St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Attendance Policy

Reviewed – June 2024

Next Review Date – June 2026

Links to other policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- E Safety policy
- SEND policy
- Pupil Premium policy
- Supporting children with medical conditions

St. Paul's C. of E. Primary School

School Aim Statement

"Everyone working together to create a caring Christian learning environment which inspires children to celebrate their unique potential and become a responsible, considerate, involved and happy member of God's world."

School Vision and Values

Shine as a light in the world, to the glory of God the Father.

Part of being a member of the church community is to go out into the world and shine, bringing God's light and love to the people you meet. Likewise, in our church school, we want all the members to shine and be a blessing to their wider community through their learning, actions and their values.

St Paul, after whom the school was named, wrote a letter to his dear friends in the church at Philippi. In chapter 2 of this letter, he says:

14 Do all things without murmuring and arguing, 15 so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. (NRSV)

These verses capture some important things about our vision for the children at St Paul's.

Do all things without murmuring and arguing…

As an International Cross of Nails School, we aim to give our children the skills to be peace-makers in their classroom, family and community. Through learning from history, celebrating difference and building a culture of peace, we aim to equip all members of the St Paul's School community to be people of reconciliation.

In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation…

This part of the reading sounds quite discouraging, but it is very realistic. Our children will face many challenges in wider society. Our vision is to equip them, through their learning and through the values we will share together in our school community, to *shine like stars in the world*.

Contents

1. Legal Requirements and Local Authority Policy 4
2. St Paul's Attendance Strategy..... 5
3. Additional practice since January 2024..... 6
4. Categories of school attendance..... 8
5. What are Authorised and Unauthorised Absence..... 8
6. Requests for Exceptional Leave 10
7. Home Visits 10
8. Attendance Champions..... 10
9. Long Term Absence Through Child's Accident or Illne..... 10
10. Repeated Unauthorised Absence 11
11. Rewards for Good Attendance..... 11
12. Attendance Targets..... 12
13. Monitoring..... 12
14. Appendices..... 13

Rationale

We believe that children need to be in school every day, on time, for all sessions, so that they can make the best progress possible. To do this it is essential that a child's time at school is maximised and even short absences can have a detrimental effect on children's learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines, so, in addition to affecting your own child, it may also affect the learning of others in the same class. Early poor attendance habits follow right through from primary to secondary school and into employment.

We expect all children to be at school, on time, each and every day that school is open, along as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage children to attend.

In our school, we believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Legal regulations and local authority policy

1.1 Parents/carers have a duty, under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that their child of compulsory school age (5 to 16) receives an efficient full-time education either by attendance at school or otherwise, and so share in the responsibility of ensuring good and regular attendance.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, the Governing Body is responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

1.3 There is no automatic right to any leave of absence. Being mindful of this, only in very exceptional circumstances will the school grant leave of absence during term time.

1.4 St Paul's is a referring school regarding Attendance. We refer to Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS), see Appendix 4 for link) we refer leave taken without authorisation to WAS. Any leave taken without authorisation can lead to parents being issued a fixed penalty. From autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

1.5 The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first.

1.6 In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This may include prosecution.

1.7 The payment must be paid directly to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice.

Our Policy now reflects latest DfE Guidance contained in Working Together to Improve School Attendance

St Paul's attendance strategy:

St Paul's follows a set procedure when dealing with absence and attendance. In certain circumstances, this process may be accelerated to protect the welfare of the child:

At St Paul's we:

2.1 **EXPECT -** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

2.2 **MONITOR -** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

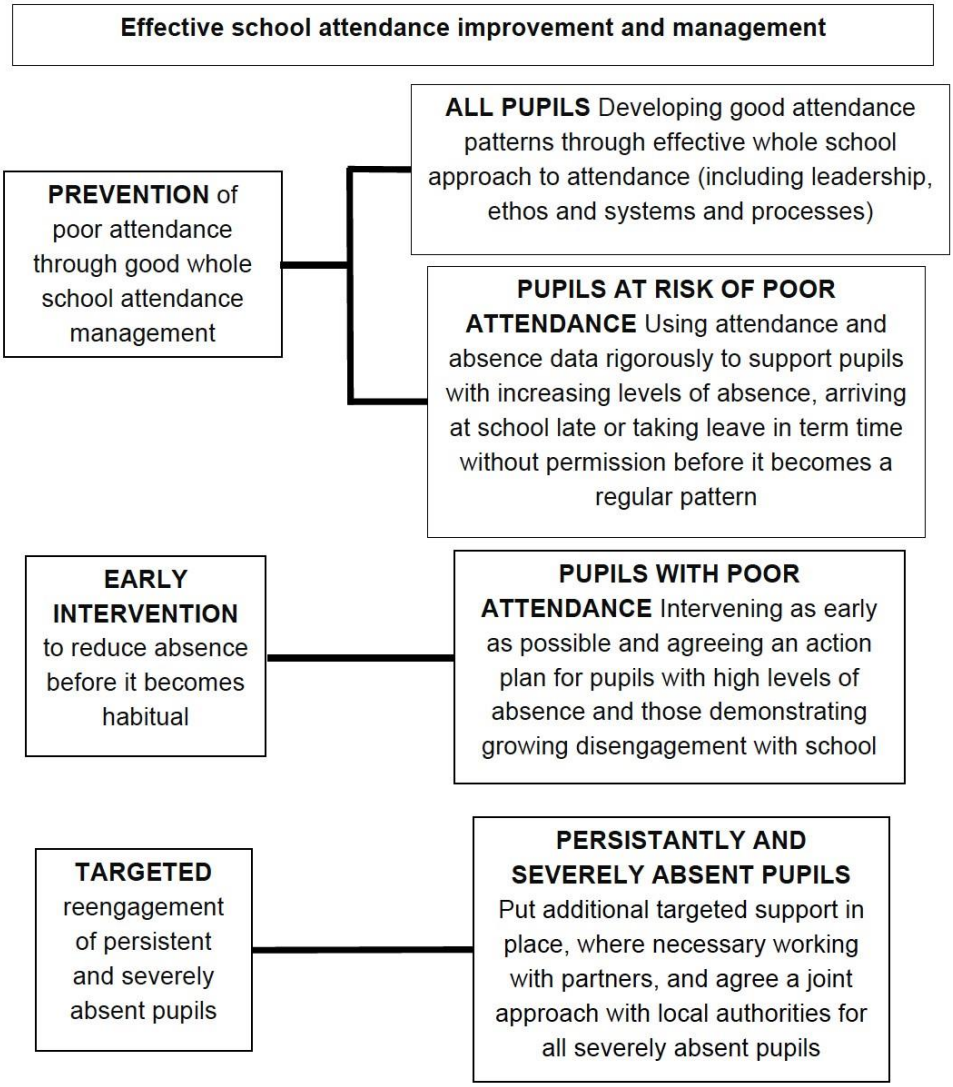
2.3 **LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND -** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

2.4 **FACILITATE SUPPORT -** Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an Early Help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

2.5 **FORMALISE SUPPORT -** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through a parenting contract.

2.6 **ENFORCE -** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Categories of school attendance are broken down into 3 aspects: Prevention, Early Intervention and Targeted Support:



2.7 Children who find school difficult and have Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) will be supported by the schools Attendance Champion and SENDCo. The impact of EBSA on young people is far reaching. Outcomes for young people who display EBSA include poor academic attainment, reduced social opportunities and limited employment. The school will endeavour to develop an improved offer of support for those children and young people experiencing EBSA, with a focus on:

- Early identification and intervention.
- Working with parents and school staff as well as the young person.
- Working in a flexible manner paying attention to the individual case and function served by non-attendance
- Emphasising the need for rapid return to school alongside good support and, adaptations within the school environment making reasonable adjustment.

2.8 In some instances, parents/carers themselves might be living with mental health problems or experiencing wider vulnerabilities or challenging life circumstances. This may affect their ability to provide support and care, and so it is important to recognise the need for practical, whole-family

support and/or early help support where necessary, in order to try to address the causes of poor attendance. For example, where applicable, the family's support worker might act as a convenor of any additional support offered and is a key party to join any conversations about a child's attendance.

What are authorised and unauthorised Absences?

3.1 **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

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 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. The Attendance Champion 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.

Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not make it an authorised absence.

Leave of Absence

- The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Expectations

- A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by a person who the school's proprietor has authorised to do so (an authorised person).

- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.

- Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.

- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.

- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.

- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.

- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days take either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.

- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.

- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.

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

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2024-25

The law relating to Penalty Notices is due to change with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence after this date will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to <u>each parent of each absent child</u>, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means <u>each</u> parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- First Leave of Absence Offence: The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 for each child if paid within 21 days.

- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.

- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3-year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

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

3.2 **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3.3 **Procedures**

3.3.1 For Year 1-6, The school day begins with registration at 8:45 am. Doors are open from 8:35 am. For Reception, the school day begins with registration at 8:55am, however the doors will also be open from 8:35am.

3.3.2 The register is taken promptly. If a child is not present when the register is taken, they are given a late mark. If a child arrives at school later than 9:30 am they are given an unauthorised absence mark (U).

3.3.3 The afternoon session begins at 1:10pm for Key Stage 2 and 12:45pm for Key Stage 1. Again, if a child arrives at school 30 minutes later than the register closing, they are given an unauthorised absence mark (U).

3.3.4 In nursery, the afternoon session begins at 12:30 pm. Persistent absence in Nursery may result in your child being removed from the roll.

3.4 **If a child is absent without notification**

3.4.1 Where no notification has been received by 9:30 am, a text message/call will automatically be sent to the parents/carers via the School Office.

3.4.2 If there is no response to the message and there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the school office, Pastoral Lead or Attendance Champion will then be in contact straight away with the parent or carer, in order to check on the safety of the child.

3.4.3 The Pastoral Lead will provide a list of vulnerable children to the School Office, Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher, which will provide information in the order of priority i.e. Family member, Social Worker, Warwickshire Attendance Services.

3.4.4 If a child is absent and the family are under Child Protection or on a Child in Need plan then the social worker allocated to the family will be contacted to report the absence. Whether a reason is known or not.

3.5 **Children who are missing in education (CME)**

We have a legal duty to identify children who are missing in education (CME), taking action when necessary and ensuring children are receiving suitable education. This duty applies to all maintained school, academies, free school and independent schools.

If a child is missing and whereabouts unknown, the school will follow the LA procedures.

A home visit will be conducted, and a letter left at the property (Appendix 1). School will contact Warwickshire Attendance Services, Warwickshire Front Door, if there are any siblings then school will make a call to their establishments.

School will complete paperwork and contact Warwickshire County Council Child Missing in Education professionals before or on the 10th day of no contact and CME will take steps to locate the child.

3.6 **Written Notification of absence**

Where the absence is because of a pre-arranged medical appointment, for example, evidence of the appointment should be sent to the school prior to the day of absence via the St. Paul's app, or in writing to the school office.

4 Requests for exceptional leave of absence

4.1 If parents wish to take their child out of school during term time, a request for leave of absence must be made on the appropriate form (Warwickshire County Council Application for Leave of Absence, Appendix 2) ideally at least 4 weeks before the exceptional leave is due to begin, except in an emergency, in which case the application will be considered on an individual basis. Application forms can be obtained from the School Office. (See appendix 2). The appropriate information and documentation must be provided to back up the application. If the documentation indicates that a child is going to a country where FGM is practiced, then school may contact the emergency services on 101 and provide them with the details about the child.

4.2 If the child is leaving the country the additional documentation detailed on the Exceptional Leave Request form must be provided.

5 **Home Visits**

If a parent does not communicate the reason for a child's absence on the third day of absence, a home visit will be made and a letter posted through the front door of the property (Appendix 1). If there are any additional concerns around a family, this may be made sooner. (see Home Visits Policy for further detail.)

6 **Attendance Champion**

St Paul's C of E has an attendance champion. This person will support the Head teacher, senior leadership team and class teachers to support high attendance for all children and aid communication of key messages. As part of their role, they will regularly meet with the Head teacher and may attend senior team meetings.

7 **Long term absence through child's accident or illness**

If a child is under the care of a hospital consultant and a consultant's letter has been produced, and the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or to be a repetitive absence, the school may contact the support services so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

8 **Repeated unauthorised absences**

8.1 The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the Warwickshire Attendance Services, who may visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

8.2 The Governors, supported by the Local Authority, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.

9 **Rewards for good attendance**

St Paul's school has a range of attendance initiatives to reward and highlight the importance of attendance in our school. Below are examples (not exhaustive) of some of the rewards and celebrations

that are arranged across the year.

Each Week
-Non uniform Friday -Every week, class attendance will be measured (Monday - Friday). If a class has achieved 100%, the class will be invited to wear non-uniform on the Friday of that week as a reward – including the class teacher and TA! -This will be communicated on a Thursday afternoon to the children and parents. -Class individual attendance will be displayed on the hall display.
End of each Half Term
-At the end of each half term, any child with 100% attendance will receive a '100% Attendance Certificate Award'. -Children with >95% attendance will be awarded a certificate. -Most improved attendance in each class will also be awarded certificates.
Each Term
-At the end of each term there will be a raffle draw to pick an attendance winner who will receive a prize for their family.
End of the Academic Year
-Special 100% attendance whole school raffle.

10 **Attendance targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are set by the Head and agreed by the senior staff and Governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. When it is setting targets, the school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools, as well as national figures and those achieved by other schools in the city.

10.1 **Individual Attendance Plans**

In cases where a pupil's attendance continues to be below the school threshold, despite previous interventions, they may receive an Individual Attendance Plan (IAP). The IAP is tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the family, aiming to address barriers to attendance and facilitate the child's engagement in learning. This plan may involve personalised strategies, additional resources and/or the family, and ongoing monitoring to support the student in improving their attendance. We believe that through collaborative efforts and targeted support, we can empower every student to achieve their full potential academically and personally. These will be reviewed on a four-weekly cycle by the Attendance Champion.

11 **Monitoring**

It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor and challenge overall attendance. The Governing Body will examine the information provided in the report to satisfy themselves that attendance meets the required levels. The attendance champion will produce termly reports to the Governing Body.

The school will keep accurate attendance records for a minimum period of three years.

Senior Leaders will monitor phase/ class and individual attendance weekly as part of the focus and drive to ensure all children attend school fully. This information will be disseminated to Pastoral Manager, those support staff specifically responsible for attendance and class teachers.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility at St Paul's. Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, as well as for taking action on day-to-day absences, according to the school's procedures. If there is a longer- term worry about the attendance of a particular child, they must report this to the Head teacher, who will contact the parents or carers.

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Written on:

Reviewed on:

Next Review Date:

Approved by :

Appendixes

Appendix 1 – Home Visit letter

Appendix 2 - Request for leave form

- Letter A
- Letter B
- Letter C
- Letter D
- Letter E

Appendix 3 - Letters Communicating with Parents

Appendix 4 - Warwickshire Attendance Service link

Appendix 5 - Monitoring letter

APPENDIX 1 – Home Visit Letter

Date :

Dear

A home visit today was conducted by: _____, as your child(ren**)** _____are not in school and no valid reason has been given as to why they are absent.

The date of absence are as follows:

Timings	Dates	School action	Response
1st Date			
2nd Date			
3rd Date		Home visit to be conducted	

After the home visit has been completed and we have had no response, then a phone call will be made to Warwickshire Attendance Service.

If concerns are still high, then a call to Warwickshire Front Door will be conducted.

Please call school as soon as you receive this letter.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Eardley

Head Teacher

APPENDIX 2 – Request for leave form

Appendix 2 - Request for leave form

Warwickshire County Council

People Directorate

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

Important Information for Parents/Carers

- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in **exceptional circumstances.**
- **If** the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised.
- Requests for Leave of Absence should made in advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence the resident parent is advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify of their decision.
- It is advised if you have not received notification regarding the leave of absence, it is the parents' responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of leave.
- If Leave of Absence is granted, please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress.
- The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent ie the parent with whom the child normally resides. Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child.
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance covering the absence dates in full will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.
- Unauthorised Leave of Absences will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service upon the child's return to school.

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

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

Name of Child: _____ Form Group: _____

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

Expected date of return to school: _____

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

……..……..……

……

Total Days Requested On This Occasion ☐

(For siblings) I have also applied to _____ School/Academy for leave of absence for _____ *(Insert child/children's name)*

Signature of resident Parent/Carer: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

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

1. Head teachers **shall not grant any** leave of absence during term time **unless:**

A) An application has been made in advance, by the parent with whom the child normally resides

AND

B) They consider there to be exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

2. The Head teacher must be satisfied that exceptional circumstances warrant the granting of a leave of absence.

3. The Head teacher can determine how long an absence should be and any additional absence will not be authorised.

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education through regular attendance at a school or otherwise (ie home education) (Section 7 Education Act 1996).

- If a child who is of compulsory school age, who is registered at school and fails to attend regularly, it is the parent that will be guilty of an offence (Section 444 (1) Education Act 1996).

- Parents whose children have unauthorised absence may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or prosecution.

- Any Fixed Penalty Notices issued and/or prosecution will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend school.

