



Attendance and Exceptional Leave Policy

September 2022



Approved by Board of Directors
September 2020

Attendance and Exceptional Leave Policy

Introduction

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best progress possible. To do this it is essential that a child's time at school is maximised and even short absences can have a detrimental effect on children's learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines, so, in addition to affecting your own child, it may also affect the learning of others in the same class. **Early poor attendance habits follow right through from primary to secondary school and into employment.**

We expect all children to be at school, and on time, every day that the school is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage children to attend.

In our Multi Academy Trust (MAT), we believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our schools a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1 Legal Requirements and Local Authority Policy

1.1 Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

1.3 There is no automatic right to any leave of absence and all schools in our Trust are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising leave. Being mindful of this, only in very exceptional circumstances will the school grant leave of absence during term time.

1.4 Any leave taken without authorisation can lead to parents being issued a fixed penalty, which is currently £60 per parent per child up to 28 days.

2 Our Policy now reflects latest DfE Guidance contained in Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

3 The main pillars of our attendance strategy are:

4 EXPECT

5 Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

6

7 MONITOR

8 Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

9

10 LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

11 When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

12

13 FACILITATE SUPPORT

14 Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

15

16 FORMALISE SUPPORT

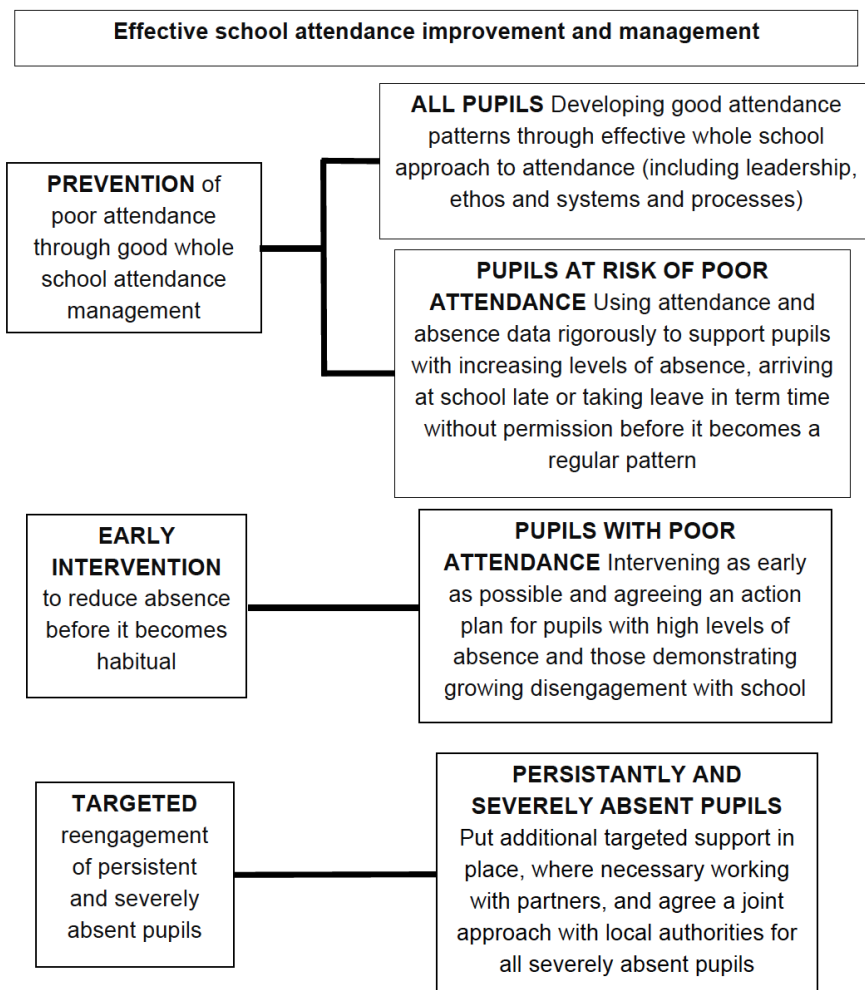
17 Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

18

19 ENFORCE

20 Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Categories of school attendance are broken down into 3 aspects: Prevention, Early Intervention and Targeted Support.



21 What and Unauthorised Absence?

are Authorised

21.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not make it an authorised absence.

Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances**, and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the appropriate County Council. The County Council have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with their Penalty Notices Code of Conduct.
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to the County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.

21.2 Unauthorised absence

-An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3. Procedures

3.1 The school day begins at 8:45 am.

3.2 The register is taken once the children have settled into class. If a child is not present when the register is taken, they are given a late mark. If a child arrives at school later than 9:15am they are given an **unauthorised absence** mark.

3.3 The afternoon session begins at 1:15pm and the same procedures apply.

Inspire primaries including Clifford Bridge, Hearsall, Walsgrave and Whittle Academies all have Nursery provision. Sessions start at different times dependent on the time parents have booked their children in.

Morning sessions typically start at 8:30am and the afternoon session at 12:30 pm.

Persistent absence in Nursery may result in your child being removed from the roll.

If a child is absent without notification

3.4 Where no notification has been received by 9:30 am a text message/call will automatically be sent to the parents/carers via the School Office.

3.5 If there is no response to the message and there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school's Pastoral Team, who will then be in contact straight away with the parent or carer, in order to check on the safety of the child.

3.6 The Pastoral Manager will provide a list of vulnerable children to the School Office, Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher which will provide information in the order of priority i.e. Family member, Social Worker, Attendance Officer.

Missing children

3.7 If a child is missing and whereabouts unknown, the school will follow the LA procedures and contact CME after 10 days they then take immediate steps to locate the child.

3.7

Written Notification of absence

3.8 Where the absence is because of a pre-arranged medical appointment, for example, the note should be sent to the school prior to the day of absence.

4 Requests for exceptional leave of absence

4.1 If parents wish to take their child out of school during term time, a request for leave of absence must be made on the appropriate form (Coventry Primary version and Warwickshire Primary version) ideally at least 4 weeks before the exceptional leave is due to begin, except in an emergency, in which case the application will be considered on an individual basis. Application forms can be obtained from the School Office. (See appendix 1)

4.2 The appropriate information and documentation must be provided to back up the application.

4.3 If the child is leaving the country the additional documentation detailed on the Exceptional Leave Request form must be provided.

- 6 Warwickshire Schools - All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- 7 Home Visits
- 8 If a parent does not communicate the reason for a child's absence on the third day of absence a home visit will be made. If there are any additional concerns around a family, this may be made sooner.

Attendance Champion

Each Inspire primary academy has an attendance champion. This person will support the Headteacher, senior leadership team and class teachers support high attendance for all children and aid communication of key messages. As part of their role they will regularly meet with the Headteacher and may attend senior team meetings.

Clifford Bridge Academy – Margaret Sutherland
Hearsall Community Academy – Tracie Bailey
Stockingford Academy - Debbie Lloyd
Walsgrave Academy – Michelle Smith
Whittle Academy - Luke Harris

8.1 If the documentation indicates that a child is going to a Country where FGM is practised then School may contact the emergency services on 101 and provide them with the details about the child.

9 Long-term absence through Child's Accident or illness

9.1 If a child is under the care of a hospital Consultant and a Consultant's letter has been produced, and the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or to be a repetitive absence, the school may contact the support services so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6. Repeated unauthorised absences

6.1 The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who may visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

6.2 The Governors, supported by the Local Authority, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

7.1 All Inspire Primaries have a range of attendance initiatives to reward and highlight the importance of attendance in our schools. Below are examples (not exhaustive) of some of the rewards and celebrations that are arranged across the year.

Each Week
-Non uniform Friday -Every week, each classes attendance will be measured (Monday - Friday). The class which has the highest attendance or 100% will be invited to wear non-uniform on the Friday of that week as a reward – including the class teacher and TA! -This will be communicated on a Thursday afternoon to the children and parents and celebrated on the school newsletter each week.
Each Half Term
-Children who have 100% attendance each week will be given a Golden Attendance Ticket. -At the end of each half term there will be a raffle draw to pick an attendance winner from each Phase of the school (EYFS, KS1, LKS2 & UKS2). Obviously, the more tickets a pupil has, the greater chance they have of winning.
End of each Term
-At the end of each term, any child with 100% attendance will receive a '100% Attendance Certificate Award' in special assembly. -Most improved attendance will also be awarded from each year-group.
End of the Academic Year
-Special 100% attendance assembly where children will receive 100% Attendance Trophy.
Each Week (where attendance is needing to be a school priority focus)
-Class individual attendance will be displayed on the classroom door. -The class with the best attendance each week will receive 5 minutes extra play on a Friday (or 5-minute afternoon play). This will run in each Phase of the school – EYFS, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are set by the Head of Education, Primary and agreed by the senior staff and Governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. When it is setting targets, the school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools, as well as national figures and those achieved by other schools in the city.

9 Monitoring

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the Trust Standards Committee to monitor and challenge overall attendance. The Standards Committee will examine the information provided in the report to satisfy themselves that attendance meets the required levels. The Head Teacher will produce an termly reports to the Local Governing Body.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 Senior Leaders will monitor phase/ class and individual attendance weekly as part of the focus and drive to ensure all children attend school fully. This information will be disseminated to Pastoral Managers, those support staff specifically responsible for attendance and class teachers.
- 9.4 Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, as well as for taking action on day-to-day absences, according to the school's procedures. If there is a longer-term worry about the attendance of a particular child, they must report this to the Headteacher, who will contact the parents or carers.

10 Review

- 10.1 The policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Exceptional Leave Policy

Exceptional leave during the School Day

Parents are expected to arrange medical appointments out of school hours where possible. Children must not be taken out of school without a previously written agreement (unless in an emergency). Parents must report to the school office, enabling the school staff to collect children from the classroom.

On return to school during the day parents must inform the School Office so that the register can be adjusted accordingly.

Parents should inform the School Office of any unexpected events which may result in a delayed return to school.

Exceptional leave during Term Time

We follow Local Authority guidance on parents taking children out of school for holidays during term time, which is **not** to authorise, and absence for this purpose will be treated as unauthorised absence. Consequently, parents will receive a Fixed Penalty Notice from the Children and Families First Service (see school's Attendance Policy).

Exceptional Leave of absence will only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances.

Requests for Exceptional Leave

- Except in an emergency, permission must be sought from the school at least 4 weeks before the exceptional leave is due to begin and in advance of making any arrangements. The request must be made on an **Exceptional Leave of Absence Form**, which can be obtained from the school office.
- Evidence of any travel bookings, if applicable, may be requested by the school.
- Each request for exceptional leave of absence is considered by the Headteacher.

Exceptional Leave Request Form – Coventry Academies

Dear Parent / Carer

Governors’ Policy states that no holidays will be authorized during term time unless the circumstances are exceptional in which case; I will consider requests on an individual basis. I am not in a position to stop you taking your child/ren on holiday however, if you do take your child/ren on holiday without permission I will not be able to authorise the request Unauthorised absences are liable to Penalty Notices fines or prosecution for non-attendance.

Child/ren who are absent for more than ten days following the expected date of return may be removed from roll and there can be no guarantee of a place being available at (name of school) on their return.

Parents/Carers

Name of Child(ren)	1)	Class 1)
Name of Child(ren)	2)	Class 2)
Name of Child(ren)	3)	Class 3)
Name of Child(ren)	4)	Class 4)
Address		Contact details while on holiday:- Name: Holiday Address:
Reason for leave request		Holiday contact telephone number:
Date of Leave requested		
Signature of parent(s)/carer(s)		
Print full name		

Employer

I am only able to grant annual leave during the above period for my employee.

Employee Name.....

Employer Signature.....

Full Name.....

Office use only

Name of child (1) _____ Class _____

Name of child (2) _____ Class _____

Name of child (3) _____ Class _____

Name of child (4) _____ Class _____

Current attendance (1) _____% (2) _____% (3) _____% (4) _____%

(Attendance is taken for 12 months from the date the form is submitted)

- In line with Governors' Policy I am unable to authorize this exceptional leave request for the above period.

- In this instance I am able to authorise this exceptional leave request for the above period.

Signature _____ Date _____

(for Office Use)

Letter 1 sent	Letter 2 sent	Letter 3 sent	Letter 4 sent	Penalty Notice Actioned

Exceptional Leave Request Form – Warwickshire Academies

Warwickshire County Council
Communities Directorate

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES ONLY

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____

First Date of Proposed Absence: _____ Last date of Proposed Absence: _____

Expected date of return to school: _____

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence (*they can only be exceptional circumstances*) (*see overleaf before completing*)

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

Total Days Requested On This Occasion

(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for _____ (*Insert child/children's name*)

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____

1st date of absence requested: Last date of absence requested:.....

Expected date of return to school:

Absence Authorised: Yes/No

The reasons for this decision are:.....

- LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: Date:

- **Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**
 - A) *An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides*

AND

 - B) *They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

-
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
 - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
 - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
 - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.

Parents:

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.
3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.