



Pupil Attendance Policy

It is the school's aim to always expect regular attendance. Regular and punctual attendance is vitally important in raising achievement and developing the potential of all pupils.

Introduction

Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is, under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, a legal requirement. Parents are responsible for ensuring that any child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. (The term parent throughout this policy also refers to carer or legal guardian). It is also essential for pupils to attend school regularly in order to maximise the opportunities available to them.

For a pupil to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. However, we do accept that serious illness is inevitable on some occasions. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

The Role of Parents

Parents have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school regularly and that they arrive at school on time and are collected from school on time. It is the parent's responsibility to ring and inform the school by 9.15am if and why a pupil is absent and to provide any further information that the school needs. If no message has been received by 9.30am the school will phone the pupil's parent for confirmation of absence and reason.

Leave of absence

Amendments to the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013 stating that Headteachers may not grant any absence for holidays during term time. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. Headteachers will not be able to grant **any** leave of absence during term time unless there are '**exceptional circumstances**'. It is the Headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

All absences must be requested in writing to the Headteacher in accordance with the School Policy (by completing appendix A). This request **MUST** be made prior to the leave of absence (at least 2 weeks) and any commitment being made or it will result in an unauthorised absence.

Applications from parents to take their child on leave of absence during term time will be considered on each application. The Leave of Absence Calculation Chart (Appendix B) will be used to guide the Headteacher's decision, and in some cases the attendance Governors' decision, on whether or not to authorise the requested leave of absence. The following factors will apply:

- If the total score is 6 or less and there are 'exceptional circumstances', leave of absence may be authorised.
- If the total score is 7 or more, leave of absence should not be authorised. However, the Headteacher may be aware of 'exceptional circumstances' which would warrant approving leave of absence.
- If the Local Authority has begun legal proceedings, leave of absence should not be authorised.
- Parents should be made aware that any leave of absence which has not been agreed in advance will lead to the pupil being marked with unauthorised absences and that this may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or other action.

A letter confirming that the request has been authorised/denied will be sent to the parent.

Any permission given for a leave of absence will be on the understanding that the parent agrees to support their child in completion of a study pack provided by the class teacher during their absence. The parent must agree to administer the work, mark it and return it to school after the leave of absence.

Any child who has 20 absences (10 days) or more unauthorised absences in one school year will automatically be referred to the Education Welfare Officer who could initiate court proceedings against the parent. If a pupil is taken out of school after their leave of absence has been refused, the parent may be reported to the Education Welfare Officer.

Changes to the persistent absence threshold

From October 2011 the DfE definition of persistent threshold absence reduced from 20% to 15% of sessions. From the beginning of the academic year 2015/2016 the persistent threshold for absence has been reduced to 10%. This would equate to 7 or more sessions in the first half term, 14 sessions in the first full term, 25 sessions in two terms and 38 sessions across the year.

Lateness

Lateness is discouraged and a regular check will be made of this. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his/her continuity of learning but also that of others. If a pupil is marked late after registration has been taken (9.10am) it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

The Headteacher will request a discussion or send a letter to the parents of any child who persistently arrives late.

Absence due to medical reasons

When a pupil is absent from school due to ill health; a letter, telephone call or a personal visit to the office is required. Medical appointments during school time are discouraged. Where this is not possible, parents are requested to opt for appointment times at the start or end of the day so that pupils do not miss a whole day of school. Parents must inform the school by letter, telephone call or a personal visit to the office. Parents are asked to collect children from school for such appointments as pupils are not permitted to leave the premises during the day unaccompanied. However, the school may allow older pupils to leave unaccompanied if permission is given in writing by the parent.

Registers

'Both staff and pupils should see the taking of registers as an integral and key part of the school day, as indeed was intended in law. Particular attention should be paid to accurate registration and to the preservation and security of registers. In this connection, Headteachers need to bear in mind that registers may be used as evidence in cases where parents are being prosecuted for school attendance offences and that inappropriate authorisation of absences may compromise subsequent court proceedings.'

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (SI 2089)

The register should be an accurate reflection of a pupil's attendance. The decision on whether or not to authorise a particular absence rests with the Headteacher. The class teacher will record attendance of the child at the start of the morning and the afternoon sessions. If the child fails to attend regularly or their attendance level falls below 90%, the parent will be informed by letter and may be invited for a meeting with the Headteacher.

The register is a legal document and may be used as evidence in court. Procedures for completing the register are as follows:

- Do not mark a pupil present unless the pupil is in the room when the register is called
- Do not leave any spaces in the register
- Do not allow pupils to mark the register
- Make any changes to the register clearly distinguishing between the original entry and the correction
- Mark pupils who are present a.m. and p.m.
- Mark pupils who are absent as O and use the absence codes in the front of the register if reason is known.
- Mark pupils who arrive late, after the register has been called but before 9.10am, as L
- Mark pupils who arrive after 9.10am, when the register is closed, as U

Adopted by Governors Autumn 13

Amended by Governors Spring 14

Reviewed Autumn 15

Appendix A – leave of absence request

FORM TO BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL WITH A MINIMUM OF TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Absence may be granted where ‘exceptional circumstances’ are demonstrated. Please ensure you detail below the ‘exceptional circumstances’ for requesting to take your child out of school and attach supporting documents where appropriate.

Name of Pupil:	Date of Birth..... Class/Tutor Group.....
Leave of absence requested from date:..... to date.....	
Number of schools days that your child will be absent from school:	
Do you have a sibling request in another school? If so, please state which school:	
Reason for leave of absence request (please detail the exceptional reasons why are you requesting to take your child out of school). Continue on a separate sheet if necessary:	
Name of Parent /Carer:	
Signature:	Date:

Absences which have not been agreed will be marked as unauthorised absences; these may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or other action.

For School Use: UPN..... Attendance %.....

Previous leave of absence this Academic Year Yes/No*

No. of days:

Arrange to meet with parent/carer Yes/No*

Headteacher's signature Coding B H O P

Appendix B
Leave of Absence Authorisation Calculation Chart

Name of Pupil: UPN:		
The merits of each individual request should be evaluated by providing answers to ALL the following questions and scoring accordingly.		
	Points Possible	Points
When is the leave of absence planned for?	September = 2pts April, May and June= 2pts Jan & Nov (Roseland CC only) = 2pts Other dates = 1pt	
Pupil's attendance level is? (Up until Autumn half term use the % figure from the previous year.)	Less than 70% = 7pts 70% to 85% = 6pts 85% to 90% = 5pts 90% to 94.5% = 4pts More than 94.5% = 2pts	
How close is the pupil to a SATs assessment or other examination?	Non-SATs/Exam Year = 1pt SATs /Exam Year = 3pts Less than 2 weeks before = 4pts	
How much leave of absence has already been taken in the current academic year, including the requested leave?	8 or more days = 4pts 5 to 7 days = 3pts 3 to 4 days = 2pts 1 to 2 days = 1pt	
Subtotal		
Any exceptional circumstances which indicate that the leave of absence should be authorised.		- 2pts
Any exceptional circumstances which indicate that the leave of absence should not be authorised.		+ 2pts
Details of exceptional circumstances:		
.....		
<u>Total</u>		

<p>Leave of absence where the total is 7 or more <u>should NOT be authorised</u></p> <p>The only exception to the above may be where there are, in the opinion of the Headteacher and Attendance Governors, exceptional circumstances (incl. religious and cultural considerations). Add comment in the box above. If the Local Authority has begun legal proceedings leave of absence should NOT be authorised.</p> <p>CIRCLE WHERE APPROPRIATE:- REQUEST APPROVED / REQUEST DENIED</p>
<p>Completed by..... Date.....</p>

Appendix C

XXXX School

Dear

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form.

I am able to confirm that your child's leave of absence has been authorised from *date* to *date*.

Requests for leave are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered *name of pupil* overall level of attendance using the attached form (appendix B) and the impact any leave may have on statutory examinations and tests.

Please contact the school to discuss a possible study pack or project outline that *child's name* can complete whilst away.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Appendix D

XXXX School

Dear

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request form.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence from *date* to *date*.

I do not feel that there are 'exceptional' reasons why this leave should be authorised and my first concern has to be the educational development of *pupil name*. Requests for leave of absence are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered *name of pupil* overall level of attendance using the attached form (appendix B) and the impact any leave may have on statutory examinations and tests. Unfortunately, the score is higher than 7 so the leave cannot be authorised.

If you decide to go ahead with your leave of absence, *pupil name* absences will be marked as unauthorised. I should inform you that unauthorised absences are referred to the Local Authority who may, under certain circumstances, consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further please feel free to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher