required is included on the attached leaflet.

I would strongly advise that you read the attached leaflet which will provide further guidance on getting your child to school and advice as to your legal responsibilities.

Most attendance problems can be sorted out by parents. **If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss contact the school immediately and ask for an Early Help assessment.**

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 10

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES – PUPIL TERM TIME LEAVE REQUEST (to be completed by

**parents/carers only)**

Pupil’s Name ………………………………… D.O.B ………….. Form ………

Pupil’s Name ………………………………… D.O.B ………….. Form ………

Pupil’s Name ………………………………… D.O.B ………….. Form ………

I request permission for the above named pupil(s) to be granted leave during the school term.

Reason for request

…………………………………………………………........................................................

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

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

Dates of Absence

From ………………………………… To No of school days

Address where we will be staying……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

I/We understand that if leave is agreed:

* if travelling abroad, I / we will supply a copy of the return travel documentation.
* I / we will supply the name and phone number of a contact person whilst abroad.
* if I / we do not return at the agreed time; I / we am / are aware that I / we may be issued with a penalty notice. If I do not pay the fine, the case may be referred to Court which could result in a fine of up to £1000 per child and a criminal record.
* In exceptional circumstances penalty notices may not be issued and cases may be taken straight to Court.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Parent/Carer Name**…………………………………………………… **DOB**………………………………………………. **Address**…………………………………………..…………………………………………………….**Signature**……………………………………**Date**………………………………………… | **Parent/Carer Name**……………………………………………… **DOB**……………………………………… **Address**……………………………………………………………………………………**Signature**…………………………………**Date**…………………………………… |

Request **agreed / denied**

Signed ……………………………… Headteacher Dated …………………………..



## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 11 – Leave Denied Process (LD1)

Date

Parent name Address

Dear (Parent name)

**Re: Child’s full name - D.O.B. Yr Group at Greet Primary School**

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child’s leave of absence. Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

*‘If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence’.*

If you decide to take the leave the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

We are sure you would not wish to jeopardise your child’s academic progress by taking them away at this time.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Enclosure: copy of ‘Leave of Absence Request Form’

## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 12 – Unauthorised Leave (LD2)

Date

Name Address

Dear (Parent’s name)

**Re: Child’s full name, D.O.B. «Child Yr Group at Greet Primary School**

This letter is sent to parents/carers whose child is/has been absent from school due to possible unauthorised leave in term time.

If it was not unauthorised leave but illness which caused your child’s absence you will need to provide medical evidence to the school in order for it to be authorised. This could include:

* Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
* Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
* Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
* Medication prescribed by a GP
* Copy of prescription
* Print screen of medical notes
* Letters concerning hospital appointments
* Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP ‘sick’ notes are not required unless the child has been treated abroad.

If you asked a friend/relative to notify the school of the leave, you must contact the school yourself, to explain the absence - but this does not mean it will be authorised.

Under the Regulations, retrospective authorisation for leave in exceptional circumstances is not permitted Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

*‘If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school*

*his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence’.*

Unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action being taken against you. I would also advise that if your child is still currently absent from school, you must return the child to school with immediate effect.

Yours sincerely

 Headteacher

## A logo with colorful text  Description automatically generated with medium confidenceAppendix 13

Date

Name Address

Dear Parent

Your child, «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» has been identified as having poor punctuality at

«School\_name» School.

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be prosecuted by the Local Authority if late arrival is not resolved.

**I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal**

**responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Minutes lateper day during the school year | Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year |
| 5 mins | 3.4 days |
| 10 mins | 6.9 days |
| 15 mins | 10.3 days |
| 20 mins | 13.8 days |
| 30 mins | 20.7 days |

Poor punctuality can lead to your child…

* Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends
* Missing the beginning of vital lessons
* Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day
* Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future

If your child is having any difficulties that you wish to discuss, contact me immediately. If you have other concerns about your child or difficulties you may need support with, please contact the school who may be able to assist in the form of an Early Help Assessment.

Your child’s punctuality must now improve or the school may have no option but to take further action against you.

If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and telephone number.

Yours sincerely

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