TPAT
Truro and Penwith Academy Trust



Goonhavern Primary School
Primary Attendance Policy

Document Control

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1.0	October 2024	Trust Board	New policy written to target the improvement attendance strategy.	October 2025
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1. Policy Statement

It is the aim of all TPAT schools that every pupil enjoys learning, experiences success and realises their full potential. The Attendance Policy reflects these aims and recognises that regular full time attendance has a very significant positive effect on the motivation, social development and attainment of pupils.

As part of the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT), we are committed to our shared core purpose, which is at the heart of all we do. This core purpose is to improve the life chances for all children and young people in our schools. Our school's mission/ core values are aligned with that of the Trust.

Our school strives to deliver excellent educational experiences for pupils, improving their life chances and serving the communities to which we belong.

This policy should be read in conjunction with existing school policies including (but not limited to) the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Behaviour
- Exclusions and Suspensions
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Legislation and DfE guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the following legislation which sets out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996 (as amended)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended in 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended in 2012 and 2013)

DfE guidance:

- The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE May 2014) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315587/Equality_Act_Advice_Final.pdf

- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3

- Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2023) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

- Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2024) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

- Working together to improve School Attendance (DfE August 2024) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

- School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE July 2016) https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/parental-responsibility-measures

- School census guidance (DfE) https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complete-the-school-census

- Suspension and permanent exclusion (DfE August 2024) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

- Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE January 2024) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance

2. Aims

- To communicate the importance to all pupils and their parents/carers of maximum attendance at school as an essential pre-requisite for taking full advantage of the educational opportunities and to maximise individual achievement;
- To make explicit to all relevant parties (staff, parents/carers and students) TPAT's and the School's expectations for attendance;
- To promote a consistent approach across the school towards all matters relating to attendance;
- To clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance;
- To communicate to all relevant parties the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised";
- **To communicate the need for families and school staff to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.**
- To properly take into account any protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

3. Introduction

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, places a legal duty on Parents/Carers to ensure that any child of compulsory school age receives full-time education that is suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. It is essential for children to attend school regularly in order to maximise the opportunities available to them. For a child to reach their full potential a high level of school attendance and punctuality is essential. We aspire to achieve 100% attendance for every child. We acknowledge that there may be times when a child is unavoidably absent from school. Further, the Trust will take into account its duties under the Equality Act 2010 when making decisions under this policy. This will include consideration being given to make reasonable adjustments or adapting this policy as appropriate.

Goonhavern Primary School support children and parents by:

- ***Promoting the value of high attendance and punctuality and reducing absence, lateness and particularly persistent absence***
- ***Ensuring every child has access to full time education to which they are entitled***
- ***Acting early to support high attendance and address absence***
- ***Ensuring school is a safe and supportive environment in which children can thrive.***

4. Why regular attendance is important

Any absence impacts on the progress of a child and disrupts learning, relationships with peers and academic, personal and social development. Repeated absence is therefore most likely to be detrimental to children and to seriously impede their learning. Any child's absence disrupts teaching and may, therefore, affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the responsibility of the parent/carer and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

5. Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and local governing committees to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

A child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and, within the context of this school, we will adhere to the latest safeguarding policies and practices. A child missing from education may be at risk of abuse or neglect or become a victim of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Failing to attend school on a regular basis is therefore a safeguarding concern.

Here at Goonhavern Primary School we monitor trends and patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of our standard procedure. However, it is recognised that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, Local Procedures and the School's Safeguarding Policy, staff will monitor and report any safeguarding concerns within the school to the DSL on to the relevant authorities as appropriate. As part of the school's safeguarding duty and standard procedures, staff will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when they cannot establish their whereabouts and there is concern for the pupil's welfare.

If a pupil is not attending school regularly as required, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the school's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

6. Why Do Pupil's benefit from 'High' attendance?

Achieving high school attendance is a national priority. Goonhavern Primary School data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement.

We want our children to achieve excellent attendance in line with national average. Illness usually appears as a block of time off school. We review attendance patterns each week and look for unbroken and broken weeks as a key indicator. We would not usually expect that children would have more than one or two broken weeks in the course of an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern and we will offer support to families where there are more frequent broken weeks, in line with our attendance procedures. The impact broken weeks and missed learning can have on a child's education (taken from national data) is illustrated below for guidance:

If your child misses…	That equals at least…	Which is the same as….	And over 13 years of education that's…	Or at least…
1 day a fortnight	80 lessons per year	4 whole school weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 whole years	1040 lessons
1 day a week	160 lessons per year	8 whole school weeks per year	Over 2.5 whole years	2080 lessons
2 days a week	320 lessons per year	16 whole school weeks per year	Over 5 whole years	4160 lessons
3 days a week	480 lessons per year	24 whole school weeks per year	Nearly 8 whole years	6240 lessons

7. Understanding Absence

By law, schools must register pupils for two sessions each day (morning and afternoon registration). Every half-day of absence must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the nature of any absence is always required from parents.

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by Goonhavern Primary School:

Illness

- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents/carers in line with the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised.

- If the school has a genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity of the illness, the school will request medical information and/or evidence to support the absence - such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of information/evidence.

- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require suitable information and/or evidence in order to authorise any future absence where illness has been given as the reason. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/carer/s aware of this expectation in advance.

- The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent/carer on the first and any subsequent days of absence may not be authorised.

Pupils taken ill during the school day

If a pupil needs to be sent home from school due to illness, this will be agreed by an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected by a parent/carer or adult authorised to collect the child by the parent/carer and identified to the school. No pupil who is ill will be allowed to leave the school without being collected by a known adult. Even if a family home is relatively close to the school, we do not allow sick children to walk home unaccompanied.

Medical/Dental Appointments

- Parents/carers must, wherever possible, arrange for medical and dental appointments to take place outside of school hours. Where appointments during the school day are unavoidable, the pupil should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a pupil to miss a whole day for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is. The school recognises that pupils with a health condition may have a higher number of medical appointments than other pupils and it is therefore possible that at least some of these appointments may be during the school day.

- If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent/carer confirmation.
- The school reserves the right to request evidence of appointments from parents/ carers. Suitable evidence may include appointment letters or cards, copies of emails from a verifiable address (e.g. NHS) confirming the date and time of the appointment.

8. Exceptional Circumstances Leave of Absence

By law, Headteachers are not allowed to authorise absence during term time unless the circumstances are exceptional.

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.
If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further 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 for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days. Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.
Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.
Absence not authorised by the school may also 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. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.
Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

All requests from parents for term time leave of absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's form (available on the website or from Reception). Wherever possible, a request

must be made at least 3 weeks (15 school days) prior to the requested leave of absence. Parents will receive written notification to confirm whether their request has been authorised.

Each application from parents for an 'exceptional circumstance' leave of absence during term time will be considered on its own merit - see Appendix 6 Exceptional Circumstances Request Form

9. Persistent Absence

In line with DfE Guidance, a pupil is considered as 'persistently absent' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year **for any reason**. Absence at this level is highly likely to significantly harm a child's educational progress.

Children who are persistently or severely absent are supported by school staff and the TPAT Attendance Team in line with our attendance procedures.

10. Home/School Partnership

Goonhavern Primary School works in close partnership with parents and families to achieve high attendance for every pupil.

Parents must:

- Contact the School on the first day of a child's absence – by 8.50am at the latest;
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time – the school day starts at 8.40am. Late arrival after registers close may be classed as an unauthorised absence –see Appendix 3 (Late to School Protocol)

The School will:

- Contact parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given. Wherever possible the school will phone the parent to discuss their child's absence even when a reason has been provided;
- Meet with parents to discuss and agree support to improve attendance in line with our attendance procedures.
- Escalate concerns about attendance to the TPAT Attendance Team when appropriate and in line with our attendance procedures to ensure children receive support to attend school regularly.
- Where necessary to ensure regular attendance, it may be necessary to apply for sanctions such as Penalty Notice fines or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. In all cases we believe it is in the child's best interests to attend school regularly and our decision making is always led by our commitment to protecting the entitlement of children to full time education.
- Follow up promptly any concerns parents pass on to us that may be affecting a child's attendance;
- Provide support and involve the school's support staff and other support agencies to help pupils re-integrate into school after illness or other individual circumstances;
- Regularly remind pupils (where appropriate) of the importance of high attendance and punctuality for example, through assemblies and class time;
- Acknowledge and celebrate improving attendance.

11. Telephone numbers and preferred method of communication:

There are times when the School needs to contact parents about educational matters, including attendance, punctuality and absence. The school may also need to contact parents in the event of an emergency. Therefore, we need to have correct parental contact phone numbers at all times. Parents must ensure the school always has an up to date contact number. **Parents have a duty to notify the school as soon as possible of any changes to their contact details.**

Where possible we would like to communicate with parents and carers **electronically via email**. This allows us to save paper, reduce waste, and ensure that important information is shared quickly and efficiently. However, we understand that email may not be the best option for every family, so we are still happy to provide paper letters and would ask that parents/carers contact us to request paper copies if required.

12. Supporting High Attendance and Reporting

To promote the importance of high attendance and punctuality, the School will recognise improvement in attendance.

Attendances, punctuality and absence are reported to parents in all written reports and attendance records are available to parents on request.

13. Roles and responsibilities

The roles of the class teacher, school office team and Headteacher are explained in **Appendix 2**. **All** members of staff have a responsibility to promote high attendance.

14. The Trust Attendance Team

The Trust Attendance Team works alongside the school's Attendance lead. The School works closely with the Trust Attendance Team to support pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. One of the team may accompany staff to visit homes, meet with parents in school (or at their home) and they are a vital component in our efforts to secure high attendance.

The Trust Attendance team may initiate legal proceedings against parents who have not fulfilled their responsibility for ensuring regular attendance. Before a case goes to court, Parenting Contracts may be drawn up, setting targets for improving attendance. The primary aim of all school action is to ensure every child attends school on a regular basis and is therefore able to achieve their full potential.

15. Students with Special Educational Needs (SEND)

Our School supports the attendance of pupils with SEND and understands that their specific needs present additional school challenges. Good attendance for all pupils including and especially those with SEND is crucial in ensuring academic and social progress. Further information relating to the support available to pupils with SEND is available from the school's SENDCO.

16. Young Carers

Students identified as Young Carers are offered additional support to ensure they can achieve high attendance. We recognise that attending regularly can be particularly challenging for Young Carers. Further information about the support available for our Young Carers is available from our Pastoral Team.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Registration Procedures
- Appendix 2 – Roles and Responsibilities
- Appendix 3 – Tiered Approach to Supporting Attendance
- Appendix 4 – Punctuality Procedure
- Appendix 5 – Attendance letters (Model Letters)
- Appendix 6 – Exceptional Circumstances Leave Request Form and Model Letter

Appendix 1: Registration Procedures

Staff Guide to Registers and Associated Procedures:

This section complements our Attendance Policy and should be read in conjunction with it. It deals with the practicalities of completing registers and associated attendance procedures. The register is a legal document which may be used as evidence in court. The decision on whether or not to authorise a particular absence rest with the Headteacher. The class teacher will record attendance of a child at morning and afternoon registration. In some circumstances, the Headteacher will authorise another member of staff to take the register with the same level of delegated authority as the teacher or tutor.

Marking the register

A register is taken at the beginning of the AM and PM session to ensure the school has accurate information about where children are. Every register must be taken accurately and in a timely way as an essential part of the school's culture of safeguarding. The responsibility for taking the register will be held by the class teacher (including supply or temporary teachers), cover supervisor, or other school staff as appropriate.

Reading the registers

The registration information is read every morning after Registration. It is imperative that the data entered is accurate and that there is a mark for **EVERY** pupil. Every pupil **must** fall into one of the three categories of present, absent or late. Staff must enter either 'present', 'absent' or 'late' (+ how many minutes late). **Staff have a responsibility to safeguard the children in schools care and it is vital that the information held is accurate.**

The school operates a policy of '1st day response' regarding absence across the school. The Administrator/Attendance Officer will contact the parents of any child who is absent without an explanation.

Communication with/from parents

Same-day contact has been shown to be the single most effective strategy in improving rates of attendance. It is also vital to safeguard children. Parents must contact the school before ------ on the **first** day of absence to notify the school of their child's absence and the reason for absence. Communication by phone or in person is required on each day of a period of absence. If absence notes are received, they should be initialled and dated by the class teacher. **All notes must be sent to the Administrator/Attendance Officer on the same day they are received.**

Punctuality

- Registration starts at 8:50am and at 1:00pm. Thereafter a pupil's absence will be recorded as late (L).

- A pupil should be marked as **late** when the class teacher has completed the register and a pupil arrives after the register has been "sent". A late mark should be added for any student who arrives to class after 8.50am and after 1:00pm . The number of minutes late should be recorded.

- Parents may be prosecuted for persistently failing to get their child to school on time. The school will take a robust response to pupils who are regularly arriving late.

Appendix 2: Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible for promoting and maintaining high levels of attendance across the school by:

- Ensuring the school complies with all statutory attendance requirements and guidance.
- Establishing a positive culture where good attendance is valued and celebrated.
- Monitoring whole-school attendance data and identifying trends, patterns, and areas of concern.
- Ensuring robust systems are in place for recording, tracking, and improving attendance.
- Working closely with families, staff, the Local Authority, and external agencies to support pupils whose attendance causes concern.
- Authorising or declining requests for leave during term time in line with legislation and school policy.
- Ensuring attendance concerns are addressed promptly and proportionately.
- Reporting attendance information to governors and relevant stakeholders.
- Providing staff with appropriate training and guidance relating to attendance procedures.
- Ensuring safeguarding considerations are central to attendance monitoring and decision-making.

The Office Team plays a key role in the day-to-day management of attendance by:

- Maintaining accurate attendance records on the school's management information system.
- Recording and coding attendance registers in line with statutory guidance.
- Receiving and recording absence notifications from parents and carers.
- Following up unexplained absences on the first day of absence and escalating concerns where necessary.
- Monitoring attendance data and highlighting concerns to the Headteacher and relevant staff.
- Keeping accurate records of all attendance-related communication with families.
- Issuing attendance letters and supporting the organisation of attendance meetings where required.
- Recording late arrivals and early collections.
- Producing attendance reports for school leaders, governors, and external agencies when required.
- Supporting the administration of attendance initiatives, rewards, and recognition programmes.
- Ensuring attendance records are maintained confidentially and securely.

Teachers have a crucial role in promoting regular attendance and punctuality by:

- Taking accurate attendance registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within the required timescales.
- Recording attendance promptly and in accordance with school procedures.
- Informing the school office of any attendance concerns, patterns of absence, or safeguarding issues.
- Encouraging pupils to attend regularly and arrive on time.
- Developing positive relationships with pupils and families to support engagement with school.
- Making attendance an integral part of the classroom culture.
- Identifying and reporting pupils whose absence may be affecting their progress, wellbeing, or safeguarding.
- Supporting reintegration following periods of absence where appropriate.

- Contributing relevant information to attendance meetings and support plans.
- Working collaboratively with school leaders and external agencies to improve attendance where concerns exist.

Appendix 3: Tiered Approach to Supporting Attendance



Appendix 4: Punctuality Procedure

Aim:

- To achieve high levels of punctuality for all pupils, through partnership with parents and students.

Rationale:

- Excellent punctuality is central to learning. For pupils to achieve their potential it is essential that high levels of punctuality are maintained. All parents are expected to ensure that their children are on time every day.

Our school acknowledges its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, with respect to safeguarding and in respect to students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of a lesson they may miss work and vital information to support progress. Late arriving pupils disrupt lessons and the learning of others. The school day starts at 8.40am and we expect every child to be in registration at that time. Registers will be marked at 8.50am and a child will receive a late mark if they are not present in the class.

If a child arrives after the register closes at 9.15am and the explanation provided is not satisfactory they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this may **not** count as a present mark and it may mean they have an unauthorised absence. Ten or more unauthorised sessions (5 school days) in 100 sessions (50 school days/10 school weeks) could result in a first warning of Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.

If a child is persistently late parents/carers will be asked to meet with a member of school staff and/or Attendance and Inclusion Lead to resolve the problem. We encourage Parents/Carers to approach us at any time if there are problems getting a child to school on time.

All pupils are expected to be on time every day and to every lesson. Lateness is only excused in exceptional circumstances. Where lateness is caused by unforeseen family circumstances, parents must contact the school to provide a reason, or provide a written explanation. Persistent lateness will not be authorised.

If a pupil is late to school and arrives during registration, this will be recorded by the school administration team, who will ask parents to accompany the child into reception and sign a late book providing an explanation for the late arrival. The administrator/attendance officer will monitor punctuality and follow schools' absence management process

POLICY

Appendix 5: Tier 1 Letter

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

RE: **[Pupil Name]** DOB: **[DOB]**

We know that children / young people fall behind their friends and classmates when they miss school. We believe that our community is stronger together, with all of our children in school, on time, every day. We are building life skills, life-long friendships and preparing your child for future success. We have noticed that your child has had weeks broken by unavoidable absence, recently.

We would really like to assist you to ensure **[Pupil Name]** is supported to overcome any barriers to attending school every day, so they can get the best possible outcomes. We know that sometimes our children / young people cannot come to school because they are really unwell - and that's the right thing to do for them. Medical advice is clear however that children / young people with mild illness will often be well enough to attend - for example if they have a cough, or cold. The NHS guidance Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk) is designed to support parents in their decision making about mild illness.

We want to ensure your child's attendance improves and be assured that we remain available to assist with any barriers or issues that you feel may be impacting on your child's ability to attend school regularly. If you need support with your child's attendance, or if you would like further advice, please contact me on **[Contact number].** If we do not hear from you, we will assume there are no barriers to attendance preventing your child attending school regularly. However, keep in mind that if your child accrues further absence, we will contact you to arrange a meeting to agree a pupil support plan.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Manager/Co-ordinator/Officer

POLICY

Appendix 5a: Tier 2 PSP Invite Letter

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

Dear [Parental salutation]

Re: Child's Name

We recently contacted you regarding **[Pupil Name]**'s attendance, who has had a number of weeks broken by absence. As we had not heard from you, we had assumed that there were no additional support needs or barriers to attendance at that time. However, we have now noted further instances of absence.

We recognise that you are the expert when it comes to your child, and your knowledge and insight are key to helping us understand any barriers they may be facing. We want to work with you to ensure the right support is in place, so that [**Pupil Name]** can access their education in a way that meets their individual needs.

We would therefore like to invite you to a Pupil Support Plan meeting on **[insert date]** at **[insert school].** This meeting will give us a chance to talk together about what's working, what might need adjusting, and how we can move forward positively. If this date or time is not convenient or attending in person isn't possible, we are happy to rearrange or offer a virtual meeting or meet in a location more convenient for you, please just let us know what works best.

We truly believe that strong partnerships with families lead to the best outcomes for children. We hope you will be able to attend and work with us to ensure **[Pupil Name]** receives the support they need to attend school regularly and thrive.

Please be aware if you fail to attend this meeting or contact us to re-arrange, we will proceed in your absence. At the meeting we will agree actions and expectations based on any barriers to attendance that we are aware of and which will be outlined in the pupil support plan, of which you will receive a copy. In the event that we are unable to agree the pupil support plan with you and you choose not to adhere to the actions and expectations, and your child's attendance continues to decline, we will have no other alternative other than to follow the trust policy. This is to ensure compliance with your legal duty under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 in ensuring your child receives efficient full-time education.

We remain available and committed to supporting you and your child with any barriers you feel are impacting on your child's ability to attend school and hope to meet with you very soon.

Yours Sincerely

POLICY

Attendance Manager/Co-ordinator/Officer

POLICY

Appendix 5b: Tier 2 Medical Information Letter

(Parents attendance at pupil support plan meeting).

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

Dear [Parental salutation]

Re: Child's Name

Thank you for attending the recent Pupil Support Plan (PSP) meeting. As discussed, regular school attendance is essential for your child's academic progress and overall development. We understand that **[Child's Name]** has been experiencing frequent illness, and we remain concerned that continued absence may significantly impact their ability to achieve their full potential.

We appreciate the challenges you are facing and acknowledge that **[Child's Name]** has been struggling with a health-related issue. In accordance with our Attendance Policy and due to the ongoing pattern of broken attendance, we now require medical evidence or information to authorise any further absences. This should relate specifically to the days your child is absent or to any diagnosed or suspected condition affecting their ability to attend school regularly.

Providing this information will help us work collaboratively with you and health professionals to ensure **[Child's Name]** receives appropriate educational support tailored to their needs.

Please note that, moving forward, any absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless suitable medical evidence is provided. For occasional absences, acceptable documentation includes a compliment slip or appointment card from the GP, prescription slips, or packaging of prescribed medication. However, if absences become more frequent and relate to an ongoing health condition, we will require clear and detailed information from the relevant health practitioners.

Regrettably, the school is unable to cover the cost of medical letters. It is the responsibility of parents and the healthcare providers managing your child's condition to supply the necessary documentation to support their access to education.

If medical evidence is not provided, further absences may not be authorised. While we are committed to supporting you in accessing appropriate health interventions, please be aware that continued unauthorised absence may result in legal action, including prosecution.

We remain dedicated to working with you and **[Child's Name]** to improve attendance and ensure access to education in line with their needs. However, if there is no engagement with the PSP actions and attendance does not improve, the school may need to escalate to Tier 3 and initiate a referral to the trust Education Welfare Officer. At that stage, you will be informed of your legal responsibilities and the potential consequences of continued non-attendance.

We look forward to seeing you at the PSP review meeting and receiving an update on any health-related barriers. If you require further advice or support before the review, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Headteacher

POLICY

Appendix 5b: Tier 2 Medical Information Letter

(Parents do not attend pupil support plan meeting).

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

Dear [Parental salutation]

Re: Child's Name

We were disappointed that you did not attend the recent Pupil Support Plan (PSP) meeting. Regular school attendance is essential for your child's academic progress and overall development. We understand from the explanations you have provided for absence to date that **[Child's Name]** has been experiencing frequent illness, and we remain concerned that continued absence may significantly impact their ability to achieve their full potential.

We appreciate the challenges you are facing and acknowledge that **[Child's Name]** may be struggling with a health-related issue. In accordance with our Attendance Policy and due to the ongoing pattern of broken attendance, we now require medical evidence or information to authorise any further absences. This should relate specifically to the days your child is absent or to any diagnosed or suspected condition affecting their ability to attend school regularly.

Providing this information will help us work collaboratively with you and health professionals to ensure **[Child's Name]** receives appropriate educational support tailored to their needs.

Please note that, moving forward, any absence will be recorded as unauthorised unless suitable medical evidence is provided. For occasional absences, acceptable documentation includes a compliment slip or appointment card from the GP, prescription slips, or packaging of prescribed medication. However, if absences become more frequent and relate to an ongoing health condition, we will require clear and detailed information from the relevant health practitioners.

Regrettably, the school is unable to cover the cost of medical letters. It is the responsibility of parents and the healthcare providers managing your child's condition to supply the necessary documentation to support their access to education.

If medical evidence is not provided, further absences may not be authorised. While we are committed to supporting you in accessing appropriate health interventions, please be aware that continued unauthorised absence may result in legal action, including prosecution.

We remain dedicated to working with you and **[Child's Name]** to improve attendance and ensure access to education in line with their needs. However, if there is no engagement with the PSP actions and attendance does not improve, the school may need to escalate to Tier 3 and initiate a referral to the trust Education Welfare Officer. At that stage, you will be informed of your legal responsibilities and the potential consequences of continued non-attendance.

We look forward to seeing you at the PSP review meeting and receiving an update on any health-related barriers. If you require further advice or support before the review, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

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Appendix 5c: Tier 3 First warning Letter

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

Dear **[Parent Salutation],**

Re: [Child's Name]

First Warning Letter of Prosecution for Poor School Attendance.

I am writing to inform you that following a review of **[Name]** 's attendance, attendance has still not improved.

I enclose for your information, a copy of their latest attendance certificate from **[School]**. You will see that their attendance is currently **[%]** and they have accrued **[Sessions]** of unauthorised absence, with [weeks] broken by absence since **[Date]**. I am therefore issuing you with a First Warning Letter of Prosecution and would be grateful if you could take some time to carefully read through the enclosed Warning Document.

I would like to visit you at home / I would like to contact you on the number provided by school on **[Date]** at **[Time]** to explain the Warning Letter in more detail and to discuss how we can work together to improve **[Name]**'s attendance. I can offer advice and support but must also explain the possible legal implications in regard to absences that are not now authorised by school in accordance with our Trust policy and process. **Please be aware that you may face prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure your child attends school on a regular basis, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.**

I hope when we meet we can agree a further support plan to improve **[Name]**'s attendance, but in accordance with our policy, if their attendance does not improve, and they miss a further 10 sessions within the next 10 school weeks, I will be left with no alternative other than to call an Education Planning Meeting where a decision on taking legal action will be made, should we be unable to resolve the attendance problems.

Please contact me if you have any queries in regard to this letter. You can also contact me to rearrange the appointment, if the date and time are not convenient / if you would prefer a home visit, or the contact details provided by school have changed.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Education Welfare Officer

Tel:

POLICY

Email:

POLICY

Appendix 6: Exceptional Circumstance Leave Request Form

NOTICE TO PARENTS /CARERS

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education no longer allows Headteachers to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

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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.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further 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 for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also 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. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

All requests must be completed on this form; letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the Reception Office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence.

I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at (SCHOOL NAME).

School name

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the Reception Office at least 15 school days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Pupil Name: _____

DOB: _____ **Year group:** _____

Home Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Name of Parent/Carer completing this form: _____

First day of absence: _____

Date of <u>return</u> to school: _____

If leaving your home address before the first day of absence, please provide the date on which you will leave_____

Total number of days missed: _____ days

Reason for absence:

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Supporting evidence provided as an addition to the request:

Yes ☐ No ☐

Preferred Method of Communication (please select one):

☐ **Email** (Please provide your preferred email address):

……

☐ **Letter Mail** (Information will be sent to the address we have on file. If you've recently moved, please update your address below):

I u*nderstand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days. I also understand that if my child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, I will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. Which may result in a further request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days. I understand that fines are per parent and will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, I understand that other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.*

I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me. ***I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.***

Signed …… Dated ……

(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)

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Appendix 6a: Exceptional Circumstances Leave Refusal

Private and Confidential

Mr & Mrs

House

Street

Town

Postcode

Date

Dear **[Parent Salutation],**

Re: [Child's Name]

I am writing regarding your request to take (child name) out of school on Date until Date.

The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for pupils in 'exceptional circumstances'. Here at [enter school name], we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence; we look at each request on its own merit, before reaching a decision.

Unfortunately, we regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If (pupil name) does not attend school on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In cases where parents subsequently report their child as ill during this period, we reserve the right to record the absence as unauthorised.

I urge you to reconsider your decision, and bring to your attention the following warning;

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.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further 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 for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

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Absence not authorised by the school may also 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. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

I would like to offer you the opportunity to contact {enter staff contact} if you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. {Enter school name} is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

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