

## Attendance Policy

Policy developed	November 2022 based on updated government guidance
Reviewed and updated	
Approved by governors	29 <sup>th</sup> November 2022

*"Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn."*

*Working together to improve school attendance DfE September 2022*

### **UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES**

At Harston and Newton Community Primary School we believe that children should attend school every day when the school is in session. There is a clear link between school attendance and attainment; children miss out socially and academically when they are not attending school. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.

**Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary schools**

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is a positive ethos and culture that promotes a love of learning. To achieve this aim, we work hard to make our school a happy and rewarding environment for all. We also ensure that children who are unable to attend school, owing to ill-health, are supported as appropriate.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Our policy aims to:

- emphasise the importance to all pupils and families that maximum attendance at school is vital for achieving their full potential;
- reinforce the notion that every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled and that parents are responsible in law for the regular and punctual attendance of their child;
- make explicit to all (pupils, parents/carers, teachers) the school's expectations on attendance levels and support strategies, to help pupils maximise their attendance;
- stress the need for home and school to work in partnership to achieve high attendance;
- promote a consistent approach across the school towards attendance matters;
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties linked to attendance at school and in the Local Authority.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **The governing body**

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

### **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 it to governors. The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and liaises with the Local Authority over the issue of fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

### **The office staff**

- check answer phone and emails, and take calls from parents about absence to record on the school system;
- contact parents when absence has not been reported as per the policy guidelines;
- report concerns about attendance to the Headteacher;
- work with an education welfare officer to tackle persistent absence;
- manages and maintain correspondence;
- arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.

### **Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis. Teachers record absence as an N code and attendance and correct codes are added by the school office. Class teachers are responsible for working with parents to ensure improved attendance for identified pupils. Class teachers are responsible for reporting any concerns about patterns of absence to the Headteacher, office staff, and on Safeguarding forms when it is considered a Safeguarding issue.

### **Parents/Carers' Responsibilities**

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis. Arranging an absence from school without good reason is an offence. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning.

Parents/Carers must:

- ensure their child(ren) attends school everyday unless prevented from doing so by illness or a medical appointment;
- inform the school in advance of any medical appointments during school time. For the absence to be authorised as medical, we require evidence from the doctor, dentist or optician, such as appointment details card/letter/text message;
- ensure their child arrives at school in time for registration. Lateness is monitored and may be recorded as unauthorised;
- inform the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that any problem can be quickly identified and dealt with;
- follow application procedures regarding a request for a leave of absence in term time, which should only be taken if absolutely necessary. Leave is not automatically authorised unless considered an exceptional circumstance - this does not include holidays or overseas travel for extended periods of time.

Any leave taken during term time that has been unauthorised could be subject to a Penalty Notice.

### **DAY-TO-DAY PROCEDURES**

#### **Attendance registers**

Under the Education Regulations 1995, the Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the school keeps accurate attendance registers. At Harston and Newton Community Primary School, attendance registers record the attendance of children who are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon session each day. They also record whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. The register is usually taken electronically, using Bromcom, our MIS system, but a paper register is available for supply teachers or in the case of problems with the ICT system.

## Punctuality

It is important that children attend school on time each day; this is the parent/carer's responsibility.

Staff are on the playground from 8.45 a.m. and the whistle is blown at 8.50 a.m. The school day starts at 8.50 a.m., when the children line up, into class and have early morning work to complete. Morning registration is from 8.50 to 9.00 a.m. and afternoon registration is at 1.15 p.m. If a child arrives during registration he/she will be marked as late (L). After 9.00 a.m. this becomes an Unauthorised Absence (U) for that session and cannot be changed. The afternoon register is taken in the same way at 1.15 p.m.

Any child arriving after 9.00 a.m. must be signed in by a parent at the school office (children's signing-in book records time of arrival, reason for lateness and parents' signature). School cannot accept a reason for lateness from a child. If no satisfactory explanation is received from a parent, by the end of one week the absence will remain as an unauthorised absence.

It is very disruptive for a class and the teacher when a child is late after a lesson has started, and it is equally distressing for a child to enter a lesson late. It also leads to lost learning time, which has a significant impact across the year.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

## REPORTING ABSENCES

### Illness

If your child is ill, please notify school on the first day of absence and each morning during the illness. This is the parent's responsibility. You can email the office and leave a message [office@harstonnewton.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@harstonnewton.cambs.sch.uk). Please ensure that you include

- name of child and class
- reason for absence – **Please be specific** (e.g. high temperature, sickness and diarrhoea, heavy cold, chicken pox) **and don't just say your child is unwell. We need to check on patterns of absence and for some illnesses we need to notify parents and staff**
- name of the person leaving the message

You can also ring the school and leave a message on the answer machine but ensure you include the same information.

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 unnecessarily ask for medical evidence.

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 in advance. No child should attend school until 48 hours after their last episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea. If on the first day of absence a valid reason is not received, a no-reason mark will be coded against the child's name. If no valid reason is given within one week by a parent, then that absence will be Unauthorised absence and cannot be changed.

If the school has not been contacted by parents by 9.10 a.m. we will follow our first day absence call system.

### **Medical appointments**

Every effort should be made to arrange routine dental/ medical appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, your child should be returned to school as soon as possible after the appointment. Parents/carers are required to sign their child(ren) in and out of school at the school office in the children's signing out book, and to complete an absence request from prior to the appointment.

If a child has to have a number of medical appointments, the school will ask for a copy of the appointment letter/card to confirm that this is the case.

### **Illness during the school day**

If your child becomes unwell during the school day, we will make every effort to contact you, so it is important that we have up-to-date contact numbers. Should your contact details change, please inform the school office as soon as possible.

If we have not had a message to explain why a child is absent, we operate a first day absence call system. The office staff will ring the first contact to ensure that the child is safe and establish the reason for absence.

### **Religious observance and special circumstances**

Absence can be authorised for religious observance if the day is set aside by the religious body to which the parent belongs, e.g. Eid, Diwali, Yom Kippur. Absence may also be authorised for special circumstances, e.g. instrumental exams or attending the funeral of a close relative, but this is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Requests for special absence should be made in advance, if possible, by completing a form available from the school office or on the school website.

### **HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances". They no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

All applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing on the prescribed form provided by the school. Only the Headteacher may authorise such a request. Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis, but the following requests for a leave of absence for a family holiday do not meet the criteria and therefore will be unauthorised and subject to a Penalty Notice:

- cheaper holidays in UK or abroad
- holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term
- visiting family or friends who have different half-term holiday dates
- family weddings for more than two days or visits to see family abroad
- relatives coming to visit.

When a parent removes a child after the application for leave had been refused or when no application had been made to the school, the school will apply for the issue of a penalty notice.

### **FOLLOWING UP ON ABSENCE**

If a child is absent from school, and we have not heard from the parent by 9.10 a.m., we will follow our first day absence call system.

- An initial phone call home will be made to the first and second contact on the child's data sheet and a message left, where possible.

- If we have no response, phone calls will be made each hour until lunchtime.
- If we still have not heard from the family, two members of staff will visit the family home to find out where the missing child is.
- If we still cannot ascertain where the child is, we will contact the Police and Social Care Team for advice.

These procedures will be followed to ensure all children are accounted for; as some children come to school unaccompanied, we need to ensure the safety of the children.

### **ATTENDANCE, ABSENCE and PERSISTENT ABSENCE**

#### **The national expectation for attendance is 95% or more**

All attendance and absence is monitored closely by the school; figures for whole-school attendance are published by Ofsted and the DfE. Records of your child's attendance are kept year-on-year for comparison.

#### **Authorised absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received a reason from a parent/carer, as required. An example of this could be when a child has been ill. Only the school can authorise absence. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classed as authorised. For example if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, or if a parent keeps a child at home because the parent or relative is ill, this is not an authorised absence.

#### **Unauthorised absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

#### **Exceptional circumstances**

Some absences may be authorised owing to exceptional circumstances. This could be:

- a short absence to attend a special religious/cultural festival;
- bereavement in the immediate family.

#### **Reluctance to attend school**

Sometimes children can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, counselling services and the Education Welfare Service to support families.

#### **Persistent absenteeism (PA)**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more of schooling across the school year, for whatever reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absences. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any child's education and we need a parent's fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

We rigorously monitor all absence, and the reasons that are given. If a child is seen to have reached the PA mark, or is at risk of moving towards that mark, we will inform the parents immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are invited to a school-based meeting; a plan is drawn up with specific targets to improve attendance.

#### **Communication with parents**

We use the Cambridgeshire 'three letter' system to alert parents to the fact that there may be a problem with attendance. If a pattern of absence or regular absences emerge, during monitoring, parents will receive a letter from the Headteacher (attendance falling below 95%) outlining the concerns. They will be invited in to school to discuss this with the

Headteacher and to agree targets. A record of this meeting will be kept on the child's file. Sometimes absence may involve the support and intervention of the Education Welfare Officer.

### **Local authority referrals**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Cambridgeshire Attendance Team. Local Authority Officers work with schools, families and other professionals to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

### **Understanding barriers to attendance**

We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, a parent may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individualised early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, Young Carers or those with other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance while being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, when appropriate.

### **Children missing from education**

Where a child is not attending school, has moved without a forwarding address or school, or cannot be traced, or contact cannot be made with the parent, the school is required to inform the local authority that the child is missing. The school will carry out a home visit and refer the family to social care and the police to ensure any concerns for the child's welfare have been thoroughly investigated. Pupils will not be removed from the school roll until notified by the local authority that their enquiries are complete.

A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point the child will be considered "missing from education."

### **Deletion from roll**

For any pupil leaving, *other than at the end of Year 6*, parents are required to complete a 'Leavers' Form', which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know and safeguard the whereabouts of all of our pupils, even those who leave us. Pupils cannot be deleted from the school roll without this information; they will be classed as absent until we have confirmation they are safe and attending another school.

It is crucial that parents keep the school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006 all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, every deletion from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

## **REWARDS**

Headteacher awards are part of our culture of celebration. From time to time children will be rewarded for excellent attendance (100%), e.g. a whole year. This may involve receipt of a special attendance certificate or a negotiated reward for the group/class/individual with the best attendance record.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

Class teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance in their class. If they are aware of any unexpected absence during the school day, they will alert the school office and/or Headteacher as soon as possible.

The school office monitors attendance and records absences on the school attendance system. The school office provide monthly updates to the Headteacher, who reviews attendance. Where the office staff have any concerns about an unexplained or unauthorised absence, they raise this with the Headteacher immediately.

Where there are on-going issues about the attendance of any child, parent/carers will be informed by the Headteacher. This will be done either by meeting and/or the use of the three letter system of referral. Sometimes this process may include involvement by the EWO and/or incur penalties (£60).

The school keeps accurate attendance records on file. Parents receive a copy of their child's annual attendance alongside the written annual report in July. Attendance records are kept on file for a minimum period of three years.

## **POLICY AGREEMENT AND REVIEW**

The policy was developed by the Headteacher, based on guidelines provided by the Department of Education and following discussion with staff. It was discussed with governors and will be reviewed and updated every two years.

## **Child Leaving Harston & Newton CP School**



Child's name	
Child's class	
Child's current address	
Date of leaving	
Name of new school	
Address of new school	
Child's new home address	

## EXAMPLE LETTER (a) - AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent,

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

This letter is for your information so you do not need to take any action.

I would like to thank you for following the school procedure regarding Attendance.

We understand that xxx has had authorised absence recently and that you called the school every day to keep us informed. We would just like to let you know how this has affected xxx attendance which is currently at «percentage\_attendance»%.

*School share a vital part in ensuring that children who are absent from school because of their medical needs maintain their education. If you child is absent from school for over 10 days it may be necessary for school to seek support for your child. Please ensure that school is fully aware of any medical issues that may affect your child's attendance.*

Please continue to work with us. You are more than welcome to contact school to discuss any queries or concerns you may have.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Head teacher or other relevant Pastoral

## EXAMPLE LETTER (b) - SOFT LETTER

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

We have noticed that your child <forename> attendance has deteriorated, I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record so that you can view a detailed breakdown of your child's absence from school.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. We are all mindful of the impact of COVID on children's learning, however we must all do our utmost to minimise the disruption, to allow for their future academic outcomes and life chances.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance due to the impact of COVID, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral  
Personnel

Enc Record of attendance  
School Attendance Leaflet

## Example Letter (c) – Attendance Concern (unauthorised)

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: **Name:** xxx

**Dob:** xxx

**School:** xxx

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage\_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. We are all mindful of the impact of COVID on children's learning, however we must all do our utmost to minimise the disruption, to allow for their future academic outcomes and life chances.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance due to the impact of COVID, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

Enc Record of attendance  
School Attendance Leaflet

### Example Letter (d) – Invite to PCM Mtg letter

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

Dear Parent,

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is still causing concern. We are aware that many pupils were unable to access education due to COVID and school attendance is now more important than ever. Therefore, we need to meet with you urgently to discuss the situation.

You are required to attend a meeting with a member of the Attendance Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date: xxx Time: xxx

Should «forename»'s attendance remain irregular; we may have to refer this matter to the Local Authority who could consider more formal action. This might result in a Penalty Notice Fine and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**, and a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

Absence due to self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but a child who is absent frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illnesses, medical evidence will be required.

We look forward to meeting you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support your child in making good progress and I hope that you will work with us to improve «forename»'s attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be initiated. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

Encs    Record of Attendance  
          School Attendance Leaflet

## Example Letter (e) - Failed to attend PCM Mtg Target Letter

Dear xxx

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx School: xxx

It was disappointing that you failed to attend the Parenting Contract Meeting (or equivalent meeting) which was due to be held at xxx on xxx at xxx.

As you did not attend the meeting I am setting a target/s for xxx which is as follows:

- 90% or above attendance target over the next 6 school weeks monitoring period (insert dates)
- Absences due to self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but a child who is absent frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illnesses, medical evidence will be required.
- Prompt communication when XXX will be absent. Parents should contact the school by xxx am as per School Attendance Policy
- xxx
- xxx

If targets are not met or unlikely to be met within the six school weeks monitoring period, then the case is likely to be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement actions to be considered. The Local Authority could issue a Penalty Notice Fine, or initiate legal proceedings through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**. This may result in a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

It is important that if you have any questions or queries please contact me on the above number.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

Enc. Record of attendance  
Attendance Leaflet (delete if not appropriate)

## EXAMPLE LETTER (f) - LATE

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

I have noted during a recent attendance review that your child is beginning to show a pattern of persistent lateness.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption.

If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's education, I would welcome the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss this.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Head teacher or other relevant Pastoral

## Example Letter (g) – Suspected Term Time Leave

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

I am writing about «forename»'s absence from school from <<date>> to <<date>>.

From information received from other sources we believe that this was due to term time leave. You have not followed the correct procedure for requesting leave of absence during term time.

We would be grateful if you could confirm the reason for the absence within 7 days of the date of this letter so this period can be recorded appropriately on the attendance register. However, if the absence was not due to exceptional circumstances but due to illness, please provide medical evidence to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days, «forename»'s absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Head teacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

## Example Letter (h) – Negative Response to Term Time Leave Request

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent

**Re: Child Name:** xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

Thank you for completing the term time leave request form as per procedure.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 was amended in September 2013. The amendments made clear that Head teachers **may not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

We have considered your application carefully and the reasons for the absence you have highlighted, however on this occasion we do not believe that the explanation provided can be justified as "exceptional circumstances".

We are aware that families have had limited opportunities to take leave of absence, however we are all mindful of the impact of COVID on children's learning, and we must all do our utmost to minimise the disruption, to allow for their future academic outcomes and life chances.

Should you still decide to continue to take your child out of school during term time, then please note that the absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. **The amount of the penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days.** Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Head teacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel