



**Moordown St. John's
Church of England Primary School**

**Policy for Pupil
Attendance
2020/2021**

***"A Christian community where commitment
to educational excellence changes lives."***

The Headteacher, on behalf of the Board of Directors of Moordown St. Johns CE Primary School, ratified this policy on 13 July 2020

Review Date: September 2021

A copy of this policy in an alternative format, such as large print or different language, may be provided on request from the school office.

Policy For Pupil Attendance, 2020 / 2021

Contents /

1. Our ethos and vision.....	2
2. Aims.....	3
3. Guidance and legislation	3
4. School procedures	4
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence	6
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	9
8. Roles and responsibilities.....	9
9. Links with other policies	12
10. Policy review	12
Appendix 1: attendance codes	13
Appendix 2: Leave of absence, exceptional circumstances	15
Appendix 3: Leave in term time request form	16

1. Our Ethos and Vision

‘A Christian Community where commitment to educational excellence changes lives’

We are a Church of England Primary School and exist to further the work of Christ by expecting and demonstrating the Fruits of the Spirit in our day-to-day lives. The Fruits of the Spirit can be found in Galatians Chapter 5 and are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control and gentleness.

This fundamental truth is the essence of all that we are and all that we do.

Be the BEST me! At MSJ we value the whole child and aim to nurture their spiritual, cognitive, emotional and physical sides to be the BEST they can be! We aim for **Balanced** children who are spiritually self-aware and curious; children who strive for **Excellence** in their own learning; **Secure** individuals who accept themselves and grow in self-belief; and children who **Thrive** physically, making healthy choices and reach for their personal best.

Balanced

Excellence

Secure

Thrive

This policy supports this important aim.

2. Aims

Moordown St. John's Church of England Primary School seeks to work with parents/carers to ensure that all children receive an education which maximises opportunities for them to realise their true potential.

The school aims to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

We are proud of our attendance record, which is generally very good, and are grateful to our supportive parents and carers who work with us to promote and encourage good attendance by their children. School staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

Addressing the issues behind non-attendance and persistent absenteeism is a priority for the school. The expectation is that all pupils will attain at least 96% attendance.

We will support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly. This policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

3. Guidance and Legislation

In March 2020, the Government made it clear that no parent would be penalised or sanctioned for their child's non-attendance at school during the period of full/partial school closure due to Covid-19.

Now the circumstances have changed it is vital for all children to return to school to minimise as far as possible the longer-term impact of the pandemic on children's education, wellbeing and wider development. School attendance will therefore be mandatory from the beginning of the Autumn Term 2020. This means from that point the usual rules on school attendance will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school
- Schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with Local Authorities' Codes of Conduct.

To enable us to provide the full educational experience for all pupils whilst at the same time ensuring safety, systems of control will be in place. One of these protective measures is to stagger the children's arrival and departure times.

From 7 September 2020, children can arrive in school anytime between 8.00am and 8.30am.

For social distancing, parents should spread out their arrival in school as much as possible and not linger in the playground or around the school gates ~ please depart the school area promptly.

All children must be in their classrooms by 8.30am.

Departure times will be as follows:

2.30pm – 2.40pm: Year R

2.45pm – 2.55pm: Years 1, 3, 4 and 5

3.00pm: Years 2 and 6

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. School procedures

4.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken 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.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils can arrive in school between 8.00am and 8.30am each school day. For social distancing, parents should spread out their arrival in school as much as possible. Registration is called at 8.30am and again at 12.45pm for all classes. Registers will close ten minutes after registration times, ie at 8.40am and 12.55pm.

Arrival between 8.30am - 8.40am or 12.45pm - 12.55pm will be marked as 'authorised late'.

Arrival after 8.40am or 12.55pm will be recorded as 'unauthorised late' unless the school has previously acknowledged and accepted the reason for the child's late arrival into school.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents/carers can report their child's absence in any of the following ways:

- ◆ Leave a recorded message on our 24 hour absence line 01202 527683 select 'Option 1'
- ◆ Send a text message to 07860 030 292
- ◆ Telephone the School Office on 01202 527683
- ◆ Call into the School Office from 8.00am.

Absence without a reason being provided is a safeguarding matter.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents 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 school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

4.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence code M (unless the child arrives in school before the close of registers); advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 5.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is important that classes make a prompt and effective start at the beginning of the school day. The start of school sessions are used to give out instructions or to organise work. If a child arrives late, they can miss vital information from the class teacher, miss out on school work and cause disruption to their own learning and that of other pupils in the class. In addition, children can find late arrival in class embarrassing, which may lead to possible further absence.

- Children can arrive in school between 8.00am and 8.30am. The school bell rings at 8.30am. All pupils are expected to be in the classroom by this time.
- A pupil will receive a late mark if they are not in the classroom by 8.30am/12.45pm when the registers are taken. Arrival between 8.30am and 8.40am/12.45pm and 12.55pm will be marked as authorised late. Registers close at 8.40am/12.55pm.
- Arrival after the close of registration without an exceptional reason will be marked as unauthorised absence code 'U' in line with Department for Education guidance. This mark shows the child to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will make verbal contact with parents/carers. If the concerns persist, the Headteacher will write to the parents/carers, including a copy of the child's attendance summary, and stating the total number of late arrivals over a determined period.

If there is no improvement, the school will arrange a meeting with the parents/carers. In the event of persistent lateness, the school may make a formal referral to the Education Social Work Service and/or give consideration to legal action.

4.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is authorised or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason/explanation for the absence, the school does not accept the reason given as an authorised absence or has good reason to doubt the explanation given.

The school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

4.6 Reporting to parents

Each child's attendance record is shared with their parents/carers as part of their child's annual written report and at Parent Consultations.

It follows that individual records of attendance are held on file and passed onto subsequent schools.

Attendance records (including correspondence with parents) are retained for a period of 3 years in line with Data Protection requirements.

Contact will be made with all parents/carers when attendance and/or punctuality become a concern.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 4.2 and 4.3
- 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 school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller 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.
- Public performances or competing at regional, county or national level for sport. Parents/carers must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of their child's participation and how learning will continue if absence occurs. The Headteacher and/or Board of Directors will decide whether to authorise such absences. A performance licence will be required for absences for public performances.

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

A list as to what does and does not constitute exceptional circumstances is shown in Appendix 2.

Parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence to support their exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave and will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted. .

There is no legal entitlement for leave in school time to go on holiday **and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.**

Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence should fill in an application form Appendix 3 in advance of making any travel arrangements.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will **be unauthorised** and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in the Council's Code of Conduct/Penalty Notice Handbook parent/carers may be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance the Code.

5.1.1 Persistent absence (Poor or irregular attendance)

The Government measures our school on attendance and the numbers of Persistent Absence pupils.

Whatever the reasons for absence, the Department for Education deems a pupil to be a persistent absentee if they have 10% or more absence (of any kind) on any given day of the school year.

The school will write to these parents/carers, each half term, to alert them that their child is falling into the persistent absentee category. Parents/carers may also be invited in to a meeting to discuss attendance and to agree steps that need to be taken to address and manage their child's absence. This may include providing the school with medical evidence for any future absence to be authorised. In cases where attendance is a concern, a referral will be made to the Education Social Work Service.

Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. Attendance data is shared with the Board of Directors, the Local Authority and the Department for Education.

5.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The school may use the full range of legal measures, including Penalty Notices, to secure good attendance.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the Council's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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 pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

Penalty Notices will be issued by the Council, on behalf of the school, in accordance with their Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

For each qualifying case of unauthorised absence the school or Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued **to one or more parent/carers** for each child. This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one Penalty Notice for each child to each parent.

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days (as at 1 September 2016). Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices.

If the fine remains unpaid the Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance.

Please be aware that it is possible for parents/carers to be prosecuted for non-attendance at school without the need to first issue a penalty notice.

The Education Act 1996 states that:

S.576: “Meaning of “parent”.

In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, “parent”, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or
- (b) who has care of him.”

This means that eg step-parents, grand-parents and/or others with whom the child lives may be considered as ‘parents’ and receive a penalty notice.

S.7: “Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.”

S.444: “Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil.

If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.”

Regular attendance is considered to be at least 96% in any one rolling year. Legally a pupil attends regularly when all absence is authorised.

5.3 Statutory duty to report absence

The school is aware of the importance of its duty with regard to **preventing radicalisation** of children, young people and their families and the need to alert the appropriate authorities of any long-term absence. The school also has a statutory duty to report instances when a girl verbally discloses that she has been absent for Female Genital Mutilation.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school seeks to promote effective partnerships with parents/carers and to provide support, advice and guidance on the importance of regular and punctual attendance of their children.

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents/carers and the child. To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Seek to foster and develop positive partnerships with parents/carers; encourage/invite parents/carers in to school to discuss individual attendance concerns; signpost parents/carers to our Parent Support Worker, School Nurse or other professional/agency for support and guidance.
- Offer regular School Nurse ‘Drop-Ins’, the dates of which are advertised in our fortnightly newsletter. The School Nurse can also be contacted at Pelhams Clinic, telephone 01202 570821
- Set whole school targets in relation to attendance and persistent absence. The whole school attendance target for 2020/2021 is 96.5% with less than 15 individual pupils being classified as Persistent Absentees at the end of the academic year.
- Expect that all pupils will achieve an attendance level of at least 96%.

- Highlight the importance of good attendance and progress towards attendance targets in our newsletters, class, assemblies, consultation evenings, workshops and in the prospectus. Attendance issues may also be discussed in Inclusion meetings, pupil target setting meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings.

The school encourages the active involvement of other services and agencies to support and promote good attendance. The Education Social Work Service may arrange Parenting Contracts, School Attendance Orders, Education Supervision Orders, issue Penalty Orders and/or liaise with other agencies and professionals as appropriate.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school's attendance lead is Nicky Armstrong. The attendance lead monitors pupil absence on an ongoing basis.

Attendance review meetings take place every half term. Present at these reviews will be the school's attendance lead, the inclusion leader and the named Director for attendance. The Headteacher endeavours to attend these meetings also.

Parents are expected to advise the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's attendance is 93% or below, the reasons for all absences will be investigated and we write to the parents/carers if attendance is a concern,

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will invite the parents/carers to a meeting following which we may consider involving an education social worker and/or give consideration to taking legal action.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Regular attendance monitoring reports are shared with the Board of Directors.

Pupil-level absence data is 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.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Board of Directors

The Directors have a valuable role to play in establishing the importance of school attendance matters and in supporting measures taken to improve attendance.

There is a named Director, Mr David Gordon, with responsibility for attendance.

The Directors will receive regular reports on attendance and monitor/analyse the school's progress towards targets and the effects of pupil absence upon attainment.

The Board of Directors has a responsibility to ensure the school has an attendance policy and procedures in place

The Board of Directors is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

8.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting to Directors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and will authorise the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

8.3 The Attendance Lead

The attendance lead will:

- Ensure attendance is recorded accurately.
- Ensure parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence if no reason for non-attendance has been provided. If contact has not been established with any of the named parents/ carers/emergency contacts after 3 days of absence, contact will be made with known friends and/or the wider family. School staff may also visit the family home. Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be referred to the Education Social Work Service as a 'Child Missing Education'.
- Monitor attendance data at the school and individual pupil level, meeting half-termly with the Inclusion Leader and the named Director for Attendance to review and analyse individual pupil and whole school attendance, including progress towards targets.
- Write to and/or arrange calls/meetings with parents to discuss attendance and/or punctuality issues and explore any support that may be needed eg referral to school nurse, parent support worker.
- At the end of each half-term, identify pupils whose attendance is 90% or less; these pupils are considered by the Government to be 'Persistent Absentees'. Contact parents/carers to make them aware and to ask them to ensure their child's attendance improves.
- Refer to Education Social Work Service pupils whose attendance continues to cause concern.
- Enter concerns about attendance into the school's safeguarding database.
- Report on attendance to the Board of Directors.
- Provide attendance data for pupil/parent/teacher meetings and for inclusion in the pupils' school reports.
- Retain attendance records (including correspondence with parents) in line with Data Protection requirements (ie for a period of 3 years).
- Notify the Local Authority:
 - each half term of all pupils whose attendance is 90% or less.
 - of all starters (including 'non-shows') and all leavers that are outside of the usual admission/transition rounds.
 - of any pupils who have been placed on part-time timetables.
 - when a pupil reaches 20 unauthorised sessions of absence. Complete individual returns for such pupils advising of the actions taken to address absence.
- Notify the Local Authority when a pupil is to be deleted from the school roll where they:
 - have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
 - have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school;
 - have been certified by the school medical officer as 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 we do not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
 - have been permanently excluded.

8.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers will

- Accurately record pupils' attendance on a twice daily basis, using the correct DfE codes (Appendix 1).
- Maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration. **Registers close 10 minutes after the start of registration ie at 8.40am and 12.55pm.**
- Endeavour to work with and support families whenever possible; investigate underlying reasons for pupil absence; provide support and guidance to families where pupils may be reluctant to come to school.
- Liaise with the attendance lead on matters of attendance and punctuality, communicating any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Discuss attendance at pupil/parent/teacher meetings and how this relates to pupil attainment.
- Discuss individual and whole school attendance in Inclusion meetings, pupil target setting meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings.

8.5 School Office staff

Staff in the School Office will take calls/receive messages from parents/carers regarding absences and will record these on the schools' attendance system using appropriate codes.

8.6 Parents and carers

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carers legal responsibility under the 1996 Education Act. Permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

- Support the school in aiming for their child to achieve 100% attendance each year.
The expected level of pupil attendance is at least 96%.
- Ensure that their children arrive in school on time.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone/text/in person as soon as possible on the first day of absence. **A child who is absent without a reason being provided is considered a safeguarding matter.**

PLEASE NOTE *If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers after 3 days of absence, the school will make all reasonable efforts to establish the whereabouts of your child, including making enquiries to known friends and the wider family. School staff may also visit the family home. It may be necessary to start 'Child Missing in Education' procedures as set down by the Local Authority.*

We have a legal duty to report to the Local Authority any pupil who is absent without explanation for 10 consecutive days. *The Local Authority will commence 'Child Missing in Education' procedures which include visiting your child's home and alerting other key services to locate the child. Please help us to help you and your child by ensuring we always have up-to-date contact details for you.*

- Send in a letter confirming the reason for the absence upon their child's return to school.
- Speak to the class teacher if they are concerned about their child's attendance or their child appears to be reluctant to come to school.
- Discuss with the class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.

- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance See Appendix 3
- Provide supporting evidence/documentation, if requested, to verify pupil absence.
- Work with the school, Education Social Work Service and/or other professional/agency, to resolve any concerns regarding their child's attendance.
- Ensure the school is kept up-to-date with any changes to their contact information.
- Collect their child promptly at the end of the school day.
- Complete a 'Leavers Form' (available from the School Office) prior to their child leaving the school (other than when transferring to secondary school). This should detail the child's proposed leaving date, the name and contact details of the proposed new school and the family's new address and telephone number (if relevant). *If pupils leave and we do not have this information, the child is considered to be 'missing'. Investigations will be carried out to locate the child, which includes liaising with the Education Social Work Service, the Police and other agencies.* Please note: when a child moves overseas the school is required to make a referral to the Education Social Work Service before we are able to remove your child from our roll. This is standard practice ~ the Education Social Work Service will make contact with you to verify your move.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is consistent with the following school policies:

- Admissions
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Special educational needs
- Teaching and learning
- Behaviour (including anti-bullying)

10. Policy review

This policy has been carefully considered and ratified by the Headteacher on 13 July 2020.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, with the next review scheduled to take place during September 2021. However this will be brought forward should changes in protocol be recommended by either the Department for Education, the Local Authority or the Diocese.

Signed: 

Date: 13 July 2020

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
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
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not 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)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance

Headteachers may only grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. The following are examples of agreed exceptional circumstances to guide Headteachers when considering leave of absence requests.

Before deciding whether to authorise leave of absence Headteachers will consider

- The impact on the student's academic progress of any absence
- The pupils attendance over the academic year
- Whether the leave falls within any key stage national tests or exams.

Examples of exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling - Headteachers should use their discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence - up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative - only if Headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional
- Teenage parents responsible for the care of their own child - at the Headteacher's discretion.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the LA - as appropriate. Bournemouth Education Social Work Service can advise schools on individual circumstances if required.
- Time-off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service
- Religious observance - The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs". This would include the Islamic Eids, as well as religious observance days of the orthodox Christian, Jewish and other religions. Headteachers may specify that only one day will be authorised at a time (most of the families who request leave on religious grounds are Muslim and the request is for the two Eids).
- Weddings of parents and siblings - weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married. Leave should only be authorised for this purpose when a Headteacher is satisfied that there is a persuasive reason for holding the wedding during term time. In difficult family situations the Headteacher may use his/her discretion in granting leave, for example where natural parents are separated, and in new relationships and it may cause a child further difficulties if he/she is excluded from a wedding. Each case should be addressed on its individual merits, taking into account the overall welfare of the child.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Pilgrimages by parents (eg. Hajj). These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time (at least 5 days). They are not regarded as exceptional as children themselves do not perform Hajj, but tend to travel with their parents when they go.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitment.

LEAVE IN TERM TIME REQUEST FORM

Before requesting leave in term time you need to think about:

- The lessons your child will miss
- The difficulty your child will have in catching up
- The effect it will have on your child’s friendship groups
- The effect it will have on how well your child performs in school

For your information:

- Amendments have been made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which took effect from 1 September 2013. From this date **schools will not be permitted to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**
- All term time holiday/leave requests must be submitted to the Headteacher with the exceptional circumstances fully explained. In order to make the decision whether to authorise leave or not, parents/carers may be asked to provide evidence supporting their circumstances.
- Parents/carers need to be aware that Penalty Notices can be issued per parent, per child for unauthorised absence from school, for unauthorised leave taken in term time and/or for pupils stopped during a Truancy Patrol (£60 if paid within 21 days; £120 if paid within 28 days as at 1 September 2013) in line with the Education (Penalty Notice Regulations) England 2013. The Council’s Safeguarding and Social Inclusion Service will issue Penalty Notices on behalf of the Police, the Local Authority and the School.

Please complete and return to the School Office at least one week before the proposed leave

Name(s) of child(ren): Class(es):

Date of leave:

Dates of leave already requested this academic year:

Please provide a DETAILED reason why the leave MUST be taken during term time (continue overleaf in necessary):

Signed: (Parent/Carer) Print Name: Date:

Note: Leave is not authorised until signed confirmation has been received from the Headteacher

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY:

After careful consideration of your request:

- Leave not authorised - Penalty notice not to be issued on this occasion
- Leave not authorised - Consideration will be given to issuing Penalty notice if leave taken (see details above)
- Leave authorised

Comment:

Signed: (Headteacher) Date: