



Respect

Creation

Fellowship

Wisdom

Hope

ARCHBISHOP BENSON C of E SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Chair of Governors

Jenny Webster



1.0 Introduction

At Archbishop Benson School, we are proud to be a Church of England school rooted in our local community. In keeping with our inclusive vision and values, we are committed to being the school of first choice for all local families, providing an excellent education for all our pupils.

Our policies and procedures are focused on ensuring that we all enjoy and achieve within a nurturing and enriching school community.

Vision:

With **fun and learning**, **hand in hand**, **all things are possible**.

"**I can** do **all things** through **Him** who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

Values:

RESPECT

CREATION

FELLOWSHIP

WISDOM

HOPE

2.0 Aims:

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

3.0 The importance of school attendance

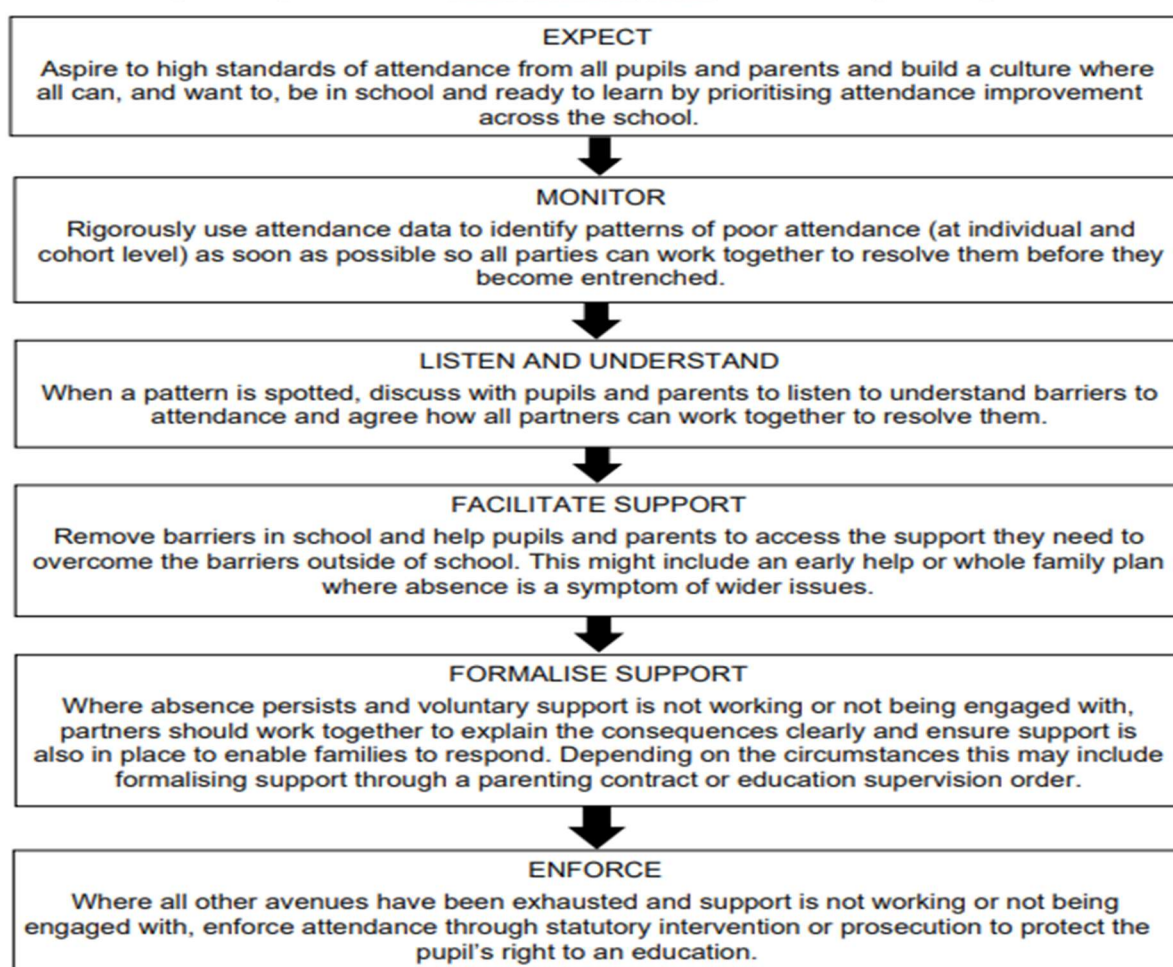
Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, school and partners will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age 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 otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. Nationally, the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms.

3.1 Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance- at home, in school or more broadly- requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



3.2 Expectations of school

All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community. As set out in section 1, attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and should therefore be seen as **everyone's responsibility** in school.

As a school, we consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, systematically analyse our data to identify patterns to target improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance. We also recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils want to attend and can learn and thrive.

4.0 Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#).
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#).
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#).
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#).
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#).

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

5.0 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school.
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Ethos Committee is responsible for monitoring school attendance. The Ethos Committee Governors can be contacted via clerk@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils.
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary and/or authorising senior attendance champion (Jen Barnard) to be able to do so.

5.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'Attendance Lead') is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school.
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement.
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes.
- Having an oversight of data analysis.
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data.
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is **Mrs Jen Barnard** and can be contacted via 01872 273185.

5.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Promoting pupil attendance within daily classroom interactions.
- Recording attendance daily. If reason for absence is known via Class Dojo, this information will be communicated to the school office on the same day.
- Maintaining relationships with parents and enabling challenge over poor attendance/punctuality and support.
- Informing the Attendance Lead where they have early concerns about behaviour.
- Highlight attendance concerns or issues to the Attendance Lead.

5.5 School Office staff

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Lead in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.
- Ensure accurate coding of absence is completed daily.

5.6. Parents/carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them).

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time.
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30 a.m. on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Jen Barnard, Attendance Lead, who can be contacted via 01872 273185.
- Support the school's stance on the implementation of national policies. If a parent/ carer is unhappy with national attendance requirements, we will signpost them to contact wither the Local Attendance Officer or the local MP.
- Maintain respectful conduct towards Archbishop Benson staff when:
 - Being challenged on attendance-related matters.
 - Attending attendance clinic or review meetings.
 - Fixed penalty notice, holiday or prosecution challenges are being implemented.

5.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time.

6.0 Recording attendance

6.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session, straight after lunch. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry.
- The amended entry.
- The reason for the amendment.
- The date on which the amendment was made.
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age. Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school between 8.35 and 8.45 a.m. on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45 a.m. and will be kept open until 9 a.m.

KS1 (YR- Y2)	KS2 (Y3-Y6)
Children arriving between 8.45 and 9.00 will be given a late mark. Anyone arriving after 9.00 will be given an unauthorised late mark.	Children arriving between 8.45 and 9.00 will be given a late mark. Anyone arriving after 9.00 will be given an unauthorised late mark.
Register opens at 1.00 p.m. Anyone arriving between 1.00 and 1.10 p.m. will be given a late mark and anyone arriving after 1.10 p.m. will be given an unauthorised late mark (U).	Register opens at 1.10 p.m. Anyone arriving between 1.10 and 1.20 p.m. will be given a late mark and anyone arriving after 1.20 p.m. will be given an unauthorised late mark (U).
School closes at 3.15 p.m.	School closes at 3.25 p.m.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

Regular attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised.
- Attendance at or above 96% (unless the child has a chronic medical need).

An “authorised absence” as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency or unavoidable cause.

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.
- These absences can be both authorised and unauthorised.

“Parent” 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.

6.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30 a.m. or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff on 01872 273185. Only a school can decide whether to authorise an absence. Please ensure you give a full reason for absence when you contact the school office, not just “sick” or “poorly”. Reasons given will be recorded on the school register document.

Each day is made up of 2 sessions -am and pm – and therefore has 2 points at which the code is recorded.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If there are repeated, persistent absences, the school may ask for medical evidence for any future absences. Parents will receive a letter from the Attendance Lead (Appendix 4)

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

6.3 Absences due to Mental Health

Supporting Pupil Mental Health

At Archbishop Benson Primary School, we believe that we will achieve good attendance by promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing through a whole-school approach to pupil mental health, and by developing a trusted relationship with parents/carers and families that involves them in the conversation about the school's ethos, and emphasises the importance of supporting mental health and regular attendance. The school has a trained senior mental health lead who has a strategic oversight of our setting's whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. We also play an important role in teaching pupils about respectful relationships, emotional wellbeing, mental health and supporting social and emotional development through the Jigsaw PSHE programme.

The DFE document 'Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance' states:

When is it appropriate for a pupil to be absent because of a mental health issue?

Schools should set and maintain high expectations for the attendance, engagement and punctuality of pupils who are anxious about attending school. It is important to recognise that, in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as much as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten their anxiety about attending in future. School staff will recognise that there can be attendance challenges where a child has a social, emotional or mental health issue, particularly a severe issue for which the child is receiving clinical treatment.

As per paragraph 219 of the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance, school staff should advise parents/carers to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Many children will experience normal

but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly. School staff should work quickly to communicate this expectation to parents/carers and work together with them to ensure that such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance. Any associated anxiety about attending should be mitigated as much as possible by creating a plan to implement reasonable adjustments to alleviate specific barriers to attendance. These adjustments should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with all parties, including parents/carers. As mentioned above, in this guidance any actions taken to support attendance are referred to as "reasonable adjustments". This term is used throughout this guidance as a way of describing those actions in general terms, as opposed to relating to a school's duty to make reasonable adjustments pupils with a disability under section 20 of the 2010 Equality Act. In developing a plan to support attendance through reasonable adjustments, school staff will need to take into account the individual circumstances of the child, being mindful of safeguarding responsibilities as set out in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 guidance

Any plan to help a pupil to attend well may also involve making referrals to in-school (e.g. pastoral care input from a trusted adult) or external professional support (e.g. a health professional, family support). The school will work proactively with home and with external professionals to ensure the same ambition is maintained for the attendance of the child by all other parties as by the school, maximising in-person learning where possible

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends school.
- Work with the school and other partner organisations such as the LA, GPs or other medical professionals to establish a shared understanding of perceived barriers to attendance, with a view to supporting their child to maintain full-time attendance at school.
- Proactively engage with any support offered.
- Maintain good communication with the school and be open in communicating information that will help improve the quality and nature of support being provided.
- Take action as best they can to support their child(ren) to recognise and manage their social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing. Support is available through Children's Mental Health Support Team- [Children's Mental Health Support Team](#)

The School will:

- Set and maintain high expectations for attendance for children with mental health concerns and work with pupils and parents/carers to maximise their attendance.
- Facilitate support for pupils experiencing mental health problems as well as for those experiencing normal but difficult emotions through sensitive conversations with pupils and parents/carers.

- Consider additional pastoral care inputs and where appropriate, make referrals.
- Engage with parents at an early stage in conversations to support their child experiencing anxiety to ensure robust support for the child.
- Support parents if they feel the child needs to visit a specialist in relation to a mental health concern. The school will encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours where possible.

6.4 Planned absence

Emergency appointments

Attending an emergency medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised, as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provide evidence of the appointment. Evidence can be sent to the school office as a screenshot via Dojo or be shown directly to office staff. Parents should inform the school office on 01872 273185 detailing the date, time and nature of the appointment **AND** send a Dojo message to the class teacher. Please allow at least 15 minutes notice for collection of your child. Medical evidence **will** be asked for any emergency appointments. Failure to provide medical evidence, will result in your child's attendance being marked as unauthorised.

Non-emergency appointments

There is an expectation that non-emergency medical appointments, e.g. optician, dentist, school nurse, should be arranged for out-of-school hours, either after school or during holiday breaks. Most high-street opticians open at the weekend and after school. Most GP surgeries offer extended hours. With 13 weeks holidays across the year, it should be possible for most parents to book non-emergency appointments within these weeks. The school may need to speak to parents/carers where this may be an issue.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to Appendix 2 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

6.5 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (8.45 - 9a.m.), will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
- After the register has closed (9 a.m.), will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- If a child is persistently late, their classteacher will speak to the parent/carer to ascertain how the school can support punctuality. If the child continues to be late, the Attendance Lead will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer to discuss how punctuality can be supported.

6.6 Following up unexplained absence

Attendance Protocols

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

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after close of register and where no reason for absence is known. The school will call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. Encourage attendance later in the day if appropriate.
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents/carers, a further telephone call home will be made again that morning. If no response can be gained, the child's named emergency contact(s) will be telephoned in line with our Missing Child/Absent Child reasonable enquiries process. (See Safeguarding Policy).
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues for 2 days without explanation, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.
- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, emergency contact numbers will be contacted.
- If school still cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out.
- School will telephone home if a pupil leaves the school without permission.
- If a child is absent for three or more consecutive school days, the school might request medical evidence to verify the illness.
- If medical evidence is not provided after three or more consecutive days, the school will carry out a welfare check at the child's home.

In certain circumstances the school may also:

- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement.
- Write to the parents of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues.
- Visit the home of the pupil or request a welfare check to be made by the police.
- Refer to an external agency/ support service 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.
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as implementing a Family Support Plan or referring to Children Services, where there are safeguarding concerns.

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 first day of absence and each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return.
- If no contact is received, the Attendance protocols above will be instigated.

6.7 Following up unexplained absence after a holiday request

If a child continues to be absent after a holiday, whether authorised or unauthorised by the school, the school will ask for evidence of absence. This may include but is not limited to:

- Flight details/boarding passes.
- Holiday accommodation confirmation dates.
- Other evidence of travel dates.
- Medical evidence.

Failure to provide appropriate evidence will result in a home visit and welfare check.

If we have reason to believe that the child is on extended leave in excess of the agreed number of days, the school may make the decision to submit a request for the issue of a Penalty Notice.

6.8 No 'Leave of Absence' requests

There may be cases where parents have decided not to request a leave of absence, but rather to take the holiday and claim their child was ill for the period in question.

- There is parental expectation that a parent rings the school on **each and every day of absence**.
- If a parent leaves a voicemail as a result of the phone call being before office opening hours, a return call will be made to the parent, especially where the absence is continued.
- If no phone call has been received from the parent to explain the absence, school **will** try to contact the parent for further information about the unexplained absence. Unanswered phone calls **will** be followed up with emails urging parent to make contact with school.
- If school have not been able to make contact with the parent after three days, a home visit will be made; it would be expected that an ill child would be at home. If there is no one at home, this will be followed up with an email to parents stating that school have made a home visit, found no one there, and that school would like to arrange a visit for the next day.
- If a holiday absence is suspected without parents requesting a 'Leave of Absence', school will request an attendance meeting with the parents,

where parents are given an opportunity to provide reasons and evidence of their child's absence. This could be in the form of a prescription script, a doctor's appointment confirmation or any other evidence that parents may feel is relevant.

- If the child has siblings at other schools, school may liaise with those schools to check for similar absence patterns and any information that those schools may have.
- School may make a note of any information / social media posts that are provided to us (from 'open' profiles only) or conversations that would suggest the family was on holiday.
- Schools can use the 'N' attendance code while looking into the matter further (this should only be a temporary code, to be updated as soon as possible)
- In line with Department of Education guidance, if school suspect that a child was taken on holiday and sufficient evidence of illness has not been submitted, school may proceed with a Penalty Notice.

6.9 Reporting to parents/carers

The classteacher will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels during the Autumn and Spring terms at parent evenings verbally and through a written report and through a written report during the Summer Term.

7.0 Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Approval for term-time absence

Since September 2013, changes to Government regulations and guidance means that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence for the sole purpose of a holiday (unless in exceptional circumstances) – see appendix 2.

All absences associated with a holiday (without exceptional circumstance) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within 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 and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution.

Archbishop Benson believes that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for child due to 'exceptional circumstances.'

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least one month before the planned leave. If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher and it will be marked as unauthorised. The leave of absence form is available on our school website.

The Headteacher will treat each application individually and may discuss with parents the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local Authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority if:-

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken.
- A longer period of time is taken in excess of the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents 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 possible Children Missing from Education procedures being instigated.

Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

Archbishop Benson 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.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school. That decision is at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include, but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday.
- Shopping for uniforms/shoes or other items.
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair.
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes.
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation.
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend.
- Medical issues like headlice or worms do not require for a child to be sent home to be treated or to stay off school to be treated. This is reinforced by DfE guidance to schools. Children should be treated at home during out-of-school hours. An absence from school to treat these conditions will not be coded as an authorised absence unless requested by the school.
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school.

7.2 Medical Absence

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they are unwell. Guidance can be found on the NHS: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about health protection and managing specific infectious diseases at GOV.UK. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

7.3 Afternoon Absences

Absence will not be authorised if a child is picked up early from school, unless appropriate evidence is provided. This will only be authorised in emergency situations. The weekly timetable for every year group is very carefully planned to ensure that the full ABB curriculum can be delivered. Sessions in the afternoon are just as important as those in the morning and it is important that children do not miss any of them. We ask parents to avoid contacting the school and asking for their child/ren to be picked up early in the afternoons. Office staff will check any requests with senior leaders to establish if the request is an exceptional circumstance.

7.4 Persistent Absence

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 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational potential.

The attendance of all pupils at school is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are at risk of becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and/or attendance meetings 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, Education Supervision Order or full prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

7.5 Legal sanctions

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

The decision to submit a request for the issue of a Penalty Notice will be considered when a child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular'

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

8.0 Strategies for promoting attendance

The school employs a range of strategies to encourage, celebrate and reward good and improving attendance:

- Daily Senior Leader and Classteacher 'Meet and Greet' to welcome each child into school.
- School-led Breakfast & Wraparound Child Care facility.
- Before School Club for targeted children.
- Attendance data shared weekly in newsletter.
- Attendance data shared weekly in Collective Worship with pupils.
- Attendance Cup awarded weekly to class with highest collective attendance.
- Attendance sticker for children with 100% attendance for one full term per academic year.
- Attendance certificate for children with 100% attendance for two full terms per academic year.
- Attendance badge and picnic for children with 100% attendance for three full terms per academic year.

Support Systems

School recognises 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, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance.

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

- Discussions with parents and pupils.

- Parent Support Advisor/Family Support Worker support.
- Pupil Engagement through pupil conferencing and School Council discussions.
- Trauma-Informed School Support.
- Relationship work.
- 1 to 1 mentoring.
- Reward incentives.
- Additional learning support.
- Behaviour support.
- Reintegration support packages.
- Attendance clinics.
- Engaging the support of other agencies – Early help hub referral / support.
- Support from our Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP)

Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the Head teacher will consider the use of legal sanctions following consultation with the Local Authority.

9.0 Attendance monitoring

9.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

9.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families.

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

9.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to classteachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

9.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Monitor targeted children closely.
- Send letters to make parents aware of poor attendance/punctuality including attendance data, concerns and offers of support.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

9.5 Children Missing in Education

Children missing in education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.

Children missing in education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation (including travel to conflict zones), and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. It is important that pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority. In the more general circumstances of a child going missing, who is not known to any other agencies, and there are no immediate safeguarding concerns, the Head Teacher will inform the Education Welfare Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation.

Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School has a safeguarding duty in respect of our pupils, and this includes investigating any unexplained absences.

10.0 Policy monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum bi-annually by Jen Barnard, Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11.0 Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Behaviour Policy.
- SEND Policy.

12.0 Statutory Framework

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

- School attendance, DfE (2024).
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: statutory guidance, DfE (revised March 2017).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (2021).
- Cornwall Council Children Missing Education Practice & Procedures.
- Cornwall Council Elective Home Education Practice & Procedures.
- Cornwall Council Advice and Guidance for Schools – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Children.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

Appendix A – Attendance and Absence Codes (from September 2024)

1. If a pupil is present in school the following codes from table 1 should be used

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
/	Present at school AM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
\	Present at school PM	Must be in school at registration	Attending (Present)
L	Late arrival before register is closed	The pupil was absent when the register started being taken but arrives before the register closes	Attending (Present)

2. If a pupil is absent from school so that they can attend a place other than school for any of the following reasons the relevant code from table 2 should be used.

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
K	Attending Education provision arranged by the LA	- The nature of the provision must be recorded. - Code K can only be used if the child is present at the provision	Attending an approved educational activity (Present)
V	Attending an Educational Visit or Trip	- The pupil is attending a place, other than that the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for an educational trip or visit. - Arranged by or on behalf of the school and supervised by a member of school staff - The visit or trip must take place during the session for which it is recorded - Code V can only be used if the pupil is present at the visit	Attending an approved educational activity (Present)
P	Participating in a sporting activity	- P code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity. - The sporting activity must take place during the session for which it is recorded	Attending an approved educational activity (Present)

		• The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by the local authority under Section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 • The activity is of an educational nature • The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity and • The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.	
W	Attending Work Experience	• W code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity under arrangements by school or the LA • The activity takes place in the session for which it is recorded. • The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; • the activity is of an educational nature; • the school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and	Attending an approved educational activity (Present)

		the activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved.	
B	Attending any other approved Educational Activity	- B code can only be used if the pupil is present at the activity under arrangements by school or LA - In session for which it is recorded - The place is somewhere other than the school, another school where the pupil is registered, or a place where educational provision has been arranged for the pupil by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 or sections 42(2) or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014; - The activity is of an educational nature; - The school has approved the pupil's attendance at the place for the activity; and attending an approved educational activity - The activity is supervised by a person considered by the school to have the appropriate skills, training, experience and knowledge to ensure that the activity takes place safely and fulfils the educational purpose for which the pupil's attendance has been approved. <u>As set out in the DfE's guidance on 'Providing remote education'. pupils who are absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be recorded as absent using the</u>	Attending an approved educational activity (Present)

		<u>most appropriate absence code.</u> Schools should keep a record of, and monitor pupil's engagement with remote education, but this is not formally tracked in the attendance register	
D	Dual Registered at another school	- The school at which the pupil is scheduled to attend must record the pupil's attendance and absence with the relevant code. - Code D may only be used by either school for a session where the pupil is scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. - Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexpected and unexplained absences are promptly followed up	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)

3. If a pupil is absent with leave (NB Schools are not required to follow regulation 11 in granting a leave of absence should still use the relevant code)

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
C1	Leave of absence – performance or regulated employment abroad	- Performance licence issued by the LA or - Body of Persons approval issued by LA or - Justice of the Peace has given licence for pupil to go abroad for performance or regulated purpose	Authorised absence
M	Leave of absence for Medical or Dental appointment	- Agreement in advance - Application by parent/carer that child normally lives with - Minimum time necessary - Where pupil is absent at registration	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for interview	- Agreement in advance - Application by parent/carer that child normally lives with - In session absence recorded	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for		Authorised absence

	studying for public examination		
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	- For part time attendance - Absence for timetabled sessions to use appropriate code and not X	Not a possible attendance (neither present or absent)
C2	Leave of absence – compulsory school age children subject to part-time table	- Exceptional circumstances - If the school and a parent who the pupil normally lives with have agreed that, exceptionally, the pupil should temporarily be educated only parttime - Temporary and regularly reviewed	Authorised absence
C	Leave of absence exceptional circumstances	- Exceptional circumstances - No blanket approach - School discretion - Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.	Authorised absence

4. Pupil absent for other authorised reasons

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	- The pupil is a mobile child and their parent(s) is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. - To help ensure continuity of education for pupils, when their parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes in England, it is expected that the pupil should attend a	Authorised absence

		school where their parent(s) is travelling and be dual registered at that school and their main school	
R	Religious observance	The pupil is absent on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body the parent(s) belong to (not the parents themselves)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	The pupil is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related). Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness.	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision made	The pupil is suspended from school or permanently excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission register, and no alternative provision has been made for the pupil to continue their education	Authorised absence

5. Pupil Absent -Unavoidable Cause

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
Q	Unable to attend school because of a lack of access arrangements	- There is a lack of access arrangements for a pupil whose home is in England if— (a) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil under section 508B(1) of the 1996 Act(13) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty; (b) a local authority have a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the pupil because of section 508E(2) (c) of the 1996 Act(14) for the purpose of facilitating the pupil's attendance at the school and have failed to discharge that duty;	Not a possible attendance

Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use	Not a possible attendance
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being closed unexpectedly	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	- The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: - in police detention, - remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or - detained under a sentence of detention. A pupil's absence should be recorded under code Y7 (Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause) if they are unable to attend because they are serving a community based (i.e. non-detained) part of a sentence of	Not a possible attendance

		detention, referral order, or youth rehabilitation order that requires them to be absent during the school day	
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupils travel to or attendance at the school would be: - contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or, - prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. Schools must also record the nature of the unavoidable cause (regulation 10(6))	Not a possible attendance

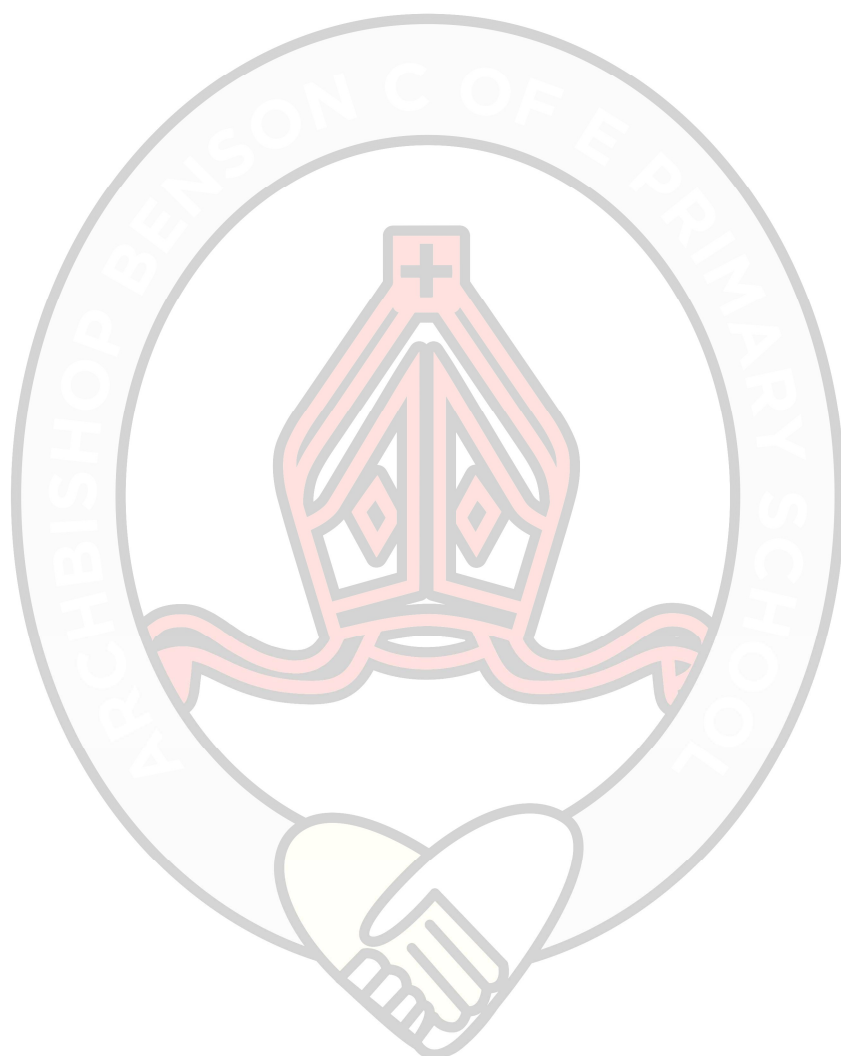
6. Absent for unauthorised reasons

Code	Meaning	Criteria	Statistical Value
G	Leave of absence not granted by school	- The school has not granted a leave of absence and the pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday. - A school cannot grant a leave of absence retrospectively. - If the parent did not apply in advance, leave of absence should not be granted.	Unauthorised absence

N	Reason for absence is not yet established	- Where absence is recorded as code N (reason not yet established) in the attendance register, the correct absence code should be entered as soon as the reason is ascertained, but no more than 5 school days after the session (regulation 10(7) to (9)). - Code N must not therefore be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; - if a reason for absence cannot be established within 5 school days, school must amend the pupils record to code O	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrival at school after registration closed	- Where a pupil has arrived late after the register has closed but before the end of session. - Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.	Unauthorised absence

7. Administrative Codes

Code	Meaning	Statistical Value
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Not collected
#	Planned whole school closure	Not collected



Appendix 2: SCHOOL GUIDANCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The 'Working together to improve school' guidance came into force in August 2024, changing the rules about term-time holidays. These regulations have not been amended since their introduction and remain in force. The amendments specify that all schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to 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, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.

If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time, then it would not be normal to authorise absence. The school can only grant or accept pupil absence for **unavoidable reasons**. The legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are **exceptional circumstances**. The fundamental principles for defining "exceptional" are rare, significant, unavoidable & short. And by "unavoidable" we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

Before authorising an absence, the headteacher will consider the impact on the pupil's sustained progress, the pupil's attendance rate over time and whether the period of absence falls during any national tests or exams. The headteacher will not authorise absences if believed to the detriment of a child's education. Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of any request for absence.

The headteacher decides what constitutes 'exceptional circumstances'

No parent/carers can demand leave of absence as of right. Page 18 of the DfE's guidance document on school attendance says:

38. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

[Working together to improve school: Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

REQUESTS FOR PUPIL ABSENCE WHICH WILL/MAY CONSTITUTE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Where necessary, parents will be requested to provide sufficient information in order to confirm the nature of the exceptional circumstance. The school has referred to the [Working together to improve school: Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) to provide clarity and consistency to support schools in making decisions regarding requests for leaves of absence.

Family Circumstances

Absence for the wedding of a close family member is considered an exceptional circumstance for the day of the wedding & appropriate travel, but not a request for extended leave.

- A wedding within county will be authorised for one day.
- A wedding for out of county will be authorised for up to two days, depending on the distance of travel.
- A wedding abroad will be authorised for three days.

Absence for the funeral of a close family member is considered an exceptional circumstance for the day of the funeral service only and appropriate travel time, but not a request for extended leave.

- A funeral within county will be authorised for one day.
- A funeral for out of county will be authorised for up to two days, depending on the distance of travel.
- A funeral abroad will be authorised for three days.

Absence to visit a close family member who is seriously/terminally ill is considered an exceptional circumstance.

Absence linked to a terminally ill, close family member, where it is likely to be the last of such absence, is considered an exceptional circumstance.

Where there has recently been a death or other significant trauma in the immediate family and it is felt that an immediate holiday or absence might help the child concerned deal with the situation better and/or the family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis, this may be considered an exceptional circumstance.

Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems, this may be considered as an exceptional circumstance. Information/evidence must be provided.

Absence for pupils and families with complex special educational needs or disabilities may be considered as an exceptional circumstance. Information/evidence must be provided.

Domestic circumstances

Absence to deal with the sudden loss of housing may be considered an exceptional circumstance but not a request for extended leave.

Absence for a family moving within county & needing to look/visit a new school is considered an exceptional circumstance and would be granted a day or half-day's leave.

Absence for a family moving out of county & needing to look/visit a new school is considered an exceptional circumstance and would be granted up to two days' leave, depending on the distance.

Armed Forces

Absence to spend time with a parent who is on leave from the armed forces or is about to go on an extended tour of duty is considered an exceptional circumstance.

Sporting and Extra-Curricular Enrichment

Absences where a child represents their sporting discipline at a regional or national event, may be considered an exceptional circumstance but not a request for extended leave. Information/evidence must be provided.

An event within county will be authorised for one day.

An event for out of county will be authorised for up to two days, depending on the distance of travel.

An event abroad will be authorised for three days.

These exceptional circumstances will be limited to five days per year.

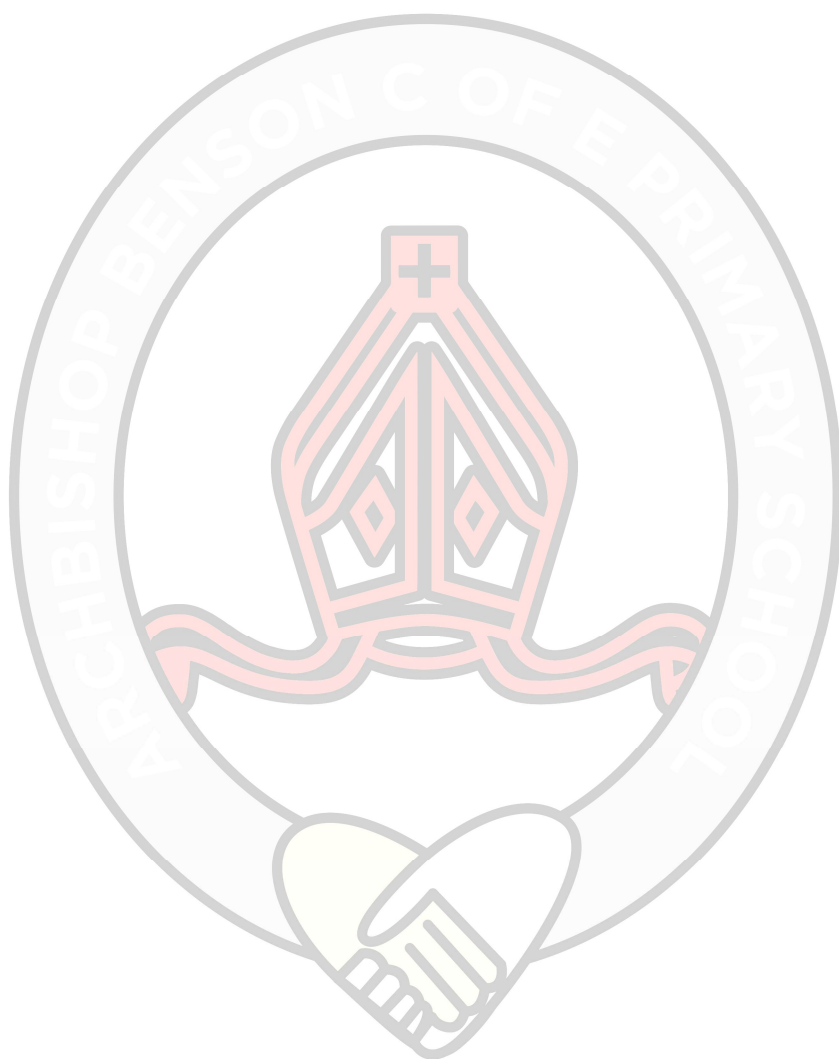
Absences where a child represents extra-curricular activities at regional or national events, including but not limited to academic competitions, choir, music, dance and theatre events may be considered an exceptional circumstance but not a request for extended leave. Information/evidence must be provided.

An event within county will be authorised for one day.

An event for out of county will be authorised for up to two days, depending on the distance of travel.

An event abroad will be authorised for three days.

These exceptional circumstances will be limited to five days per year.



Appendix 3: Attendance Overview

Attendance % (days off in a year)	Impact on achievement	Staff Involved	Actions
99-100% (0-2 days off)	Excellent – child is accessing all learning opportunities	Class teacher/ Headteacher	Great contribution to class Attendance Award – Well done!
96-98% (4 – 7.5 days)	Good – very few learning opportunities are missed		
93-95% (9.5 -17 days off)	Risk of under achievement	Class teacher	Class teacher check in to support absence/punctuality
90-92% (19-25 days off)	Severe risk of under achievement	Class teacher/ Attendance Lead	- Class teacher referral to Attendance Lead - Attendance Lead monitors risk of Persistent Absence
Below 90% (Persistent Absence) (27+days off)	Extreme risk of under achievement	Attendance Lead/ Education Welfare Officer	- Parent/carer meeting with Attendance Lead (and EWO) to create plan to support attendance - Formalised support from EWO - Home Visit from EWO - Consideration of Fixed Penalty

Appendix 4 – Sample Letters to Parents:

Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer,

Please find below the current attendance rate for your child, which we are required to report to you at regular intervals by the Department for Education.

We fully understand both that occasional absences can be totally unavoidable and also that when those absences are translated into a percentage, it can sometimes be a surprise or upsetting for some parents.

We want to reassure you that we know there are many, many genuine circumstances that combine to make a particular attendance rate and to thank you for keeping us informed during those periods. That close contact with the school is very much appreciated and has enabled us to explain pupils' absence to the Education Welfare Officer on your behalf, meaning this letter is just for your information only and to help you keep track of your child's attendance so far this academic year.

If we have not added a personalised, handwritten note to the letter, you need take no further action, unless of course there is anything you wish to discuss or clarify. If that is the case, please speak to your class teacher at the end of the school day or send them a dojo if that is easier for you.

If at the end of the letter I have added a hand-written note for you, please do not worry. It simply means that we either a) need to clarify an aspect of your child's attendance so that our records are up to date and we can offer support where necessary and helpful or b) we need to follow up from a previous conversation or support plan.

Your Child's Attendance

Your child's attendance for the school year as of (date)		Missed Days Learning By The End Of The Year
Name		98% = Approximately 4 days missed learning
% Attendance		95% = Approximately 10 days missed learning
% Authorised Absences		90% = Approximately 4 weeks missed learning
% Unauthorised Absences		85% = Approximately 5½ weeks missed learning
Number of Lates		80% = Approximately 7½ weeks missed learning

Personal Message for Your Family (if necessary)

Once again, thank you for all of your invaluable support this year, the staff really do appreciate it.

Yours faithfully,
Mrs. Barnard
Assistant Headteacher

Sample Letters to Parents: Letter 2

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: School Attendance –

You may recall that I wrote to you recently to make you aware that ***** attendance was **%. ***** attendance is now % and is still a cause for concern. I enclose an attendance certificate for your information.

I am sure you are well aware regular attendance at school is important so that pupils can maximise their educational opportunities. The table below outlines the impact of absence on your child's learning as well as missed opportunities to develop social and emotional skills.

Absence from School

Children are required to attend school for 190 days each year

Attendance during one school year	equals days absent	which is approximately weeks absent	Which means this number of missed lessons
95%	9 days	2 weeks	45 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	95 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	145 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	190 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	240 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	285 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	335 lessons

**How does your child's attendance compare with this target?
Please remember that children who miss a lot of school achieve less**

The average attendance nationally is 96%. We aim to achieve this average or even better to ensure that our pupils gain full benefits from their education.

I am inviting you into school on [date] at [time] to meet with me to look at ways that we can work together to support ***** in improving their attendance.

If you are unable to attend the appointment date or time, then please do not hesitate to contact us to rearrange this.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Barnard

Assistant Headteacher

Enc – attendance certificate

Sample Letters to Parents: Late Letter

Dear Parent of *****,

Re: Punctuality to school

I am sure that you are aware that pupil attendance and punctuality is a national issue. It is recognised that punctuality is an essential life skill and vital for positive mental health and well-being as it prevents anxiety for children at the start of each day. As a school, we are required to routinely inform parents where punctuality is impacting on attendance resulting in a late mark.

As directed by the DFE, we monitor each child's attendance and punctuality closely. I am sure that you will be concerned that your child's punctuality has been noted as a cause for concern.

Our register shows that ***** is frequently late. A total of ***** late marks have been issued since the start of this academic year. This means that your child arrived at school after 8.45 a.m. but before 9 a.m. Please note that the register closes at 8.45 a.m. regardless of which entrance your child uses to enter school.

There are also several unauthorised lateness marks on the register.
An unauthorised lateness is one where your child has arrived in school after the registers have closed for the session at 9 a.m. Persistent unauthorised lateness can also lead to legal proceedings being taken against you.

As you can appreciate, persistent lateness can be very disruptive to your child's learning, as their peers have already settled into the school day and they will have missed the first part of their lesson which can lead to them struggling to achieve their full potential.

Please be advised that this letter is for parent's information. If a parent receives this letter for the first time, we recommend that they speak to their child's classteacher who can offer practical suggestions to support.

We appreciate that parents often inform the school of reasons for lateness. The school will always take this information into consideration but we will still have an obligation to inform parents of poor punctuality and parents may receive multiple letters during the course of the year should punctuality not improve.

Punctuality is a parent/carers responsibility and we must remind parent/carers that it is not appropriate to contact the school on receipt of a late letter and be rude or aggressive with members of staff. In such situations, this will be referred to Mrs Giblett.

I trust that you will support us by ensuring ***** arrives at school on time in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Barnard
Assistant Headteacher

Sample Letters to Parents: Medical Evidence Request

Re: Medical evidence request for *name* for 2025-2026 academic year.

Dear

I am writing to you regarding any future absences for *name* *DOB.* Due to low attendance during the 2024-2025 academic year, we will continue to ask for medical evidence for any absences during the 2025-2026 academic year. This can be in the form of:

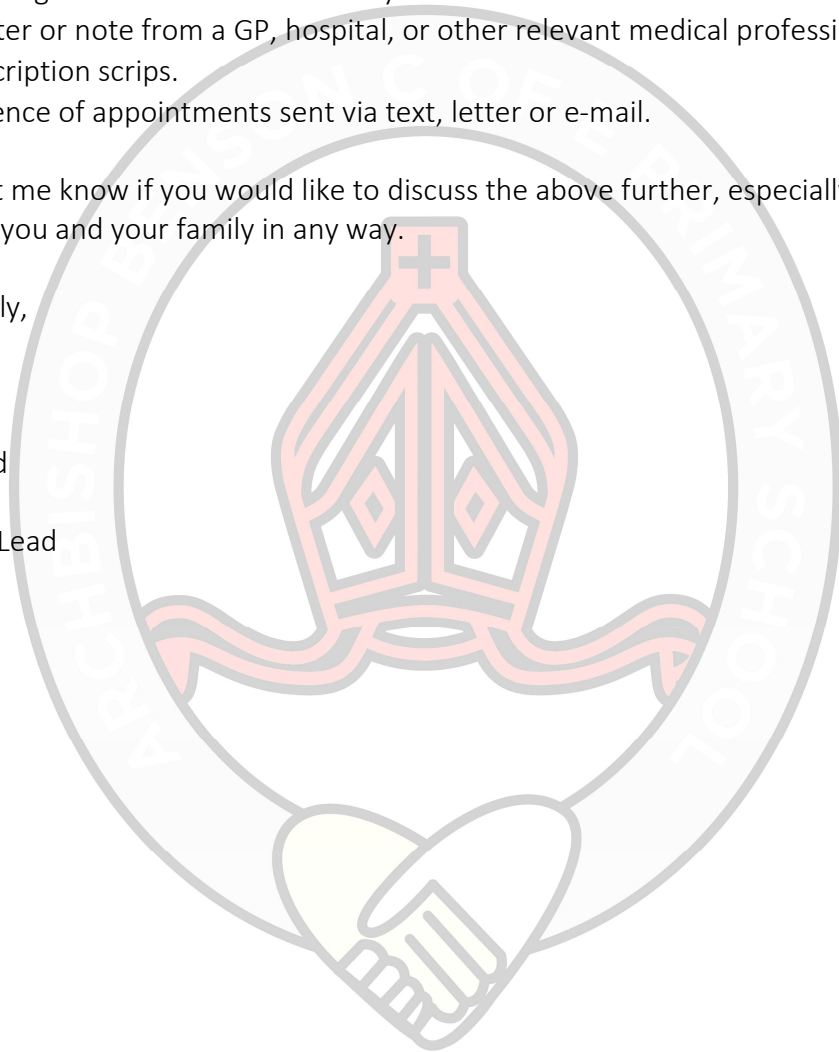
- A letter or note from a GP, hospital, or other relevant medical professional.
- Prescription scrips.
- Evidence of appointments sent via text, letter or e-mail.

Please do let me know if you would like to discuss the above further, especially if the school can support you and your family in any way.

Your sincerely,

Mrs. Barnard

Attendance Lead



Sample Letters to Parents: Meeting Request following no 'Leave of Absence' requests.

Re: Attendance Meeting for ***** for absence from ***** to *****

Dear *****,

I am writing regarding the absence of ***** from school from ***** to *****. We have reason to believe that you were on holiday during this period and would like to give you an opportunity to discuss this absence with Mrs. Barnard- Attendance Lead. The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for pupils in 'exceptional circumstances'. For further information on exceptional circumstances, please refer to our Attendance Policy on our website. Furthermore, we believe that the school's process for parents wishing to apply for Leave of Absence has not been followed.

Please provide evidence of ***** absence at the meeting. This could be in the form of a prescription script, confirmation of a doctor's appointment or any other evidence that you may feel is relevant.

Meeting date and time:

Please come to the main school office.

Your sincerely,

Mrs. Barnard

Assistant Headteacher and Attendance Lead

Sample Letters to Parents: Proceeding with Penalty Notice

Re: Proceeding with Penalty Notice.

Dear *****,

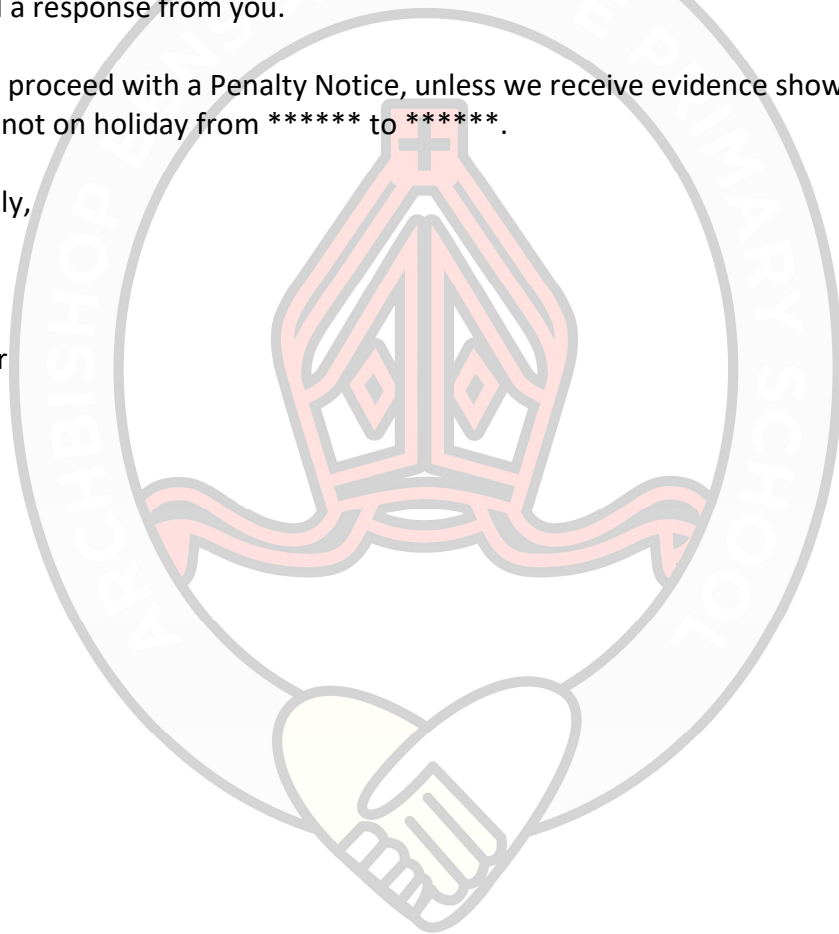
I am writing regarding the absence of ***** from school from ***** to *****. We have reason to believe that you were on holiday during this period. We have given you an opportunity to meet with our Attendance Lead to discuss the above absence and for you to provide sufficient evidence for ***** absence. You did not meet with the school on the *****. The school attempted to offer you an alternative date of your choice, but we have not received a response from you.

We will now proceed with a Penalty Notice, unless we receive evidence showing that ***** was not on holiday from ***** to *****.

Your sincerely,

Mrs. Giblett

Headteacher



Policy monitored by	FGB
Date of adoption	November 2025
Date of review	November 2027

