



Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Procedure

River Bank Primary School

2026

Introduction

We firmly believe that good attendance is of paramount importance if children are to fulfil their potential and make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. All children have the right to a stimulating, enjoyable and high-quality full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability, gender and cultural background. We acknowledge that irregular attendance can seriously disrupt continuity of learning, undermine educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the school. We expect all children to attend school at all times and firmly believe that this is fundamental to developing a love for learning, and achieving the high academic standards expected of them.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age (term after fifth birthday) to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need 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 other than at a school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. The 'Working together to improve school attendance' document includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our school Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy should be read in conjunction with and with reference to the advice outlined in 'Working together to improve school attendance' and our medical needs policy.

Aims

Our school aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by providing pupils with a stimulating and enjoyable learning experience where they want to come to school to learn, feel a sense of belonging, feel safe, secure and valued. We set high expectations of our pupils to be positive role models within the school and to maximise the educational opportunities available to them.

Working in partnership with staff, parents and the pupils themselves, River Bank Primary School ensures that everyone is both fully aware of the policies and procedures related to attendance and of our school's commitment to ensuring that all pupils attend on a regular basis. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted upon promptly.

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion is Miss Lois Anderson.

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is Mrs Kerry Coles 01582 531860 Option 1.

The name of our linked Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance is Toni Chivers.

The following guidelines show our thresholds for assessing attendance.

- 98-100% Good
- 96-97% Satisfactory
- 94-95% Improvement needed
- below 94% Cause for concern

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severely Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' attendance is 90% or below. Attendance below 50% is defined as severely absent and will require a multi-agency approach. This can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will have a considerable impact on any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to address this.

Parents can be taken to court under the Education Act 1996 if they do not make sure that their child attends school without good reason (as defined in law) and if the child has too many unauthorised absences. This could lead to prosecution in a magistrates' court and if found guilty parents could be liable for a fine of up to £2500 or imprisonment.

It is the school's decision whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

The following lists show examples of authorised and unauthorised absences; although these are not exhaustive:

Examples of authorised absences:

- Unavoidable urgent medical or dental treatment.
- Special occasions agreed with the school as an authorised absence.
- Religious observance days, the number and timing of which is determined by the school.
- Off-site activities e.g. music exams or participation in a music festival in school.
- Exceptional circumstances.

Examples of unauthorised absences:

- Where children miss registration and are unable to give an acceptable reason.
- Medical and dental appointments which could be made after school or in the school holidays.
- Additional days taken for special occasions or days other than those specified by the school.
- Shopping during school hours. For example, buying uniform.
- Going to the airport to meet or say goodbye to relatives.
- Looking after brothers and sisters.
- Staying at home to spend time with members of the family.
- Absence for more than the agreed period.
- Attendance at any function without prior agreement with the school
- Term time leave except in exceptional circumstances.

Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance

Registers

The classroom doors open at 8:30am, 15 minutes prior to the start of the school day at 8:45am. The class teacher takes a register using our school management data system at 8:45am, and records who is present and absent from school first thing in the morning. The Attendance Officer will then review the registered attendance and will ensure that absence is recorded if a telephone call or a verbal message has been provided to the office.

Late arrivals

Once doors are closed at 8:45am, any pupil arriving after this time is required to enter via the main school entrance. Pupils who are signed in by their parents at the office after 9:00am will be recorded as 'unauthorised late'. If parents regularly sign their children in late, they may be subject to a local authority fixed penalty notice (fine). Parents will need to electronically sign their child/ren in at the

reception, recording their name and class. Lateness will be monitored and parents will be contacted (appendix 1) if their child's lateness is causing concern. If lateness persists, the local authority may issue a penalty warning, which could lead to a penalty notice being served.

Monitoring attendance

Data concerning classes and individuals is regularly analysed for monitoring purposes and shared with governors. Attendance concerns will be discussed, focusing on identifying the barriers to attendance and agreeing strategies to improve attendance.

The senior leadership team must be informed by the attendance officer of any children who are causes for concern or who are absent for extended periods. Initially support to address concerns will be sought from the Attendance Officer and the school, and advice will be sought from the local authority or other appropriate agency where support may benefit for those who are persistently absent.

Attendance is measured and monitored on a half termly basis by the Governing Body and whole school targets set by the headteacher.

Absence procedures

Reason for absence may be offered verbally by phone before 09:30am. If no contact is made by the parent, a member of staff will contact the parents to ascertain the reason for absence. If no contact can be made, members of staff will carry out a home visit. If a child is ill for consecutive days, contact should be made to the school for each day of absence.

The school will decide if we wish to authorise the absence or record it as unauthorised. This decision will be made within the guidance set out in the 1996 Education Act, which identifies a clear set of circumstances whereby a child's absence can be authorised.

If any child is absent without any communication from the parent, it is our policy to follow up with a telephone call or home visit if there is no response, or if we have concerns of school avoidance or there is a particular concern.

After the above procedures, where we have concerns about a child's level of absence for which we have no legitimate explanation, the Attendance Officer will continue to make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child. At this point we will record all subsequent absences as unauthorised.

When a child's attendance falls to 94% or below, parents will be contacted. A first letter (appendix 2) may be sent. This communication will bring about an opportunity for parents to discuss any potential barriers affecting attendance and identify support to which may be helpful.

If no improvement is made or attendance continues to be a cause for concern, a second letter (appendix 3) will be sent. After a period of monitoring, the attendance will be reviewed and if no improvement has been made, parents will be invited in for a meeting to discuss reasons for absences and any support that could be provided by the school. At this meeting an attendance support plan (appendix 4) may be offered in order to improve attendance.

Where attendance does not improve despite support and intervention, formal attendance procedures may begin in line with Department for Education guidance and Local Authority procedures.

Supporting vulnerable pupils

The school recognises that some pupils face additional challenges which may impact attendance. Particular consideration will be given to pupils who:

- Have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Have medical or mental health needs
- Are young carers
- Are looked after or previously looked after
- Are experiencing significant family difficulties
- Are subject to safeguarding concerns
- Eligible to means-tested free school meal

The school will work with families and partner agencies to provide tailored support which promotes regular attendance while taking account of individual circumstances.

Unauthorised absence procedure

When four sessions of unauthorised absence are reached, an unauthorised early support letter (appendix 5) will be sent to inform parents of the consequence of any further unauthorised absences. When ten sessions of unauthorised absence are reached, a Notice to Improve (appendix 6) will be issued. This will inform parents that they now have six school weeks in which to improve their child's attendance. If there are any further periods of unauthorised absence during this time, the school will need to refer this to the Local Authority and this may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Penalty notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G – holiday not agreed, O – unauthorised absence and/or U – unauthorised late). The ten-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, for example returning to school on the fourth day (before the five-day minimum) or using the days before and after school holiday dates during the academic year, or repeated absence for birthdays or other family events, the local authority will exercise discretion and consider issuing a penalty notice if appropriate.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

Children Missing in Education

All schools have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines Children Missing Education as 'Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school'.

The Children Missing Education (CME) Policy and Procedures are to ensure that children missing education, or at risk of missing education, are identified, tracked and re-engaged in appropriate full-time education and that children who move out of Luton are tracked until they are engaged in education elsewhere, so that no child 'slips through the net'.

When unexplained absence reaches ten days, a CME referral will be made and enquiries will be made in conjunction with the Local Authority. Where a pupil has not returned to school after a period of extended leave or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school have failed, after making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Pupils will not be removed from roll where there is a safeguarding concern.

Where a school notifies the relevant local authority that a pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with:

- a) the full name of the pupil;
- b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- c) at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- d) the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- e) the name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable and
- f) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register

Where a parent notifies the school in writing that they are home educating, the school must delete the child's name from the admission register and inform the local authority. However, where parents orally indicate that they intend to withdraw their child to be home educated, the school will notify the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Deletion from roll

For any pupil leaving River Bank Primary School, other than at the end of year 6, parents/carers are required to inform the school in writing. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school and travel details if moving overseas. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all of our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does

not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Term-time leave

Term-time leave will be unauthorised. This includes overseas trips to visit family members. A form is available if you need to make an application for leave (appendix 7).

Arrangements for sending home children who are ill

If children are sent home unwell, the office or family team will contact parents to inform them. The absence is recorded in the class register. Regular monitoring of the children who are being sent home will take place by the school and if a pattern is recognised, there will be a discussion with parents.

Provisions

We provide a breakfast club offering a healthy breakfast; along with participation in a range of activities that the children have indicated they would like to participate in. This is used as a tool to encourage increased attendance and punctuality. Pupils with attendance that is a cause for concern are actively encouraged by the attendance officer and the school to attend these in order to ensure pupils are in school and develop a positive attitude towards the importance of attendance at school.

Equal opportunities and attendance

All pupils may experience difficulties in school at some time which may lead to children not wanting to come to school. It is imperative that parents/carers contact the school so that help can be given in relation to:

- Catching up with work missed
- Long absences: providing distance learning materials
- Support teachers and assistants providing individual attention where appropriate
- Personal attention and encouragement from class teachers and other specified staff
- Adaptations to teaching.

Attendance incentives

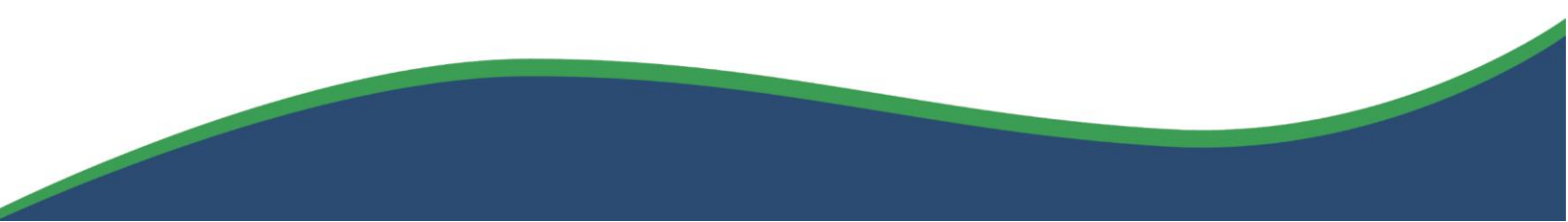
We recognise and celebrate good attendance and punctuality. Through a range of age-appropriate incentives, we seek to promote positive attitudes towards attendance and reinforce the importance of attending school regularly. Attendance celebrations are designed to encourage and recognise commitment to learning whilst ensuring that support remains available for pupils experiencing genuine barriers to attendance.

Communication

If any parents are concerned about any school issues, including attendance, they are welcome to meet with our attendance officer, or to make an appointment to see the class teacher.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be annually reviewed by the Full Governing Body.



Signed:

R. Mahmood

Adopted:

Autumn term 2026

Review Date:

Autumn term 2027

Appendix 1

Current Date (Short)

Dear Recipient(s) Salutation,

Re: Student(s) Full Name Student(s) Registration Form

It has been noted during Autumn Term 1 that Student(s) First Name was late to school on Report Field: Statutory/Roll Call Attendance (Late) this academic year occasions. Children are able to go to their class from 8.30am and must be in class ready to learn at 8.45am.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as a parent it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a penalty notice being issued against you and /or legal proceedings being considered.

If you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact our Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely,

Miss L Anderson

Attendance Lead

Appendix 2



Current Date (Short)

Dear Recipient(s) Salutation,

At River Bank Primary School, we want every child to get the very best from their time at school. To do this, we ask that children attend regularly for at least **96% attendance** across the year.

Student(s) First Name (Legal)'s attendance has fallen below this level. We know there can be times when children are unwell or there are genuine reasons for being absent, but regular time out of school can make it harder for them to keep up with their learning and friendships.

We'd really appreciate your support in helping to improve Student(s) First Name (Legal)'s attendance. Please make sure they are in school every day unless they are too unwell to attend. If there is anything making attendance difficult, please do get in touch so we can work with you to find a way forward.

Thank you for your help - together we can make sure your child doesn't miss out on important learning and experiences in school.

Kind regards,

Mrs K Coles

Attendance and Admissions Officer

Appendix 3



Current Date (Short)

Dear Recipient(s) Salutation ,

Re: Student(s) Full Name Student(s) Registration Form

I am writing to advise that Student(s) First Name's school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to Report Field: Attendance this academic year and as a result we are becoming concerned that Student(s) First Name has missed a significant part of his/her/their learning.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning and is a legal requirement.

The school, along with the local authority Attendance Support Officer will continue to closely monitor Student(s) First Name's attendance and we look forward to seeing an improvement with immediate effect.

If no improvement is made, we will invite you to an attendance meeting to discuss how we can support in improving Student(s) First Name's attendance. If you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact our Attendance Officer or speak to your child's teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Miss L Anderson



Appendix 4

Attendance Support Plan

To Improve School Attendance

This Attendance Support Plan is a voluntary agreement between the school and the parent(s)/carer(s) regarding the pupil named below. By signing this agreement, I/we understand that the information may be shared with other relevant agencies to ensure that the necessary and appropriate support is provided.

Date/time of meeting:	
Venue:	

Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Postcode:	
School:	
Present at meeting: (full names and titles)	

Current Attendance %	
Authorised %	
Unauthorised %	

Areas of concern identified/resolved for discussion
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(To add in here initial concerns to share in first meeting)

Concern 1:

Concern 2:

(Use this for evidencing where issues have been resolved after the first meeting)

Resolved:

Resolved:

Action agreed:

EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED: • (Pupil name) will arrive at school by 8.30am every day • Parent will bring (Pupil name) into school each morning. • Parent will contact school each time (Pupil name) is absent from school. • Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness/appointment absence (Pupil name) may incur. • Are any issues preventing (Pupil name) from attending regularly, school staff will be informed? • (Pupil name) will meet weekly with Teacher / Pastoral Support

School or applicable agency will:
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EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS AGREED: • Assist family with referrals for any identified services (e.g. FPS) • School will monitor attendance. • Complete Home Visits • Maintain contact with the family and child. • Agency targets (add in if applicable) • Seek Advice and Guidance from the Local Authority at Termly Target Support meeting if there's no improvement made. <i>(Ensure all early intervention support has been utilised)</i>
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Parental Agreement

To achieve these changes, the parent(s), agree to fulfil the following actions:

Examples

River Bank Primary School, Bath Road, Luton LU3 1ES

Telephone: 01582 531860 Email: info@riverbankprimary.org Web: www.riverbankprimary.org

Active Education Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales Registered Office: Floor 2, Apex House, 30-34 Upper George Street, Luton, LU1 2RD
Registered Company Number: 07650619 (England and Wales)

Parents to ensure (Pupil name) attends school every day and on time.

Parents to provide Medical Evidence if any further absences from school for school to authorise absence.

Parents to attend any further meetings with School and any other agencies identified.

Parents to reinforce the importance of good regular attendance in school and the impact it will have on academic achievements.

Date for review meeting: (2 or 4 weekly meetings to be held)	
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The following persons are in agreement with this Attendance Support Plan:

Signature:..... Parent/carers

Signature:..... Pupil

Signature:..... School Representative

Signature:..... Other Agency (if applicable)

Appendix 5

Mr Smith
1 Luton Road
Luton
LU1 1AA

Dear Mr Smith (one parent per letter),

Re: (pupil's full name) (one pupil per letter) at River Bank Primary School

This letter is issued under the terms of the Luton Borough Council's Code of Conduct for the use of Penalty Notices.

I write to inform you that (pupil's full name) has been recorded as having 4 school sessions (equivalent to 2 school days) lost to unauthorised absence at River Bank Primary School. (Pupil's name) absences were between Start date of absence and End date of absence.

The Education Act 1996, Section 444 states: "If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly his/her parent is guilty of an offence"

School will continue to monitor (Pupil's name) attendance. If there are further unauthorised absences a penalty notice can be issued in accordance with the Luton Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days. More information regarding the national framework for penalty notices and possible legal intervention can be found in our school attendance policy.

Please Note, the above absences will be included if any further action is taken against you.

In the event of your non-payment of a Penalty Notice, you can be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court by Luton Borough Council for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Another parent/carer or someone with day-to-day responsibility regarding the above-named child may have also received this letter as each adult has separate responsibility and will also need to take appropriate action.

Should you require any support or additional guidance or have any queries regarding this letter please contact our Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely



David Sansom - Headteacher

Appendix 6

Mr Smith
1 Luton Road
Luton
LU1 1AA

Dear Mr Smith (**one parent per letter**),

School Attendance - Notice to Improve

(Please read this letter carefully)

Re: (**pupil's full name**) (**one pupil per letter**) at River Bank Primary School.

Overall Attendance	%	Unauthorised Sessions (2 sessions per day)	
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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 school every day on time.

It is the duty of all parents; under the provisions of section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their children attend school regularly, regular attendance also meaning punctual attendance.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the child's parent may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996. This notice is sent to you as the parent/carer of **[CHILD'S NAME]**

The school has offered support to you and your family to try and help improve **[CHILD'S NAME]**'s attendance, including:

- Telephone calls.** We contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer support with any issues your child may be having.
- Letters/Emails** We wrote to you on **[INSERT DATES]** letting you know about **[CHILD'S NAME]**'s attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
- Attendance Support Meeting Invitations.** We invited you to meetings on **[INSERT DATES]** to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.
- Bespoke support for identified barriers to regular attendance.** *Please include a summary of support you have put in place/signposted to, to support the pupil and their family to overcome identified barriers to regular attendance.*

Unfortunately, despite the support that has been offered, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between **[START DATE]** and **[END DATE]**, **[CHILD'S NAME]** has failed to attend regularly at River

Bank Primary School which has resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absence. Please see the attached registration certificate for details. We are very concerned that this amount of absence will have a negative impact on [CHILDS NAME] learning and wider development.

You now have six school weeks in which to improve your child's attendance. This means that between [ENTER DATE OF LETTER] and [DATE IN 6 WEEKS], your child must show significant improvements in attendance and have **no unauthorised absences** from school during this period. If there are any unauthorised absences during this time, we will need to refer this to the Local Authority and **a penalty notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded**. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days. More information regarding the national framework for penalty notices and possible legal intervention can be found in our school attendance policy.

We still want to work with you to help [CHILD'S NAME] to attend school regularly. Please contact our Attendance and Admissions Officer Mrs Coles to make an appointment or arrange a phone call to discuss this notice and what further support is available.

Your sincerely

Lois Anderson

Assistant Headteacher

Appendix 7

Request for leave of absence from school during term time

This should be completed before booking any travel arrangements

To be completed by the Parent/Guardian

Pupil's Name _____ Class/Tutor Group _____

Address _____

Ethnicity _____ Date of birth _____

Date of absence request From _____ / _____ /20_____ To _____ / _____ /20_____

Reason for application

.....
.....

Has your child had term time leave from 19th August 2024? Yes / No

Dates of term time leave already taken: -

.....

1st Parent/Guardian details

First name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Date of application _____ / _____ /20_____

2nd Parent/Guardian details

First name _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

I have read the leave of absence information overleaf and the School's Attendance Policy

1st Parent/Guardian signature _____

2nd Parent/Guardian signature _____

School response

If the child has had previous unauthorised leave, please state dates and number of days taken

Current leave agreed/Not agreed (delete) Reason:

.....

.....

.....I

If leave is to be authorised, the following must be completed

Travelling abroad? **Yes/No** Country _____ Return date: ____/____/____

Proof of return date (*tickets/e mail etc*)

Response sent by email/ posted to parent/s by 1st class post. Date:

.....

Please see below for further information regarding the policy on leave of absence from school

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 have been amended and come into force from 1st September 2013. **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Requests for leave of absence should not normally be granted for the purposes of a holiday. The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Head Teachers have the discretion to authorise leave of absence in **exceptional** circumstances and it is only for the Head Teacher to determine what is truly exceptional. School days are precious; children only attend school 190 out of 365 days. There are 175 days a year which parents can use for any activities other than school.

Applications for Leave of absence

Requests must be made in advance or the leave cannot be authorised. All requests should normally be made at least two weeks in advance to the Head Teacher by completing the school application form. A parent/adult with whom the child resides with must make the application even though the pupil may not be taking the proposed leave with them. The form must be fully completed and you will receive a written response confirming if the request will be authorised or not. **If you are travelling abroad you will need to supply us with confirmation of your booking including date booked and return flight tickets, such as bringing a copy of the flight tickets into the school reception for us to copy.**

Unauthorised Absence

If you take your child out of school without the school's prior authorisation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (which is illegal) and noted in your child's school records. Leave of absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher.

Where a parent/carer has taken their child on leave of absence during term time for 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to) 5 school days or more, without the Head Teacher's authorisation the following will apply:

First Offence Penalties

- The first penalty notice issued to each parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at:
£160.00 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years from 19th August 2024)

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at:
A flat rate of £160.00 if paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and any further offences (within 3 years from 19th August 2024)

- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering **prosecution** but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
- Where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, for example returning to school on the fourth day (before the five-day minimum) or using the days before and after school holiday dates during the academic year, or repeated absence for birthdays or other family events. The local authority will exercise discretion and consider issuing a penalty notice if appropriate.

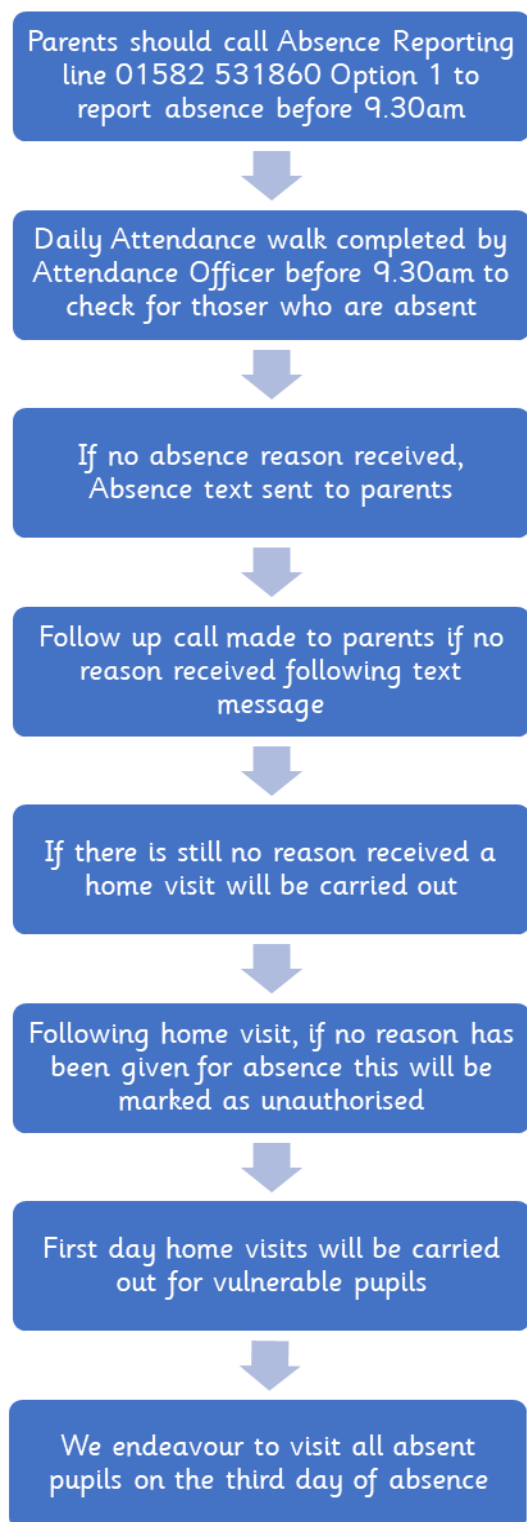
Penalty Notices are per parent, per child as appropriate, so if there are 2 parents both will need to pay the fine for each child. Part payments are not accepted. There is no appeal process for a penalty notice. Unpaid Penalty Notices, result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court. Please note all adults with care of the child are usually liable. **Penalty Notices are an alternative to prosecution for failing to ensure a child's regular attendance.**

Failure to return to school on the date expected

If there is a reason which delays the pupil in returning to school the parent/guardian must inform the school immediately. The school will require evidence of this issue and will then decide whether the absence can be authorised. For any travel arrangements outside of the UK we require proof of return flights, prior to the leave being taken, this may protect you from receiving unauthorised absence for your child and a fine if they are unable to return on the date expected. Each case will be assessed individually and medical evidence from abroad is not routinely accepted. Please note prolonged unauthorised absence from school can also result in your child's name being removed from the school roll and on return you would need to re-apply for another school place.

Appendix 8

Daily Attendance Flow Chart



Appendix 9



Unauthorised absences procedure

Leave of Absence form completed by parents and returned to Attendance Officer

- Letter sent to parents advising absence will be authorised
- On return from absence, a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority if more than 10 sessions of absence have been recorded

No Leave requested

- When 4 sessions of unauthorised absence reached, an Unauthorised Early Support Attendance Letter sent to parents
- When 8 sessions of unauthorised absence reached a Penalty Notice Warning Letter or Notice to Improve letter will be sent to parents
- When 10 sessions of unauthorised absence reached a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued by the local authority on return from absence
- If 20 sessions of unauthorised absence is reached without return date given, pupil can be removed from roll

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Active Education Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales Registered Office: Floor 2, Apex House, 30-34 Upper George Street, Luton, LU1 2RD

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Appendix 10

Persistent Absence Flow Chart

