

## Heene Church of England Primary School

'Together in faith, we love, grow and learn'

# Attendance Policy

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| 1               | April 2026  | Headteacher | Transition board |          |

| Type of Policy             | Tick ✓ |
|----------------------------|--------|
| DCAT Statutory Policy      |        |
| DCAT Non-statutory Policy  |        |
| DCAT Model Optional Policy |        |
| Academy Policy             | ✓      |
| Local Authority Policy     |        |

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## 1. Aims

Our attendance strategy is rooted in Heene CE Primary School’s Christian vision, “*Together in faith, we love, grow and learn,*” and is underpinned by a clear, graduated framework set out in our attendance policy and trigger flowchart.

At its heart, our strategy is **supportive, relational and inclusive**. We believe that good attendance enables pupils to flourish academically, socially and spiritually, and that barriers to attendance are often complex and require understanding, trust and partnership with families.

We take a **whole-school approach** where attendance is everyone’s responsibility. Strong daily routines, positive relationships and a culture of care mean that pupils feel safe, valued and eager to attend school. Good attendance is consistently promoted through worship, newsletters, celebration assemblies and classroom practice, reinforcing the message that every day in school matters.

Our strategy places a strong emphasis on **early identification and early intervention**. Attendance is monitored daily and analysed regularly to identify patterns, emerging concerns or changes in behaviour. We use clear thresholds to guide action, ensuring that support is offered before absence becomes entrenched. Staff are trained to notice early signs such as recurring lateness, odd days of absence or increasing illness, and to respond promptly and sensitively.

Where concerns arise, we work in **close partnership with parents and carers**. Initial contact is informal and supportive, focusing on listening to families, understanding individual circumstances and removing barriers to attendance. This reflects our value of *love*—acting with compassion, dignity and respect. As concerns escalate, communication becomes more formal but remains focused on collaboration rather than blame, with clear letters and meetings that set expectations while continuing to offer support.

We operate a **clear, transparent graduated response** to attendance concerns, aligned to our policy and flowchart. This ensures consistency and fairness for all families. Support meetings, attendance plans and contracts are used to agree targets, review progress and coordinate help from within school or external agencies where needed. These steps embody our commitment to *growth*—supporting pupils and families to make sustained improvements over time.

Where attendance does not improve despite sustained support, we are clear about our **statutory responsibilities**. We use legal measures, such as Notices to Improve or requests for Penalty Notices, only when necessary and only after support has been offered and documented. This clarity helps parents understand expectations and reflects our value of *learning*—protecting pupils’ entitlement to a full-time education.

Safeguarding underpins our entire attendance strategy. Unexplained absence is followed up on the first day, patterns are scrutinised closely, and attendance concerns are considered alongside wider wellbeing, SEND or safeguarding vulnerabilities. Our approach ensures that no child becomes invisible.

Overall, our attendance strategy is **values-driven, data-informed and child-centred**. It balances encouragement with challenge, support with accountability, and compassion with high expectations, ensuring that every child at Heene CE Primary School is supported to attend regularly, thrive in school and achieve their God-given potential.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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

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

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The Transition Board

The Transition Board is responsible for:

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

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Transition Board
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Leading regular attendance training for all staff
- Offering a clear vision and strategy for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Leading the Family Support Worker to ensure they are delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.5 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily and submitting this information to the school office for both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Class teachers will routinely promote the importance of attending school every day, on time.

### **3.6 School office staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Headteacher or another senior leader, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### **3.7 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on each and every day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

### **3.8 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made

- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

**See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.**

We will also record for pupils of compulsory school age:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

**Pupils must arrive in school on time each school day.**

All schools must keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. The registers must state whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

**Session times for Heene School are:**

**Gates open:** 8:35am

**School day begins:** 8:50am

**Registration closes at:** 8:50am

**School day ends:** 3:20pm

**Total hours provided in a typical week:** 32.5

Registration opens for pupils 8:40am. Children can use both entrances and come into school through the classroom door. Teachers and Teaching assistants will be there to meet them. The gates close at 8.50am.

Late arrivals (after 8.50am) should enter through the main school entrance and need to be signed in by Parents/Carers on the iPad.

Lesson start at 8:50am (all year groups) and finishes at 3:20pm

(All year groups except EYFS)

EYFS have a soft finish 3:05-3.15pm

Parents should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (8.40 am). If a child arrives after 8.50am his/her parent should report directly to the school office. Children are considered late if they arrive between 8.50-9.20am (although the register will remain open). After 9.20am the register is closed, and the absence becomes unauthorised.

**Lateness** - The school policy is to encourage punctuality, but also to actively discourage lateness as it can seriously disrupt lessons. As many English or Mathematics lessons are the early learning work in readiness for the first lesson in the day the child will miss the main input and be disadvantaged. If a child is late and misses registration, a late mark will be recorded. Obviously, the school will be sympathetic if this is for a good reason. If, however, a pattern of lateness starts to emerge, parents will be invited to discuss the matter with the Class teacher/Headteacher in order to reach a satisfactory solution

**4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence **on each and every day** of an unplanned absence by 9.00 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

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

Where the absence is longer than 5 days **or** there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

**4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised **as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.**

**However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.**

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Daily attendance report sent to the headteacher.

#### **4.5 Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a home visit.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- In some cases call to gain additional information even if the absence has been phoned in and explained.

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels, pupils attendance is available for all parents to see on the Arbor app, attendance information is also given to parents at Parent's Evenings, which are held twice a year.

### **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling – the Headteacher will use discretion having heard about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the immediate family, and it is felt that time might help the child concerned better deal with the situation

The Headteacher reserves the right to request supporting documentation when making the decision whether to authorise an absence as an 'exceptional circumstance'.

**What circumstances are not exceptional? (this list is not exhaustive)**

These include: -

- the availability of cheap holidays (*the school actively maps INSET days before and after terms commence and finish*)
- an absence or holiday paid for, or booked, by someone else
- an overlap with beginning/end of term

- a mix-up in term dates

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least fourteen days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form.

An absence request form can be obtained by emailing the school office [office@heeneprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@heeneprimary.co.uk) or using the QR code below. This form should be completed and returned at least 14 days before the proposed absence.



The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

## 5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority will fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty Notices are issued **by the Local Authority on behalf of the school, in line with statutory guidance.**

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

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

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute.

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

### 6.1: Support for pupils and their families:

The school recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents and carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance.

Strategies used will include:

- ✓ Discussions with parents
- ✓ Referrals to support agencies
- ✓ Pupil voice

- ✓ Mentoring
- ✓ Specific interventions
- ✓ Reward systems
- ✓ Adaptations to the curriculum
- ✓ Behaviour support
- ✓ Attendance contract

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, the school will seek support from the Local Authority Behaviour and Attendance team and the Trust.

## 6.2. Strategies for promoting/rewarding attendance:

### Weekly Attendance Celebration

Celebrations in Worship are held every week on Friday

Classes with the highest attendance and most improved attendance receive the Attendance Owl on a Friday.

Weekly attendance display updated to show the class that is leading on attendance.

### Weekly School Newsletter

The school newsletter is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly includes sections reminding parents of our school attendance target.

### Bespoke Attendance Rewards

Where pupils are being supported with their attendance, personalised reward programmes are established.

### Parent's Evenings

Class teachers discuss attendance with parents/carers and strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality.

### Postcards

Pupils' attendance is celebrated through postcards home.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data at least half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- The Attendance and Admission Officer will provide all class teachers with attendance data for the term. The list will be presented in numerical descending order with the highest attenders at the top. Every pupil will be colour coded as indicated below:

#### Summary

Green – pupils with attendance between 100% and 95%

Amber – pupils with attendance between 94.9% and 90.1%

Red – pupils with attendance of 90% and below

- The pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (**Appendix 2**)
- The Headteacher will report on whole school attendance and attendance for vulnerable groups of pupils three times a year in the Headteacher's report to governors.

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

### 7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### 7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

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

### 7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil has 90% attendance and therefore misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from DCAT, the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the senior leadership team. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full local governing body/Trust.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## 10. Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

| Code | Definition                    | Scenario   |
|------|-------------------------------|--|
| /    | Present (am)                  | Pupil is present at morning registration                                       |
| \    | Present (pm)                  | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                     |
| L    | Late arrival                  | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                  |
| K    | Off-site provision            | Pupil is attending education provision arranged by the local authority         |
| B    | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school  |
| D    | Dual registered               | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| J1   | Interview                     | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment   |

|          |                           |   |
|----------|---------------------------|---|
| <b>P</b> | Sporting activity         | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| <b>V</b> | Educational trip or visit | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school     |
| <b>W</b> | Work experience           | Pupil is on a work experience placement   |

