



Sutton St James Community Primary School



Attendance Policy

Implementation Date: September 2024

Review Date: September 2026

Headteacher: Claire Willows	
Chair of Governors: Vicki Newton	
Date implemented:	
Date for review:	



Sutton St James Community Primary School



Attendance Policy

Implementation Date: September 2024

Review Date: September 2026

1. Introduction

- Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential at Sutton St James CP School.
- We value all pupils and we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties.
- Sutton St James School believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them enabling them to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent individuals who are able to make a positive contribution to their community.
- We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000 and the new legislation on attendance that came into force in August 2024.

2. Legal Framework

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act.
In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act and the New National Framework for Penalty Notices (August 2024) empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £160.00 or £80.00 or to prosecute depending on the number of offences committed.
- A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

3. Categorising absence

- Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.
- Parents should advise the school on the first day of absence and provide the school with an explanation of the nature of the absence. **Contact must be made with school each day of absence**, unless the pupil is suffering from diarrhoea or sickness, in which case, contact should be made every other day.
- Where a parent does not phone in, the administrator will phone to check why the child is absent. A record will be made stating that the school had to contact home.

Absence will be categorised as follows:

- Illness In most cases a telephone call from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.
- Medical/Dental Appointments Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day.
- Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement.
- Excluded (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.
- Leave of Absence Parents are advised to avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday. Leave of absence may be granted but only in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Parents wishing to take their child on holiday during term time must send a written request to the head teacher before holiday arrangements are made. If the permission to take leave is not granted and the pupil still goes on leave, the absence will be unauthorised and this will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised.

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

- **Religious Observance** Sutton St James CP School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

- **Mobile Absence** The aim for the attendance of Mobile children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

Sutton St James CP School will follow County guidance to protect Mobile parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance.

- **Late Arrival** Registration begins at 8:45a.m., pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. The register will close at 9:00 a.m. pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late, this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.
- **Unauthorised absence** Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation of an exceptional circumstance. Absence has to be preapproved before taking your child out of school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday

- Shopping for uniforms
- Having their hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- "Couldn't get up"
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of school

4. Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil

Sutton St James School will follow Lincolnshire County Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown. In line with safeguarding procedure where school has received no notification as to the whereabouts of the child for a period of 5 school days, the school will report the absence to the Local Authority.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Sutton St James CP School believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Bi-annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006, The New Framework for Penalty Notices (August 2024) and other attendance related legislation is complied with

- Agree school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority within the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department of Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance. At Sutton St James CP School this is the Headteacher.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

All staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006, The New Framework for Penalty Notices (August 2024) and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead attendance and allocated sufficient time and resource.
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Children, Schools and Families as required and on time
- Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

Sutton St James CP School request that Parents will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the school daily before 9:00am if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow up this with a note where possible.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, home work, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time, where this is unavoidable, send a written leave request to the Head Teacher in advance of booking the holiday

6. Using Attendance Data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every big term, 3 times per year, the administrator will provide the Head Teacher with attendance data for each pupil in each class.

This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (Appendix 1).

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

7. Support Systems

Sutton St James CP School recognise that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in

school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels
- Referrals to support agencies
- Reward systems (class and individual)
- Reintegration support packages

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

In extreme cases where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, our school will consider the use of legal sanctions including the use of Fixed penalty notices.

Supporting Documents

School attendance – Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.

[School attendance and absence: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour – statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities.

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/parental-responsibility-measures>

Lincolnshire County Council Attendance Strategy

[School attendance strategy – What's new in supporting the improvement of attendance in schools? - Lincolnshire County Council](#)

Appendix 1

Escalation of Attendance Interventions

Pupils with attendance between 100% to 95%

At the end of each small term, children will receive certificates congratulating them on their good (98%) attendance.

At the end of each big term, children will receive certificates congratulating them on their excellent (100%) attendance.

At the end of each year, children with 100% attendance, for the whole year, will receive a certificate of achievement.

Pupils with attendance between 94% and 90% (Letter 0)

A letter will be sent to parents to raise their awareness of their child's attendance, setting the expectation that this **must** improve over the next term. This letter also offers advice and support from the school, if required.

Pupils with attendance between 89% and 80% (Letter 1)

A letter will be sent to parents to raise awareness of their child's attendance, setting the expectation that this **must** improve to at least 95% over the next term. If attendance does not improve, parents will be required to attend an attendance meeting with the headteacher to offer support and advice to ensure that it improves.

If attendance does not improve (in subsequent terms), the parents will be required to attend an attendance meeting with the Headteacher. **(Letter 1A)**

Pupils with attendance below 80% (Letter 2)

A letter will be sent to parents required them to attend an attendance meeting with the Headteacher.

If attendance does not improve (in subsequent terms), following a meeting with the headteacher, then parents will be required to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting with the headteacher and Governors. **(Letter 3)**

Where these interventions have already been implemented and have had unsatisfactory impact, possible outcomes of the School Attendance Panel meetings will be:

- Complete a TAC leading to multi agency support (with parental agreement)
- Refer to Lincolnshire County Council to issue a FPN

School Attendance Notice to Improve (Letter 4)

Attendance will be monitored weekly. When a child has reached 8 sessions of unauthorised absence (4 days) within a 10 week period, parents will be contacted by the school and support offered. If attendance does not improve, and a further 2 sessions of unauthorised absence occur, then a School Attendance Notice to Improve Letter will be sent.

Persistent Lateness (Letter 5)

The school opens at 8.30am each morning. Morning register is taken at 8.45am. Children need to be in their classroom by 8.45am, so should be dropped off allowing time for them to walk to their classrooms, organise their equipment and be seated ready for registration.

Being late can be very disruptive to the school day, missing the start of lessons, means that your child will miss instructions and other essential information which will affect their learning. Children who are late often feel embarrassed and self-conscious when walking into lessons that have already started.

Children arriving after 8.45am will be marked as late "L" in the register. If the child arrives after 9.00am, they will be registered as late "U" in the register. This will adversely affect their attendance.

Where a pattern of persistent absence appears, a letter will be sent to parents to offer support in ensuring that the child arrives on time.

Holidays during school time (Letter 6)

If you are planning to book a holiday, please ensure that you check the term time dates and book during holidays, not term time. Dates can be found on the school website and on the weekly update. At the beginning of each year, you will receive a letter notifying you of the implications of taking your child on holiday during school time and Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance with this letter.

A request for leave of absence must be completed prior to taking time off school. Any leave of absence taken without request, will be an unauthorised absence. Forms are available from the school office.

Letter 0

Date 19th December 2024

Attendance Monitoring

Dear Parent of _____

At Sutton St James Community Primary School, we recognise the vital importance of children attending school regularly to enable them to achieve their maximum potential. We monitor the attendance of every child within school and write to parents if we are concerned about a child's level of attendance.

In accordance with our procedure to improve attendance and achievement, I am writing to you because your child's attendance at the end of Term 2 (19.12.24) is below 95%.

A copy of the attendance record is enclosed.

I would expect your child's attendance to improve to above 95%. If you require any advice or support to achieve this, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

I would like to remind you that parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their children receive an adequate education under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Letter 1

Date 19th December 2024

Attendance Monitoring

Dear Parent of _____

At Sutton St James Community Primary School, we recognise the vital importance of children attending school regularly to enable them to achieve their maximum potential. We monitor the attendance of every child within school and write to parents if we are concerned about a child's level of attendance.

In accordance with our procedure to improve attendance and achievement, I am writing to you because your child's attendance has fallen to below 90% at the end of Term 2 (19.12.24)

A copy of the attendance record is enclosed.

Official monitoring happens 3 times a year at the end of each long term (December, March and July). Parents of children whose attendance is below 80% have to be invited to attend a meeting to discuss ways to improve their attendance. As your child's attendance is now below 90%, it is vital that this improves over the next term to avoid this meeting having to happen

An attendance of less than 80% means an average of at least one day off every week and this will harm your child's future if it is not improved. I realise that there may be good reason for your child's recent absence and you may have already told us about it. However, it is vital that all pupils attend at least 95% of the time and therefore we will be monitoring your child's attendance.

With your support, I would expect your child's attendance to improve to above 95%. If it does not, you will be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss your child's attendance and any support the school can give. I would like to remind you that parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their children receive an adequate education under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Letter 1A

Date

Dear _____

Re: _____

Meeting _____

On 20th December 2023, I wrote to you advising that your child’s attendance had fallen to below 90%. Unfortunately, your child’s attendance has not improved to above 90% at the end of Term 4 (28.03.24) and this is continuing to cause concern. A copy of the attendance record is enclosed.

I must remind you that regular attendance is a legal requirement and it is important that any issues that may be the cause of this poor attendance are addressed as soon as possible. You are invited to attend a meeting at school with the Head Teacher on the date and time stated below to discuss your child’s attendance and offer our support in improving this.

If you are unable to attend on this date, please contact the school to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Please complete the reply slip below to confirm you will be attending this meeting.

Yours sincerely

C. Willows

Miss C Willows
Headteacher

School Attendance Meeting

Child’s Name: _____

I will/will not be able to attend the attendance meeting on

Signature _____

Date _____

Letter 2

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: _____

Meeting _____

Your child's attendance is below 80% at the end of Term 2 (19.12.24) and this is causing concern. A copy of the attendance record is enclosed.

I must remind you that regular attendance is a legal requirement and it is important that any issues that may be the cause of this poor attendance are addressed as soon as possible. You are invited to attend a meeting at school with the Head Teacher on the date and time stated below to discuss your child's attendance and offer our support in improving this.

If you are unable to attend on this date, please contact the school to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Please complete the reply slip below to confirm you will be attending this meeting.

Yours sincerely

C. Willows

Miss C Willows

Headteacher

School Attendance Meeting

Child's Name: _____

I will/will not be able to attend the attendance meeting on

Signature _____

Date _____

Letter 3

Date _____

Dear _____

Re: _____

Meeting _____

Following our meeting on 30th January 2024, I note that there has been no significant improvement in your child's attendance. Their attendance for this academic year is 61.02%

A copy of the attendance record is enclosed.

You are invited to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting with myself and a member of the Governing Body on the date and time above to discuss the concerns around their attendance.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact the school to rearrange. Please complete the reply slip below to confirm you will be attending.

Yours sincerely

C. Willows

Miss Claire Willows
Headteacher

School Attendance Panel Meeting

Child's Name _____

I will/will not be able to attend the attendance meeting on

Signature _____

Date _____

Letter 4

School Attendance Notice to Improve

Date

Dear

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

You, «**FORENAME**» «**SURNAME**» are a parent/carer of «**Students_Name**», (called in this notice “the pupil”) who is a registered pupil at **Sutton St James Community Primary School**.

Pupils attendance %

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve «**Students_Name**»’s attendance, including *(delete as appropriate)*:

- Telephone calls: - The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having. Please provide some specific dates and evidence if not contacted every day child was absent.
- **Home visits.** We have visited you at home to adhere to our safeguarding responsibilities and to provide support with any issues your child may be having.
- Letters and/or emails dated XXXXX. The school wrote to you, letting you know about «**Students_Name**»’s attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
- Inviting you to (an) Attendance Support Meeting(s). The school invited you to (a) meeting(s) to discuss your child’s unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. Our school attendance policy makes clear the consequences, should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and/or you did not effectively engage with the support offered.
- Offered referral assessment (ADD REFFERAL). please explain if engaged or not engaged and the outcome of any support.
- Attendance Contract designed to support you to ensure that «**Students_Name**»’s attendance improved and to prevent further unauthorised absences from being recorded.

- Offered Reasonable Adjustments. Please provide evidence of what this was offered and engagement.
- Referrals to other support services if applicable: INSERT NAMES OF OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES TO WHICH REFERRALS HAVE BEEN MADE

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between «**WARNING_START_DATE**» and «**WARNING_END_DATE**» the pupil failed to attend regularly at **Sutton St James Community Primary School** which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

You now have (Amend as appropriate: 3-6 weeks) (ADD DATE) in which to improve your 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. Should we not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period.

Targets to improve attendance (**ADD YOUR OWN TARGETS**):

a Penalty Notice may be issued / a referral may be made to the Local Authority requesting they issue you with a Penalty Notice.

NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded.

Penalty Notice can be issued under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.**

See below for further information:

Penalty Notice	Details
First Notice in a 3 year period:	<p>Issued to each parent.</p> <p>Charged at £80 if paid within 21 days</p> <p>£160 if paid within 28 days.</p>
Second Notice in a 3 year period:	<p>Issued to each parent.</p> <p>Charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.</p>
Third Notice in a 3 year period:	<p>Alternative action should be taken, for example prosecution or other attendance legal interventions.</p> <p>Fines per parent are capped at two within any three-year period.</p> <p>If a parent is prosecuted for their child's non-attendance, they could face a Magistrates court appearance and a fine of up to £2,500 and/or prison. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.</p>

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, please contact the school as soon as possible:

Letter 5

Date

Dear

Persistent Lateness

Our attendance records show that _____ has been late on _____ occasions since the start of this term.

We are sure that you understand lateness can be very disruptive to the school day. Missing the start of lessons means that instructions and other essential information will have to be repeated which will delay the start of lessons and all pupil's learning.

The school day starts at 8.45am and registers close at 9.00am. Late arrival after this time, will be marked as unauthorised absence. 10 unauthorised absences within a 10 week period may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

If there has been an emergency eg car breaking down, please contact the school to notify us of this. The lateness may then be authorised.

If you are having problems getting your child to school, please do not hesitate to contact us to see how we can work together to resolve the situation.

I look forward to seeing an improvement in _____ punctuality.

Letter 6

30th September 2024

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for holiday

I am writing to remind you that The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 was amended and has been in force from the 1st September 2013. Recently, this has been further updated with the New National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices (August 2024), which is explained below and summarised in the chart for you. These changes must be made by all schools and Local Authorities across the country, with the aim of ensuring consistent approaches.

As a result, a request for leave of absence will not be granted for the purpose of a holiday / or **extended absence unless deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances'**.

Below is a more detailed description of the changes made by the DFE and how these may impact you and your families going forward.

These changes have been broken down into 4 categories.

1) A new National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices. Any attendance penalty notices issued after the 19th August 2024 will be issued in line with the new regulations. (See summary chart attached)

The new Penalty Notice regulations are: - Each parent (including resident step parents) will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent. For example, 2 parents and 3 children, each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 in fines. - The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. - This will be considered your first offence. - The next time an offence occurs, within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, with no reduction. - The third time an offence occurs this will be presented to Magistrate's court with no penalty notice issued. This will include Term Time Leave fines, and Irregular Attendance. Term time leave does not just include holidays. Where a child is absent and it is believed they are absent due to term time leave, schools will be expected to carry out a home visit and see the child on or before the 3rd school day of absence. For irregular attendance - Where a child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in any 10-week period, the school must consider escalation to prosecution. Sessions refer to each half a school day, with most schools having 2 sessions each day. The school must consider the reasons for the absence, the support already offered, and the engagement of the parents/carers and young person. These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks, or unauthorised absence. It is therefore important to notify school every day that your child is absent, providing a reason, and where appropriate evidence of medical appointments or prescribed medication. Schools will consider NHS guidance Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk) when making their decision whether to authorise absence due to illness.

2) Updates to the Working Together to Improve Attendance Guidance The Department for Education have updated the Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) available on the DFE website.

This clarifies the expectations for parents, schools and the Local Authority to promote the importance of regular attendance at school, and to provide ideas for support and interventions when a young person is not attending school on a regular basis.

3) Regulation changes to modernise school attendance and admission registers.

The predominant change is around the use of attendance coding for schools to use on their attendance register. This may mean that you see different marks on your child's attendance certificate, including sub codes for example C2 for a reduced timetable, or Y4 for school closed due to weather conditions. The H code for authorised term time leave (holiday) has been removed, therefore Headteachers can no longer authorise term time leave, unless there are exceptional circumstances covered by the C code and must request an attendance penalty notice if there are 5 or more days of unauthorised absence. Another change to these regulations is that parents must accept the school place offered prior to their child going on school roll. Therefore, if you have been offered a school place that was not one of your preferences you must either accept the school place or notify the Local Authority how you intend to educate your child.

4) Regulations will come into force on the 19th August 2024 to mandate attendance data sharing by all state funded schools.

This means that your child's attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the Local Authority every day. This will be live data. This will allow the DFE to provide schools with the tools to monitor and see improvement in attendance, and will allow the Local Authority to provide advice, support, and Early Help services. It will also allow tracking of attendance trends for example a child reported as ill the same week each year, or a certain year group or cohort with patterns of absence. With all of these changes the priority is supporting a young person to access school every day, ensuring they have the reasonable adjustments, interventions and early help to engage in their learning. If your child is finding attending school difficult, is feeling anxious about attending school, or needs help to access their education speak to the school, arrange to meet to discuss reasonable adjustments and the support available for your child. Every school day matters.

If you wish to seek approval for any request of absence for your child(ren) from School, then you must **apply in writing to the Head Teacher (using a 'Leave of Absence Request form' from the office), at least four weeks in advance** of the request for absence. You should only then remove your child(ren) if the absence has been authorised and notified to you in writing by the School. Any exceptional circumstances must be clearly set out in the written request to the Head Teacher with evidence, who will consider each case upon its merits.

If you still choose to take your child out of school during term time and it is **not** deemed to be exceptional circumstances and/or has not been approved by the School, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued for the period of absence (see

summary chart). Failure to pay the Fixed Penalty may result in further legal action being taken against you.

Please note that if the school has sufficient evidence that a child has been on holiday, when parents have called to say they are ill we will also issue a FPN. Please do not ask your child to lie to us.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children at their school under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £160.00 or £80.00. (See Summary table for New Framework for FP – 19th August 2024)**

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice can also be issued if your child is seen in a public place within the first 5 days of an exclusion from their school.

- **Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes it a duty for parents in relation to pupils subject to a fixed period or permanent exclusion to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of any such exclusion. If a child is present in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion during school hours the parent may be guilty of an offence for which they can be prosecuted by the LA before a magistrates' court or issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for £160.00 or £80.00.**

I need to draw your attention to the fact that parents have a duty in law to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time, unless they are unable to do so by reason of ill-health or other legally acceptable reason.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure their child receives suitable efficient full time education either by regular attendance at school or education otherwise. Section 444 (1)(a) of the same Act states that where a parent of a child who knowingly and without reasonable justification fails to ensure regular attendance of a registered pupil at that school, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against that Section. The Local Education Authority may, where necessary, institute legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under this section of the Education Act 1996 against those parents concerned. Alternatively, Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Education Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £160.00 or £80.00.

If you have any concerns regarding this, please contact Miss Willows. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

C. Willows

Miss Claire Willows
Headteacher

Fixed Penalty Notice Agreement

Child/children's names _____

I have read and understood the guidance on our Fixed Penalty Notice guidance.

Parent's Name _____

Signed Parent 1 _____

Parent's Name _____

Signed Parent 2 _____

Date _____