



**Agapé, Courage  
Thankfulness**

## Attendance Policy

|                                   |                        |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Name of Policy/Procedure</b>   |                        |
| <b>Author</b>                     | Michelle Dunford       |
| <b>Version</b>                    | V2                     |
| <b>Applicable to</b>              | All Schools in ACT MAT |
| <b>Approved by:</b>               | ACT Trustees           |
| <b>Approved on:</b>               | October 2025           |
| <b>Review Cycle</b>               | 1 Year                 |
| <b>Date of next review</b>        | October 2026           |
| <b>Website Publication yes/no</b> | Yes                    |

| Section                                                                      | Page number |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. <u>Introduction and Aim</u>                                               | 3           |
| 2. <u>The Law on school attendance &amp; rights to a full-time education</u> | 4           |
| 3. Principles & Expectations                                                 | 4/5/6       |
| 4. <u>Key contacts</u>                                                       | 7           |
| 5. The school day<br>Registration and Reporting a pupil absent               | 8           |
| 6. <u>Supporting Attendance</u>                                              | 9           |
| 7. Early Interventions                                                       | 10/11       |
| 8. Definition of Leave<br>Guidance for Parents – Term Time Leave (TTL)       | 12/13       |
| 9. <u>Penalty Notices</u>                                                    | 14          |
| 10. <u>Children missing in education and Elective home education</u>         | 15          |
| 11. Appendix 1 – Example of Statutory Letters                                | 16          |
| 12. Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes                                            | 17          |

## Introduction and aim

The ACT Multi Academy Trust is committed to a strong culture of ensuring that all our children reach their full potential and we recognise that attendance is an essential part of that journey.

### Aim

The purpose of the ACT Multi Academy Trust's Attendance policy is to ensure every child who is a registered pupil at each of our schools has the same opportunities and equal access to high quality education.

We recognise the barriers to accessing education are wide and complex and are not limited to inside the school building. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and families to identify potential barriers, understand individual needs and listen to our children's voices in order for our children to feel safe, secure and happy in school.

This policy sets out the aims, purpose and ethos of attendance across our Trust, the roles & responsibilities of the Trust and those of our Academies. Each school within our Trust will adopt this policy and outline the school specific details and procedures for working together to approve attendance. Regular attendance is the responsibility of all staff and this policy will give clear direction, outlining the legal responsibilities of all parties, to ensure regular attendance.

The following guidance has been taken into consideration when developing this policy: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92111/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance-19-august-2024.pdf)

The objectives of the policy are to;

- Ensure that all Trust staff are fully aware of the legal framework for working together to improve attendance.
- Provide a framework for academies to develop and implement their attendance and recording procedures in accordance with this policy.
- Ensure that there are effective procedures in place to deal with attendance issues which may arise.
- Assist staff to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practices.
- To set out responsibilities of various stakeholders.
- Support the Trust's overall aim to create and maintain a learning environment where all children and adults feel safe and valued and know they will be listened to and taken seriously.



## ACT Multi Academy Trust Equality Principles

The ACT Trust recognises its responsibilities in relation to equality law and is committed across its schools to the key principles of equality. In all of our schools measures are taken to create an inclusive culture to ensure equal educational opportunities for all our students and staff at all times. We do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristics in admission or employment, nor in access to our educational and professional programmes and activities. We take positive action to provide equal opportunity to all students and staff and others using the trust's school facilities.

### **The Law on school attendance & rights to a full-time education**

The Statutory Policy – Working together to improve school attendance – August 2024 is issued under the Education Act 2002 (all chapters) and sections 19(4A) and 444B(3) of Educations Act 1996

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

### **Principles**

The ACT Multi-Academy Trust, realises that for a child to reach their full educational potential, a high level of school attendance is essential. An ethos of high levels of attendance and punctuality is recognised and valued across all schools within our Trust. We aim to work with parents/carers and families to ensure that all children registered at each of our schools attend every day and on time, unless the absence is unavoidable. We expect that all children will achieve 100% attendance but recognise that there may be exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence, or absences relating to persistent health issues. Our policy applies to all children, including Reception-aged children, to promote good attendance habits from an early age.

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support children and their parents/carers to have the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer.
- Ensure parents/carers are aware of their legal responsibilities.

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a Trust we will encourage parents/carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

The Trust has a safeguarding duty of care to all its pupils. We take the role of ensuring a child's good attendance as part of our wider safeguarding duties.

## Expectations

### We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ✔ Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ✔ Ensure that their child arrives at school prepared for the school day, punctually and in time for registration. Lateness is monitored and may be recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- ✔ Inform school in advance of any medical appointments during school time. Parents may on occasion be asked to provide supporting information from the hospital, doctor or dentist, such as appointment details card/letter/text message in relation to the time requested. Where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside of school hours.
- ✔ Ensure that they contact the school before 9am if their child is unable to attend school, citing the reason.
- ✔ Inform the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that any problem can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- ✔ Follow application procedures regarding a request for leave of absence during term time, (TTL) which should only be taken if absolutely necessary. Leave is not automatically authorised unless considered an exceptional circumstance. Any leave taken during term time, that has been unauthorised, could be subject to a penalty notice/fine.
- ✔ Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details, and ensure school has more than one name, address and telephone number as an emergency contact.
- ✔ Engage with early interventions designed to support the family and their child's attendance at school.
- ✔ Discuss attendance where necessary face to face or on the telephone – conversations are preferable to messages or emails.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of statutory school age (the term after the child turns five) attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting an absence from school without good reason is an offence. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning.

### Schools within the Trust will:

- ✔ Provide a safe learning environment.
- ✔ Keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.
- ✔ Monitor individual children's attendance and punctuality.
- ✔ Contact parents/carers when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- ✔ Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, information from a GP or other relevant body may be requested to assist school in offering appropriate support.

- ❖ Meet regularly with the Local Authority Attendance Improvement Officer (LAAO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality. (Through Targeted Support Meetings – TSM)
- ❖ Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Local Authority Attendance Service.
- ❖ Provide intensive and bespoke support to children at risk of persistent absence.
- ❖ Work alongside other services and teams to support children's attendance. E.g. other schools in the Trust, the Local Authority, Early Help, Social Care, Virtual School and the local community (including volunteers).
- ❖ Meet regularly with Senior Leadership Team to discuss attendance trends, share concerns and request support and where necessary share with the Director of Attendance for the trust.
- ❖ Share attendance data with parents/carers and share what good attendance and success looks like for their child.
- ❖ Communicate clearly and consistently with parents/carers and children regarding attendance.
- ❖ Follow the Local Authority Medical Needs Policy for children who are failing to access education in school due to medical and behavioural needs. This goes hand in hand with Section 19 of the Education Act 1996.
- ❖ Consider an Individual Healthcare Plan for children with medical needs.
- ❖ Work alongside the Access and Inclusion team to identify and support children with medical needs preventing them from attending school.
- ❖ Identify children who are struggling to attend school through mental health/anxiety and instigate procedures and support under the ACT Multi-Academy Trust EBSA Policy

#### [Emotional Based School Absence](#)

#### **We expect that all children will:**

- ❖ Attend school every day.
- ❖ Attend school punctually.
- ❖ Attend appropriately prepared for the day.
- ❖ Discuss promptly with their class teacher any problems that may affect their school attendance.

#### **We expect that School governors will:**

- ❖ Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- ❖ Hold the head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.
- ❖ Report back to ACT Multi-Academy Trust Trustees/Governors

#### **We expect that the Local Authority will:**

- ❖ Provide support, information and guidance to school by having regular meetings to discuss attendance.
- ❖ Act as a partner with school to support in some cases of persistent absence.
- ❖ Work with schools in the enforcement of penalty notices, fines and prosecutions in cases that require legal involvement.
- ❖ Identify suitable provision and reasonable adjustments for pupils unable to access education due to prolonged ill health.

## Contacts

| Name                                           | Role                                                      | Contact details                                                                                        |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                | Trustee for Attendance ACT MAT                            | TBA                                                                                                    |
| Michelle Dunford                               | Director of Attendance & Pupil Premium for ACT MAT        | doa@act-academytrust.org                                                                               |
| John Turner                                    | Attendance Champion                                       | jturner@bg.act-academytrust.org                                                                        |
| Sara Lawford                                   | Attendance Administrator                                  | slawford@bg.act-academytrust.org                                                                       |
| Katie Chaudhry                                 | SENDSCO                                                   | sendco@bg.act-academytrust.org                                                                         |
| David Sandford                                 | Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)                        | head@bg.act-academytrust.org                                                                           |
| Michelle West                                  | Family Support Worker                                     | michelle.west@cambridgeshire.gov.uk                                                                    |
| Michelle West                                  | Local Authority Education Inclusion Family Advisor (EIFA) | michelle.west@cambridgeshire.gov.uk                                                                    |
| Katie Chaudhry                                 | Early Help Support Officer                                | sendco@bg.act-academytrust.org                                                                         |
| Zeena Cooper<br>Attendance Improvement Officer | Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO)                 | nsa.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk                                                                     |
|                                                | Local Authority Access and Inclusion Worker               | earlyintervention@cambridgeshire.gov.uk                                                                |
| Cambridgeshire Local Authority                 | NSA Help Line                                             | nsa.helpline@cambridgeshire.gov.uk<br>Non School Attendance Helpline:<br>Monday – Friday 9.00 to 15.30 |
|                                                |                                                           |                                                                                                        |
|                                                |                                                           |                                                                                                        |

## The School Day

### Registration

#### Reception to Year 6:

- The classroom door is opened at 8.45am.
- All external gates are locked at 8.55 am.
- Once the external classroom door has been locked, entry to the school is via the main entrance.
- Registers are open at 8.45 am and closed at 9.15 am. Pupils who arrive at school after this time will be recorded as L, late on the register.
- Pupils who arrive at school after 9.15 am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as U, unauthorised late, which then affects their overall attendance level.
- It is a legal requirement that a register of attendance is taken during the morning and afternoon at school. Any unexplained absence must be coded as unauthorised until a reason is given by parents/carers. This must be no later than 5 days after the session. Only the Head teacher may authorise or unauthorise an absence. The register can only routinely be amended where the reason for absence cannot be established at the time it is taken and it is subsequently necessary to correct the entry. Where amendments are made, the register will show the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made, and the name of the person who made the amendment. Registers are kept for three years as a record.

### Lateness

When children arrive late at school, they disrupt routines, affect other children's learning, miss the teacher's instructions to the lesson and may also feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late. They may also miss important intervention programmes and the opportunity to practice key learning skills. Where pupils show a persistent pattern of lateness, parents/carers will receive contact from the school advising them of the concern and offering support to resolve the issue. Should the lateness continue, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their child's lateness.

If there is no improvement, despite the school's attempts to address unauthorised absences, a referral could be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for pupils who are of statutory school age.

### Reporting a Pupil Absence

Parent/Carers must contact the school on the first and every subsequent day of absence by 9.15 am.

For any pupil not present at the close of registration, and the reason is still unknown, a member of the office staff will attempt to make contact with the Parent/Carers once the registers have closed at 9.20 am.



The member of administration team will ring every contact, starting with the priority contact, until a reason for absence is known. Messages will be left on voicemail requesting parents/Carers to contact the school regarding their child's absence. Outcomes of any phone conversations will be logged on the pupil's electronic school record. Staff will complete registers in accordance with the correct use of registration codes (see appendix 2)

Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence if there is no response from a parent/carers to an enquiry regarding their child's absence from school.

At times we may decide it is necessary to conduct a door knock to establish the safety and wellbeing of a child who is absent without explanation from a parent/carer.

## **Supporting Attendance**

The Attendance Champion for each school is a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and will share data trends, concerns and updates to SLT on a regular basis.

All members of the school staff have a safeguarding responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and lateness; with the Head teacher having overall responsibility for the monitoring of attendance and lateness of every pupil. Where there are concerns, parents will always be informed by letter and/or telephone conversation and given an opportunity to come into school to meet with designated staff.

The Attendance Champion in each of our schools is responsible for all children's day to day attendance at school, and will partner with other agencies to help us do this. For children who might need extra support to maintain their attendance e.g. Young Carers, we signpost families to appropriate places to reduce the impact that their needs and personal circumstances have on their attendance at school. Safeguarding and attendance are closely linked, and we work together with Social Care to identify where children need extra support. We will work with families in many different ways to overcome barriers to attendance. All staff have direct access to our trained Designated Safeguarding Lead, and this is important for this work.

