



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our Shared Vision

Striving for excellence in everything we do

High Quality
Education for
ALL

Effective
home/school
and community
partnerships

Equality Mission Statement

We are committed to ensuring equality of educational opportunity and support for all pupils, parents, carers, staff and visitors irrespective of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, gender reassignment, and socio-economic background. We aim to provide a fully inclusive school in which every person feels proud of their identity and is able to participate fully within the school community. We believe that a diverse school community is a strength which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Approved by: FGB	Date: 18.9.2025
Signature (Chair of Governors): Signed copy held on file in school	Signature (Headteacher): Signed copy held on file in school

Last reviewed in: September 2025	Next review date: September 2026
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This policy covers many of the articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some key ones are listed below.

Article 3 Best Interests of the Child

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect the child.

Article 28 Right to Education

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free.

Rationale

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled.

For a child to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered, it is vital that they are at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Parents/Carers and school share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to children and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

This policy is in line with the recommendations set out in the 'Working together to improve school attendance' (DfE August 2024)

General Purposes

Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.

Ensure parents/carers understand and perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at the school, attend regularly.

Reduce absence, including persistent absence.

Ensure all pupils are punctual.

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. However, there are key actions that are stakeholders are expected to ensure are implemented. The table below summaries these.

Parents/Carers	Class Teachers	Office Staff	Parent Support Advisor (PSA) and Strategic Lead for Attendance
Ensure their children attend school regularly and are punctual.	Ensure that a daily attendance register is taken for each session. Speak to parents/carers about child's attendance when they return to school after an absence.	Ensure accurate information regarding absence is recorded on Integris.	Have in place an up-to-date Attendance and Punctuality Policy that outlines clear procedures in relation to attendance and punctuality.
Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness)	Raise concerns about a child's attendance with PSA.	Contacting the parent/carer, on the first day of absence if no reason has been received.	Promote the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality and communicate policy and procedures to parents/carers and the wider community. <i>Please refer to the Attendance and Punctuality flowcharts on the website.</i>
Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible		Raise any concerns with PSA	
Ensure their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day.		Following up with a phone call, if there is no response to the message by the afternoon registration session.	Encourage, recognise, reward and celebrate excellent attendance.
Inform the school if their child does not require their allocated place any longer.			Regularly analyse and report accurate data to governors, the LA and government, including key actions taken to improve attendance/punctuality.

Key staff involved in the effective implementation of this policy and associated procedures

Clare Stock	Deputy Headteacher for EYFS/KS1 and Designated Safeguarding Lead	0208 270 4900 office@becontreeprimaryschool.com	Senior leader responsible for strategic overview of attendance
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Jackie Moldrich	Parent Support Adviser	0208 724 1793 office@becontreeprimaryschool.com	Responsible for daily attendance procedures
Bernadette Reilly	SENDCo	0208 270 4900 office@becontreeprimaryschool.com	Provides provision/support for children with SEND.
Mel Lewis	Specialist Learning Support Assistant	0208 270 4900 office@becontreeprimaryschool.com	Supports children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

School Procedures

Registration

Schools must also take the attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion the register is taken the appropriate national attendance and absence code must be entered for each pupil.

(Working Together to Improve School Attendance- (2024)

This applies to normal school practice.

Morning registration starts at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 8:50 a.m. when the registers close. A child arriving after 8:50 a.m. must report to staff at the 'Late Door' and their name recorded on a list and marked in late. At 8:55 am, the main gates close and any child coming in after this must enter via the school office entrance. Parent/carers are required to sign in their children and state the reason for their lateness.

Afternoon registration starts at 12:45 for Reception and Four Seasons ARP and 1.00 p.m. for KS1 and KS2 and any child not in attendance for this session will receive the appropriate code for the absence.

Codes used are in line with Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) and LA policy and procedures. Below are the most common standardised codes that are used for registers.

/ \	/ =present mark for a.m. session \ = present mark for p.m. session
L	Late arrival before the register has closed
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
I	Illness (not a medical or dental appointment)
M	Medical/dental appointment
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances authorised by the school
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
N	Reason for absence not yet provided
R	Religious observance
G	Holiday not authorised by the school

E	Suspended or excluded but no alternative provision made
D	Dual registered at another school
V	Off-site educational activity (e.g. trip)
P	Participating in a sporting activity
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school

The Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance from LBBD outlines three different stages of support. These are:

Stage 1: Prevention

This stage is where the needs are met by services available to all. This stage applies to children who have a level of attendance between 90-100%.

These children will primarily receive support from the school through a whole school approach which promotes good attendance.

Stage 2: Early Help and Support

This is used when a child's attendance continues to decline over a period of time and is at risk of falling below 90%.

Stage 3: Statutory Intervention

This stage is used when a child's attendance falls below 90%.

Statutory intervention by Barking and Dagenham Council can take the form of either:

- Statutory children's social care involvement; or
- Attendance legal intervention (e.g. a fixed penalty notice or prosecution)

Listed below are a number of strategies to encourage excellent attendance and at which stage these are implemented.

Promoting Good Attendance

We have in place a number of strategies to encourage, recognise, reward and celebrate excellent attendance. These include:

- Making early contact with parent/carers when a child fails to attend school without providing a reason, and if a child fails to be punctual regularly. (Stage 1)
- Monitoring and tracking attendance of individual children by attendance team. (Stage 1)
- Formal and informal meetings with parents to discuss any concerns around falling attendance. (Stage 2)
- Establishing a good working relationship with parent/carers who are concerned that their child may be experiencing difficulty in attending school and offering appropriate support and intervention, where necessary. (Stage 1 and 2)
- Reporting attendance levels to parents/carers as part of Parent/Teacher Consultation Meetings and providing an attendance summary with end of year school reports. (Stage 1)

- Rewarding excellent attendance using our BECONTREE 100 (BEC 100 in Reception) initiative. Each class receives a letter for every day where 100% attendance is achieved in the class. The class is rewarded with a non-uniform day and a certificate when all the letters and numbers are achieved. (Stage 1)
- Overall attendance and individual class attendance percentages are celebrated and rewarded in weekly assemblies, reported in our school newsletter and on our website. (Stage 1)
- Termly RAYGG (red, amber, yellow, green, gold) rated attendance letters sent home to inform parents of child's current attendance percentage. (Stage 1 and 2)

Absences and Persistent Absences

Reporting Absences

When a child is absent, parent/carers must contact the school on the **first day of the absence**, by calling the school office on 0208 270 4900. A note about the reason for absence is made on the school's registration system and coded accordingly. Please note: Schools authorise absences, not parents/carers. A reason/note from a parent/carer is not an automatic right to authorise a child's absence.

Section 444(1), Education Act 1996 states that ***if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.*** (LBBB Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for Irregular School Attendance)

If irregular school attendance occurs, then this offence can trigger the use of a penalty notice. Further information about this can be found on page 6 of this policy.

Following up an Absences-

When a child does not attend, the school will respond effectively by:

- Contacting the parent/carer using the school's automated messaging service, on the first day of absence if no reason has been received. In the case of a number not being available, emergency contacts will be used. (Stage 1)
- Following up with a phone call and then letter, if there is no response to the message by the afternoon registration session. (Stage 1)
- Carry out a home visit (if more than one day absent with no information) if no contact has been made with either the parent/carer or with the allocated emergency contact person for safeguarding reasons. (Stage 1 and 2)
- Where necessary, contacting the parent/carer to attend an attendance meeting. (Stage 2)
- Monitoring closely any areas of concern connected with non-attendance. (Stage 1 and 2)

Persistent Absences (Stage 3)

If absence continues and is deemed to be persistent or severe, and the school has been unsuccessful in actively engaging with the parent/carer, the matter will be referred to the Local Authority for further action.

A child is identified as a persistent absentee (PA) if they have missed 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year). A child is known as a severe absence child if they have missed 50% or more.

Schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils:

1. Work together with the parent/carer to address any in school barriers to attendance. If this is outside of the school control, work with parents to access the support they may need.
Please see Appendix A: Attendance Procedures Flow Chart which outlines the different support strategies that are in place, different attendance stages and the actions that may follow.
2. If the absence intensifies, school to work in partnership with the Local Authority and other relevant partners.
3. If voluntary support is not effective or parents disengage, schools to work in partnership with the Local Authority to:
 - put formal support in place e.g., a parenting contract
 - issue a penalty notice
 - intensify support through children's social care involvement, especially for those children with a severe absence rate (50% or below attendance)
 - prosecute parents where other routes have failed. Prosecution may also occur if a child is a PA child.

These steps may not be taken in a sequential order as it will be dependent on the current absence rate and any previous involvement from the Local Authority.

Attendance of Children with a Social Worker

The school along with the virtual school head will monitor the attendance of those children with a social worker.

The virtual school has the responsibility to:

- regularly monitor the attendance of children with a social worker, including looked after children.
- set aspirational targets for attendance of children with a social worker, and put in place personal education plans for looked after children.
- provide training for designated teachers about their role promoting the attendance of children who have ever needed a social worker.
- secure regular attendance of looked after children and provide advice and guidance to services supporting the child.
- work across children's social care to make sure that attendance is built into every child in need or child protection plan where attendance is a concern.

The school will inform either virtual school or the child's social worker of any absences.

Illness

Sickness of 5 days or more must be covered by a medical certificate but if a pattern of sickness is established, the school may request that further medical certification be provided.

Exceptional Circumstances Absence Request

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) states that ***'a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance.'***

However, if you require leave due to an exceptional circumstance, it must be requested (in advance) by the parent who the pupil normally lives with. We will then consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Please see Appendix B for an Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

Legal Action and Fines

Penalty Notices

When can penalty notices be issued?

A penalty notice can be issued when a child has had **10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 school week period.**

The sessions do not need to be consecutive and the 10 week period can cross two terms.

If this occurs then parents will be issued with a 'Notice to Improve Letter'. This is where parents/carers have a minimum of twenty school days to improve the child's attendance. During this time, your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school during this period.



Exceptional Circumstances Leave in Term Time

What you need to know!

Can I take my child out of school?

Parents **do not** have any legal entitlement to take their children out of school during term time.

Will my request be granted?

Request must only be in exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will inform you of their decision. Each case is considered on an individual basis. Emergency absences will be considered, but we do require supporting documentation to show that it is an emergency e.g. booking confirmation of flights, medical evidence of emergency procedure etc.

What is the penalty notice?

We are required to follow the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance. This outlines the cost of the penalty notice. The penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. This is fine per parent per child that has an absence. Proceeds from penalty notices **DO NOT** go to the school.

What happens if I need to?

An 'Exceptional Circumstances Form' must be completed prior to the absence. It needs to be submitted to the Headteacher. Failure to complete the form will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

What happens if the absence is not agreed?

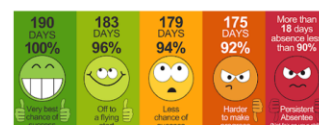
If the request is not authorised and the child does not attend school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences, of 10 session (5 or more days) will result in a penalty notice being issued.

What about a holiday?

Holidays are not exceptional circumstances and these will not be granted. Any absence due to holidays will be **unauthorised** and you may be issued with a **penalty notice**.

Where can I find out more information?

Additional guidance can be found on the DfE website
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf



If we should not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, a Penalty Notice may be issued.

What is classed as an unauthorised absence?

Absences will be treated as unauthorised if:

- no explanation is given by the parent/carer. It is the parent/carer responsibility to notify the school if their child is going to be absent.
- there is no evidence provided for the child's absence e.g., medical procedure.
- the child is absent for an unexceptional special occasion.
- the child is away from school on a family holiday.

Penalty Notices

If the criteria are met for a penalty notice, then the following will apply:

Penalty Notice 1

The first penalty notice issued to a parent will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

If there is not improvement in attendance, then a second penalty notice can be issued.

Penalty Notice 2

A second penalty notice issued to the same parent is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

Only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent within a 3-year rolling period. In this instance alternative action will be taken instead. This will include prosecution. Therefore, a court warning letter will be issued.

Removing children from the school roll

All schools are required by law to inform their Local Authority before, or at the point of, removing a child's name from the school roll.

In LBBD, this is achieved by completing and submitting the borough's 'online off-roll' form [School roll - pupil to be deleted from school register | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](https://lbbd.gov.uk/school-roll-pupil-to-be-deleted-from-school-register)

There are a number of reasons why a child may be removed from the school roll the main ones are outlined in the table below

a	The child has enrolled at another school
f	Parents have informed school in writing that they have decided to home educate
g	Child has stopped attending because s/he no longer ordinarily resides at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school
g1	The child no longer resides in this country
i	Child has been continuously absent from the school for at least twenty school days and the absence are unauthorised
o	Child has been permanently excluded from the school (Off roll from the date the exclusion is upheld by the school governors.

Further reasons for removing children from the school role can be found in Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance.

Children Missing in Education

If children are not in education, and are not known to local authorities, their well-being and safety may be at risk.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined, for the purpose of statutory guidance, under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, respectively, as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

The school will adhere to *LBBD's 'Legal and borough procedures for adding or removing a child's name from the roll of a school'*. Key information is detailed below.

Nursery and Reception Children under 5 Years

We aim to instil good attendance habits from the start of each child's education. Therefore, unauthorised absences for children under 5 no longer receive the C code for Special Circumstances.

Nursery and reception children's attendance figures do not count towards the school's overall attendance percentage and legal proceedings for irregular school attendance and the issuing of notice to improve letters and/or penalty notices cannot be considered until the term after a child's 5th birthday.

Punctuality

Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for making sure that their child attends school regularly. This means that children should have no sessions of unauthorised attendance.

It is essential that children arrive on time to school so that they do not miss out on the important learning activities that happen early in the day when they are most alert. Regular school attendance is an important part of giving your child the best possible start in life. Children who miss school frequently, even by a couple of minutes each day, can fall behind with their work and social development.

The school has systems in place that are rigorous and followed consistently to ensure that all children arrive at school on time.

- monitor the child's lateness, if there are 10 or more sessions of lateness per term a letter will be sent home to parent/carers.
- if lateness does not improve, a formal meeting with parents/carer to discuss any concerns around falling attendance. Targets will be set for parent/carer to work towards to ensure that lateness improves.

A child who arrives after 9:15 a.m., without a valid reason which can be evidenced, e.g., medical appointment, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

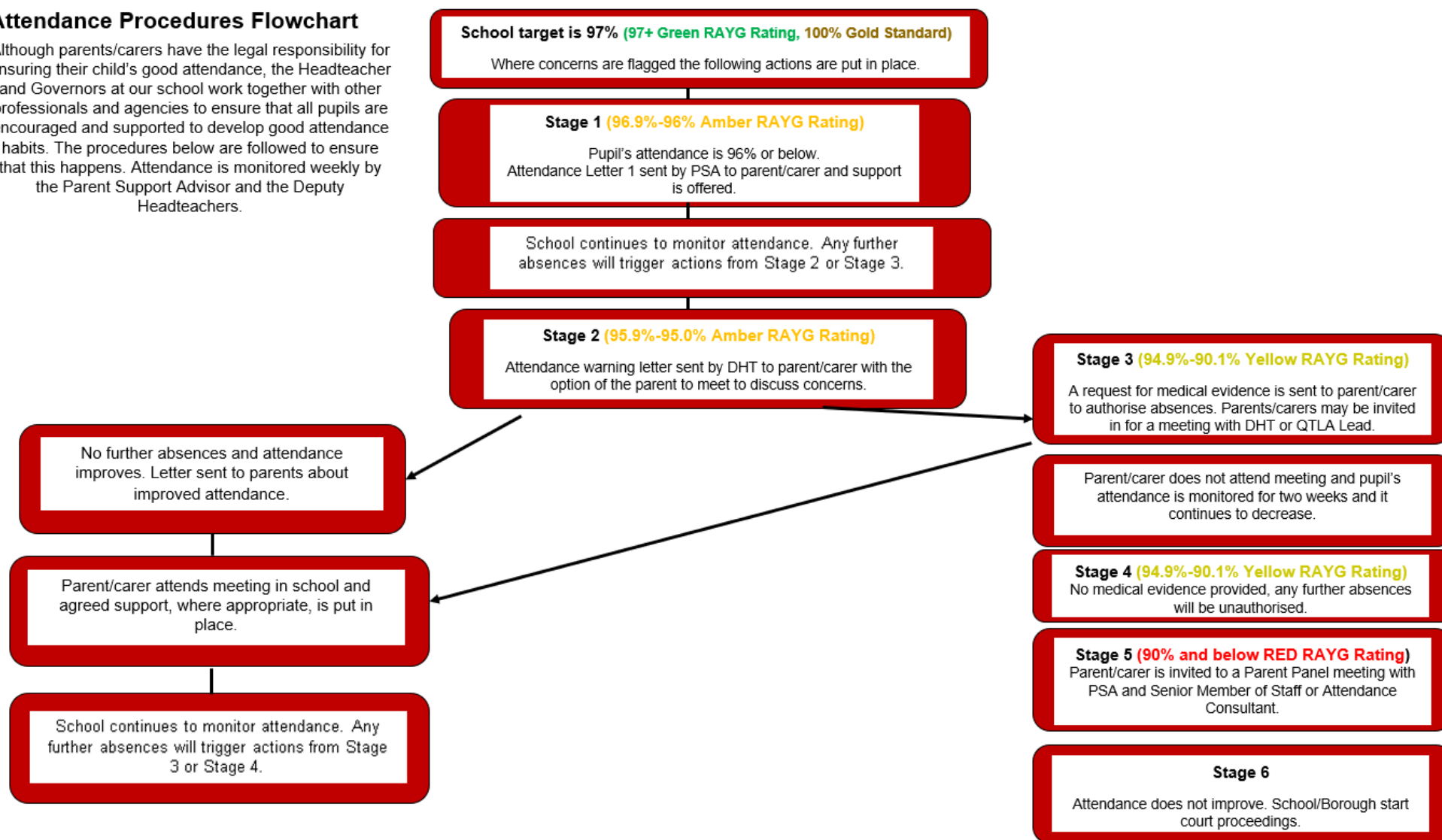
Links with other policies

- LBBD Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for Irregular School Attendance
- LBBD Legal and borough procedures for adding or removing a child's name from the roll of a school
- Current Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance
- Becontree Primary School Safeguarding Policy
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)
[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)
- Promoting the Education of Children with a Social Worker
[Promoting the education of children with a social worker and children in kinship care arrangements: virtual school head role extension - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-children-with-a-social-worker-and-children-in-kinship-care-arrangements-virtual-school-head-role-extension)

Appendix A- Our Attendance Procedures

Attendance Procedures Flowchart

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. The procedures below are followed to ensure that this happens. Attendance is monitored weekly by the Parent Support Advisor and the Deputy Headteachers.



Attendance Policy: Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

Exceptional Circumstances Leave in Term Time What you need to know!

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Will my request be granted?

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What is the penalty notice?

We are required to follow the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance. This outlines the cost of the penalty notice. The penalty notice is £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. This is fine per parent per child that has an absence. Proceeds from penalty notices **DO NOT** go to the school.

What happens if I need to?

An 'Exceptional Circumstances Form' must be completed prior to the absence. It needs to be submitted to the Headteacher. Failure to complete the form will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

What happens if the absence is not agreed?

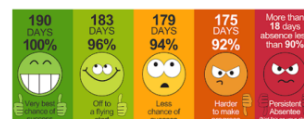
If the request is not authorised and the child does not attend school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences, of 10 session (5 or more days) will result in a penalty notice being issued.

What about a holiday?

Holidays are **not** exceptional circumstances and these will not be granted. Any absence due to holidays will be **unauthorised** and you may be issued with a **penalty notice**.

Where can I find out more information?

Additional guidance can be found on the DfE website
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf



Important Information

Please be aware that *parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children receive a suitable full time education through regular school attendance at school. (Section 7 Education Act 1996)*

Please complete parts A and B

Part A

Child(ren)'s Name:	Class:
Child(ren)'s Name:	Class:
Child(ren)'s Name:	Class:
Date for which absence is requested:	
From (first day of absence)	To (last day of absence)
Total number of school days missed:	

Part B

When did you plan this absence? (Please evidence to show that it is an emergency e.g. booking details etc) _____

Why is this absence an exceptional circumstance? (Please provide supporting evidence such as medical appointment, death certificate etc) _____

Please explain why this couldn't be taken during the school holidays. _____

Please tick statement below

☐ ***I have read the above information and am aware that the absence may be unauthorised and could result in a 'Penalty Notice'.***

Signed: _____ (parent/carer)

Name: _____ (please print) Date: _____

Part C- School Use Only

Response from school (within 10 working days)

Attendance summaries attached: Yes	No
Previously requested leave of absence: Yes	No
Absence authorised: Yes	No
Is further evidence needed?	
Penalty Notice to be issued in line with Borough Procedures: Yes No	
Penalty Notice 1: (first request) (£80 if paid within 21 days, £160 within 28 days) ☐	
Penalty Notice 2: (second request) (£160 within 28 days) ☐	
Comment/Reason why not attendance is not authorised:	
☐ Does not met the criteria of exceptional circumstance	
☐ Attendance is currently below school threshold (97%)	

Additional comments if needed

Signed: _____ (Head teacher) Date: _____