Parents:

1. The application must be made in advance by the parent(s) that the child normally resides with.

2. Any leave of absences taken which have not been requested in advance will recorded as unauthorised.

3. Parents can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecuted for unauthorised absence including holidays.

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

For school use only: NAME OF CHILD: _____ Date received by school: _____

1st date of absence requested by parents: …… Last date of absence requested by parents: …….

Expected date of return to school (as advised by parents): ……

****

Absence: Authorised / Unauthorised / Split (please delete as appropriate)

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

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

Head teacher/Attendance Lead: ….……..... Date: ……

LETTER A - Response to LOA request not authorised

Dear «salutation»

«forename» «surname» «year_reg»
Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances
Leave of absence period between <<date 1>> and <<date 2>>

An application/request for a leave of absence has been received from the resident parent in respect of the above-named child

I have carefully considered the application/request and reviewed the exceptional circumstances outlined.

As you are aware the law prohibits Head teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

In this instance I do not consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to your application and **will not** authorise this Leave of Absence request. Your child is therefore required to be in school on these dates.

Any absence taken during this period will be recorded as unauthorised.

As parent(s) you have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives a full-time education (section 7 Education Act 1996). You may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court if your child is absent during the period requested in your application.

Failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. If a leave of absence is not authorised this could result in:

- **The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice to you (£120.00 fine to be paid within 28 days of issue, which reduces to £60.00 if paid within 21 days); or**
- **A criminal prosecution against you**

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in respect of EACH absent child, so the fine will apply to EACH parent in respect of EACH child as set out in the fixed penalty notice(s).

If the Fixed Penalty is not paid then the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's legal department to consider instigating a criminal prosecution against you under the Education Act 1996. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

Evidence shows that pupil absence has a negative impact on pupil performance and social development. We urge you to consider this matter very carefully before deciding to take your child out of school.

This matter will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

LETTER B – Response to LOA request authorised parent letter.

Dear «salutation»

«forename» «surname» «year_reg»
Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances
Leave of absence period between <<date 1>> and <<date 2>>

An application/request for a leave of absence has been received from the resident parent in respect of the above-named child.

I have carefully considered the application/request and reviewed the exceptional circumstances outlined.

As you are aware the law prohibits Head teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

In this instance only I consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to your application and the school **is** prepared to authorise the absence for the dates outlined above.

Any additional absence taken without authorisation, including prior to or following the requested period of absence will not be authorised and as parent(s) you may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court.

Failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. If a leave of absence is not authorised this could result in:

- **The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice to you (£120.00 fine to be paid within 28 days of issue, which reduces to £60.00 if paid within 21 days); or**
- **A criminal prosecution against you**

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in respect of EACH absent child, so the fine will apply to EACH parent in respect of EACH child as set out in the fixed penalty notice(s).

If the Fixed Penalty is not paid then the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's legal department to consider instigating a criminal prosecution against you under the Education Act 1996. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

This decision is not made lightly. Our school is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes that regular attendance through the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

Please contact the school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the leave of absence on your child's academic progress.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

LETTER C – LOA not requested in advance

Dear «salutation»

«forename» «surname» «year_reg»
Leave of Absence during Term Time between <<date 1>> and <<date 2>>

With reference to your child's recent leave of absence.

As you are aware Government regulations prohibit Head teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The regulations state an application must be made in advance to the school for consideration.

The resident parent did not make an application in advance for this period of leave as required and therefore the absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

As parent(s) you have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives a full-time education (section 7 Education Act 1996). You may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court because your child was absent during the period in question. Evidence shows that pupil absence has a negative impact on pupil performance and social development.

The school have decided the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Warwickshire Attendance Service for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. If a leave of absence is not authorised this could result in:

- **The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice to you (£120.00 fine to be paid within 28 days of issue, which reduces to £60.00 if paid within 21 days); or**
- **A criminal prosecution against you**

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in respect of EACH absent child, so the fine will apply to EACH parent in respect of EACH child as set out in the fixed penalty notice(s).

If the Fixed Penalty is not paid then the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's legal department to consider instigating a criminal prosecution against you under the Education Act 1996. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

LETTER D – Non resident parent

DATE

Dear «salutation»

«forename» «surname» «year_reg»
Leave of Absence during Term Time
Non-Resident Parent Request

Thank you for your recent request for a Leave of Absence during term-time between (date 1) and (date 2) dated (date)/received on (date).

When considering such a request I am obliged to act within the law.

The *Government regulations* state an application must be made in advance to the school *by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides*.

Our records show that your child does not normally reside with you and therefore we are unable to consider your Leave of Absence request.

The application may be resubmitted to me when completed and signed by the "resident parent" and due consideration will be given to it at this time.

Please note, should no further request be received in respect of the above dates and your child is absent during this period, the absences will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Unless acceptable evidence is presented to support the absences, the matter may be referred to the Warwickshire County Council's Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS). As a parent you may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court.

Failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. If a leave of absence is not authorised this could result in:

- **The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice to you (£120.00 fine to be paid within 28 days of issue, which reduces to £60.00 if paid within 21 days); or**
- **A criminal prosecution against you**

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in respect of EACH absent child, so the fine will apply to EACH parent in respect of EACH child as set out in the fixed penalty notice(s).

If the Fixed Penalty is not paid then the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's legal department to consider instigating a criminal prosecution against you under the Education Act 1996. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

LETTER E – Response to LOA split decision

Dear «salutation»

«forename» «surname» «year_reg»
Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances
Leave of absence period between <<date 1>> and <<date 2>>

An application/request for a leave of absence has been received in respect of the above named child from the resident parent.

I have carefully considered the application/request and reviewed the exceptional circumstances outlined.

As you are aware the law prohibits Head teachers from authorising absence in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

I do not consider that there are sufficient exceptional circumstances relating to the application to warrant authorising the full leave of absence period requested.

In this instance the school is only prepared to authorise (insert number of days) day(s) of the requested period as follows:

(please list the dates).

The school **will not** authorise (insert number of days) days(s) of the requested period, therefore your child is required to be in school on the following dates:

(please list the dates).

If your child is absent on any of the dates that he/she is required to be in school, these absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

As parent(s) you have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives a full-time education (section 7 Education Act 1996). You may be liable to further action including the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution through the court if your child is absent during the period requested in your application.

Should your child be absent during this period and it is appropriate to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice, it will be issued for only those dates of absence which have been recorded as unauthorised.

Failure to secure a child's regular attendance at school is a criminal offence under Section 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. If a leave of absence is not authorised this could result in:

- **The issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice to you (£120.00 fine to be paid within 28 days of issue, which reduces to £60.00 if paid within 21 days); or**
- **A criminal prosecution against you**

Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in respect of EACH absent child, so the fine will apply to EACH parent in respect of EACH child as set out in the fixed penalty notice(s).

If the Fixed Penalty is not paid then the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's legal department to consider instigating a criminal prosecution against you under the Education Act 1996. If criminal proceedings are issued and you are found guilty, the court could sentence you to a fine of up to £1,000 for a Section 444(1) conviction; or £2,500, a community sentence period or a custodial period of up to 3 months for a Section 444(1A) conviction.

Evidence shows that pupil absence has a negative impact on pupil performance and social development. We urge you to consider this matter very carefully before making a decision to take your child out of school.

This matter will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service.

If you have any concerns about the content of this reply, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head teacher

Appendix 3 – Letters Communicating with Parents

Nursery Attendance Letter

Dear

Re: <<forename>> <<surname>>

Please find attached a copy of <<forename>>'s registration certificate. <<forename>>'s attendance is currently <<percentage attendance>>%.

Regular early years attendance is important for all children as it is only through regular, consistent routines that children build up the secure attachments they need for healthy development and ensures that good habits are formed early so that children are school ready.

Regular attendance has a positive impact on all aspects of a young child's learning and development. A regular routine supports the young child to feel settled and secure. Unsettled children have higher stress levels which, in turn, prevent them from being able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities available.

There are of course, genuine reasons (such as illness), which can make attendance at school difficult. Unfortunately, missed lessons cannot be repeated and catching up on work is not as effective as the original learning experience. Children who have regular and/or prolonged absence from school or who arrive late on a regular basis will suffer in the long term from gaps in their learning.

I would urge you to encourage <<forename>> attends every session that they can, and I would value your support in this matter. If you would like to discuss any concerns you may have regarding attendance, or you need any further support from school, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you require any further clarification regarding school attendance, please read our Attendance policy, which is available on the school website.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Eardley

Stage 1 Letter

DATE

Dear

Re: <<forename>> <<surname>>

Please find attached a copy of <<forename>>'s registration certificate. <<forename>>'s attendance is currently <<percentage attendance>>% which is below the school target of 95%. I am sure that this is as much as a concern for you as it is for us.

There are of course, genuine reasons (such as illness), which can make attendance at school difficult. Unfortunately, missed lessons cannot be repeated and catching up on work is not as effective as the original learning experience. Children who have regular and/or prolonged absence from school or who arrive late on a regular basis will suffer in the long term from gaps in their learning.

The school will continue to monitor <<forename>>'s attendance and or punctuality over the next four weeks. If there has not been an improvement during this time, school will invite you to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to support <<forename>> in achieving an improvement.

I would urge you to encourage <<forename>> attends every day that they can and I would value your support in this matter. If you would like to discuss any concerns you may have regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you require any further clarification regarding school attendance, please read our Attendance policy, which is available on the school website.

Yours sincerely

Stage 2 Letter

DATE
Attendance Appointment

On:

At:
Dear

Re: <<forename>> <<surname>>

With reference to the letter dated (INSERT DATE). I have reviewed <<forename>>'s attendance and or punctuality and as you will see from the enclosed Registration Certificate there has not been a sustained improvement in <<his/her>>'s attendance which is currently <<percentage attendance>> %

As you know, in order for <<forename>> to reach their full potential, <<he/she> must have high attendance and good punctuality at school.

I would therefore like to meet with you to discuss <<forename>>'s attendance and/or punctuality, this meeting is an opportunity for us to support <<forename>> to achieve improved attendance. If the suggested date is not convenient a mutually agreeable appointment will be arranged, please contact the office upon receipt of this letter to confirm or change your appointment time and date.

Failure to attend this meeting may result in your child being placed on a School Attendance Target.

It is the Head teacher's decision to authorise absence any absence based on information provided by parents. I must inform you that if a School Attendance Target is issued, we will require medical evidence to support absence due to illness. Medical appointment cards/letters, GP appointment cards stamped or signed by surgery staff, and copies or proof of a prescription (medicine/tablets/label/container) showing the date prescribed are examples of evidence that can be accepted by the academy.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education through regular attendance at school or otherwise (section 444 of the Education Act 1996)

If you require any further clarification regarding school attendance, please read our Attendance policy, which is available on the school website.

Yours sincerely

Stage 3 Letter

DATE

Dear

Re: <<forename>> <<surname>>

With reference to our previous letter dated (INSERT DATE), we invited you to attend a meeting with <insert name> to discuss <<forename>>'s attendance on

Date:
At:

As you failed to attend this meeting, in your absence a School Attendance Target for <<forename>> was put in place.

Target - 100% attendance
Period - 20 school days (40 sessions)

We recognise that there are times when <<forename>> may be absent from school due to serious illness and we ask that you contact a member of staff in the school office to make us aware of this.

Any absence without medical evidence will be unauthorised.

Failure for <<forename>> to meet this target will result in a referral to Warwickshire Attendance Service, which may lead to prosecution or a fine.

If you require any further clarification regarding school attendance, please read our Attendance policy, which is available on the school's website.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 4 Warwickshire Attendance Service link

Warwickshire Attendance Service: General Enquiries - Education Services Directory – Education and Early Years providers

Appendix 5 Monitoring letter

Date:

Dear

Re: <<forename>> <<surname>>

Please find attached a copy of <<forename>>'s registration certificate. <<forename>>'s attendance is currently <<percentage attendance>>%, or <<days missed>>.

Over the course of a school year, our target for attendance for all pupils is 95%, or a maximum of 8 days missed. Any child missing 19 days of school or more is classed as persistently absent, and at this point school is obliged to discuss the pupil's absence with the Local Authority team for attendance.

There are of course, genuine reasons (such as illness), which can make attendance at school difficult. Unfortunately, missed lessons cannot be repeated and catching up on work is not as effective as the original learning experience. Children who have regular and/or prolonged absence from school or who arrive late on a regular basis will suffer in the long term from gaps in their learning.

The attendance of all children is regularly monitored and we endeavour to work together with you to ensure that your child reaches their full potential in school. Should we have further concerns, or see a further decline in your child's attendance, school will invite you to a meeting to discuss how we can work together to support <<forename>> in achieving an improvement.

I would urge you to encourage <<forename>> attends every day that they can and I would value your support in this matter. If you would like to discuss any concerns you may have regarding attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

If you require any further clarification regarding school attendance, please read our Attendance policy, which is available on the school website.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Eardley