School is responsible for monitoring whole school attendance data and using this to inform how we support pupils. We share this data within the school staff to ensure continuity of support. We are required to report our attendance to the Department for Education (DfE) so that we can compare our performance with that of other schools, both locally and nationally. Attendance data from each school in our Trust is analysed regularly by the Director of Attendance, and children whose attendance is falling or deemed to be a concern will be noted. This will be communicated with parents and carers. Support will then be put in place. Children whose attendance falls to 90% or under are deemed to be 'persistently absent' and can be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement action. Pupils whose attendance is 50% or under are 'severely persistently absent' and parents/carers will be expected to engage in substantial support.

We have a whole-Trust ethos of promoting and celebrating attendance. This means that we train every staff member in attendance procedures so that everyone understands the processes for attendance and the pastoral structures in school. We train, remind and support all staff to follow this policy, and constantly refer to it. Good attendance is celebrated with children and families and reported to parents/carers at Parents Evenings and in formal written end-of-year reports.

Our whole-Trust strategy for attendance involves deciding how to allocate resources (both financial and staffing) to manage attendance. Our support and early interventions for attendance are regularly monitored to ensure they are having an impact.

## Early Intervention

As a Trust, we aim to work collaboratively with parents/carers to improve school attendance. This means that we will listen, empathise and support with attendance. Under this process we will endeavour to follow the following model.



### Monitor – Listen & Understand

ACT Multi-Academy Trust is committed to working with parents and families to identify barriers and recommend and implement support wherever necessary to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

Lateness and attendance are monitored daily by the **school attendance champion** who will:

- Scrutinise the registers daily, monitoring authorised/unauthorised absence and other reasons provided for pupil absence and lateness.
- Raise concerns with parents/carers of identified patterns of lateness with an initial 'Late Letter'.
- Contact parents by telephone, email, or letter to establish a reason for a pupil's absence if the reason is unknown.
- Raise concerns with parents/carers once attendance has fallen below an acceptable level.
- Offer support or signpost to other areas of support within the community.
- Class Teachers will identify trends and initiate dialogue with pupils and parents/carers. This will be followed up by the schools Attendance Champion with a telephone call offering support.
- Send a letter to offer support and further explain the effect the absence/lateness is having on the child.

### Facilitate Support

When required, support strategies with a monitoring period will be put in place to help improve the attendance or lateness of a pupil. Attendance Champions should arrange face to face meetings with parents/carers to discuss the monitoring period outcomes and agree support strategies to assist attendance and/or punctuality, these strategies will be documented and monitored for impact.

## Formalise Support

Should a pupil's attendance or lateness continue to be a concern despite the support strategies in place, with no improvement to the expected level set by school, a referral will be made to the Local

Authority Attendance Team for statutory aged pupils. We will 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 an attendance contract or education supervision order. This could also result in a Penalty Notice/fine, or prosecution being issued by Cambridgeshire County Council, as per section 444 Education Act 19

96. This may result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months in prison.

The Attendance Champion will:

- ✦ Send an invitation to attend a meeting to enter into an Attendance Contract. This is a supportive meeting, entered into voluntarily to discuss the needs of a pupil and family and identify ways that barriers to attendance can be removed.
- ✦ Consider the Implementation of the Trust EBSA Policy

## Enforce

Should the Attendance Contract and/or EBSA Policy fail to improve attendance, or should there be no engagement with interventions and support despite every attempt by the school to support the family, a request for the issue of a penalty notice/fine or prosecution could be made to the Local Authority Attendance Team for children of statutory school age.

The Attendance Champion will;

- ✦ Issue a Notice to Improve letter, a strategy used in partnership with the Local Authority to set targets for improved attendance. This is a final attempt to improve attendance when parents/carers are failing to engage with support being offered by school, before referring parents for legal sanctions.
- ✦ If attendance does not improve, school will refer to the Local Authority for legal sanctions.
- ✦ Liaise with other external organisations in relation to a pupil's attendance/lateness.
- ✦ Monitor pupil attendance within specific and identified groups.

## Illness

Children who are unable to attend school due to diarrhoea can return after they have been 48 hours clear. Children who are unable to attend school due to vomiting can return once they are 48 hours clear.

Children with mild coughs, colds, sore throats, sneezes and runny noses who are otherwise well can continue to attend school. However, if they develop a high temperature they should stay at home until their temperature has reduced and they are well enough to return to school. We expect children to attempt to come to school unless they are too unwell to complete basic tasks. We will contact you if they need to return home.

(See Local Authority Advice – Is my child too ill for school?)

For absences relating to a medical appointment, supporting information may be requested to authorise this absence. This can be a text message which clearly identifies who the appointment is for, or an appointment card. A period of absence will only be authorised in relation to the length of the appointment.

## **Medical Needs and SEND**

When children are prevented from accessing school due to physical or mental ill health, school will try to identify the barriers these pupils face, and use our tiered approach to supporting medical needs. This starts with the universal offer of support for all children and leads to higher tiers of need where increasingly specialist support is required. We will consider reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support in school and lunchtime arrangements. We will liaise with appropriate services to ascertain support, in the rare instances that a pupil is unable to access any education inside the school setting. We will work with the Local Authority Access and Inclusion Team to identify available options for education. Where a pupil's health needs mean they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long term, we may seek medical information to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision. This may take a variety of forms, which we will discuss with parents/carers on an individual basis.

Where children have an EHCP, we will liaise closely with the child's SEN Caseworker to work towards the best attendance outcomes for the child.

We are able to make adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustments must be agreed by, and regularly reviewed with, the pupil and their parents/carers

## **When Supporting Medical and Mental Health Needs the Attendance Champion will;**

- ✔ Monitor and respond to pupil absences for those with additional medical needs and will refer to the schools Medical Policy.
- ✔ Where mental health is a barrier to regular attendance, consider implementing the Trust EBSA Policy and/or liaise with the Local Authority Attendance Officer for additional interventions/support pathways.
- ✔ Monitor pupils and follow procedures for pupils who are 'Children Missing in Education'.
- ✔ Follow statutory reporting procedures for parents who have requested to home educate their child.
- ✔ Follow statutory procedures when deleting a pupil from roll.
- ✔ Monitor absences for illness and requests for leave to attend medical appointments.
- ✔ Reporting pupils to the Local Authority when they have 10 consecutive 'O' coded (unauthorised absence) sessions in school.
- ✔ Report pupils with 15 consecutive days of 'I' (illness) codes to the Local Authority.

## **Definitions of Leave**

We expect attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

## Authorised leave

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason such as:

- ❖ Illness or a medical appointment. There is an expectation that the pupil will be in school for registration or return to school after the appointment, depending on where the appointment falls within the school day and the health of the pupil.
- ❖ Religious Observance - only day(s) exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong to.
- ❖ The leave of absence has been authorised due to a short and exceptional, unavoidable circumstance.

## Unauthorised leave:

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school, even with the support of the parent/carers, such as:

- ❖ Shopping, hair appointments, visiting family, taking part in a protest or birthdays.
- ❖ Medical appointments where supporting evidence of appointment details have not been provided when asked for.
- ❖ There has been no reason provided by the parent/carers to support an absence.
- ❖ Failure to follow school procedures or inform the school when taking a pupil out of school during term time.
- ❖ A leave of absence that has not been authorised due to not being considered an exceptional circumstance.

**Coding is always at the Head teacher's discretion.**

## Guidance for Parents – Term Time Leave (TTL)

Parents do not have the right or entitlement to take their child out of school for a term time holiday. Recent government guidelines have removed the discretion on head teachers agreeing to term time leave. Any requests for leave of absence need to be submitted before the leave is taken. Parents must complete a Term Time Leave Request form and provide any supporting evidence, if applicable, with their request. This also applies to parents requesting to take their child out of school during the school day.

If the school suspect Term Time Leave has been taken but the parent/carers have not completed a Term Time Leave Request Form, we will write to all parent/carers giving them an opportunity to clarify the reason for absence and provide supporting evidence. Failure to respond to or provide supporting evidence will result in a referral to the Local Authority for unauthorised leave from school.

**Exceptional circumstance** (*definition of exceptional: rare, unavoidable, short*) will be considered on an individual basis, such as up to two days absence from school to visit a dying relative, death of a family member, attendance at a funeral or any unavoidable one-off event.

The following examples of requests for leave of absence that **do not** meet the criteria of an exceptional circumstance and will not be authorised and could be subject to a Penalty Notice Fine/Prosecution for pupils of statutory school age are:

- 🌿 Cheaper holidays/flights in the UK or abroad
- 🌿 Holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term
- 🌿 Trip of a life time
- 🌿 Visiting family or friends who have different half term holiday dates
- 🌿 Family weddings for more than 1 day or visits to see family abroad
- 🌿 Relatives coming to visit
- 🌿 Extension of leave if a pupil has not returned to school after an agreed absence if does not meet grounds for an exceptional circumstance

### **Penalty Notices – Unauthorised TTL**

If a pupil takes unauthorised term-time leave for 10 consecutive sessions or more (generally 5 days) they will be subject to a Penalty Notice. The fine for a penalty notice is £80 per child, per parent/carer, increasing to £160 if not paid after 21 days but within 28 days for pupils who are of statutory school age. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child and this could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months per parent.

For **second** offences of unauthorised term-time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child.

For the **third** offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.

The definition of parent in relation to a Penalty Notice includes Step-parent and the partner of a parent who lives in the same household

See Graph below:

| ← Three-Year Period →                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>First</b> Term Time Leave<br/>10 sessions (5 days) or more.<br/><b>£80</b> for each child per parent.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>E.g. if two parents take 3 children away, the fine would be <math>£80 \times 3 = £240</math> per parent.<br/><b>The total would be £480.</b></p> <p>If you pay after 21 days it rises to <b>£960.</b></p> </div> <p>If you don't pay after 28 days = a prosecution.</p> | <p><b>Second</b> Term Time Leave<br/>10 sessions (5 days) or more.<br/><b>£160</b> for each child per parent.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>E.g. if two parents take 3 children away, the fine would be <math>£160 \times 3 = £480</math> per parent.<br/><b>The total would be £960.</b></p> </div> <p>If you don't pay after 28 days = a prosecution.</p> | <p><b>Third</b> Term Time Leave<br/>10 sessions (5 days) or more.<br/>Prosecution.</p> |

If 3 or more term time leave Penalty Notices have been issued over a 3 year period then prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996, may be considered as an alternative to a Penalty Notice fine being issued. Where a parent takes a child out of school during term time for an extended period (20 days or more), not authorised by the school, prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996, may also be considered.

### Children Missing in Education

If a pupil fails to attend school for 10 consecutive days, without explanation, the school will refer the pupil to the Local Authority as a Child Missing in Education. After a further 10 days of absence with no explanation, your child is at risk of losing their school place with the school.

### Elective Home Education

It is a parent's right to be able to withdraw their child from school to educate them at home if they wish to. There are legal responsibilities parents/carers must fulfil if they wish to educate their child at home, which are monitored by the Local Authority. Please speak to the Head teacher in the first instance if you are considering this option.





## EXAMPLE LETTER - SOFT LETTER

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

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

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement.

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

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

We know that a lot of families already have a supportive network of relatives, friends and community groups. However additional support is also available for families via an Early Help Assessment, where help can be provided from trained professionals who can provide support, signposting and access your community offer. If you would like to discuss this process in more detail, please contact XYZ (Attendance Lead/ Champion).

Further support is also available in the community, more information can be found on H.A.Y website. Please scan the QR code below.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher  
Enc Record of attendance  
School Attendance Leaflet



# Burrough Green Church of England Primary Academy

Headteacher: Mr David Sandford

Burrough Green, Nr, Newmarket, CB8 9NH, Telephone: 01638 507236

Email: [office@burroughgreen.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@burroughgreen.cambs.sch.uk)



*The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, as amended 2013*

## Request for authorisation of a Pupil Absence Request for Exceptional Circumstances

I wish to apply to have an absence authorised for:

Child's name ..... Year group .....

Child's name ..... Year group .....

Child's name ..... Year group .....

Child's name ..... Year group .....

Date from ..... date to ..... (inclusive)

Number of school days child /children will be absent .....

Name of parents(s)/Carer(s): .....

Address: .....

**Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances why the absence needs to be taken in term time. This section must be completed (please continue on a separate sheet if needed).**

Signature of **both** parent (s)/carer (s) (even if separated and therefore live at different addresses).

Parent/carer 1 ..... Date .....

Parent/carer 2 ..... Date .....

NB: Amendments to the 2006 regulations (2013) make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw pupils from school and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. The school will always want to discuss this with you personally.

Please complete this form and send to the Headteacher. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered by the school.

Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as 'Unauthorised Absence' and may result in a court prosecution or a penalty notice being issued (see back of form for details of this).

|                                                                           |                             |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| SCHOOL USE ONLY                                                           | Specify dates unauthorised: |       |
|                                                                           | Specify dates authorised:   |       |
| Signature of Headteacher:                                                 |                             | Date: |
| A personal discussion with you is requested                      yes / no |                             |       |
| Current school attendance:                                                | %                           |       |



## Guidance

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (Headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be **unauthorised** and may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

### Exceptional circumstances

These are defined as: rare, unavoidable, short. Each case will be considered on an individual basis but parents should be aware that the **following do not meet the criteria set by the DfE:**

- Cheaper holidays / flights in the UK or abroad;
- Holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term;
- Trip of a life time
- Visiting family/friends that have different half term holidays;
- Family weddings for more than one day or visits to see family abroad;
- Relatives coming to visit;
- Extension of leave if a pupil has not returned to school after an agreed absence if it does not meet grounds for an exceptional circumstance;
- Leave taken due to potential travel disruption.

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has either chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parent and does not meet the statutory defences mentioned below.

### Penalty Notices

As a parent it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your Child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a referral to the Local Authority for enforcement actions to be considered. The Local Authority could issue a Penalty Notice fine or initiate legal proceedings through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child. If a pupil takes unauthorised term-time leave for 10 consecutive sessions or more (generally 5 days) they will be subject to a Penalty Notice. The fine for a penalty notice is £80 per child, per parent/carer, increasing to £160 if not paid after 21 days but within 28 days for pupils who are of statutory school age. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child and this could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months per parent.

For second offences of unauthorised term-time leave (10 consecutive sessions or more) within a three-year rolling period, the fine is a flat £160 per parent, per child. For the third offence in a three-year rolling period, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996.


The only statutory defences to the offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons;
- The LA failed to provide transport when required to do so;
- The absences were due to religious observance;
- You had permission of the school or there was an unavoidable cause.

There is no obligation upon the school to provide work for a pupil on holiday or on return to compensate in any way for missed work.



## Attendance Codes

|                                                                                |     |                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | / \ | Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session                                                               |
|                                                                                |     | Late arrival before the register is closed                                                                                    |
| K                                                                              |     | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority                                                                 |
| V                                                                              |     | Attending an educational visit or trip                                                                                        |
| P                                                                              |     | Participating in a sporting activity                                                                                          |
| W                                                                              |     | Attending work experience                                                                                                     |
| B                                                                              |     | Attending any other approved educational activity                                                                             |
| D                                                                              |     | Dual registered at another school                                                                                             |
| <b>Absent – Leave of absence</b>                                               |     |                                                                                                                               |
| C1                                                                             |     | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.      |
| M                                                                              |     | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment                                                 |
| J1                                                                             |     | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution |
| S                                                                              |     | Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination                                                         |
| X                                                                              |     | Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school                                                                 |
| C2                                                                             |     | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable                                           |
| C                                                                              |     | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance                                                                                 |
| <b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>                                       |     |                                                                                                                               |
| T                                                                              |     | Parent travelling for occupational purposes                                                                                   |
| R                                                                              |     | Religious observance                                                                                                          |
| I                                                                              |     | Illness (not medical or dental appointment)                                                                                   |
| E                                                                              |     | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made                                                           |
| <b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes</b>          |     |                                                                                                                               |
| Q                                                                              |     | Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements                                                          |
| Y1                                                                             |     | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available                                                       |
| Y2                                                                             |     | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel                                                                       |
| Y3                                                                             |     | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed                                                              |
| Y4                                                                             |     | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed                                                       |
| Y5                                                                             |     | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention                                                                    |
| Y6                                                                             |     | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law                                                             |
| Y7                                                                             |     | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause                                                                       |
| <b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>                                           |     |                                                                                                                               |
| G                                                                              |     | Holiday not granted by the school                                                                                             |
| N                                                                              |     | Reason for absence not yet established                                                                                        |
| O                                                                              |     | Absent in other or unknown circumstances                                                                                      |



|                      |                                             |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| U                    | Arrived in school after registration closed |
| Administrative Codes |                                             |
| Z                    | Prospective pupil not on admission register |
| #                    | Planned whole school closure                |

Attendance Codes – September 2024