



## **Holbrook Primary School Attendance Policy**

### **Policy Consultation and Review**

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. All parents are informed about the policy when their children join the school and on a regular basis through the newsletter and letters home where relevant.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on at least an annual basis. This policy is draft until reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on at the next full governing body meeting in the Autumn term.

Signature

Headteacher

Date:

Signature

Chair of Governors

Date:

<b>Contents</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction/Aim</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Legal Framework</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Attendance Objectives</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Roles and Responsibilities</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Recording Absence and Attendance</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Our Procedures</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Tailored Support</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Staged Reintegration/Reduced Timetables</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Related Policies</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Statutory Framework</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>17</b>

## 1. Introduction/Aim

### BEST

At Holbrook Primary we value the attendance of all pupils. There is a strong relationship between good school attendance and achieving positive outcomes for children. It is recognised that attending school regularly can be a protective factor for children and young people. It is important that as a school we offer a safe environment, positive relationships, high quality teaching and learning opportunities to develop social and emotional skills.

Ensuring that children attend school every day will help achieve this ambition by maximising their education and social achievements as well as developing self-discipline, organisation and preparedness for the work environment. Improving attendance and reducing absence, especially persistent absence is a priority for our school and Coventry City Council.

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, pupils, and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences.
- Make parents / carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

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, prevention of bullying, behaviour, and inclusive learning.

## 2. Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive 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 school or by education otherwise than at school. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

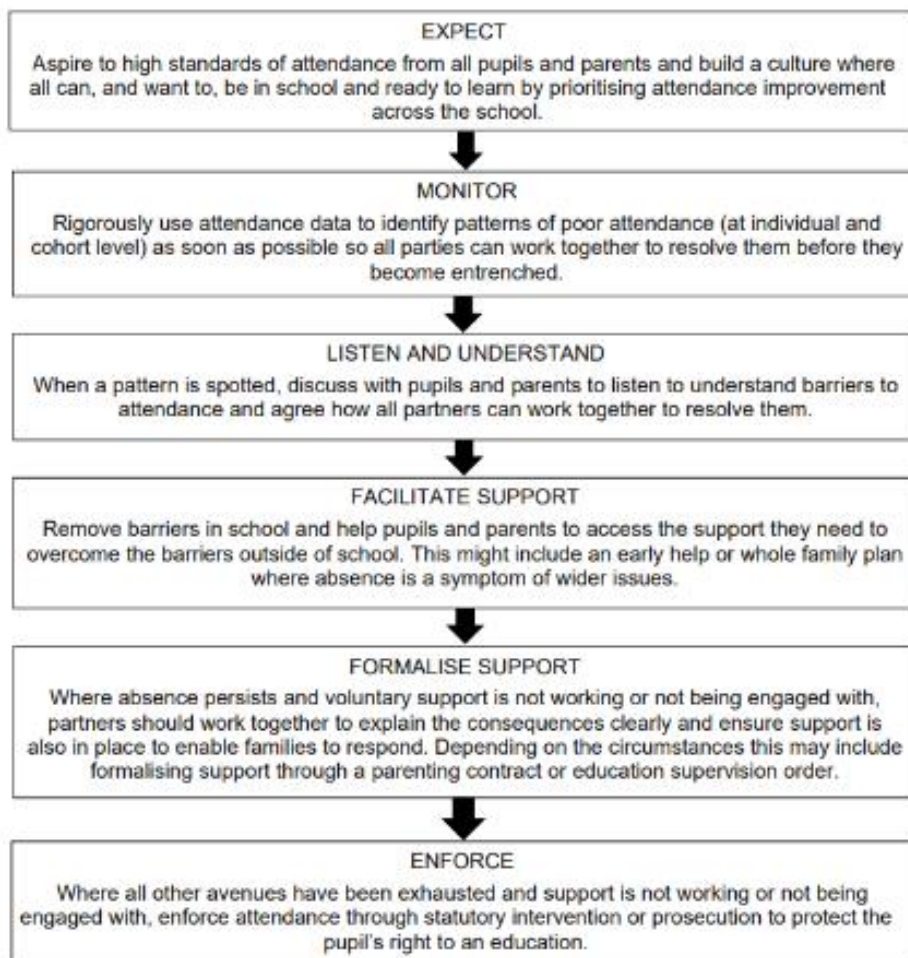
A "Parent" is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

### 3. Attendance Objectives

Our school attendance policy:

- Is easy to understand by pupils, parents and staff
- Is clear and consistently applied, transparent and fair
- Considers the individual needs of pupils and their families
- Is easy to find so that the whole school community is aware of our attendance expectations
- Includes the contact details of key staff to make it easy for parents to get in touch
- Is reviewed by staff regularly and involves pupils and parents because school attendance matters to everyone
- Is followed in accordance with the procedures in the flowchart below



#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

At Holbrook Primary School we believe that school attendance matters to everyone. School attendance is a shared responsibility by governors/trustees, all school staff, parents, pupils, and the wider school community.

Role	Name	Contact details
Headteacher	Tamara McCarthy	02476 688947 <a href="mailto:admin@holbrook.coventry.sch.uk">admin@holbrook.coventry.sch.uk</a>
Deputy Head	Clair Henry EYFS & KS1	
Deputy Head	Nicki Kelsall KS2	
Learning Mentor	Demi O'Connor EYFS & KS1	
Learning Mentor	Clinton Potter Y3 & Y4	
Learning Mentor	Harry Craker Y5 & Y6	

The Governors of Holbrook Primary School recognises the importance of school attendance and promotes it across the school's ethos and policies. They take an active role in attendance improvement by:

- Supporting the school to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensuring school staff receive training on school attendance.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

Holbrook Primary School will:

- Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.
- Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.
- Have dedicated senior leaders with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Signpost and support access to any required services where out of school barriers are identified.
- Take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners
- Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers where absence becomes persistent.
- Hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future where there is a lack of engagement.
- Work with the local authority on legal intervention where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate.
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.
- Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.
- Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.

- Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.
- Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils with SEND and/or medical conditions and their parents to maximise attendance.
- Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
- Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals for children with SEND and medical conditions.
- Regularly monitor data for children with SEND and medical conditions, including at governing body meetings and with local authorities.
- Inform the pupil's social worker, where there is one, if there are any unexplained absences and if the child's name is to be deleted from the register.

Holbrook Primary School requests that parents:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by school staff, parents and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.
- Attend school ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested e.g. PE kit, reading book etc
- Bring a note of explanation from their parents or guardians to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation.

## 5. Recording Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department of Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

### 5.1 Leave of absence/Extended Holidays

The headteacher can only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. All absences associated with a family holiday (without exceptional circumstances) during term time will be marked as unauthorised on the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority by the headteacher and be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

Holidays are recorded with a G code but only where the school has received a completed holiday form *with a return date*. If no holiday form is received or there is no return date, the absence should be recorded as unauthorised, (0 code) and the procedures should be followed in line with the DfE Child Missing from Education documentation. This should be reported within 10 days of the child being deemed as missing. A home visit must be carried out before a CME is submitted, bins checked, neighbours spoken to and a compliment slip stating that a CME will be submitted and requesting contact to be made is posted through the door and telephone contact should be attempted and recorded.

All parents taking the child out of school for an extended holiday will have to meet with the Head Teacher and complete a form. This form states that it is the parent's intention to take their child away from school during term time and accept that it will be an unauthorised absence and that the child should not be out of school for more than 20 days. If they don't return within 21 days, contact should be attempted with the family to ascertain where they are and the reason for non-return. If no contact is made, a CME should be completed and school should take advice from the LA.

The parent will also be asked to record which country they are visiting. This information will support the school in acting appropriately in the following situations:

- Where concerns of female pupils at risk of FGM are highlighted, questions will be asked around this to ensure the child's safety. Where concerns still persist, an urgent referral will be made to RAS (Referral and Assessment Service)
- Where concerns of visiting countries where groups of people are at war and there are concerns for the safety of the children and association of extremism, a referral will be made to the appropriate body following guidance from the PREVENT Duty.

The Newsletter, every half term, reminds parents that if their child has unauthorised absences from school for five or more days and is above the age of five, they may incur a fine. This fine is for both parents.

Children's places will be kept open for a maximum of 21 days. If parents wish to take a longer holiday, without reasonable explanation or cause, they will be informed that their child's name will be taken off roll.

Where a child has not returned after their stated return date on the holiday form, contact should be attempted with the family to gain a revised return date and reason for non-return. Consideration should be given here for non-return if it is due to unavoidable causes and exceeds the 20 days, guidance should be taken from the headteacher to confirm the next appropriate action. If no contact can be made, a child missing from education form must be completed within 10 days and the Local Authority informed.

Where a holiday form has not been completed and there has not been any verbal communication, a maximum of 10 days can pass before a child missing from education form should be completed and the

matter should be reported to the Local Authority. Where verbal communication has been received, this should be recorded and follow the policy as appropriate.

During both situations, where a child has failed to return to school, home visits should be made, attempts to contact family members, asking neighbours if they have seen the family, checks around the property for evidence of the family being there ie check bins etc should be made.

In all other circumstances of non-attendance, if children do not return to school within 10 days of absence, Learning Mentors will make attempts to contact the family but ultimately, a child missing from education form will be completed within the 10 day period and therefore referred to the Local Authority. Once reported and agreed with the Local Authority, the children's names will be taken off roll after 21 days. If their parents or a relative contact the school and provide a valid reason for absence, this may be considered if mitigating circumstances and the child will be left on roll. However, the family on their return, will still receive a fixed penalty notice. If a child is unable to travel because of medical reasons this must be supported by a medical note which must be faxed to school at the time of the illness.

We always issue fixed penalty notices for any unauthorised absences where they meet the criteria.

In all circumstances, only the Headteacher can authorise a child being taken off roll. Therefore, if this is considered the appropriate next step, this must be reported and discussed with the Headteacher before this process can be completed.

When absence is granted by the head teacher, the parent will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in a children missing from education procedure being instigated.

## **5.2 Medical Appointments and absence due to illness**

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must inform that class teacher and the school office. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without being collected.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness or the child is on an attendance plan, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

## **5.3 Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance**

Holbrook Primary 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 is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

## **5.4 Unauthorised Absence**



Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- Pupil or family member's birthday
- Sibling school closed
- Distance from school
- Parent appointments
- No one available to drop off or collect child
- Sibling/parent is ill
- Transport issues

## **6. Our Procedures**

### **6.1 Register Keeping and Recording**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, require schools to take an attendance register at the beginning of the morning session and once during each afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational activity or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

An absence report is completed each week by the Learning Mentor with responsibility for attendance. The absence report identifies absences and shows whether these were authorised or unauthorised.

An authorised absence is one where the school has accepted the explanation offered as a satisfactory justification for the absence. Examples of authorised absences would include:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments
- Days of religious observance, previously agreed by headteacher
- Interviews for school places
- Dual registration with a special school, PRU or other educational establishment
- Exclusion
- Family bereavement (close family relatives - short period of time agreed with headteacher)

Other absences are likely to be unauthorised. Where teachers or learning mentors are uncertain they must seek advice from the head teacher.

### **6.2 Late Arrival at School**

At Holbrook Primary School all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.35am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. The school register will be taken at 8.45am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to report to the main office with their parents, who will be expected to sign in and provide a reason for their absence. If their arrival is before 9.15am it will be recorded as late - L code (Late before the close of register).

The school register will officially close at 9.15am. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session - U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss any patterns of

late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.

### **6.3 Expected absence procedure for parents**

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the morning of the first day of absence and on each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- A text will be sent to parents for all pupils who are not in school after close of register at 9.15am and where no reason for absence is known.
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact will be telephoned.
- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit will be carried out on the second day of absence. If contact cannot be made a letter will be left advising of our visit and asking parents to contact school with a reason for absence.
- carry out a further home visit on the fourth day of absence. If contact cannot be made a letter will be left advising that a CME form may be submitted if we do not receive contact from parents by the end of the fifth day.
- where we have concerns a CME may be submitted before the 5 days
- significant concerns may result in a request for a safe and well check from the police.
- School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission.

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Discuss the pupil at the termly Targeted Support Meetings to seek advice and guidance on additional support strategies.
- Refer to Early Help and/or other external agencies to offer support, guidance, and advice.
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures.
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken.

### **6.4 Rewards and Interventions**

We believe that good or improving attendance should be rewarded at individual and class level.

Each week, through awards assembly, attendance of each class is considered and those over 96% are celebrated. Those classes attaining 100% receive a whole class treat.

Individual attendance of 100% is recognised each term and rewarded.

Each class attendance is featured in the weekly school newsletter. Our target and current attendance % is displayed by the Learning Mentors on our attendance board in the main reception area.

### **Stage 1: Prevention**

**Criteria:** Attendance is between 94% and 100% by running regular attendance reports to identify pupils that are between 94 – 96% and send SMS to inform parents of concerns. Children who have patterns of poor attendance or punctuality will be targeted by Learning Mentors and direct contact with these parents at termly parents' evening will be made.

### **Stage 2: Early Intervention**

**Criteria:** Attendance is between 90% and 93% pupils placed on a supportive attendance plan, parents invited to an absence meeting – attendance will be monitored on a 6 weekly basis – when attendance reaches 96% pupils to receive an attendance certificate and well done SMS.

Pupils who have attendance between 81% and 90% may require support from other services outside of school and universal services at stage 1.

### **Stage 3: Targeted Support**

**Criteria:** Attendance is below 80%

Pupils who have attendance below 80% may require multi-agency support in addition to that provided at stage 2.

## **7. Tailored Support**

At Holbrook Primary School we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. 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. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- Breakfast club
- Signposting to Early Help
- Providing food parcel or signposting to Food Bank
- Attendance meeting
- After school club
- 1:1 Learning mentor pastoral support

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. This may include a referral to Early Help or a Parenting Contract.

## **8. Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 40 sessions (20 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

### **8.1 Fixed Penalty Notices**

Fixed penalty notices will be issued by the Head teacher to parents or carers if your children are absent from school for the following reasons:

- Holiday / leave of absence during term time
- Irregular attendance including persistent late arrival to school (after registration has closed) which equates to 10 or more sessions within a current 5-week period

Penalty Notices will be issued by post to your home address to each parent or carer by the local authority at the request of the Headteacher. The Penalty Notice is:

- £60 for each of your children if paid in full within 21 days
- £120 if paid in full after 21 days but within 28 days.

## **9. Staged Reintegration/Reduced timetables**

All children of compulsory school age are legally entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and the school and local authority have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in the area receive such an education. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

We will not use a reduced timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision where applicable. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carers and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family. We will notify the Attendance and Children Missing Education Team of all reduced timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed.

## **10. Related Policies**

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- safeguarding including child protection
- medical needs
- admissions
- anti-bullying
- exclusion
- special educational needs
- teaching and learning
- behaviour and rewards

## **11. Statutory Framework**

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance, DfE, \(September 2022\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education, DfE \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education, DfE \(September 2022\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children, DfE \(July 2018\)](#)

## 12. Appendices



### Confirmation of meeting between the Head Teacher and parents to discuss impact of extended absence on child's achievement



The school recommendation is that you do not take your child out of school for holidays. Permission will not be given and the absence from school will be unauthorised.

All unauthorised absences are liable to Penalty Notice Fines or prosecution for non-attendance, whatever the reason even if the family representative feels that the absence is of unavoidable cause.

**Child/ren who are absent for more than 20 days will be removed from roll and there can be no guarantee of a school place being available on return**

#### Notification of Extended Holiday

Name of child(ren) \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for unauthorised absence \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Country Visiting: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of unauthorised absence from \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_

**I understand that removing my child from school will have a detrimental effect on their education and will incur a penalty fine.**

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print full name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact address/ phone number whilst away \_\_\_\_\_

#### Office use only

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Current attendance \_\_\_\_\_ %

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Current attendance \_\_\_\_\_ %

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Current attendance \_\_\_\_\_ %

The parents have been informed the school that the above children listed are being removed from school for the dates specified.

This absence will be recorded on the school register as unauthorised and will incur a fine.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Head Teacher