Infinity Academies Trust

Ready to learn; Prepared to flourish.

IAT-CW-014

Attendance Policy

Bourne Elsea Park C of E Primary Academy

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Document Management Information

Policy Reference	IAT-CW-014
Applicable to:	All internal and external stakeholders to Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy
Development and Consultation:	Has been produced in consultation with the SLT at the school and is carried out within the context and spirit of the schools' value and vision statements.
Dissemination:	This policy is available by the Trust document manager.
Implementation:	To be shared with all staff and reviewed appropriately.
Training:	As required
Review Frequency:	Annually (or however long) or should there be any specific statutory changes.
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Revision History

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1.0	New Policy	September 2026

1.0 Introduction

Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all pupils. We believe it is extremely important for pupils to attend regularly and on time. This will give them the best opportunity to progress and succeed at school.

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

At Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy, we:

- provide a welcoming and caring environment where all members of the Academy feel secure and valued
- expect pupils to arrive on time every day
- will support parents in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- believe leave of absence should not be taken during term-time. We will not authorise requests for leave of absence during term-time, except in exceptional/ unavoidable circumstances

How to notify the Academy of an absence:

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or unavoidable circumstances, please contact the academy on each day of absence by: Calling the office on: 01778 426968

Please inform us of any planned absence in advance, this includes unavoidable medical appointments during the school day.

2.0 Aim

Ensuring all pupils have high attendance is a key priority of the academy. Pupils are entitled to a full-time education, and we know that pupils with high attendance do better at school than those with high absence rates. We also know that absence can be a sign of other risks in a young person's life. The aim of this document is to set out how we create and maintain a positive culture that supports and values good attendance. It includes how we:

- Promote good attendance and punctuality
- Follow up absences
- Communicate and work with families to reduce absence
- Monitor absences and analyse patterns of absence
- Work with local partners to support high attendance and reduce absence

3.0 Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of Infinity Academies Trust Attendance Policy. The Trust policy details the relevant legislation and guidance documents. In particular, this policy carefully follows DfE guidance in this area.

Our work on attendance is linked closely to our approaches to safeguarding and behaviour.

How we promote a culture of high expectations in attendance and punctuality:
We build a whole school culture. Good attendance is everybody's concern. Assemblies and targeted information keep the profile of attendance high amongst children, while tailored training is delivered through staff workshops to provide staff with specific information updates to carry out their role including administrative, pastoral and senior leaders

The profile of good attendance is shared throughout the school community so that there is an understanding and ownership of the school, class and individual attendance data. Information to parents and carers is clear; explicitly linking attendance to learning. It's about raising the profile through planned whole school and class activities. In short, everyone should lead and model the importance of good attendance.

We understand there may be barriers to good attendance, and these require sensitive and detailed unpicking. Positive relationships with parents and carers are essential. An important factor for success is deciding who is best placed to build the initial relationship and to listen, so that barriers can be removed. This may vary on an individual basis and may not always be the head teacher, attendance officer or Family Key Worker. It could be a trusted class teacher, pastoral worker or teaching assistant but what *is* important, is beginning the discussion.

Our targeted Attendance Plan includes details on the support families can expect to receive and at which stage.

For example, when attendance drops to between 96-93%:

Informal discussions with the pupil may take place to explore whether they have any concerns or issues that could be a barrier to attendance.

Reminder information sent home

Parents/carers invited to discuss any concerns, and the PASS set up with the attendance officer (Parent And Student Support).

A bespoke plan may be created to support children's individual needs.

For persistent absentees:

The Parental Agreement is reviewed

During the Parental Plan Review, those involved will identify whether any additional support could be offered by the academy or partner agencies

Consider implementation of the ATTEND framework - if poor attendance has been identified due to the child suffering from mental health issues including anxiety, the school will activate support for the child and family following the Lincolnshire EBSA Ladder and use the ATTEND Framework to support underlying reasons behind the child's reluctance to attend school or leave home. This will comprise of a graduated approach of support starting with a Plan, with support from the Lincolnshire Local Authority and local NHS services.

An individual pupil audit may be carried out to determine ATTEND involvement.

Teachers will be informed of individualised plans to support children with their attendance and reintegration into learning.

4.0 Our expectations of attendance and punctuality

Our school gates open at 08:45am each morning and pupils must arrive in school by 09:00am.

Registration ends at 09:00am

Where parents decide to have their child registered at a school, they have a legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, this means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence, in advance, from the academy.

Parents/carers are expected to:

Make sure their child attends every day on time.

Contact: the academy on 01778 426968 to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence, and on each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.

Provide the academy with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child. This is essential so that contact can be made in case of emergencies.

Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time.

Class teachers:

Are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the office by 09:00am when registration closes.

Admin staff will:

Take calls from parents/ carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the academy system.

Provide regular attendance reports to staff and report concerns about attendance to the designated senior leaders responsible for attendance including the Head Teacher.

Work with staff and families to tackle persistent absence.

The designated senior leader is responsible for Leading attendance across the academy will:

- Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Have an oversight of data analysis
- Evaluate and monitor processes
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Oversee the arrangement of calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Oversee the delivery of targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Work with local partners to implement bespoke strategies to improve attendance for those children with persistent absence or severe absence

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance are Mrs Louise Jordan and Miss Lorna Ockwell. They can be contacted via the school office on the number detailed above.

The Head Teacher is also responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the academy
- Monitoring academy-level absence data and reporting it to the Trust
- Monitoring the impact of processes and attendance strategies
- Monitoring the impact of work with local partners to improve attendance in identified cases.
- Working with local partners when formal procedures such as parental contracts, supervision orders and penalty notices are required.

5.0 Recording attendance

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
- We will use the DfE codes to detail the attendance and absences.
- We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically by calling the academy office.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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 academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment and medical evidence is provided (appointment letter/text/card).

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. Parents can request a term-time absence by completing the form which is available from the academy office.

Go to section 6 to find out which term-time absences the academy can authorise.

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

Children arriving late will be noted in the attendance log in the office and regularly monitored by the Head Teacher and attendance team. Parents/carers of children who are consistently late will be invited into school by the attendance lead for a support meeting where a parental agreement will be set up and further areas of support from external agencies explored.

Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. A home visit may also be completed on the first day of absence, even if the school have had contact with the pupil's parent/ carer.
- If the academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the academy may complete a home visit. If the Academy has not been informed of the reason for absence over consecutive days, the police may be asked to do a safe and well check.
- 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 academy will consider involving the best approach, which may be supporting or signposting to a further outside agency depending on the circumstances. Daily home visits may be undertaken for each day that the absence continues.

Reporting to parents/ carers

The academy will regularly inform parents/ carers about their child's attendance, absence levels and punctuality through letters at the end of each half term. Information about attendance is also given at parent/carer/ family feedback and consultation evenings.

6.0 Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term time absence

The Head Teacher 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 with discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

What are Exceptional Circumstance?

Exceptional circumstances are defined as being unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child outweighs the loss of learning time.

Below are examples not defined as exceptional circumstances-

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Quieter hotels/ locations due to fewer families being away at the same time

- Poor weather in school holidays
- Overlap of timings with the beginning and end of term
- Booked the wrong dates by mistake/did not check/ relative booked for them
- Family wedding attendance
- Family birthday
- Availability of time off work
- Can only get time for holidays in term time
- Family time
- Day trips
- Visits to see other relatives
- Holidays taken without following the correct procedure

Exceptional circumstances may be defined as-

- Illness and medical appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- There are other, infrequent, occasions where absences are permitted and coded as 'Authorised Circumstances'. This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. serious family illness or bereavement.

Parents/carers should communicate with school if there are such circumstances.

The Head Teacher's decision is final in such matters. The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with the leave of absence request form, available from the main office.

Evidence may be required to support any request for a leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments.

It is an academy's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. Parents must provide the exact nature of their child's illness. We cannot accept broad reasons such as: 'illness', 'poorly', 'feeling under the weather' or 'tired'. To authorise the absence, the academy needs to know exactly what is wrong with your child. In some circumstances we may request further evidence of a child's illness to allow the absence to be authorised. We reserve the right to seek additional evidence related to the illness if we have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

Please note, family holidays should not be taken in term time as they damage progress and continuity of learning. We will not authorise any holidays unless they fit the criteria for very exceptional circumstances.

Term time holidays

If you choose to go ahead with a term time holiday, a Penalty Notice could be issued by the Local Authority under the following legislation:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act.

In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty. The amount of the Penalty is based on the following:

For a first offence, if a parent pays the Penalty Notice within 21 days from the date it is served the sum due from the parent to discharge the Penalty Notice is £80.

The parent can still pay the Notice after 21 days, but the payment increases to £160. This must be paid before 28 days have passed from the date of service.

If a parent pays the amount due within the times set out above, then no further action will be taken against that parent for the offence on the date(s) set out in the Penalty Notice. For a further offence within a three-year rolling period, the payment will be £160. There is no discretion permitted for early payment.

A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Unexplained absence for 10 school days

If a child is missing for ten school days, then the child will be referred to Education Welfare as a child missing in Education (CME). This may involve additional home visits and in some circumstances the police or other external agencies. If the missing child does not return to the school for a further ten days (20 school days in total) and there has been no contact from the parents/carers, then the child's place may be removed from the register. This decision will be made by the Head Teacher/Executive Head Teacher after an individual assessment of risk has been made. The academy will notify the local authority if a pupil is removed from the academy register.

Penalty Notices and Prosecution

It is important to be aware that poor attendance may result in the issuing of penalty notices to parents. These notices can apply to term-time holidays, any unauthorised absences, or a combination of both. The national threshold for issuing a penalty notice in England is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10- week period. This typically equates to 5 school days. (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4

weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

Legal sanctions

Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or not appropriate (such as an unauthorised holiday in term time), the local authority can take forward legal intervention to formalise support and/or enforce attendance. This includes fines or a penalty notice. The arrangements for these procedures are found here https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/fixed-penalty-noticescode-conduct

7.0 How we monitor attendance

Monitoring attendance:

The academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the academy and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Collect and analyse pupil-level absence data each term from the Trust and DfE and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The academy will compare attendance data to the Trust and national average.

Analysing attendance

The academy 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.

Attendance is monitored and analysed regularly.

Daily monitoring takes place via the office and calls are made in the first instance to all parents and carers where children are not attending, and the academy has not been informed. Where a vulnerable child does not attend, a call may be made to the social worker or family key worker to carry out a home visit. Each week the Attendance Team meets to discuss the previous week's attendance and punctuality of individuals and discuss further action that needs to take place. Safeguarding meetings occur weekly where attendance of vulnerable children features. Analysis of the attendance of individuals, classes and groups of children takes place at the end of each term, or sooner where necessary. This analysis is used to target individuals or groups of children who need further support. Information on attendance is fed back to the Executive Team and the Trust Board. The academy uses reports on attendance data (for example via the ISDR) for further analysis.

Using data to improve attendance:

The academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other academy 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
- Reduce persistent and severe absence - persistent absence (PA) is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence (SA) is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of being persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as Family Action, Safer Families, social workers, Early Help workers, BOSS (Behaviour Outreach Support Service) and PRU (Lincolnshire Pupil Reintegration Unit).
- Carry out an individual pupil audit to determine any other external involvement.

Appendix 1 – Letter to share with parents annually

ON ACADEMY LETTERHEAD AND ON THE ACADEMY COMMUNICATION APP

September 2026

Applications for leave of absence including Family Holidays.

I am writing to advise you about any application for absence from **Name of Academy** due to a family holiday.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have removed the reference to holidays during term time and now provides that a leave of absence during term time will only be granted where an application is made in advance to the school and the school consider that the leave of absence should be granted due to ***exceptional circumstances*** relating to that application.

Should you fail to apply in advance for absence due to a family holiday or other circumstance then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If it has been decided that the request for absence or family holiday applied for does not constitute an 'exceptional circumstance' then your child's absence will also be recorded as unauthorised.

If you decide to take your child out of school during this period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If you choose to go ahead with the holiday, a Penalty Notice could be issued by the Local Authority under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient fulltime education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty. The amount of the Penalty is based on the following:**

For a first offence, if a parent pays the Penalty Notice within 21 days from the date it is served the sum due from the parent to discharge the Penalty Notice is £80.
The parent can still pay the Notice after 21 days, but the payment increases to £160. This must be paid before 28 days have passed from the date of service.
If a parent pays the amount due within the times set out above, then no further action will be taken against that parent for the offence on the date(s) set out in the Penalty Notice.
For a further offence within a three-year rolling period, the payment will be £160. There is no discretion permitted for early payment.
A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

This letter is a formal warning should you cause your child to be absent from Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy without authorisation.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely
Headteacher

Appendix 2 – Strategy for Attendance to share with Parents

ON ACADEMY LETTERHEAD AND SHARED VIA THE PARENT APPLICATION

September 2026

Attendance expectations and procedures

Attendance is a high priority at Bourne Elsea Park Primary Academy, and we ask that all children aim for an attendance rate of 96% or above.

Please be advised that attendance and punctuality is monitored closely, therefore if we have any concerns over your child's attendance or punctuality, we will invite you to attend a meeting in school to see if there are any ways that we can help and support you and your child around attendance.

Please see the information below outlining action taken for each group of attendance category:

95% - 100%	Excellent – no action taken
90% - 94%	Close monitoring and invitation to a meeting. Medical evidence may also be required to authorise future absences – any absence not relating to illness will automatically be unauthorised
Below 90% - Persistent Absence (PA)	PN (penalty notice) warning (notice to improve) PN request to be submitted to LCC for prosecution

****Lates are monitored closely, and should your child attend late on a regular basis, you will be invited to attend a meeting****

In summary, please see the below timeline in relation to poor attendance:

1. Invitation to a meeting (parent and student support meeting)
2. Should there be no improvement after the meeting, a 'notice to improve' letter will be issued – you will be asked to provide medical evidence for all future illness related absences for them to be authorised – anything other than illness will be automatically unauthorised
3. If there is still no improvement, a final legal warning will be issued, and a Penalty Notice request will be submitted to Lincolnshire County Council Legal Department – you may be summoned before a Magistrates Court for the alleged offence of not sending your child regularly (and punctually) to school in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 1996

Reasons for absences:

Please be advised that only genuine reasons for absence will be authorised. Reasons such as the following will **not** be authorised:

- Mum/dad poorly
- Headlice
- Tiredness

Reminders:

- If your child has sickness or diarrhoea, we ask that they are absent for 48 hours (2 full days clear) before returning to school
- Medical evidence will be requested for an illness related absence that goes on for 4 days or more (evidence can be prescribed medication, a doctor's appointment, doctor's note etc).

Safe and well checks/home visits - If your child does not attend school, a member of the safeguarding team may come to your home to ascertain why. This is called a 'safe and well check'. If your child has been absent from school and does not return on the 3rd consecutive day, a safe and well check will be carried out by a member of the safeguarding team (regardless of whether or not you have informed school why your child is absent).

Please appreciate that we have a duty of care to the children who are a part of our academy, and the safeguarding procedure is in place to make sure children are kept safe.

How to inform the office of an absence:

Telephone/voicemail – 01778 426968

Email – bepenquiries@infinityacademies.co.uk

When leaving a message via the above methods, please ensure that you are specific as to why your child is absent e.g. temperature, sickness etc. Terms such as unwell, poorly, under the weather etc will not be accepted, and we will contact you to obtain the 'reason for absence' asking you to be more specific. If the illness is not elaborated on, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Punctuality:

Arriving to school:

The school gates are open between 08:45 – 9:00

Any child who arrives after this time will be marked as late in the register.

A child who arrives late to school and comes in via the office may feel very anxious about walking into their class, especially when their friends are settled and ready to start the day. Children who arrive late miss out on the start of the day, which includes group work, instructions for the day etc. Children need to be in school on time and arrive via the appropriate classroom door. This promotes routine and stability

Collection at home time:

Please ensure that your child is collected promptly at home time. Gates are open from 15:05 – 15:25. Collection time is 15:15. Should you be running late, please let the office know as soon as possible. We record late collections and late arrivals, and if it becomes a regular occurrence, you will be invited into school for a meeting to ascertain why.

Holidays:

Family holidays during term time will under no circumstances be authorised. If your child's attendance is below 95%, a Penalty Notice request will be issued to LCC.

Holidays and leave for any other reason during term time should be applied for using the absence request form.

We ask that parents/carers are truthful about holidays. If you have informed us that your child is poorly, please be reminded home visits are routinely conducted. When the home visit is made, and we do not get a response, this is a cause for concern and the police may be contacted to make a welfare check. This will be recorded by the school and the police. Also, if you do not apply for the holiday via the correct procedure, this is an automatic fine.

Medical appointments – doctors, dentist, hospital:

Whilst we ask to preferably arrange medical appointments for out of school hours, we do understand that it can sometimes be unavoidable. Please follow the procedures below:

Please *ALWAYS* inform the office of the appointment in advance – via telephone. Evidence must also be provided for the absence to be authorised:	
For hospital appointments	Provide school with a copy of the letter
For doctor or dentist appointments	Provide school with a screenshot of the appointment text, photo of the appointment card, or ask for a compliment slip confirming the attendance to the appointment from the doctor/dentist/nurse etc

Evidence can either be brought to the office for photocopying or emailed (by taking a screenshot and attaching it to an email) to the following email address: bepenquiries@infinityacademies.co.uk

Absences for parent/sibling appointments will not be authorised.

Please be advised that a whole day should not be taken for an appointment e.g. if the appointment is at 11am, your child should attend for the morning session and then return to school afterwards, unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been agreed to prior.

Whilst we understand some absences are unavoidable due to illness, I would like to kindly remind parents that we want to help avoid any of the above actions, so ask that you work with us to keep your child's attendance at 96% or above.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 3 – Request for Leave Form

Pupil Request for Leave

As you are aware the Department for Education (DFE) updated guidance on improving school attendance, effective from 19th August 2024 in collaboration with the Local Authority.

The change in legislation indicates that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. We know that Government research shows that there is a very strong link between regular school attendance and academic achievement. The Government advise that an attendance rate of less than 95%, in any one academic year, will have a detrimental effect on a child's education.

Due to the above, the Academy will no longer be granting parents/carers time off to take their children on holiday. As of 19th August 2024, the national threshold for issuing a penalty notice in England is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10-week period. This typically equates to 5 school days. (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

A Penalty Notice can be issued under the following legislation:

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act
- In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty

If you wish to seek approval for any request of absence for your child(ren) from School, then you must apply in writing to the Headteacher, **at least four weeks in advance** of the requested period. You should only remove your child(ren) if the absence has been authorised and notified to you in writing by the Academy. Any exceptional circumstances must be clearly set out in the written request to the Headteacher who will consider each case upon its merits.

If you then choose to take your child out of school during term time and it is not deemed to be exceptional circumstances and/or has not been approved by the Academy, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued for the period of absence.

The money raised from these fines is retained by the Local Authority and the school does not receive any of this. We will continue to work with families to support as much as we can with attendance and further information can be found in our school attendance policy on our website.

The form below must be completed and returned to the school office. The application will be considered carefully, and we will notify you of the school's decision within 10 working days**. We strongly advise that no leave of absence be booked prior to receiving this decision.**

Kind regards,

Headteacher

Pupil Leave of Absence Request Form

Name of pupil: _____ Class: _____

I would like to take my child out of school for the following dates:

First date of absence: _____ Last date of absence: _____

Reason (attaching supporting evidence/documents _____

_____

Signed _____ (Parent/Carer) Date: _____

For completion by school:

Absence (please circle one): *Authorised* *Unauthorised* *Further monitoring required*

Total number of days granted: _____ *Coded as:* _____ *Recorded on Arbor* _____

Parent Informed: _____ *Headteacher signature:* _____