

# Attendance Policy



## **“Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility”**

At Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT) we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all Trustees, Governors, staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

**Adopted by (body):** CELT Trustees

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This policy is part of the following suite of annually updated safeguarding policies:

1. Child Protection and Safeguarding
2. Supporting Children and School with Medical needs/ Managing Medicines
3. Mental Health and Wellbeing
4. Online Safety
5. Child on Child Abuse
- 6. Attendance**
7. Staff Code of Conduct
8. Whistleblowing

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## Introduction

CELT regards good pupil attendance as the key factor in underpinning welfare and progress. This policy will enable CELT schools to promote the importance of good attendance and challenge attendance issues. The policy safeguards the rights of pupils/pupils to be educated.

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. CELT recognises its responsibilities to ensure children are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all pupils registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all children are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at school miss just over 4 half-terms of learning or 19 full school days in each year.

## Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff, parents and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- improve pupil's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all pupils, apart from those with chronic health issues
- create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a pupil's education
- work in partnership with pupils, parents and staff, so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence
- promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in children a sense of their own responsibility
- establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
- recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers and our attendance officer, in promoting good attendance
- ensure that attendance issues are challenged consistently

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils
- ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their pupil attends regularly and punctually
- equipping pupils with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development
- maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters
- developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness
- supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance
- developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school

## Key Personnel

- The Attendance Lead is: Rachel Nile
  - Contact details: email: [rnile@mount-charlessch.org](mailto:rnile@mount-charlessch.org)
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: Rachel Nile
- The Deputy DSL is: Claire Bunting
  - Contact details: [dsl@mount-charlessch.org](mailto:dsl@mount-charlessch.org)
- The nominated Attendance Governor is: Verity Wendon

## Definitions

Absence from school falls into two categories, authorised and unauthorised

### Authorised absence

- an absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, genuinely ill, has a hospital or other medical appointment, is visiting another school or for religious reasons
- only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Where the absences are not authorised we will inform parents of this

### Unauthorised absence

- an absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of the school. (Unauthorised holiday constitutes an unauthorised absence.) Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a pupil is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent
- the Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Heads may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Absence will not be authorised in term time for scenarios such as family holidays (unless exceptional circumstances can be evidenced), birthday treats, oversleeping due to a late night or visiting relatives
- if the absence is unauthorised the Education Welfare Services will be notified of the absence and consideration may be given to a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings for non-attendance. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent/carers of each pupil taken out of school and that this

carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days if the fine is not paid on time, it may result in legal action being taken against parents/carers. **Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Legal action under Section 444(1) can result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.**

- a Penalty Notice will be considered if a pupil's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. This is defined by CELT schools as falling below the threshold of 96%. In the Autumn Term, a pupil's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year

Further information on avoidable absences and the Law can be found in Appendix A.

## Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

### Pupils and students

- aim for high attendance (an average student would achieve an attendance of over 97%)
- be on time for school
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- take pride in attendance and punctuality

### Parents/Carers

- ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment
- contacting the school office promptly, before 9am, whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school giving details of the reason, they are unable to attend
- informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist (Appointment card/letter/prescription paperwork or packet.)
- as far as possible ensure that non-urgent medical or dental appointments are made outside of the school day or avoiding registration periods
- avoid any term time absence requests, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised
- talking to the school as soon as possible about any pupil's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with
- promote the link between attendance and attainment/progress

### Attendance Officer

- overall monitoring of school attendance
- identify trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- make first day phone calls
- alerting the attendance lead and designated safeguarding lead of any pupils who are not in school, and no contact has been made by 9:30am
- contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues

- monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- making referrals to the Education Welfare Service
- meet parents/carers to discuss attendance concerns
- liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence
- keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the attendance lead/Headteacher
- inform the senior leader responsible for attendance where there are concerns and acting upon them
- provide background information to support referrals
- monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- follow up absences with immediate requests for explanation via telephone calls or e mail
- ensure attendance issues are raised by teachers at parent consultation evenings where necessary
- collate and record registration and attendance information
- take and record messages from parents regarding absence
- contact parents of absent children where no reason for absence received
- record details of pupils who arrive late or go home
- send out standard letters regarding attendance.

### **Class Teacher**

- are the child's first point of contact and will monitor daily attendance
- take registers accurately and on time
- highlight concerns regarding attendance with parents
- discuss attendance during parent consultations or at individual parent meetings
- raise concerns with the attendance officer where necessary
- report any anomalies to the attendance officer

### **Senior leader responsible for attendance**

- promote excellent attendance by pupils and provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance
- ensure attendance protocols and practices are in line with emerging national guidelines.
- ensure parents are made aware of any changes made to attendance procedures and protocols
- monitor attendance and where concerns are identified, consult with class teachers/parents/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues
- inform governors of attendance data through leadership reports
- inform parents of attendance sessions for their pupils in line with the school's reporting procedures
- use attendance data strategically to implement strategies to improve attendance within cohorts

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

- discuss pupils with attendance concerns in weekly safeguarding meetings
- monitor and follow up on absence where there are no reasons given or where the attendance officer has not been able to contact the parents after 48 hours
- liaise with social care and/or Children in Care team where pupils have a social worker regarding attendance

- ensure pupils who are not attending school have been contacted and seen on a regular basis

### **Headteachers (or member of senior staff with responsibility for attendance).**

- consider requests for absence and meet with parents to discuss such requests as necessary
- make referrals to the Local Authority for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices as appropriate

### **Governors**

- monitor the implementation of the policy and keep it under review
- ensure that the policy is communicated to pupils and parents, is non-discriminatory and the expectations are clear
- scrutinise and challenge attendance data on a termly basis

## **Promoting Good Attendance**

CELT recognises that regular school attendance is important to ensure all children have every opportunity for success. Attendance in school is promoted through:

- maintaining appropriate registration processes
- maintaining appropriate attendance data and analyse this regularly at individual, school and cohort level.
- communicating clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils
- consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness
- following up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school
- informing parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence
- strongly discouraging unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time
- working with parents to improve individual pupil's attendance and punctuality
- referring to the Attendance Officer any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve
- reporting attendance statistics to Cornwall LA and the DfE where requested
- see Appendix H for attendance matters flow chart

## **Celebrating Good Attendance**

Examples:

- Attendance shared throughout school
- Class attendance award
- Certificates/ rewards

CELT also recognises that some children may be affected by health or special educational needs which can impact on attendance, we are mindful of this and ensure that these pupils are also included in attendance rewards.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Registration**

The school is open from 8:30am. Morning registration takes place at 8:45am and afternoon registration at 1:05pm. Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of



attendance. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.00 am or 1:05pm (Attendance code / and \ for pupils who are present.)

All attendance records are documented using SIMs software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept securely.

### **Lateness**

Any pupil who comes into school after 8:45am or 1:05pm will be marked as late in the attendance record. (Attendance code L). Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil. Any child who arrives for school later than 9 am/1:20pm (15 minutes after start time) will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning or afternoon. (Attendance code U).

Pupils who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.00 am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (attendance code M). Routine dentist or doctor's appointments should be made outside of the school day.

Pupils who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness the Senior Leader responsible for attendance will meet with the parent/carer to create an action plan to improve punctuality. Should punctuality not improve the Local Authority may be approached to give consideration for a fixed penalty notice.

## **Absences**

Parents/carers should contact the school office telephoning 0172673911 on the first day of their child's absence before 9am. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with full details of the reason for their absence. Please avoid using phrases such as "poorly" or "sick". Parents must repeat this for every day of absence, unless by agreement with the school.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on SIMS. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised (see definitions for further details). The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where parents/carers have ongoing concerns about attendance or welfare an appointment should be made with Rachel Nile via the school office to discuss these.

### **Contact**

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence the school will follow these steps:

- Send an absence text message requesting a call to provide a reason
- Contact the child's first contact and leave a message requesting a call to provide a reason
- If no response is received other contacts held for the child will also be contact

- If not heard from any contacts, then a home visit may be conducted.
- If no response is received to this home visit or safeguarding concerns are raised the child is referred to the Local Authority as a possible Child Missing Education. Contact may also be made with Children's Services and/or the police in line with safeguarding procedures.

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent and no response to efforts to contact parents, including a home visit, the absence is recorded as unauthorised (attendance code O).

### **Long term illness**

When pupils have an illness, confirmed by a medical professional, that means they will be away from school long term, where appropriate, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their schoolwork.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the county support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

### **Medical Evidence**

When a pupil's attendance falls below 93% or a pupil has several instances of illness, the school will follow their protocols (see appendix H). This may involve sending the parent or carer 'letter 3' requiring medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries. If this evidence is not provided, then the absences will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Absence in term time**

Absence from school falls into two categories, authorised and unauthorised. Absence may be authorised when a child is genuinely ill, has a hospital or other medical appointment, is visiting another school or for religious reasons. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Heads may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Absence will not be authorised in term time for scenarios such as family holidays (unless exceptional circumstances can be evidenced), birthday treats, oversleeping due to a late night or visiting relatives.

### **Absence in exceptional circumstances**

The Headteacher may, on occasion, make a judgement that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term time.

### **Absences at the start/end of term**

If a pupil is absent due to illness from school on the first or last day or any term or half term, the school will require that medical evidence is provided. If this evidence is not provided, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday**

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of the Headteacher to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year. Instead, the Headteacher will

only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied that **exceptional circumstances** exist.

**Should parents be considering a holiday during term time a leave of absence request form must be completed by all adults with parental responsibility BEFORE the holiday is booked.** An absence request form can be requested from the school office. Where a holiday is not authorised, consideration will be given to requesting a penalty notice from the Local Authority for this period of absence if a child's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. ***This is defined by CELT schools as falling below the threshold of 96%.*** In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

## Addressing Attendance Concerns

We expect 100% attendance but will start additional monitoring and raise concerns with parents if absence falls below 96%.

It is important for pupils to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and school staff to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Parents should ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed.

Concerns about attendance are raised with parents/carers via letters which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the Attendance Officer has a responsibility to make a referral to the Education Welfare Service. A first warning will be issued, then an educational planning meeting will take place, before a final warning. From this point, if there are no further improvements, court proceedings will begin.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and if they fail to do so, may commit an offence under Sections 7 & 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Please see Appendix H for attendance matters protocols.

## **Monitoring Attendance**

The Attendance Officer has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the SIMs attendance software.

Attendance data is analysed weekly by the Attendance Officer to ensure that all pupils are in school as often as possible. Where there are attendance concerns letters Mount Charles School will contact you to discuss these. (See Appendix H)

Regular meetings are held with the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings.

Attendance data is also analysed half-termly by the Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance to support improvements in attendance at cohort and whole school level. These attendance action plans are shared with the Trust to ensure attendance is supported for all pupils at every level.

See appendix I for data management roles.

## **Pupils Missing Out on Education (PMOOE) and the use of Alternative Provision**

The vast majority of children engage positively with school and attend regularly. However, in order to flourish, some children require an alternative education offer or may require a modified timetable to support a return to full time education provision.

It is recognised that children accessing alternative provision (AP) or a reduced or modified timetable may have additional vulnerabilities. Ofsted refer to these as Pupils Missing Out On Education, because they are not accessing their education in school in the 'usual way'.

### **Pupils in Alternative Provision**

Some pupils are educated either on a full-time or part-time basis in an alternative setting. A modified timetable must be completed, and the Attendance Lead will liaise with the Alternative Provider to ensure that the pupil is attending, and it is accurately recorded.

The Head and SLT with responsibility for attendance will retain oversight of the school processes for pupils accessing alternative provision (AP)

The school will visit the AP to review safeguarding processes and procedures prior to the planned start date. All records of the risk assessment process will be completed in line with the Trust guidance.

CELT staff understand that the safeguarding of pupils/young people accessing an AP remains the responsibility of school where the pupil/young person is on roll.

A senior leader will keep the placement and timetable under review and involve parents in the review. Reviews will be frequent enough to provide assurance that the off-site education and/or modified timetable is achieving its objectives and that the pupil/young person is benefitting from it.

The school will monitor and track children attending alternative provision to ensure that the provision meets the needs of the child and the child is attending.

The school leadership will report to the LGB of any formal direction of a pupil/young person to alternative provision.

The school will ensure that parents (and the local authority where the pupil/young person has an EHCP) are given clear information about alternative provision placements timetables: why, when, where, and how they will be reviewed.

### **Pupils requiring a reduced or modified timetable**

The school will gain consent from the Trust Lead or School Improvement Lead to put in place a reduced or modified timetable. The school will ensure that parents and the local authority are given clear information about the reduced or modified timetables: why, when, where, and how they will be reviewed.

Reviews will be fortnightly to provide assurance that the off-site education and/or modified timetable is achieving its objectives and that the pupil/young person is benefitting from it.

Any pupil with a reduced or modified timetable will also be reviewed at the CELT SEN panel with the Trust SENCO and Trust Safeguarding Lead.

The school leadership will report to the LGB information regarding the use and effectiveness of the use of modified timetables and this will also be reviewed in the Safeguarding Portfolio Holder visits/reports.

