



## Attendance Policy

### **1. Rationale**

The governors and staff are committed to providing a full and effective education for all students to ensure that they achieve their potential in all that they do. All students benefit from the education the Academy provides and from regular Academy attendance. Regular Academy attendance is crucial if students are to achieve their full potential.

Absence from the Academy, whatever the cause disrupts learning and will impact negatively on the life chances of all students.

Promoting good attendance is a whole school priority

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure that their children receive efficient full time education. Academies are responsible for taking pupil attendance registers twice a day; at the start of the morning session and at the start of the afternoon session. An entry code must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory Academy age who are on the Academy's admission role.

This policy is written in accordance to DFE statutory guidance on school attendance (Aug 13) see attached.

### **2. Aims – The Whole Academy Attendance Policy Aims**

- i. For every student to achieve excellent attendance
  - ii. Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all associated with Academy
  - iii. Set targets to improve individual and whole attendance levels including statutory targets
  - iv. Record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
  - v. Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing relevant attendance data
  - vi. Provide support and advice and guidance to parents and pupils
  - vii. Promote effective partnership with the EWS and other services and agencies.
- Implement positive recognition for good and improved attendance linked to reward systems

### **3. ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER/GOVERNORS**

- Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented
- Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DFE
- Advise on and implement whole Academy strategies for improving attendance
- Monitor attendance data, analyse data in order to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.
- Early intervention to support students whose attendance is causing concern
- Ensure contact with the EWO
- Present attendance figures for Governors termly through Heads report and Governor visits
- Work with teachers to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern; all - unexplained absences to be followed up.
- To ensure that all registers are up-to-date.
- Write to parents if there are attendance concerns (see appendix 2, 3 and 4)
- Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with teachers, parents. EWO and outside agencies.
- To promote good attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.

- To ensure that pupils who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and re-integrated back in to School upon their return.

### **ROLE OF THE PARENT/CARER /PUPILS**

Section 444{1} of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

- Parents/Person with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and on time.
- Parents should support the school by avoiding, if possible non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.
- Parents DO NOT have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday during term time (appendix 5)
- Contact school on the first day of absence and if possible indicate day of return
- Only the school within the context of the law can authorise absence. The fact that a parent has offered a note in relation to the particular absence does not oblige the school to accept the reason for the absence.
- All unexplained absences will be investigated and parents will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.
- Attend meetings about their child's attendance; support school in responding to concerns regarding attendance.
- Parents who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action; as a last resort Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.
- Parents will only be authorised a holiday on completion of holiday work given by the teacher.

### **PUPILS**

- All students are expected to be on the school site between 8.45 to 8.55am appropriately prepared for the day.
- At 8.55am students should be in their first lesson/registration
- Students who arrive after 8.55am must report to reception; their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the member of staff on gate duty and recorded for the register
- Poor punctuality is not acceptable; pupils who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt lessons and miss out on valuable teaching time.

### **ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE CLERK**

- Telephone parents of pupils on the first day of absence before 9.15am asking reason for absence.
- Record authorised and agreed absences in registers appendix 1
- Amend registers as required
- Provide attendance data for the Headteacher/ EWO/Governors (at the end of every week raise concerns for any children directly to the head, at the end of every half term provide the head with a detailed report of any child with less than 95% attendance)

## **ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

- To provide advice and guidance on policies and government initiatives regarding pupil attendance.
- To work with the Headteacher to follow up poor school attendance.
- To meet with Headteacher and parents of pupils identified as needing support to improve attendance.
- To make home visits and maintain contact between parents, school and other external agencies.
- To Liaise with Headteacher to pursue prosecution of parents for their child's poor attendance.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS**

Unless there are special circumstances St Merryn School will not authorise 'Leave of absence' during term time. All leave of absence applications must be made prior to the leave of absence by submitting a school leave request form; students with attendance of less than 90% will not, unless for exceptional circumstances have their leave of absence authorised. If a parent takes their child on holiday in term time without the Headteacher permission, or if a child fails to return from holiday within ten school days of the expected agreed date of return, the Headteacher would refer them to the EWO.

