



Placing children's rights at the heart of all we undertake.
respect integrity humility equality care towards all

Anker Moor Primary Academy

Attendance Policy

2020-21

Reviewed by: Simon Russell

Date: September 2020

Approved by:

Date:

Next review due: September 2021

Principles:

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs.

All children should be in school, on time, every day that school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable from September 2020.

School Responsibilities:

- Promote positive behaviour and good attendance through use of curriculum and learning materials.
- Reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Reward those above our attendance target and those who reach 100% attendance.
- Work with parents to resolve problems, which may affect a child's attendance and will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Workers where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.
- Encourage attendance for all pupils through ensuring parents and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and act early to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern or a pattern is noted.

Parents or Carers Responsibilities:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Endeavour to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day.
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance.
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep.
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness.
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available.

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment:

- The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams. ([February 22nd 2015 Department of Education](#)). The research is based on data from all schools in England going back several years.
- The results are very clear – **missing even small amounts of time from school can have a significant effect on achievement.**
- For example, at the end of the 2012/13 Academic year, 94% of pupils who were present all the time achieved 5+ GCSE A* - C or equivalent. Where attendance dropped to between 85 and 90%, only 75% of pupils achieved these results. This equates to an absence of around 1 week per year during Years 10 and 11 and clearly illustrates the impact of attendance on attainment.
- The same pattern is also seen at primary school level, where pupils missing up to just 14 days of school in Key Stage 2 (normally age 11) are a quarter less likely to achieve Greater Depth in reading, grammar or mathematics tests than those with no absence.

Admissions Register:

- School keeps an admission register, which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details including those of their parents and of their previous school.
- All schools (including academies) must keep a record of attendance register entries for at least 3 years and inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register.
- A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they:
 - Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children);
 - Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
 - Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
 - Have been permanently excluded.

Children at Risk of Missing Education:

The school, governing bodies and our trust have regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

We will place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, we will hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where we have concerns about a child, we use our professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform our decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

We will notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

If we have to notify the local authority of a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, we must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

We will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Elective Home Education:

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will immediately inform the Local Authority of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register using the school exit form. The LA will inform the school when the child's name can be removed from the school register. We are also required to send a copy of the de-registration letter received from parents with parental responsibility. Any enquiries should be directed to: Jenny Dodd (Elective Home Education Co-ordinator) Telephone: 01785 895691 or Email: electivehomeeducation@staffordshire.gov.uk

Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

Attendance data and targets:

The Local Authority does not prescribe individual school targets for attendance or persistent absence. As a school, we set realistic but ambitious targets for whole school attendance and persistent absence. Our whole school target for 2018-19 was 96% and 96.5% in 2019-20 (pre-Covid).

The attendance of learners with Special Educational Needs and/or are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding are two specific groups whose attendance is being particularly targeted at present.

Year end 2018/19:

	England	School Year 1 to year 6
Overall attendance %	96.1%	96.6%
Authorised absence (%)		2.11%
Unauthorised absence (%)		0.48%
Persistent Absence % (based on 10 % absence)		3.3%

Definition of persistent absence:

Persistent absentees are defined as those pupils missing around 10% or more of the typical amount of possible sessions across a given period. The definition changed in September 2015; this previously included pupils missing 15% or more of possible sessions.

- Parents receive termly updates based on their child’s attendance (Appendix 2vi)
- Any attendance below 90% for a specific term or point in time will trigger a letter (Appendix 2v) to a meeting in school with the Attendance Lead.
- Attendance patterns will then be analysed and evidence required for future absences if the absences continue.
- The Headteacher will link with the Attendance Lead if the pattern continues.
- School will then seek advice from Outside agencies as to the next level of involvement/support.

Procedures:

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

- Parents are required to contact and inform school on the morning of the first day of absence.
- The school operates a first day contact, which means that should we not have been informed of a child's absence before 9.15am, we will text parents to identify why their child is not in school. This is part of the school's commitment to safeguarding the safety and welfare of children.
- Should contact not be made on the first day, due to extenuating circumstances, we would expect a reason for the absence ASAP.
- Where possible, medical evidence should be provided on the child's return to school.
- Unexplained absences are followed up with a letter from the school office. No reply to this results in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.
- When learners arrive late, they are required to report to the main office and parents are asked to sign them in to record their arrival.
- Any child arriving after their 'Covid 19' allotted entrance time (9am) will receive a late mark (L).
- Any child arriving later than 9.15am would have their attendance recorded as U (late after the register closes). This equates to the morning mark being missed. Consequently, U codes recorded on attendance records will be used as part of the evidence for any Statutory Action deemed necessary.
- Children's attendance is tracked on the school attendance board which displays all pupil names and % of attendance.
- All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term receive a special 100% certificate.
- There is a termly prize for the year group with the best attendance each term.
- It is the responsibility of the Governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. They also receive an update each term through the Headteacher's Report to Governors. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way supported by the Office Administrator (Nikki Boag) and Attendance Lead (Eve Bryan) where appropriate. If there is concern about a child's absence, class teachers (or Higher Level Teaching Assistants) will contact the Attendance Lead / school office immediately.
- The Headteacher and the Attendance Lead, with the Office Administrator, analyses attendance data to identify trends for individual learners' classes and year groups enabling the school to target efforts. Wherever possible, action should be taken by the school to

improve a learner's attendance, investigate and address any underlying cause of problems before considering whether to make a referral to the Local Authority.