The school will share half termly data returns to the Trust safeguarding lead, regarding all pupils/young people, of statutory school age, attending alternative provision and/or on a reduced or modified timetable for review.

## **Children Missing in Education**

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an efficient, full-time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have.

CELT recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of abuse and harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life. Mount Charles School will follow procedures outlined in section 'contact' of this policy.

The school will ensure that there is a record of joiners and leavers as defined in The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006. When removing a child's name, the school will notify the Local Authority of: (a) the full name of the child, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the child normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the child's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the grounds in regulation 8 under which the child's name is to be removed from the school register.

The school will make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of a child jointly with the Local Authority, before deleting the child's name from the school register if the deletion is under

regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f) (iii) and (h) (iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) 2006.

## **Safeguarding and attendance**

CELT recognises that absence from school may be indicators of abuse and neglect, including the exploitation of children. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will regularly liaise with members of school staff with responsibility for attendance to ensure risk is identified and appropriate intervention is in place to protect children from harm.

Staff will be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

## Appendix A

**IMPORTANT:** Please read carefully the information below.

**WARNING:** If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice\* per parent per child or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996. As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason. \*Penalty notice £60 if paid within 21 days increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM TIME	
The Facts	The Law
<p>School aged pupils in Cornwall maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc.) the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><b>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</b></p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as <b>unauthorised absence</b> and you may receive a £60* fine per parent per child if your child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular', falling below the CELT threshold of 96%.</p>	<p>The law allows the school to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However, before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are <b>exceptional circumstances</b> which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient evidence/information in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from the parent with whom the child normally resides.</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away for a period of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006</p> <p>In case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.</p>

<p><b>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised. Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuine illness</li> <li>• Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible).</li> <li>• Days of religious observance.</li> <li>• Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces</li> <li>• External examinations</li> </ul> <p>When traveller children are on the road with their parents for work purposes</p>	<p><b>Other examples of absence from school that <u>will not</u> be authorised include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any type of shopping</li> <li>• Looking after siblings or unwell parents</li> <li>• Minding the house</li> <li>• Birthdays</li> <li>• Resting after a late night</li> <li>• Relatives visiting or visiting relatives.</li> </ul> <p>Parental appointments</p>
<p>Please contact the Headteacher if you wish to discuss this issue.</p> <p><b>The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full-time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.</b></p> <p>We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.</p>	



## Appendix B - INFORMATION LETTER TO ALL PARENTS (ANNUAL)

### Whole School Warning Letter regarding unauthorised leave of absence (holidays)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Dear Parent/Carer

Here at Mount Charles School, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely too ill to attend school, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of school hours or a request for leave has been agreed in exceptional circumstances.

However, the Government does not support parents taking children out of school unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances'. Any request for leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's request form.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Mount Charles School is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

The decision to submit a request for the issue of a Penalty Notice will be considered when a child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular'. The definition of 'not regular' in this instance is when it is below the threshold set by Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT). For all CELT schools, this attendance threshold is set at 96%, in line with national attendance data. In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

Yours sincerely  
Headteacher

## APPENDIX C – EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE REQUEST NOTICE TO PARENTS /CARERS

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education no longer allows Headteachers to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

All requests must be completed on this form; letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the Attendance Office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence.

I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at Mount Charles School

**APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER (to be completed by each parent/carer)**

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the Attendance Office **at least 15 school days** before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year/Tutor Group:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Post Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Carer completing this form:** \_\_\_\_\_

**First day of absence:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of return to school:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If leaving your home address before the first day of absence, please provide the date on which you will leave** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of days missed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **days** **Reason for absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me. **I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.***

**Please inform us if you have a child in another Cornwall Education Learning Trust school – we will need to contact the school to discuss the absence request. Please note, we will need to share information about your child with the other school.**

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Signed ..... Dated .....

*(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)*

***Below to be completed by the school:***

FAO – Headteacher

% Current	% Last Year	Comments

Student Name: ..... Tutor: ..... Year: .....

☐ **AUTHORISED:**

Request has been authorised for the following dates **only:**

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

☐ **UNAUTHORISED:**

**Signed** ..... **Headteacher**

**Date** \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Letter sent / Phone Call / other	Signed:	Date:
Action: PN Request	Signed:	Date:

## Appendix D: PN Model Leave Refusal Letter (for school use)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Date

Dear Name of parent/carer(s)

I am writing regarding your request to take (Student Name) out of school on Date until Date. The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for pupils in 'exceptional circumstances'. Here at Mount Charles School, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence; we look at each request on its own merit, before reaching a decision.

Under the circumstances, we regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If (Student Name) does not attend school on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In cases where parents subsequently report their child as ill during this period, medical evidence may be requested to support this.

I urge you to reconsider your decision.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

I would like to offer you the opportunity to contact Rachel Nile at Mount Charles School if you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Mount Charles School is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely  
Headteacher

APPENDIX E – Letter 1

< <Date of Printing> >  
< <Salutation> >  
< <Add Block> >

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: School Attendance LETTER ONE

I am writing to make you aware that [student] has missed XX number of days of school this [term/year].

Even one or two days of absence a month can impact on how well pupils make progress socially and academically.



I would like to offer you a meeting on [date/time] to look at how we can work together to ensure [pupil] attends every day.

We appreciate your support in ensuring [student] is in school every day.

Yours sincerely

[Class teacher]

CC: File  
Enc – attendance certificate

APPENDIX F – Letter 2

<<Date of Printing>>

<<Salutation>>

<<AddBlock>>

Dear <<Salutation>>,

Re: School Attendance LETTER TWO

You may recall that we wrote to you recently to let you know [student] had missed XX days of school since [term/year]. We have looked at [students] attendance again and can see the number of days missed has increased to XX

Even one or two days of absence a month can impact on how well pupils make progress socially and academically. [student] attendance now sits in the [category – see next page].

I would like to offer you a meeting on [date/time] with Attendance Officer to look at how we can work together to ensure [student] attends every day.

We appreciate your support in working with us to support [student]

Yours sincerely

KS2/ KS1 Lead

c.c. File

Enc. Attendance certificate

Descriptor	Threshold attendance	Actual attendance	Whole days of absence	Learning Hours Lost
<b>Excellent</b>	100%	190 days	0	0
	99%	188 days	2	10
<b>Good</b>	98%	186 days	4	20
	97%	184 days	6	30
	96%	182.5 days	7.5	37.5
<b>Cause for Concern</b>	95%	180.5 days	9.5	47.5
	94%	179 days	11	55
	93%	177 days	13	65
	92%	175 days	15	75
	91%	173 days	17	85
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	90%	171 days	19	95
	89%	169 days	21	105
	88%	167 days	23	115
	87%	165 days	25	125
<b>Serious cause for concern</b>	86%	163 days	27	135
<b>Critical</b>	85%	161.5 days	28.5	142.5
	84%	159.5 days	30.5	152.5
	83%	158 days	32	160
	82%	156 days	34	170
	81%	154 days	36	180
	80%	152 days	38	190



## APPENDIX G – Letter 3

«date\_of\_printing»  
<<ParentalAddressee>>  
<<AddBlock>>

Dear <<Salutation>>

Re: School Attendance LETTER THREE

I am writing to invite you to an Attendance meeting at Mount Charles School on -----  
-----at -----pm with the Educational Welfare Officer and  
Attendance Officer.

<<ChosenName>>'s attendance is now <<PercentageAttendance>>% and has not  
improved since our last meeting.

The purpose of the meeting is to create an action plan and to look at other ways that we can  
work together to support <<ChosenName>> to improve their attendance.

If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact (name) on (number) so we can re-  
arrange the appointment.


In addition, Mount Charles School will only authorise «chosen\_forename»'s absence where  
we have reasonable evidence that there is a medical reason or for any other exceptional  
circumstances. Please share any medical evidence you have so that we can support your  
child's welfare and education and authorise their absence. Mount Charles School can  
authorise your child's absence when it considers it reasonable to do so.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

c.c. File  
Enc. Attendance certificate

## Appendix H - Attendance Matters Protocol for Staff

0-2 days off Lost learning – 10hours	99-100%	Class Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance matters discussed as part of Meet the Teacher Sessions.</li> <li>Phone calls/discussions by Class Teachers or Pastoral Support</li> <li>Attendance data discussed and celebrated in assembly weekly</li> </ul> 
4-7.5 days off Lost learning - 20-37.5 hours	96-98%		

9.5-17 days off Lost learning - 47.5-85 hours	93-96%	Class Teacher/ Attendance Lead	<p>As above, but also including...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>At risk Letter 1</b> to be sent. Supportive letter indicating attendance not where it should be.</li> <li>Class Teacher calls to parents as directed by Attendance Lead. Class Teachers to log on CPOMS and complete an Attendance Monitoring Form.</li> <li>Students discussed in safeguarding meetings.</li> <li>Monitor for two weeks</li> <li>Celebrate improvements in attendance following any discussions.</li> </ul>
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19-25 days off Lost learning - 95-125 hours	90-92%	Attendance Lead	<p>As above, but also including...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>At risk Letter 2</b> to be sent. Meeting with Attendance Lead. All calls and interventions logged on CPOMS and Attendance Monitoring Form.</li> <li>Attendance Lead and family develop Attendance Action Plan.</li> <li>Two weeks monitoring plan</li> <li>Referral to EWO</li> </ul>
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27+ days off Lost learning – over 135 hours	Under 89%	Head of School	<p>As above, but also including...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>At risk Letter 3</b> to be sent. Meeting with Attendance Lead to implement further Attendance Action Plan. All calls and interventions logged on CPOMS</li> <li>Attendance Lead, student, family, and EWO develop plan to address absence</li> <li>Two weeks monitoring of plan</li> <li>EWO home visits</li> <li>Formalising support with EWS</li> </ul>
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All parent meetings to be documented on CPOMS.

All Attendance Monitoring forms to be held in class file and scanned onto CPOMS.

## Appendix I DATA MANAGEMENT

### DAILY –

**Late gates** – SLT on gates daily, monitor any students that are late.

**Pastoral Managers** - Phone calls for those who are absent

Visits to families where safeguarding concerns

**Attendance Officer**- Daily clear N codes. Daily attendance email shared with SLT and Pastoral Manager. All parental calls/ messages logged on SIMS.

**Pastoral Managers** provide students returning from a period of substantial absence with a meeting to ensure a successful reintegration back into full time education. All strategies and support agreed at this meeting is clearly communicated to all staff and parents/carers.

**Class Teacher** – take special responsibility for encouraging students to attend school and helping them to settle back in after absence. Celebrate good attendance.

Notify Attendance Officer of any attendance concerns.

### WEEKLY -

**Attendance officer**- to review less than 96% attendance for all students within year. Identify target students for Class Teacher discussion and who require letters.

**Class Teachers**- to discuss attendance with students, and make calls home as directed by SLT.

**Attendance officer** - N codes cleared each week (ideally do this daily) and letters out for attendance concerns. Praise messages for 100% attenders to be sent.

**SLT with responsibility for attendance** Overall class attendance shared in assembly. Extra play awarded to class with highest attendance.

### HALF TERMLY –

**Attendance Officer**- At start of each half term – generate messages to parents ref number of days missed in previous half term for pupils with attendance concerns.

**SLT with responsibility for attendance** – review data and action plan for attendance concerns based on your data (individual children discussions/cohort discussions e.g. PP/SEND/FSM/Social care etc). Review IAP's. Check missing marks and N codes have all been cleared. Check class teacher calls have been made (CPOMs log check)

**SLT with responsibility for attendance** to review action plans from each year group. Review SEND/PP/FSM whole school data to look at trends and patterns which may require a more whole school approach. Meet with EWO to review pupils who have fallen below 92%

### TERMLY:

**SLT with responsibility for attendance** - Review of plans in place at each level to ensure progress is being made – if not, modify the plans.

Celebration assemblies and rewards.

Check Attendance Plans and also check missing marks and N codes are cleared.

## Attendance Codes

### Registration codes

Codes	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present in school during registration
\	Present (PM)	Present in school during registration
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
B	Education off site (no Dual reg)	Off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools must ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.
D	Dual registration	Pupil is at another educational establishment. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis.
J	Interview	An interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment. This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment,
P	Approved sporting activity	Participating in a supervised sporting activity. This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational visit or trip	This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.
W	Work experience	Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

### Authorised absence from school

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows

I	Illness	Illness (not medical or dental appointments) Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Medical or dental appointments Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment
R	Religious observance	Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
C	Other authorised circumstances	Leave of absence authorised by the school Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
E	Excluded	Excluded but no alternative provision made. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.
S	Study leave	Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Holiday authorised by the school Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that

		there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
T	Traveller absence	<p>Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.</p> <p>This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.</p>

### Unauthorised absence from school

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

U	arrived in school after registration closed	Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.
O	Unauthorised Abs	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher. If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give

		retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
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## Other codes

Y	Enforced closure	<p>Pupil unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause</li> <li>the transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance</li> <li>a local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</li> <li>The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity) This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.</li> </ul>
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.
Z	Pupil not on roll	This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
#	School closed to pupils & staff	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.