| <b>Code</b>               | <b>Definition</b>                 | <b>Scenario</b>   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Authorised absence</b> |                                   |   |
| <b>C</b>                  | Authorised leave of absence       | Pupil has been granted leave of absence for exceptional circumstance  |
| <b>C1</b>                 | Authorised leave of absence       | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to take part in a regulated performance or undertake regulated employment abroad. |
| <b>C2</b>                 | Authorised leave of absence       | Pupil has been granted leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.                     |
| <b>E</b>                  | Excluded                          | Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded.   |
| <b>Q</b>                  | Access arrangements               | Pupils is unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements  |
| <b>I</b>                  | Illness                           | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness   |
| <b>M</b>                  | Medical/dental appointment        | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment   |
| <b>R</b>                  | Religious observance              | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance   |
| <b>S</b>                  | Study leave                       | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations  |
| <b>T</b>                  | Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence | Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school   |
| <b>Y1</b>                 | Lack of transport                 | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available   |
| <b>Y2</b>                 | Widespread travel disruption      | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel   |
| <b>Y3</b>                 | Unavoidable partial closure       | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed  |

|                             |                                 |   |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Y4</b>                   | Unavoidable full closure        | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed   |
| <b>Y5</b>                   | Detention sentence              | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention  |
| <b>Y6</b>                   | Public Health concern           | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law   |
| <b>Y7</b>                   | Other unavoidable circumstance. | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause   |
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |                                 |   |
| <b>G</b>                    | Unauthorised holiday            | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school   |
| <b>N</b>                    | Reason not yet provided         | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| <b>O</b>                    | Unauthorised absence            | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence   |
| <b>U</b>                    | Arrival after registration      | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed   |

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Definition</b>            | <b>Scenario</b>  |
|-------------|------------------------------|--|
| <b>X</b>    | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |

## 11. Appendix 2: Escalation of attendance interventions

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Attendance will be monitored closely for all pupils with bespoke interventions in place for each group or individuals within each group.</b> |   |
| <60%- 84.9%   | <b>Severe concern - <i>Persistent and severely absent pupils</i></b>  |
| 85%- 89.9%  | <b>Serious concern - <i>Persistent and severely absent pupils</i></b> |
| 90%- 94.9%  | <b>Concern-At risk</b>  |
| 95%- 96.9%  | <b>Prevention</b>   |
| 97%-100%  | <b>Aspiration</b>   |
| 100%  | <b>Celebration</b>  |

### Summary

Green – pupils with attendance between 100% and 95%

Parents may receive a letter or postcard home congratulating them on their child's excellent attendance.

Amber – pupils with attendance between 94.9% and 90.1%

The class teacher will raise concerns with the parents regarding their child's attendance to try to:

- Identify underlying home/school issues that may be causing the pupils' absence
- Review the pupil's academic progress and make links to the pupil's attendance e.g. if your child had not missed x days, they could have achieved ....

In addition, a letter will be sent to parents advising of concern and outlining the parent's responsibilities. If improvement has not occurred following this intervention, parents will be invited to a meeting with a member of the senior leadership team. The school will draw up an attendance support plan involving the setting of an attendance target and the implementation of supportive strategies as agreed with the parents and child concerned.

Where parents fail to attend the meeting without satisfactory reason and unauthorised absence has occurred further support will be sought from The Education, Behaviour and Attendance Service or a home visit may be considered where appropriate.

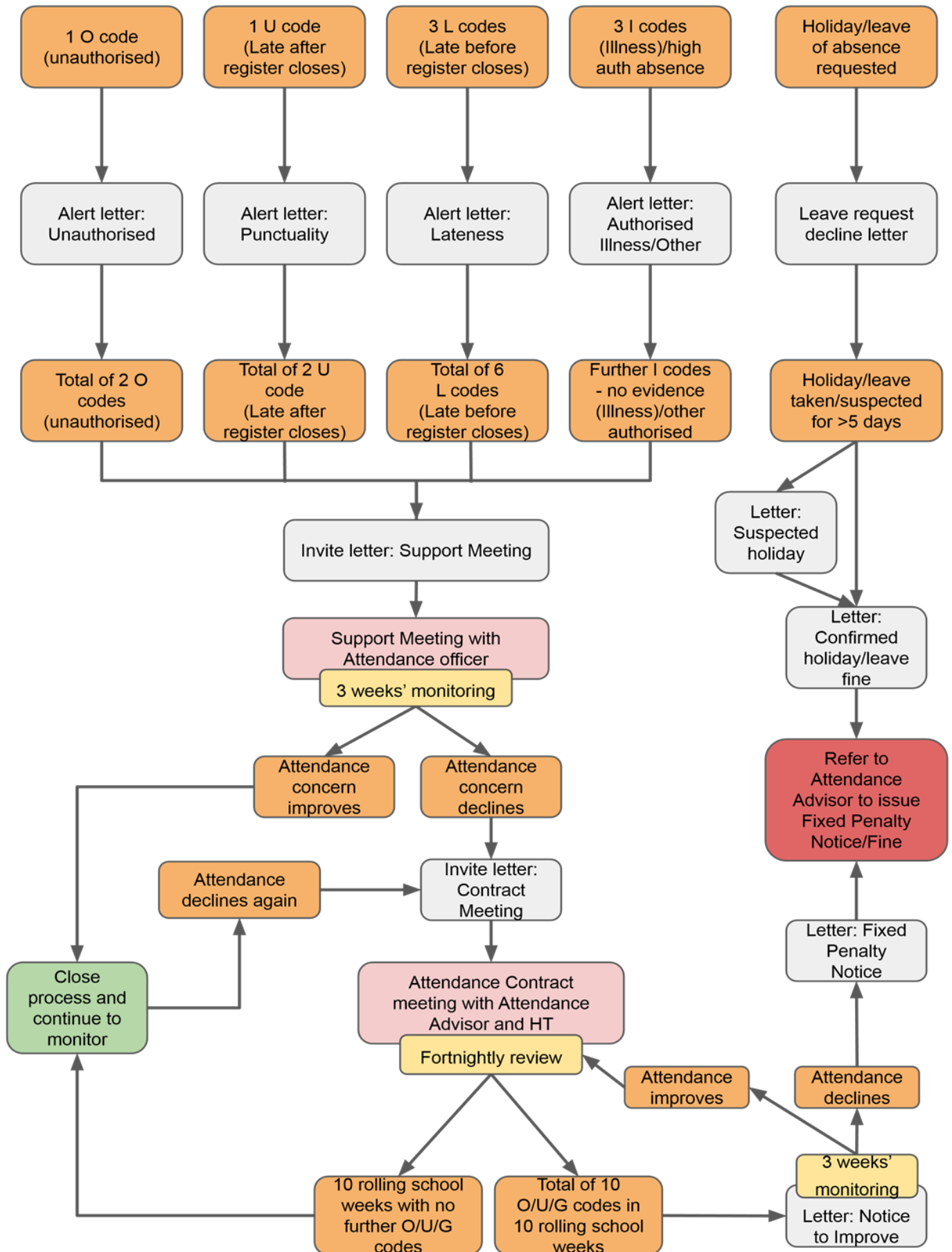
Red – pupils with attendance of 90% and below

Pupils who have attendance is 90% and below are considered to be persistently absent from school. The Attendance Officer and/or senior leadership team will organise a meeting authority to raise concerns with the parents and an individual attendance support plan will be drawn up with the parents and pupil concerned. The attendance support plan will involve the setting of an attendance target to see the pupil move to the band above as well as the implementation of supportive strategies and bespoke interventions.

## 12. Appendix 3: Flow chart – reducing persistent and severe absence

The following flowchart sets out Heene CE Primary School's graduated response to attendance concerns. All attendance interventions, communications with parents/carers and escalation (including notices to improve and penalty notices) will be undertaken in line with this flowchart.

Attendance Trigger Flow Chart



## 13. Appendix 4: Attendance Letters and Templates

The following letters are used to support the attendance process outlined in the Attendance Trigger Flowchart.

### Alert Letter: Unauthorised

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

We are writing to you because we have noticed that [pupil name] has recently taken an unauthorised [absence/absences] from school.

#### Details of absence

[Name] has been absent from school for a total of [number] days on the following dates:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

This means they have missed out on [insert absence as a percentage] of learning time this [term/year].

#### Why regular attendance matters

We want to work together with you to ensure [name] is able to:

- Fully engage in their learning and make good academic progress
- Develop friendships and feel part of the school community
- Build routines and confidence that will help both now, and in the future

#### Important information about unauthorised absence

We want to be open about the school's responsibilities. Please note:

- Unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days)
- More information about penalty notices and the attendance policy are available on our school website [insert school website URL], or from the school office

#### How we can support you

We understand that every family's circumstances are unique, and there may be challenges at home or school that make attendance difficult. However, we're here to help. Please let us know if:

- There is anything happening at home or at school that's affecting [name]'s attendance
- You need support with helping [name] attend regularly
- There are gaps in [name]'s learning we can help to address

**We are committed to working with you and [name] to support their learning and wellbeing. Please do get in touch if we are able to offer any support.**

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

### Alert letter: Punctuality

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

### Concern about [pupil name]'s punctuality

We are writing to you because [pupil name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe]. We know that mornings can sometimes be challenging, and we want to work together with you to support [name] in arriving on time each day.

#### Details of lateness:

##### Arrived after the register closed:

- [date]
- [date]
- date]

##### · Arrived late (before register closed):

- [date]
- [date] ○  
date]

**Our school day starts promptly at [time], and registration closes at [time].** Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving on time each day is important because it:

- Ensures your child doesn't miss out on essential learning
- Reduces disruption for teachers and classmates
- Helps your child settle into the school routine

We understand that there may be things happening at home or at school that are making punctuality difficult. Our aim is to work in partnership with you to find solutions. However, it is important to be aware that persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice if your child arrives after the register closes **10 times within 10 weeks**.

We will continue to monitor your child's punctuality closely. If you need help with transport, morning routines, or any other aspect, please let us know and we can work together to make sure the right support is available.

We appreciate your support in making sure [name] gets the most out of their school day. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Alert letter: Lateness

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

### Concern about [pupil name]'s Lateness

We are writing to you because [pupil name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe]. We know that mornings can sometimes be challenging, and we want to work together with you to support [name] in arriving on time each day.

**Details of lateness:**

- **Arrived late to school:**

- [date] ○

- [date] ○ [date]

**Our school day starts promptly at [time], and registration closes at [time].** Afternoon registration takes place between [time slot].

Arriving on time each day is important because it:

- Ensures your child doesn't miss out on essential learning
- Reduces disruption for teachers and classmates
- Helps your child settle into the school routine

We understand that there may be things happening at home or at school that are making punctuality difficult. Our aim is to work in partnership with you to find solutions. However, it is important to be aware that persistent lateness can result in a penalty notice if your child arrives after the register closes **10 times within 10 weeks**.

We will continue to monitor your child's punctuality closely. If you need help with transport, morning routines, or any other aspect, please let us know and we can work together to make sure the right support is available.

We appreciate your support in making sure [name] gets the most out of their school day. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## **Alert letter: Authorised**

Dear [insert name of parent/carers],

We hope this message finds you well. We are writing to you because we have noticed that [pupil name] has missed a significant amount of school recently. We understand that every family's situation is unique, and we want to work with you to make sure [pupil name] is able to succeed at school.

### Why we are contacting you:

- [Pupil name] has missed [insert number of days missed and over what time period], meaning they have missed out on [insert absence as a percentage] of learning time this [term/year]
- We are aware of the following reasons for these absences: [insert known reasons, e.g., illness, family circumstances]
- We are concerned that these absences may mean [pupil name] is missing out on key parts of their education and may risk falling behind with their learning

### How we can work together:

We want to support both you and [pupil name] in any way we can, and to understand if there is anything further happening at home or at school that may be making attendance difficult. Together, we can:

- Identify any additional support [pupil name] might need
- Explore ways to help [pupil name] catch up on school they've missed
- Discuss any temporary or ongoing circumstances affecting attendance

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance closely, please let us know and we can work together to make sure the right support is available.

We want to work collaboratively with you to help [pupil name] overcome any barriers to regular attendance and make sure they feel supported and confident at school.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## Invite: Support Meeting

Invitation to discuss [name]'s school attendance

We would like to invite you to come in for a conversation about [name]'s attendance at school. Our aim is to understand any barriers, work together to address them, and ensure [name] is fully supported to attend school regularly.

[name] is currently xx%, which is below our school expectation of 97%

**During the meeting, we would like to talk about:**

- Whether there is anything happening at school that makes it difficult for [name] to attend
- Whether there are any challenges at home that we could help with, or that you would like us to be aware of
- Anything we can do to support you or make it easier for [name] to attend school regularly

**Next steps**

Please contact the school office on [number], as soon as possible so we can arrange a time for you to meet with our Attendance Officer, [staff name]. We will work together to understand any challenges and put support in place

If you need any assistance, such as translation services or accessibility support, please let us know when you get in touch. If you are unable to attend in person, we can arrange a phone or video call.

We are here to support you and [name], and we look forward to working together to find the best way forward.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

**Invite: Attendance Contract**

**RE: School Attendance Contract Meeting – [Pupil Name]**

Dear [Parent/Guardian Name],

I am writing to you regarding [Pupil Name]'s current attendance levels. As you know, at [School Name], we are committed to providing every pupil with the best possible education. Consistent attendance is vital for academic progress and social development, and is a key expectation set out by the Department for Education.

A review of our registers shows that [Pupil Name]'s attendance has fallen to [Percentage]%, which is a cause for concern. Under government guidelines, a pupil with attendance below 90% is classified as a 'persistent absentee.'

**Current Attendance Summary:**

- **Total Sessions Absent:** [Number] (Note: a school day consists of two sessions, AM and PM)
- **Unauthorised Absences:** [Number]
- **Late Arrivals:** [Number]

Under the **Education Act 1996**, parents have a legal duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. However, our primary aim is to work in partnership with you to resolve any difficulties. We want to understand if there are any barriers—such as medical needs, transport issues, or anxieties—preventing [Pupil Name] from attending school.

We would like to invite you to a **School Attendance Contract Meeting**. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss these concerns and to agree upon an **Attendance Contract**. This is a formal, supportive agreement that sets targets and identifies what help the school and external agencies can provide to ensure [Pupil Name] achieves their full potential.

**Meeting Details:**

- **Date:** [Date, e.g., Wednesday, 24th October]
- **Time:** [Time, e.g., 3:30 PM]
- **Location:** [Location, e.g., Main Reception / Conference Room]
- **Attendees:** [Your Name], [Other Staff, e.g., Phase Leader / Education Welfare Officer]

During this meeting, we will review the registration certificate, discuss the impact of lost learning time, and agree on an action plan for the coming weeks.

Please contact the school office on [Phone Number] or email [Email Address] by [Date] to confirm your attendance. If you are unable to make this time, please let us know immediately so we can arrange an alternative appointment.

We look forward to working with you to improve [Pupil Name]'s attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

## Letter: Notice to Improve

Dear **Parent/carer Name/s**

**Pupil Name:**

**Year:**

**Attendance %:**

**Number of unauthorised sessions:**

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

The parent of a child who is a registered pupil of compulsory school age at a school may be guilty of an offence under s.444 Education Act 1996 if that child fails to attend school regularly.

You, **Parent name** are a parent/carer of **Pupils Name**, (called in this notice "the pupil") who is a registered pupil at school name.

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve **Pupils Name's** attendance, including: Edit this section as appropriate

1. **Telephone calls.** The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having.
2. **An Attendance Overview Letter.** The school wrote to you, letting you know about **Pupils Name's** attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
3. **An Attendance Support Meeting Invite.** You were invited by the school to attend an Attendance Support Meeting to discuss your child's unauthorised absences. The purpose of the meeting was to offer appropriate support to improve your child's attendance and ensure they are able to achieve expected academic levels. You were notified of the potential consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.

**Pupils Name** is currently working well below/ below/ at expected academic levels.

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern.

|                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Attendance                       | Enter attendance %       |
| Sessions of absence              | Enter number of sessions |
| Sessions of unauthorised absence | Enter number of sessions |

Between [Start Date] and [End Date] the pupil failed to attend regularly at [School Name], which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

**You now have XXX school days (select 3-6 weeks) in which to improve your child's attendance.**

**During this time, your child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences from school during this period.**

**Should we not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period or after, a Penalty Notice may be issued. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days.**

**NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded. Other legal interventions may be considered by the Local Authority.**

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss further support available, please contact school as soon as possible:

Email address: Telephone:

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

## Letter: Fixed Penalty Notice

Dear [insert name of parent/carer],

At [school name], we are committed to working in partnership with families to ensure every child can succeed in their education. We know that sometimes there are challenges that can make regular attendance difficult, and we want to support you and [name] wherever possible.

### **Why we're writing to you**

On [date], we contacted you to discuss [name]'s recent unauthorised absences and issued you with a Notice to Improve which set clear expectations which were required to improve your child's attendance. Since then, we have not seen the necessary improvement in [name]'s attendance, and they have missed the following days of school:

- [date]
- [date]
- [date]

[Name] has now had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This is equivalent to 5 days. Regular attendance is not only a legal requirement, but also essential for [name]'s learning, social development and future opportunities.

### **What happens next**

In line with our attendance policy and the local authority's code of practice, we have no option but to request a penalty notice be issued. We want to assure you this decision has not been taken lightly and comes after careful consideration.

When you receive the penalty notice, you will need to pay:

- **£80, if paid within 21 days**
  - **£160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days**

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

### **We want to work together**

We are still here to help and want to explore with you any barriers to [name]'s attendance. We would like to invite you to a meeting to discuss:

- Any issues at school that may be affecting [name]'s attendance, or ways we could support you
- Anything at home that you think we should be aware of, or that we could help with
- Ways we can work together to support [name] in attending school more regularly

Please contact the school office on [number], as soon as possible to arrange a time that works for you. Our aim is to support [name] in catching up on any missed work and to ensure their ongoing wellbeing and success at school.

If you have any questions about this process, or need support, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]

Headteacher

## **Letter: Decline of holiday/leave of absence request**

**Re: Declined Request for Leave of Absence During Term Time**

**Pupil Name:** [Child's Full Name]

**Date of Birth:** [DOB]  
**School Year:** [School Year]

Thank you for your recent request regarding a proposed absence from school **between [Start Date] and [End Date]**.

We fully recognise the importance of family time; however, we are also committed to ensuring that every child receives a consistent and uninterrupted education. As such, we are unable to authorise holidays during term time, which comprises 190 statutory school days each academic year. We encourage families to make use of the 13 weeks of school holidays available throughout the year for travel and other personal commitments.

In accordance with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and **Name of Local Authority**, headteachers may only grant leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. Regrettably, the reason provided does not meet this threshold. Should you choose to proceed with the absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised, and you may be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Please note that from August 2024, the DfE amended the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Under these regulations, each parent/carer issued a Penalty Notice for unauthorised term-time absence are required to pay a fine of **£80**, which must be paid within 21 days. Please be aware that failure to pay may result in prosecution.

In line with our school attendance policy, **Name of Local Authority** will issue Penalty Notices on behalf of the school after the unauthorised absence has occurred. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent/carer per child.

If you believe your circumstances are exceptional and wish to appeal this decision, please respond in writing upon receipt of this letter, outlining the reasons for your request.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

**Name**  
Headteacher

| <b>First Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Second Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Third and subsequent Penalty Notices</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Parent/carers are required to pay this penalty notice ( <b>£80</b> ) within <b>21 days</b> , or the amount will increase ( <b>£160</b> ) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. | If a parent receives a second penalty notice for the same child within <b>any 3-year period</b> , the charge will be a flat rate of <b>£160</b> ; there will be no reduction if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices for absence before the 2024-25 school year do not count. | A parent cannot receive <b>more than two</b> penalty notices for the same child within any <b>3-year period</b> .<br><br>Once this limit has been reached, prosecution will be considered. |

## **Letter: Holiday suspected**

Dear **[Parent/Carer's Name]**,

**Re: School Absence – [Insert Dates]**

**Pupil Name:** [Child's Full Name]

**Date of Birth:** [DOB]

**School Year:** [School Year]

We are writing to inform you that [Pupil's Name] was absent from school during the period [insert dates]. The school has received information indicating that this absence may have been due to a family holiday taken during term time.

If this is not the case, and the absence was due to illness or another reason that you believe should be considered for authorisation, we kindly request that you provide appropriate supporting evidence (e.g. medical documentation/evidence or other relevant information) by **[Insert Deadline Date]**. If no evidence is received by this date, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

In accordance with the school attendance policy and **Name of Local Authority** Code of Conduct for Education Penalty Notices, unauthorised holidays during term-time will result in a request to **Name of Local Authority** for consideration of a Penalty Notice. This is in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and DfE *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*.

Please also be reminded that under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the parent may be guilty of an offence.

We look forward to hearing from you by **[Insert Deadline Date]**.

Yours sincerely,

**Name**  
Headteacher

| <b>First Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Second Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Third and subsequent Penalty Notices</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Parent/carers are required to pay this penalty notice ( <b>£80</b> ) within <b>21 days</b> , or the amount will increase ( <b>£160</b> ) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. | If a parent receives a second penalty notice for the same child within <b>any 3-year period</b> , the charge will be a flat rate of <b>£160</b> ; there will be no reduction if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices for absence before the 2024-25 school year do not count. | A parent cannot receive <b>more than two</b> penalty notices for the same child within any <b>3-year period</b> .<br><br>Once this limit has been reached, prosecution will be considered. |

**Letter: Holiday/Leave confirmed**

Dear [Parent/Carer's Name],

**Pupil Name:** [Child's Full Name]

**Date of Birth:** [DOB]

**School Year:** [School Year]

You submitted a request for leave of absence for your child from [insert start date] to [insert end date], which, as communicated in our letter dated [insert date of previous letter], was not *authorised* by the Headteacher.

As your child has now returned to school following the absence, please be advised that this period has been formally recorded as *unauthorised*. In accordance with our school attendance policy, which aligns with the Department for Education's statutory guidance, the school has requested that **Name of Local Authority** consider issuing Penalty Notice(s).

This action is in line with the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024** and the DfE's statutory guidance, *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024)*.

Parents/carers who receive a Penalty Notice for unauthorised term-time absence are required to pay a fine of **£80**, which must be paid within **21 days**. Please be aware that failure to pay may result in prosecution.

We also remind you that under **Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996**, if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend school regularly, the parent may be guilty of an offence.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

**Name**  
Headteacher

| <b>First Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Second Penalty Notice</b>  | <b>Third and subsequent Penalty Notices</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Parent/carers are required to pay this penalty notice ( <b>£80</b> ) within <b>21 days</b> , or the amount will increase ( <b>£160</b> ) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. | If a parent receives a second penalty notice for the same child within <b>any 3-year period</b> , the charge will be a flat rate of <b>£160</b> ; there will be no reduction if paid within 21 days. Penalty notices for absence before the 2024-25 school year do not count. | A parent cannot receive <b>more than two</b> penalty notices for the same child within any <b>3-year period</b> .<br><br>Once this limit has been reached, prosecution will be considered. |

## Attendance support meeting

*(To be completed at support Meeting)*

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year/Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current attendance:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance aim over next 3 weeks: 95%**

**What is going well:**

**Barriers to attendance:**

**Support to be offered:**

**If no improvement by the end of the 3 week monitoring period, this will lead to an attendance contract meeting.**

# School Attendance Contract

(To be completed at contract Meeting)

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Year/Class:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Carer Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Purpose of This Agreement

This attendance contract is a supportive agreement between the school and family. Its aim is to help **improve attendance**, reduce absence, and ensure the child is able to **access their learning, friendships and wider school life** consistently.

All parties recognise that **regular school attendance is essential** for academic progress, wellbeing and safeguarding.

## Current Attendance Overview

- **Current attendance percentage:** \_\_\_\_\_ %
- **School expectation:** 96%+
- **Main reasons for absence discussed:**
  - Illness
  - Anxiety / emotional wellbeing
  - Sleep routines
  - Punctuality
  - Medical appointments
  - Family circumstances
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Agreed Attendance Target

From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, the agreed attendance target is: \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Expectation:** Child attends school **every day and on time**, unless genuinely unwell.

## Parent/Carer Commitments

We agree to:

- Ensure our child attends school **every day**, arriving **on time**
- Contact the school **before 9:00am** on the first day of absence, explaining the reason
- Provide **medical evidence** where requested (e.g. GP note, prescription)
- Arrange **medical/dental appointments outside school hours**, wherever possible
- Work with the school to support routines (sleep, mornings, anxiety)
- Attend review meetings and remain in regular communication with school staff

## School Commitments

The school agrees to:

- Provide appropriate pastoral and emotional support where needed
- Monitor attendance closely and share updates regularly with parents/carers
- Offer early help or referrals where concerns are identified
- Adjust support in school where appropriate (e.g. check-ins, phased support)
- Meet again on the review date to assess progress
- Work in partnership with the family to remove barriers to attendance

## Support and Strategies Agreed

The following support will be put in place:

- Daily check-in with \_\_\_\_\_
- Pastoral / ELSA support
- Gradual return or adjusted start (if agreed)
- Morning meet-and-greet
- Referral to external support (e.g. school nurse)
- Behaviour/rewards support
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Monitoring and Review

Attendance will be reviewed on: \_\_\_\_\_

If attendance **does not improve**, the school may need to:

- Increase monitoring
- Issue formal attendance letters
- Involve the Local Authority Attendance Team
- Consider further statutory action (as a last resort)

## Agreement

We confirm that this agreement has been discussed fully and that we understand our shared responsibilities.

**Parent/Carer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Role:** \_\_\_\_\_