## **PERSISTANT ABSENTEESIM**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when their attendance falls below 85% at any time during their school life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education.

All students whose attendance have fallen to 85% or are at risk of moving onto the poor attendance register and their attendance will be monitored rigorously through the school and EWO 'tracking procedure'.

All PA students are automatically dealt with by the EWO

### **Working with other agencies**

Poor school attendance can be the result of difficulties faced by a child or family, and a cause of other problems such as exclusion; pupils with low levels of attendance tend to have other complex issues therefore a co-ordinated approach by a number of agencies can assist these pupils and their families. Regular referral meetings/discussions with the EWO and the school will be held to support the co-ordination of service provision and to build on good practice.

Where a child is absent for a period of 10 consecutive days without reasonable reason the LA must be informed.

**Appendix 1 ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Statistical meaning</b>	<b>Physical meaning</b>
/	Present (am)	Present	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/ description)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (not medical or dental, etc. appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/ description)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	Out for whole session

U	Late (after register closed)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Education visit or trip	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved education activity (present)	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendance	Not required to be in school
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendance	Not required to be in school
Z	Pupil not yet on role	Not counted in possible attendance	Not required to be in school
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendance	Not required to be in school

**Approved by Staff: June 2014**

**Approved by Governors: June 2014**

**Review: June 2016**

Appendix 2

Date

Dear <salutation>

**Attendance Concern (Medical) Letter**

**Re:** <Forename> <Surname>

This letter is to inform you that your child's level of absence is giving the school cause for concern. As a school we aim for every child to have an attendance level of 95% or above.

Currently your child's attendance level is recorded as X %. The record includes X sessions of unauthorised absence and X sessions of authorised absence. An attendance rate that is this low is likely to have an adverse effect on your child's overall education.

**Therefore, as of today, no absences will be authorised unless we receive a note or appointment card from your doctor, walk-in centre, hospital or dentist to confirm that a visit to a medical professional was made. This confirmation will be required each time that your child is absent from school for medical reasons.**

If we do not receive confirmation in the manner detailed above then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the case may be passed to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Please contact the school to discuss any concerns.

Yours sincerely

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**Please return this slip to the school.**

I confirm that I received the attendance concern (medical) letter for my son/daughter.

Pupil name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 3

<Date>

Dear <salutation>

**Attendance Warning Letter**

**Re:** <Forename> <Surname>

Despite two previous letters from my colleagues regarding your child's attendance level, and/or their number of unauthorised absences, we have failed to see an improvement.

Your child's attendance level is currently X % and they now have X unauthorised absences.

If your child's attendance does not improve rapidly, or there are further unauthorised absences, then we will be left with no choice but to refer their case to the Educational Welfare Officer..

It is most important that your child's attendance improves rapidly, and they have no further unauthorised absences, to prevent this action.

I enclose a copy of the relevant attendance record for your information. Any unauthorised absences are coded as O and/or N.

Yours sincerely

✂-----

**Please return this slip to the school.**

I confirm that I received the attendance warning letter for my son/daughter.

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<Date>

Dear <salutation>

**Attendance Concern**

**Re:** <Forename> <Surname>

Further to a previous letter sent, I write to inform you that your child's attendance is still below an acceptable level. A pupil's attendance should remain at 95% or above, and they should have no unauthorised absences, in order for them to gain full benefit from the educational opportunities available to them during their time at school.

Your child's attendance level is currently X % and they now have X unauthorised absences.

It is important that we work together to ensure that your child's attendance improves. If attendance continues to fall, or there are further unauthorised absences, it may unfortunately be necessary for us to involve the Education Welfare Officer and/or school nurse.

I enclose a copy of your child's attendance record for your information. Any unauthorised absences are coded as O and/or N. If you have any queries concerning the report; or if there are any particular circumstances that you feel the school need to be aware of; then please do not hesitate to contact us at the school.

Yours sincerely

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**Please return this slip to the school.**

I confirm that I received the attendance concern letter for my son/daughter.

Pupil Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Wadebridge Area Schools Headteachers' Association

Padstow, Trevisker, St. Breock, St. Issey, St. Kew, St. Maybn, St. Merryn, St. Minver, Wadebridge Primary and Wadebridge Secondary School

### HOLIDAYS IN TERM-TIME

**IMPORTANT:** Please read carefully the information below. **WARNING:** If you take your child on holiday in term time without the prior approval of the school, you may be liable for a £50 Penalty Notice\* per parent per child. As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by, whenever possible, taking your holidays during school holidays.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>We recognise that it is often expensive to take a holiday during school breaks and that is why some parents may ask for term-time leave for their child. However, it is important that parents carefully consider the implications of taking their child out of school during term time.</p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the course work they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p><b>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</b></p> <p>There are times during a school year when a child may experience particular problems because of term-time leave such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closeness to exams or tests.</li> <li>• During the first year at a new school</li> <li>• At the beginning of a new school term</li> </ul> <p><b>If the school refuses a request for term-time leave and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and you may receive a £50* fine per parent for each child.</b></p>	<p>The law does not say that parents have an automatic right to take their child out of school for holidays during term-time.</p> <p>However, in exceptional circumstances school may authorise, in advance, requests for periods of leave of ten days in total in any year. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides, and must be for the purpose of a family holiday.</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>Advice from the Department for Children, Schools and Families in March 2008 states that schools can only approve absence for family holidays if they consider there are special circumstances. Holiday prices, and the fact that the parents have booked a holiday before checking with the school, are not special reasons.</p>
<p><b>Other absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuine illness</li> <li>• Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if possible)</li> <li>• Days of religious observance</li> <li>• Exceptional circumstances, such as bereavement</li> <li>• Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces</li> <li>• External examinations</li> <li>• When Traveller children go on the road with their parents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other absence from school will not be authorised:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For any type of shopping</li> <li>• Looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents</li> <li>• Minding the house</li> <li>• Birthdays</li> <li>• Resting after a late night</li> <li>• Relatives visiting or visiting relatives</li> </ul>

Please contact your child's head of year if you wish to discuss this issue.

**The law requires schools to be open to pupils for 190 days each year, and every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.**

We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to take holidays during term-time.

\*Penalty Notice £50 if paid within 28 days, increasing to £100 if paid after 28 days and before 42 days.

# ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

## (INCLUDING HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME)

### NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. If the request is for a holiday in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent with whom the child normally lives. Permission must be sought in advance and must be for the purpose of a family holiday. If you do not have Parental Responsibility and/or normally live with the child you must seek the consent of the parent who does and that person should complete this form. Schools will only consider requests from that parent.

When deciding whether to allow term time leave, for any reason, the school will consider:

- The time and duration of the leave
- Your child's record of attendance
- Learning that will be missed

#### TO THE HEADTEACHER

I wish to apply for NAME(S) OF CHILD(REN) \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates \_\_\_\_\_

#### THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE PROVIDED:

##### REASON FOR ABSENCE

IF HOLIDAY, PLEASE GIVE REASONS WHY DURING TERM TIME:

THE HOLIDAY CANNOT BE TAKEN DURING A SCHOOL HOLIDAY:

*I confirm I have read the information contained in this form*

Signature of Parent/Carer \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORISED:** The School agrees to your child being absent from school on the specified dates but the child/ren must complete holiday work given by the teacher.

**UNAUTHORISED:** The School does not authorise your request for leave in term time because:

**NB: If a holiday is taken without it being authorised, the School is required to report the absence to the LA (Local Authority) who may issue a £50 Penalty Notice\*, per parent, per child.**

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ Headteacher Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED FORMS TO RECEPTION**