

# Orleans Primary School



Status	Statutory
Review Cycle	Annually
Date written / last review	September 2025
Date of next review	September 2027
Published on Website	Yes
Governor's Committee Responsible	Full Governing Body

## Attendance and Lateness Policy

Good attendance at school is vital and will allow pupils to get the very best from their education. Evidence shows that pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (the end of the primary phase) had higher rates of attendance over the time than those with the lowest attainment.

It is the responsibility of parents, carers and guardians to ensure their child attends school regularly and this policy sets out how the school can support in achieving this.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

It is the legal responsibility of every parent / carer to ensure that their child attends school regularly, and it is an offence to condone absence from school without just cause.

## **AIMS**

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards school attendance. This policy sets out the school's expectations for attendance and how these apply, to school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.

These expectations are set out in this policy, under the following headings:

- How we record and monitor attendance
- How we promote regular attendance by our registered pupils
- Key responsibilities
- Actions from the school if a pupil fails to attend school regularly

## **1 HOW WE RECORD AND MONITOR ATTENDANCE**

### **1.1 The Admissions Register**

The admissions register (school roll) is kept up-to-date. We keep personal details for each registered pupil, including:

- date of admission to the school
- information regarding parents and / or carers
- previous school setting (if applicable)
- emergency contact information

A pupil will only be removed from the admissions register if the legal requirements to do so are met.

## **1.2 The Attendance Register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## **1.3 Punctuality and Regular Attendance**

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and the register for the second session will be taken at:

- 12.30pm in Nursery
- 12.45pm in Reception
- 1pm in Years 1, 2 and 3
- 1.30pm in Years 4, 5 and 6

## **1.4 Lateness**

Under normal circumstances, class registers are marked immediately at the start of each morning and afternoon session.

Pupils who arrive at school after the register has started are marked as late; this will be recorded as an L. If a pupil arrives after the register has closed, they will be marked with a U, which denotes an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

The Department for Education guidance states clearly that a child must not be marked present if they are not in school during registration.

## **1.5 Absence**

The expectation of the staff and Governors at Orleans Primary School is that every child will attend school unless they are not well enough to do so.

Parents / Carers must notify the school by 9am on the first day of absence e.g. if their child is too ill to be in school.

Parents / carers must either phone the school and leave a message with the school office, or email the school office.

If a child's attendance is already being monitored by the school we may ask for medical evidence to be provided e.g. a doctor's note, prescription or other appropriate form of evidence.

When children are absent for more than one week (5 days) on medical grounds, the school will request medical evidence. In addition, if a pattern of absence is identified the school may also request medical evidence.

If the school has not been contacted by the parent / carer regarding a pupil's absence we will contact them as soon as possible after the register has closed to understand the reason for absence. In the event the school is unable to make contact with the family or any emergency contact, the school may notify Family Services if they feel the child may be in danger.

### 1.6 Children Missing in Education

Absences from school are closely monitored in line with London Borough of Richmond's Education Welfare procedures and as part of the School's Safeguarding Policy. A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Any patterns of absence e.g. absences either or both sides of a school holiday are particularly carefully monitored. The School always attempts to initiate contact on the first day when a child is absent, if no contact has been initiated by the parent, and notes any response or lack of response. Should a child be absent a second day without notification, the school repeats its attempts to contact the family. Should a child be absent for more than three days without contact from the family to notify of the absence and reason for it, a safeguarding referral is made to [Single Point of Access Richmond](#). When a pupil first joins the school, parents are asked for two additional emergency contacts (e.g. relatives or friends) and the school will telephone the emergency contacts if the parent cannot be contacted when a child is absent. These additional contact details will help the school to check that the absent pupil is safe.

### 1.7 Medical / Dental Appointments

We encourage parents / carers to make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours, where possible.

When a child is at an appointment during school hours we expect them to be out for the minimum amount of time necessary. We require sight of appointment cards for medical and dental appointments. These should be shown to a member of the administrative team in the school office who will note this on our attendance monitoring system.

### 1.8 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Applications for a leave of absence during term time must be submitted using a Leave of Absence form that can be obtained from the School Office (see Appendix 6).

A Head of School can only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time in exceptional circumstances. By nature, these exceptional circumstances are likely to be unforeseen and extremely rare.

Leaves of absence during term time are considered on an individual basis and are granted at the Head of School's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** may include:

- Illness and medical / dental appointments
- Religious observance, for up to two days, where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the relevant religious body to confirm the day is set apart

The school **will not** authorise absence for holidays or excursions during term time.

In the event of any unauthorised absence being taken, a referral to the Education Welfare Office may be made and could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) being issued.

### 1.9 Children in Entertainment

Pupils who are taking part in a performance will need to have a licence granted by the Local Authority. As part of this, the Head of School will be consulted to decide whether or not to issue the licence. Licences are granted where the Local Authority is satisfied about the child's fitness and about the provisions made for the child's safety and education. If the Head of School is concerned that having a licence will be detrimental to the education of a child, it will not be granted. If an application for a licence is made for a child whose attendance is under 95% the Head of School

may refuse the licence. The school attendance of pupils in entertainment is closely monitored by the Educational Welfare Officer.

### **1.10 Legal Sanctions**

Local authorities can fine parents / carers for the unauthorised absence of their compulsory school-age child.

The Head of School will decide if a referral to the local authority is made, including for a penalty notice (fine).

Penalty notices are paid directly to the local authority. If the payment has not been made within 28 days, the local authority can decide on further actions, which could include prosecution or withdrawal of the penalty notice.

More information can be found [here](#).

## **2 HOW WE PROMOTE REGULAR ATTENDANCE BY OUR REGISTERED PUPILS**

We promote attendance regularly in school using the following strategies:

- Celebration assembly weekly to present the Attendance Cup to the KS1 class and KS2 class with the highest attendance that week
- Running total of Attendance Cup winners displayed, with silver stars for winning attendance and gold stars for 100% attendance, for all to see
- Reward for the class with the most stars at the end of the year
- All class attendance published in weekly newsletter, with the whole school figure provided also

### **2.1 Monitoring of Attendance**

The School Office monitors attendance daily; all absences, and their reasons, are recorded. The school office undertakes regular analysis of attendance data to identify where support may be needed, and to identify patterns of attendance across the school.

Details of concerns or emerging patterns are communicated to the Head of School, informally where there is a new concern and formally in attendance meetings. The Head of School is informed of absences of vulnerable children and their parents are contacted to check the reason for absence. If the family has an allocated social worker, they will be informed of the attendance concerns.

The Head teacher meets regularly with the Educational Welfare Officer to review attendance within the school. The Educational Welfare Officer, in consultation with the school, will contact parents where there is a difficulty.

When a child's absence falls below 90%, a letter is sent home to request a meeting with the School Family Liaison & Welfare Officer and the Attendance Officer. During this meeting the parties will work together to identify the reasons for the poor attendance and to discuss strategies that can be put in place to improve it, including how the school can support. Further absences may result in a referral to the Educational Welfare Officer. The threshold for Persistent Absence is an overall absence rate of 10% or more at any given time. Persistent absenteeism is considered a safeguarding concern and individual cases will be discussed with the safeguarding team in school, which may result in a referral to children services.

DfE collects daily attendance data from the school, including absence codes. This data is published locally and nationally, and is used for comparison and reporting to governors.

### **2.2 Reporting to Parents / Carers**

Parents / carers have access to their child's up-to-date attendance information, via the Arbor app.

Yearly attendance is included in the annual school report, with recommendations for necessary improvements, where relevant.

Parents / carers will be contacted if their child's attendance becomes a cause for concern i.e. if it

falls below 95%.

### **2.3 Recording Concerns**

Where non-attendance becomes a safeguarding concern i.e. 10% or more, this is recorded on CPOMS, the school's electronic safeguarding system.

Regular communication and points for action will be in place between school and home. This could include attendance letters, meetings and an attendance contract.

### **2.4 Pupils With Medical Needs and / or SEND**

Some pupils will face greater barriers to attendance than others, including those with long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and / or disabilities.

All pupils have the same right to an education and therefore we take into account the barriers when working with parents / carers to identify additional support needed in order to help them access full-time education.

We treat each case on an individual basis, ensuring conversations are sensitive to the needs of the pupil and taking into consideration whether additional support from external agencies - including Health Services - may be required.

We will consider the pastoral care that may be supportive of the pupil's attendance and anticipate that all cases will involve a joined-up approach between school and home, and other agencies that may be involved.

### **2.5 Reduced timetable protocol**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full site education; in very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs for example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full time education and a part time timetable is considered necessary to reintegrate the child into school.

Within any such circumstances the school will follow the local authority's guidance using the Reduced Timetable Protocol and follow its guidance in how this is recorded on the register.

## **3 KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 The Governing Body**

- Promotes the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Ensures school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Holding the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The Head of School**

- Ensures implementation of this policy consistently across the school
- Monitors school-level absence data and reports it to governors
- Supports staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitors the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

### **3.3 Admin Team**

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head of School
- Works with external support to tackle persistent absence, including Education welfare Officers
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Works with the Head of School when to issue penalty notice
- Has an oversight of data analysis

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Head of School .

### **3.4 Class Teachers**

- Record attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office within the required timeframes (each morning and afternoon)
- Record overall attendance on annual school reports
- Discuss the impact of non-attendance on a child's learning, for example during parent / teacher consultations

### **3.5 School office staff**

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

### **3.6 Parents / Carers are responsible for:**

- Making sure their child attends school every day, on time
- Calling the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Providing the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensuring that - where possible - appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

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

- Attend school every day on time

## **4 ACTIONS FROM THE SCHOOL IF A PUPIL FAILS TO ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY**

The school will work closely with parents / carers and pupils to understand the barriers to good attendance, taking into account the sensitive nature of some of those reasons and reinforcing the school's position as one of safety and support. This may include:

- Addressing in-school barriers to attendance
- Engaging with external partners to support families access support, where barriers to attendance exist that are outside of the school's control
- creating support plans, actions plans or attendance contracts that outline the agreed expectations for attendance, with regular planned review opportunities
- Referrals to services and agencies that can provide specific support

Where attendance does not improve, the level of support or intervention from the school will increase and the school will clearly explain the consequences of persistent and severe absence to the parent / carer, including the potential need for legal intervention in future.

In all cases the school will monitor the impact of the support and any interventions, making adjustments where necessary.

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

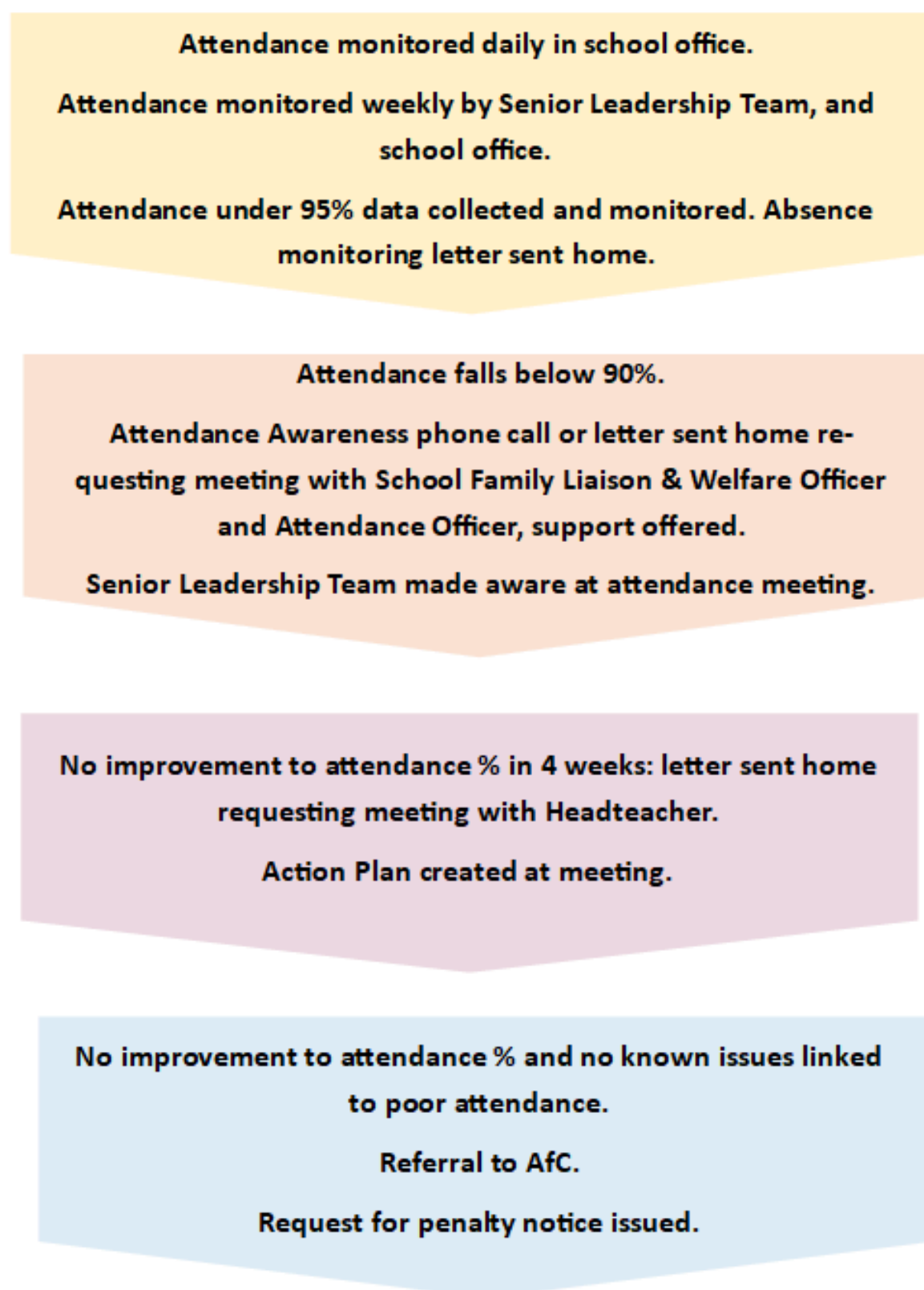
Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances



<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2: attendance flowchart



### **Appendix 3: letter to parent / carer regarding lateness**

Dear (insert name)

**RE: Lateness**

**I am writing to you regarding your child's lateness over the last half term/term. Our records show that your child has been late on \_\_\_\_ occasions. We are concerned that (Childs Name) is missing an important part of the school day when this happens.**

It is our aim that we work closely with our pupils, their parents and the Education Welfare Service and other necessary outside agencies to achieve every pupils' best possible attendance and punctuality throughout each academic year.

All pupils need to be at school at 8.55am, for their register at 9am.

Pupils who arrive at school after the register has closed are marked as late; this will be recorded as an L. The DFE guidance states clearly that a child must not be marked present if they are not in school during registration. We understand that school mornings can be hectic, but when your child is late for school, they are missing vital educational opportunities and cause disruption to the class as a whole.

If for any reason you are experiencing difficulties in getting your child to school on time, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can provide support and agree a strategy for improving this. Thank you for your continued support in these matters. I am sure we will see a marked improvement.

Yours sincerely,

#### **Appendix 4: letter to parent / carer for attendance below 95%**

Dear (insert name)

##### **RE: Absence Monitoring**

In our regular monitoring of absence, and further to our recent telephone conversation (Childs Name) appeared on our list of pupils whose attendance is below 95%.

(Childs Name)'s attendance is currently (XX%) for the period XX.XX.XXXX. This is XX authorised and XX unauthorised sessions absent year to date.

The staff at the school work hard to ensure that children are successful in their school work and regular attendance and timekeeping plays a big part in their achievement. We are bringing this matter to your attention because you may not realise how serious the problem has become.

A pupil's absence or lateness during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which you and we must seek to avoid.

If there are any concerns or circumstances affecting your child's attendance that we should be aware of please ensure that you make an appointment to see the Head of School at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Office Admin Team  
Orleans Primary School

## **Appendix 5: letter to parent / carer for persistent absence below 90%**

Dear (insert name)

### **RE: Persistent Absence**

I am writing regarding concerns with (Childs Name) current attendance record. So far this academic year their attendance level is low at XX%

The staff at the school work hard to ensure that children are successful in their school work and regular attendance and timekeeping plays a big part in their achievement.

We are bringing this matter to your attention because you may not realise how serious the problem has become.

We would now like to invite you for a meeting to discuss your child's attendance.

**Date:**

**Time:**

The school Family Liaison & Welfare Officer, the Attendance Officer and/or the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer will be present during this meeting.

A pupil's absence or lateness during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on that after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which you and we must seek to avoid.

We are now required to monitor future attendance to ensure that the level rises. The school will no longer be able to authorise any absence without a doctor's certificate or note confirming the illness.

If there is no improvement we will call you in to meet with the Head of School and the attendance team to discuss the matter. We look forward to seeing the attendance improve.

### **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:**

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause/him/her to receive full time education'.

Please feel free to contact the school should you wish to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

## **Appendix 6: letter to parent / carer invitation to meeting Head of School , action plan**

Dear (insert name)

### **RE: Persistent Absence - Meeting with Head of School**

I am writing regarding concerns with (Childs Name) current attendance record. So far this academic year their attendance level is low at ....%

Following your meeting with the school Family Liaison & Welfare Officer and the Attendance Officer on XX.XX.XXXX, your child's attendance was monitored over a 4 week period. As your child's attendance did not improve during this period, we are inviting you for a meeting to discuss your child's attendance with the Head of School

**Date:**

**Time:**

The Educational Welfare Officer from the Local Authority might be present during this meeting.

Please feel free to contact the school should you wish to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely,

## **Appendix 7: Leave of Absence Request**

Leave of Absence Request are made via a Google form once a parent has requested leave via the school office. All leave that is not illness must be applied for.

## **Appendix 8: letter to parent / carer in response to unauthorised holiday taken during term time**

Dear (insert name)

### **RE: Holiday in Term Time**

I am writing to you in response to your request to take a holiday in term time and I include a link to our published attendance policy:

[Website link to attendance policy](#)

As a school, our curriculum is organised with the aim that children build on their previous skills and knowledge. A new half term brings a different focus within each subject taught within the curriculum. We know that time taken off during term time will result in gaps in children's knowledge.

We can only authorise absences for extenuating circumstances, for example, a family bereavement or visits to other prospective schools. Therefore, we will be unable to authorise your holiday request and it will be recorded as unauthorised on our school register. This means your child's current attendance for this academic year is as follows: (Childs Name) XX%. All requests for five days or more absence are referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

I would like to remind you that there are thirteen weeks of holiday in each academic year and it is our expectation that families will take holidays during these times. It is also our policy that we do not set 'catch up' work for pupils to take on holiday.

Yours sincerely,