- Involving other agencies – the Local Authority must be informed of the absence of any child for a continuous period of 10 days or more without school's permission but school should involve the Local Support Team and take due regard of safeguarding procedures where absence of a particular child is less than 10 days but presents a cause for concern.
- It is not appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc.
- Leave may be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments, which must be in school time.
- Please note the Appendix 3 shares changes to the attendance codes linked to Covid 19.

Leave of absence during term time:

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday:

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) previously allowed headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in "special circumstances" of up to ten school days leave per year. Headteachers could also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments made clear that **headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the [Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#). Amendments to 2007 regulations reduced the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Request for leave during term time forms are available in the main office (see Appendix 2).

In appropriate circumstances, entering into Parenting Contracts and issuing Penalty Notices will be considered.

Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or persistent lateness.
- It is proposed that use of Penalty Notices will be restricted to one per learner per academic year;

- In cases where there is more than one poor-attending learner in a family, multiple notices may be issued. This decision will involve careful consideration and consultation with schools by the Local Support Team regarding the family's current circumstances;
- There will be no restriction on the number of times a parent or carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a Penalty Notice.

As a school, we have adopted the Authorisation Procedure for leave during term time (see Appendices). Where parents fail to comply with the procedure a Penalty Notice may be considered.

When an individual learner's attendance level falls below 85% in any term without good reason, a referral to the Local Support Team will be made by the school. Prior to this, parents will be invited into the school to have the opportunity to discuss any issues preventing regular attendance (with the Attendance Lead). Following investigation, any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

From 1 January 2018, any period of unauthorised leave may result in a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. The head teacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by the head teacher to the local authority.

Penalty Notice for persistent lateness

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning could be issued. This has now changed to 10 marks, and late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued. Parents are therefore encouraged where possible to ensure their child attends school on time. However, if their child is late, they must inform the school of the reason(s) why, as the school may be able to offer some form of advice or support. If a child arrives between 9am and 9.15am they are given 'L' code and do not lose their am mark. They receive a 'U' code if they arrive after 9.15am.

Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness

If your child has had 10 days unauthorised absence or is late 10 times over a twelve-week period, you may receive a penalty warning notice and also potentially a fine.

These changes were agreed with local head teachers and have been implemented to help promote and support good attendance to school. Further details and a copy of the revised Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices can be obtained from the council's website www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Office Administrator: Mrs N Boag

Attendance Lead: Mrs Bryan

Headteacher: Mr S Russell

Legal Framework:

