



# Attendance Policy and Procedures 2021-22

Chair of Governors signature

Headteacher's signature:

**Ratified:** *subject to ratification*

**Review: September 2022**

**Person responsible for overseeing the implementation:** Deputy Headteacher



Stowe Valley Multi Academy Trust

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## **COVID 19 Addendum**

### **COVID testing and absence**

Pupils who have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test, should self-isolate and get a confirmatory polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test.

The average wait time for a PCR test and result is three days. School will contact home on after the fifth and subsequent days seeking an update regarding the PCR test using an appropriate absence text or phone call.

If a pupil tests negative from the PCR test and if they feel well, they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code I (illness). Code X should only be used up until the time of the negative PCR test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests positive on the PCR test, they should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance. Code X will be used for the period of self-isolation until the test.

The school is no longer responsible for track and trace and follows advice given by Public Health England.

## **Attendance Policy and Procedures**

### **Attendance Facts – Over a student's time at school**

Statistical evidence shows that an average of half a day a week missed in Year 10 and 11 can result in the loss of one grade for every GCSE taken

An average of one day a week absence is the equivalent, over a school career, of nearly two and a half years of education

Ten days term time holiday leave annually is the equivalent of two terms of education missed, over a school career.

An average of fifteen minutes of lateness each day is equivalent to a year of education missed

90% attendance is the equivalent of a student missing one half day of school every week

### **Principles of Good Attendance**

- The school is committed to maximising the achievement of all students
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement. Good attendance is an important consideration when applying for any post-16 placement, whether at college, in training, or employment.

- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if students are to benefit fully from the academic, personal, and social opportunities which are offered to them within the school.
- Parents/carers play an important role in supporting the school and encouraging students to reach good attendance levels.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.

### **What the school expects of the students**

- To attend every day
- To arrive on time, appropriately prepared for the day.
- To report to Student Services and sign in the late book should they arrive after the official registration time.
- To inform their Personal Tutor of any reason that will prevent/has prevented them from attending school.

### **What the school expects of parents/carers**

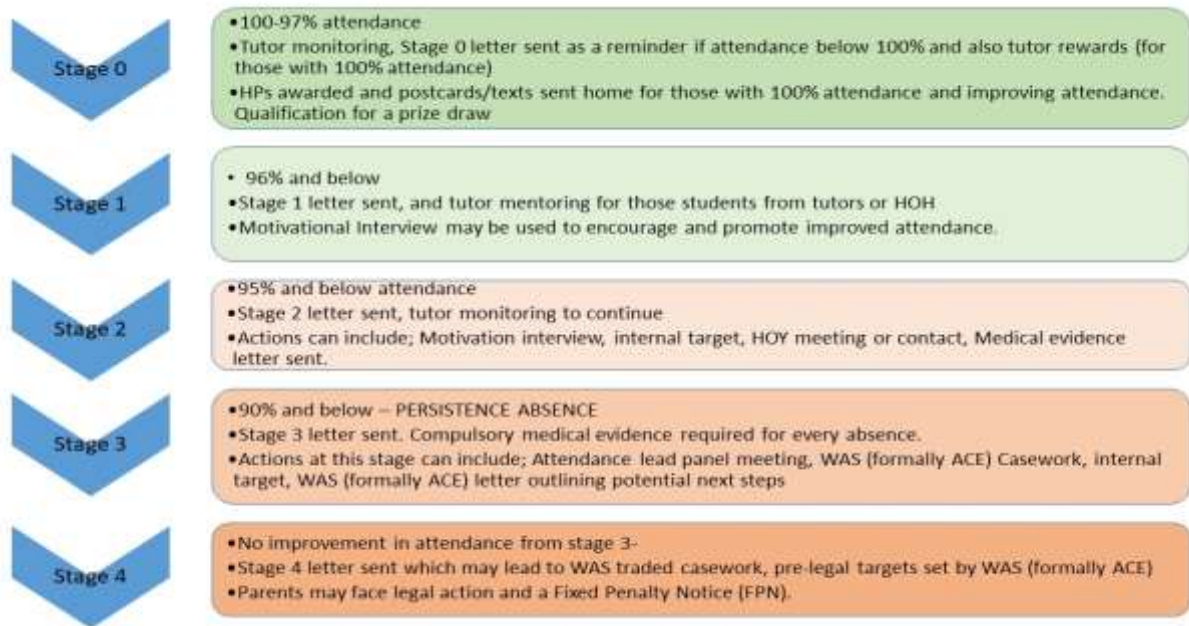
- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school on time every day.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as they know their child is unable to attend (before 9.00am) and that their child returns to school with an absence note.
- To contact the Personal Tutor or Attendance Officer whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To arrange essential appointments outside of the school day, whenever possible.
- To ensure the continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the school holiday period; in exceptional circumstances, where this is not possible, to request leave in term time by completing an application in advance of the holiday.

### **What parents and students can expect of the school**

- To provide a broad and balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- To promote good attendance.
- To record attendance efficiently and accurately.
- To make first day contact with parents when a student fails to attend school without providing good reason.
- To take prompt action on any problems notified
- To liaise with the Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) to assist and support parents and students where needed.
- To notify parents/carers of their child's attendance record annually.
- To record all attendance-related incoming messages from parents.
- To collect, monitor and analyse individual, year group and whole school attendance data, followed by appropriate action, as detailed in the Attendance Procedure Flow Chart.

### **Attendance Intervention**

Intervention will follow a staged approach and students will be monitored and different strategies will be used depending on the stage they are at in the process outlined below and their personal situation.



This flow chart is a guide and each case will be assessed and reviewed depending on each students' individual needs and which interventions will be most effective in supporting them to improve or maintain positive attendance. Early intervention will be sought so students can be supported meeting their attendance targets. The nature of student absence is crucial when applying this approach and individual circumstances will be considered.

### Returning to School After Absence

- The school will support students returning to school after a long period of absence.
- School staff, including outside agencies where appropriate, will liaise closely on this issue and employ appropriate reintegration strategies.

### Rewards and Targets

- House Points will be used to promote and maintain good attendance levels.
- Attendance targets will be set when a student's attendance falls below 95%
- Certificates will be awarded to students with high attendance rates and significantly improved attendance.

## ATTENDANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Governing Body

- Receive information from the Head Teacher/Deputy Headteacher and ratify targets.
- The Governors' Student Committee to monitor attendance in relation to target and strategies to raise attendance.

### **Deputy Headteacher**

- Develop, monitor, and review the Attendance Policy.
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers
- Set and monitor targets for improving attendance within school, including improving attendance within the School Development Plan.
- Evaluate targets through line management meetings.
- Support all staff in their work related to attendance.
- Collate attendance data for the DFE, LA and Governors.
- Liaise with the LA over attendance targets and school strategy.
- Keep Headteacher and relevant staff informed of actions taken.

### **Attendance Officer**

- Contact parents on first day of absence when a valid reason has not been provided
- Ensure accurate recording of attendance data in SIMS.
- Identify individual students with known punctuality/attendance problems and ensure these students are monitored closely.
- Support the role of the Personal Tutor as detailed below and in the flow chart.
- Liaise with parents, WAS and pastoral staff to identify and deal with poor attendance, punctuality, and other related issues.
- Refer students to and liaise with the WAS service upon agreement with Deputy Headteacher.
- Liaise with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance where relevant.
- Communicate the reason for absence to the relevant member of staff.
- Provide attendance data in line with the school's calendared schedules.
- Collate student information through the school procedural flow chart and meet with the Heads of Year.

### **Heads of Year/Heads of House**

- Liaise with Form Tutors to identify referrals to Attendance Officer for further action
- Speak to parents about school-based targets and authorisation about absence
- Attend meetings with Attendance Officer

### **Personal Tutors**

- Complete registers accurately as soon as possible at the start of each registration period, and ensure the register is returned to the Attendance Officer promptly.
- Have discussions with students and parents about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
- Collect notes for absence from students.
- Liaise with the Attendance Officer regarding any queries surrounding absence, e.g., forged notes, odd reasons etc.

## PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING ABSENCE

The law states that all young people must attend school all day every day unless they are ill, until they reach the legal leaving age. Absence will obviously make it difficult to keep up with lessons. Students who have been away must make every effort to catch up with the work but copying up is not the same as being taught. We are working hard to improve attendance and will notify parents if attendance falls below 95%.

Parents/Carers are required to phone and leave a message on our attendance line for each day's absence. Authorisation of Absence: We are advised by government legislation and Local Authority guidance that attendance can only be authorised if the following applies:

- Medical reasons - please note medical evidence and/or a parental written note will be asked for upon return to school for student's whose attendance falls below the school's expected threshold. Medical evidence will always be required if a student has five consecutive days absence from school due to illness. Notes are to be returned to student office
- Religious celebration observation
- If transport provided by the school/Local Authority cannot bring the child to school

The personal tutor identifies that a child is not in school through registration and the attendance officer will cross reference this to the phone messages left by parents as well as the late book held in Student Services.

Where no message has been left on the answering and the student is not late, the attendance officer sends a message through our "Keep Kids Safe" system. This will send a voice message, text, and email to the child's named parent/carer to notify them of the absence and request a reason for the absence. If no contact has been made, then from the third day a phone call will be made. Medical evidence will be required from the fifth day for non-covid reasons. If school is aware of positive lateral flow test a text requesting information for the PCR test will be sent on the fifth day. Additional welfare checks will also be made either through an invite to form-time or an email from the tutor on a weekly basis for students isolating. Students with poor attendance records may be contacted earlier to ensure their attendance rises.

The results of this messaging system could be that the person who received the message contacts school to explain the absence. Where this is not the case, the attendance administrator will make a further call home. The result of this action might be:

- a) There was no answer at the home
- b) The person who answered was not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe

- c) The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned
- d) The parent/carer answered the call, the child is not with them or safe and the parent is not concerned.
- e) The parent/carer answered the call, the child is with them and all is well.

In the case of a), b) and d) the attendance officer who made the telephone call should consider, with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, the degree of vulnerability of the child and any subsequent actions.

In the case of c) the staff member who made the telephone call should advise the parent to:

- Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searching for the child
- Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centers near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment
- Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing.

Where a child is absent from school for more than ten days and there are no exceptional circumstances known to the school, they will be automatically referred to the WAS service.

Where a child is absent from school for more than 10 days due to long term illness which has been authorised by the school, a referral may be made to the Flexible Learning Team for home tuition.

## **MISSING CHILDREN**

### **Prevention**

Key Stage 3 and 4 students may not leave the school premises during the school day once they arrive on our site. Sixth Form students may leave the school site during the day with the authority of the Head of Sixth Form and after using the Sixth Form signing out book.

Every effort is made to ensure the safety of students whilst they are in the school's care. All children are registered twice a day, at the start of the school day and after lunch. The completed registers are returned to the School Office so that the Attendance Administrator can follow up any absences and call parents.

When there is a trip away from the school premises then it is the responsibility of the staff taking the trip to ensure that a regular register is taken, or head count made. This will depend on the nature of the trip, the mode of transport used and the location of the trip. (See External Visits Policy and Procedures)

Staff are on duty from 8.20am in communal areas, during break time, mealtimes, PE or Games lessons and during after school clubs. Students are only allowed to leave the school premises during the school day if a request has been made by the student's parent to the Personal Tutor or Head of House. Permission will only be given in exceptional circumstances.

When a child is collected from school during the day whether due to illness or a prearranged appointment, they must always be collected from the School Reception so that a note may be made in the register to record the fact that they are no longer on the premises.

### **Where a child is found to be missing from school after registration**

If a child is found to be not in class after registering the student services team should be informed immediately.

The student services team will check whether the child has another commitment and if there is continued concern, they will alert 'On Call' who will coordinate a response.

This may include a check of the grounds and rooms to ensure the child has not hidden within the boundary. This search should take no longer than 10 minutes.

If the child is not found, parents will be informed and advised that they should contact the police if they are concerned. (Unless there are reasons connected with the child's welfare which indicate that this should not be done.)

If the parent does not respond, the 'on call' staff will consult with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to decide if the student should be reported as missing to the police.

A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the student's confidential record.

### **Where a child insists on leaving the premises after registration**

If a student insists on leaving the premises with the knowledge of staff and cannot be persuaded by them to stay on premises, parents will be contacted immediately. If the parent does not respond, the senior member of staff will consult with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher to decide if the student should be reported as missing to the police.



A written record of the incident and any action taken should be made as soon after the incident as practicable and placed in the student's confidential record.

### **Registering for after-school activities**

Each term, a timetable of after-school activities is advertised. Students who attend after school clubs are asked to sign in with their teacher and this attendance record is returned to the main school office as soon as it is completed. The office will update the after-school registration spreadsheet.

### **Procedure for registering attendance of students at College or Alternative Provision.**

All students who are on a college course are registered via a shared web-based system provided through the Local Authority. This is checked by the ASN Recording, Reporting, Assessment, Advice Manager to confirm attendance. Any missing marks are followed up immediately using the procedures already outlined.

### **Procedure for registering attendance of students on Work Experience placements**

During the week long work experience programme each student has a W recorded in their registration certificate. If they are unable to attend their work placement due to illness, they are expected to call school and their employer to inform them of this. A written/verbal record is then required by the school to authorise this absence. If a student does not attend their work placement and fails to notify their employer on that day, we have instructed employers to call us immediately. The work experience coordinator will then follow this up and follow absence procedures outlined earlier in this policy. Further safeguards are in place including issuing students with a 24-hour emergency contact number during their work experience placement which is answered by the Work Experience Coordinator and each student being visited by a member of staff during the week.

### **School and WAS Intervention**

School and WAS interventions include:

- Letters sent home regularly if absences are unexplained and when attendance becomes a concern and drops below 90%
- Home visits organised with WAS and Attendance Officer.
- WAS Pre-legal meeting warning letters issued to parents
- Attendance Pre-legal meetings for students in Years 7-11
- Referral to WAS takes place if there is no improvement in attendance together with persistent unauthorised absences from school
- Students issued with registration certificate with every Interim Report.

#### **4.1 Procedure for issuing penalty notices for persistent absence**

The Local Authority shall consider the issue of a penalty notice after the sending of an advisory letter and monitoring for a period of 6 weeks (30 school days) if further unauthorised absence occurs and the following are in place:

- A signed copy of the Memorandum of Understanding/ written agreement with school / education provider.
- A referral form is completed and submitted to the Warwickshire Attendance Service with all the necessary information and supporting relevant documentation.
- The circumstances of the absence meet the criteria according to the protocol.
- The period of absence is not being considered for proceedings according to Section 444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996.
- The issue of a Penalty Notice does not conflict with other intervention strategies in place by the Local Authority or by other agencies where the circumstances are known to the Local Authority.
- A copy of the pupil's attendance record which demonstrates at least 10 sessions (5 school days) were lost to unauthorised absence in the 100 sessions (10 Weeks).
- Prior to referral a minimum period of 30 school days given for the attendance to improve, evidencing the continued support offered by school.

#### **Leave of Absence (Holidays in Term Time)**

Parents are requested to avoid taking students for holidays during term time (please read guidance from WAS below). If it should be necessary for parents to request leave of absence during term time, request forms are available from the School Office.

There is a common misconception that any student is allowed to take 10 days holiday (in term time) per academic year. This is not true. If a Parent takes unauthorised leave for their child, we will follow this through with WAS.

The Local Authority has highlighted the need for a standard approach to the authorisation of holidays in Warwickshire.

A copy of this form can be found under Annex 1.

#### **Guidelines stipulated by WAS (Leave of Absence during term time):**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2013 came into force on 1st September 2013 and amended the 2006 regulations removing the reference to 'holiday', 'extended leave' as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amended regulations state the head teacher (or authorised person) may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" that apply to that application.

The head teacher should consider each application on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits. It is at the head teacher's discretion if the exceptional circumstances warrant the authorisation of the leave and should also determine the number of days the pupil should be absent for.

Head teachers should make clear to parents the date on which the pupil will be expected to return to school.

All requests for leave of absence must be made in advance and by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides.

A Penalty Notice will be issued when leave of absence has been taken but the school have not received and authorised a request for the same in advance (where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not be given).

The law does not set a minimum number of sessions for which a Penalty Notice for Leave of Absence during term time will be issued.

Warwickshire County Council will consider each referral on a case-by-case basis and on its own circumstances once the absence has occurred.

### **Guidelines stipulated by WAS:**

#### **Leave of Absence during term time.**

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not grant any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances**, and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council’s Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).

- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

### **Excessive delayed return from holiday**

Where leave has been granted by the head teacher, parents should be informed by letter of an agreed return date and what will occur if the pupil fails to return to school on the date stated. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 also enables schools to delete from their roll pupils who have failed to attend on the agreed return date. Following this date, reasonable enquiry should occur by the school and local authority to ascertain the pupil's whereabouts to locate the pupil prior to deletion.

### **Persistent Late Arrival at School**

When a pupil persistently arrives late, schools should investigate the reason for this and offer support where appropriate to rectify the situation. Where the arrival time is after the close of registration period (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities Absence and Attendance Codes state the register to pupils should close 30 minutes after the register was taken), the late mark, code U, an unauthorised absence should be recorded. The same process applies when requesting and issuing a penalty notice.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.**

## **Sixth Form – Attendance and Absence Procedures**

When students join the Sixth Form they sign up as a full-time student for a one- or two-year course of study.

As well as timetabled lessons, all students have non-contact periods on their timetable for private study and extra-curricular activities. Attendance at lessons and PSHE periods are compulsory and essential if students are to achieve their full potential at the end of the course. Students are expected to be in school during all non-contact periods.

The following guidance notes explain the school's policy on attendance and absence for all students in Years 12 and 13 and are to be used in conjunction with the Sixth Form Code of Conduct.

### **Expectations**

#### **Students are expected to:**

Attend 100% lessons, PSHE periods and special year group off-timetable days

Seek written permission in advance for time that you need to take off and inform subject teacher(s) concerned

Get a parent or carer to contact the school either by telephone or email before 8.30 am each morning to report any illness or sickness or bring in a letter signed by a parent or carer on the first day back after absence.

#### **The school is expected to:**

Keep records of your attendance.

Monitor your attendance and any absence, contacting home if there are any concerns

#### **Negotiated Absence:**

It is understood that there are occasionally reasons why you may need to be absent. In such cases of known absence, you must seek permission from, or notify, your Tutor/subject teacher(s) in writing at least 2 days in advance of your absence.

The following list indicates the occasions when absence may be negotiated:

Medical or dental appointment (with appointment card)

Driving test

Official study leave

Visit to university to attend open day or interview.

Participating in a significant extra-curricular activity (e.g., taking part in a regional or national event such as drama, music or sport or a workshop arranged by a particular subject area)

Educational visits

Attendance at a funeral

Religious holiday

Attendance at probation meeting or court hearing

If you are officially the responsible carer for a child or family member and an emergency arises

Severe weather (exceptional circumstances)

### **Holidays**

All post-16 courses are extremely intensive, and students are strongly discouraged from taking holidays during term time. However, if you need to apply for holiday leave the appropriate form must be collected from Student Services, completed, and returned to your tutor.

### **Illness or Missing Lesson/Registration Time**

School should be contacted by a parent or carer, preferably on the first day of absence and before 8.35am, by telephone on 01926 640465. If this is not possible then you should bring in a note signed by a parent or carer as soon as you return to school. This should also be the case where morning or afternoon registration (period 5) has been missed.

Please note that the Head of Sixth Form may contact home/parents in the event of any query over your attendance. It is your responsibility to arrange with teaching staff to catch up with any work missed and complete homework tasks set whilst you were absent.

### **Other Kinds of Absence**

The following reasons for absence are not generally acceptable and cannot be authorised by the school:

Employment or employment training which is not part of your programme of study

Leisure activities

Birthdays or similar celebrations

Baby-sitting younger siblings

Shopping

**Important Information for Parents/Carers**

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow a Head teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances**
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Request for Leave of Absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed
- If Leave of Absence is granted please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child’s academic progress
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parents(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of Absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Driving lessons

**Identifying Problems**

If, after the first term of study, your attendance in a particular subject is a cause for concern, you may be given a warning to improve. If your attendance falls further then the consequences can be more severe.

**APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A SCHOOL PUPIL IN TERM TIME IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

*Please note: **Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.***

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child: .....Form Group: .....

First Date of Proposed Absence .....Last date of Proposed Absence: .....

Expected date of return to school: .....

Reason for Proposed Absence – please provide reasons to support the application including evidence *(they can only be exceptional circumstances) (see overleaf before completing)*

.....  
.....  
.....

Total Days Requested On This Occasion

*(For siblings)* I have also applied to..... School/Academy for leave of

absence for ..... (Insert child/children's name)

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: .....

Print Name: ..... Date: .....

**For school use only:**

**Date received by school:** .....

NAME OF CHILD: .....

1<sup>st</sup> date of absence: ..... Last date of absence: .....

Expected date of return to school: .....

Absence Authorised: Yes/No

The reasons for this decision are: .....

- **LOA record sheet to be completed by school and submitted where verbal requests made/ for other relevant information**

Head Teacher/Attendance Lead: ..... Date: .....

- **Copy of this completed section must be sent back to parent with letter**

**The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 state:**

1. Head Teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**  
*A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides*

**AND**

- B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.*
2. The Head Teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.
3. The Head Teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

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- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).
  - If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).
  - Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.
  - Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.

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**Parents:**

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.
2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.
3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed [Penalty Notice or prosecuted](#) for unauthorised absence including holidays.

***We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the law is upheld and that your child achieves to his/her full potential. We look forward to your co-operation.***