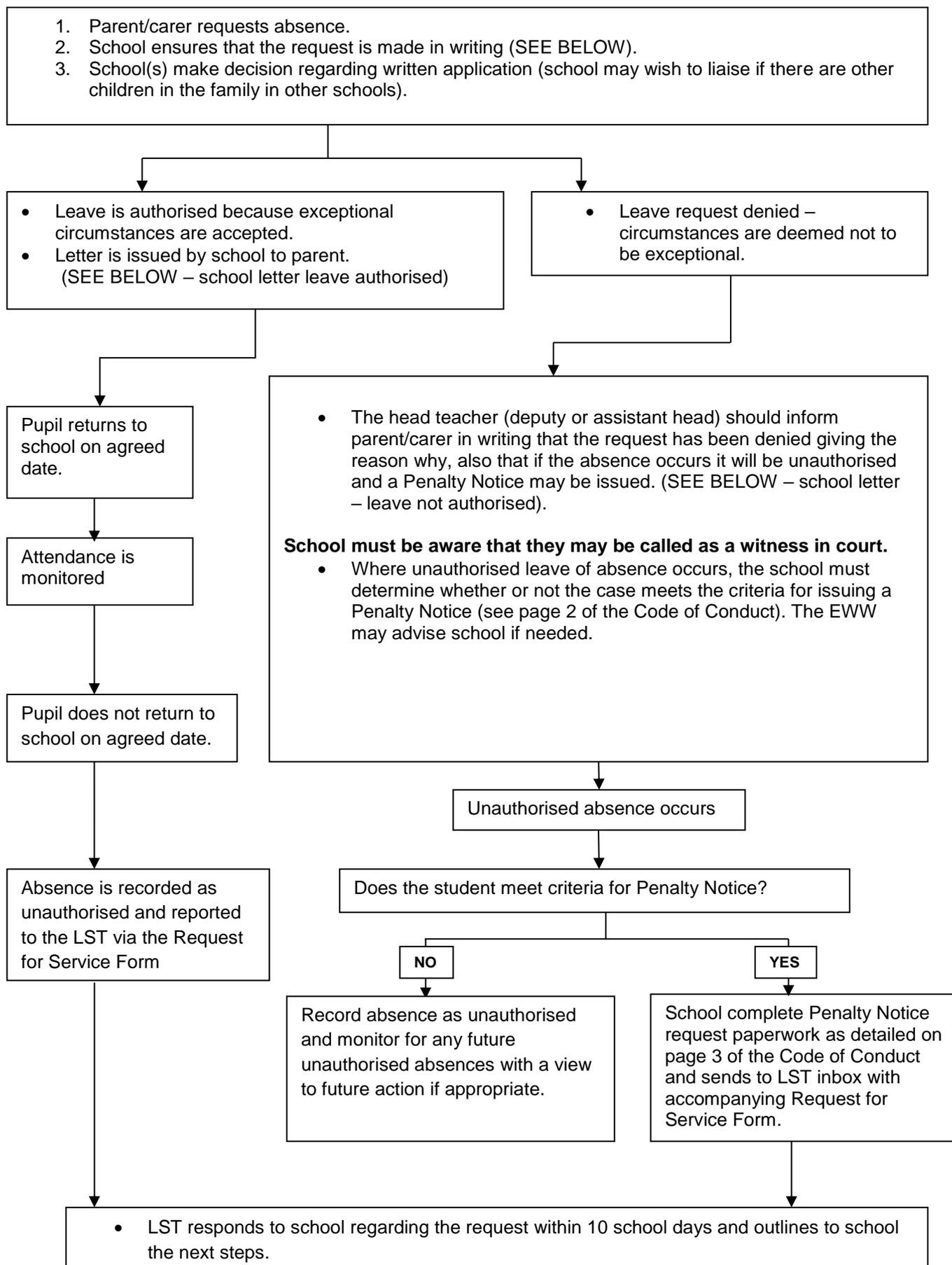
- The Education Act 1996 ;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2016.
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments; and
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- The Equality Act 2010.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Appendices:

- [Staffordshire Code of Conduct](#) for Issuing Fixed penalty notices.
- Department for Education [Guidance –Pupil Attendance](#) including use of national codes to record attendance or reasons for absence in registers.
- Example proformas such as school 'Leave of Absence' request or referral form for support from an external agency.
- Example letters such as colour coded letters to parents related to levels of attendance.

Appendix I - Flowchart – Unauthorised Leave of Absence Authorisation Procedure



Appendix 2: Guidance Notes for Parents requesting Leave in Term Time

1. Parents who want the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully, **complete the attached form and send it to the head teacher**. This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents are strongly advised not to finalise any booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision regarding their request. Head teachers cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins.
2. The Department for Education makes it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers now also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time.
4. Staffordshire County Council understands the challenges that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that, in order to ensure children receive the best education and prospects, that they should be in school during term time.
5. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements
 - the overall attendance pattern of the child
 - frequency of similar requests
 - whether the parent made the request in advance
 - students / pupils on examination courses or due to take SATS will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.
6. Where parents have children in more than one school, a separate request must be made to each school. The head teacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. However, head teachers may choose to liaise with each other as part of their decision-making process.
7. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence, but the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
8. Should the school decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**, which may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine of £60 **per parent* per child**. This fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.
9. The Local Authority will continue to monitor all school absences during term time and support head teachers in challenging parents who ignore the law.

* Generally the DfE states that parents include all those with day to day responsibility for a child.

Request for leave during term time

To: The head teacher of:..... (School) Date.....

I request a leave of absence from school during term time for:

my child (full name)

for the period from (date) to (date)

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are: -

.....
.....
.....

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows

Child(ren) (full name(s))School(s) attended

.....

.....

(Signature of 1st parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

(Signature of 2nd parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance.....%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time(this academic year)

Agreed/Not Agreed

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request :

SignedHead teacher . Date

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent/carer.....

School Letter Leave Agreed

(Parent/carer(s) name and address)

Date

Dear (Parent/carer(s) name)

(Child's name and date of birth)

Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

Having looked at your application, I feel that your request can be supported in this instance. **Therefore, the absence to include the dates requested will be authorised.**

Our key priority is to ensure that your children are as successful as possible and are able to achieve (his/her) full potential. I would therefore ask that you support your child in catching up on the time they will miss in school.

Please note: If your child does not return to school on the date agreed above then you will need to provide a further reason for this absence otherwise it will be recorded as unauthorised and you may then be liable to receive a Penalty Notice.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

Head teacher

School Letter Leave Not Agreed

(Parent/carer(s) name and address)

Date

Dear (Parent/carer(s) name)

(Child's name and date of birth)

Thank you for your letter dated (date) requesting permission for (pupil's name) to be absent from school from to

You will be aware that the Department of Education made important changes to the law for families wanting to request leave of absence in term time. The changes made it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Local Authority and school governors support this; therefore students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application very carefully. Although I understand the reason for your request, I am unable to approve leave of absence in this instance, as I believe the circumstances are not exceptional. **Therefore, if your child is away from school during this period it will be recorded as Unauthorised Absence.**

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Staffordshire County Councils Code of Conduct.

The Penalty Notice fine would be :-

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, are able to reach his/her full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her educational experience.

I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

Termly Attendance Update

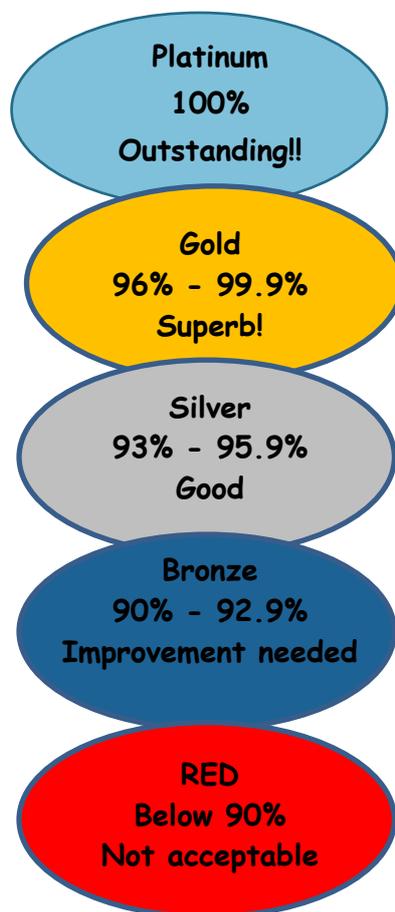
Date

Dear Parent,

Please find attached attendance information from September 4th to October 20th. It is essential that your child attends school at all times and this year we will be monitoring attendance half termly to ensure they are in school at all times. Your child's attendance needs to be above **96% to achieve our school target**. Please be advised that if your child's attendance is below 90% the school will be sending letters to inform you of this. This may also incur contact from the Educational Welfare Officer to consider next steps. Please also find a letter attached from the County Council referring to absence with changes from January 2018.

Your child's name:

Current attendance %:



Kind regards,

Mr Simon Russell
Headteacher

Termly Meeting Request



Date

Re: Child's name

Dear Parent,

Last term, you received a letter relating to your child's attendance. Unfortunately, his/her attendance has fallen below the required level of 90%. The law on a child's attendance has changed over recent years and this is something that schools and parents need to be aware of.

To discuss this, we are offering supportive meetings run by Mrs Bryan to identify any issues or problems you are possibly having. We understand that illness may be a factor in this attendance figure and this will be discussed during your meeting (if this is the case). It is essential that we raise your child's attendance so that they have the best education possible.

I must make you aware that if attendance doesn't improve the Educational Welfare Officer may become involved. However, at Anker Moor, we believe that our strong links with families will prevent this from happening.

Could you please phone the office to arrange an appointment to see Mrs Bryan at your earliest convenience. If we do not hear from you, Mrs Bryan will contact you over the next few weeks.

Kind regards,

Mr Simon Russell

Eve Bryan

Headteacher

Family Support Worker

Coronavirus related absences quick reference guide – 6th August 2020

What to do if...	Action needed	Code	Return to school when...
...my child has coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Get a test • Inform school immediately about test result 	Code X	...the test comes back negative.
...my child tests positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for at least 10 days • Inform school immediately about test result 	Code I	...they feel better. They can return to school after 10 days even if they have a cough or loss of smell/taste. These symptoms can last for several weeks once the infection is gone.
...somebody in my household has coronavirus symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate • Household member to get a test • Inform school immediately about test result 	Code X	...the household member test is negative.
...somebody in my household has tested positive for coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
... NHS test and trace have identified my child as a 'close contact' of somebody with symptoms or confirmed coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the child has completed 14 days of self-isolation
...we/my child has travelled and has to self-isolate a part of a period of quarantine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not take unauthorised leave in term time • Consider quarantine requirements and FCO advice when booking travel • Provide information to school as per attendance policy <p><u>Returning from a destination where quarantine is needed:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school daily • Self-isolate for 14 days 	Code X	...the quarantine period of 14 days has been completed
...we have received medical advice that my child must resume shielding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not come to school • Contact school as required by the pastoral team • Shield until you are informed that restrictions are lifted and shielding is paused again 	Code X	...school inform you that restrictions have been lifted and your child can return to school again.