

Attendance Policy

Policy review: September 2026
Next Review: September 2027

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1. Statement of Intent

Fens Primary School is committed to the provision of effective education for the children in our care. We believe this cannot be accomplished without regular attendance. The school will therefore do all it can to ensure that pupils achieve the maximum possible attendance. Any problems, which impede full attendance, will be addressed as soon as possible.

Fens Primary School recognises the importance of full attendance and aims to ensure that all pupils take full advantage of the educational provision made available to them.

Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and therefore is a priority for the school. Fens Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils.

As a school, we aim to develop pupils to their full potential; parents/carers have a responsibility to aid the education process by ensuring that pupils attend the school regularly, on time, and in a suitable disposition to learn.

We expect our parents/carers to value school and their child's education and to support our school's procedures.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and arrive at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important that school and families work together to ensure children have good attendance and this policy provides the framework for this.

Regular Attendance is Important

Any absence will affect the pattern of a child's learning; regular absence or arriving late for lessons will seriously affect learning and the child's capacity to engage with learning.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the parents/carers legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law which may result in prosecution and a criminal record.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for every child encompasses: -

a. Attendance
b. Inclusion & Equal Opportunity
c. Social and Personal Development
d. Health and Safety
e. Access to the Curriculum

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting good attendance

Promoting a pattern of good attendance and punctuality is everybody's responsibility; parents/carers, pupils and staff. School will identify, at an early stage, any concerns with attendance and punctuality and take measures to improve the situation. Good attendance will be celebrated in our Celebration Assemblies across the academic year. We will reward good and improving attendance (through certificates and rewards events).

2. School Attendance – The Statutory Framework

Education Act 1944 – Established the duty of Local Authorities and parents/carers to ensure regular attendance of pupils in school.

Education Act 1996 - (Section 444). The Act states that "The parents/carers of a child of compulsory school age registered at school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of an offence punishable by law."

This policy has been written using DFE School Attendance Parent Responsibility Measures (January 2015), DFE Guidance on School Attendance (August 2020) and Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024) with the aims to:

a. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
b. Ensure every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled.
c. Act early to address patterns of absence.
d. Ensure all pupils are punctual.

Fens Primary School's expectations is that all children on roll attend school every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy to do so. We do all we can to encourage all children to attend and to put in place appropriate, consistent measures.

This policy outlines our procedures and sets out everyone's responsibilities with regards to maintaining good school attendance and punctuality.

3. Registration

There is a legal requirement upon schools to keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions, pupils are marked present or absent. The Educations (Pupils Attendance Record) Regulations 1991 introduced a further requirement that attendance registers must show whether an absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised.

Both staff and pupils should see the taking of registers as an integral part of the school day, as was indeed intended in law. Particular attention should be paid to accurate registration and to the preservation and security of registers.

In accordance with current legislation, each class teacher will ensure the electronic register (SIMS) is completed by 8:55am mornings and by 1:15pm pm for KS1 and KS2. Absence monitoring procedures will be completed by a member of the Administration Team/Safeguarding Team as part of first response procedures.

It is our policy to record a late mark for children who arrive at school after class registration has taken place. Main doors open at 8:45am and close at 8:55am. Close of registration is at 9:25am where school will record an unauthorised absence for any pupils arriving after 9:25am.

We believe that pupils arriving late seriously disrupt their work and that of others. Our policy is to encourage punctuality. Children will be recorded as being late once registration has taken place.

4. Absence

(DFE School attendance parental responsibility measures – 2015): 'Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full- time education. This can be regular attendance at school, at alternative provision or otherwise (e.g. the parent can choose to educate their children at home)'.

a. They will encourage their child to attend school.
b. They will ensure that school is contacted if their child is unable to attend.
c. They will endeavour to ensure their child arrives at school punctually each day.
d. They will contact school with any problems or concerns which may affect their child's attendance at school.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to inform school of the reason for a child's absence. We would like to receive notification as soon as the child is absent from school.

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents/carers. The fact that a parent/carer has offered a note or other notification (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not, in itself, oblige the school to accept it if the school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. If, after further investigation doubt remains about the explanation offered – or where no explanation is forthcoming at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised. Where parentally condoned unjustified absence appears to be a problem in relation to a particular pupil, we will refer to the Local Authorities Attendance Officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Family Support Officer or Headteacher where necessary or if further attendance monitoring is required.

An excessive amount of unauthorised absence can also seriously disrupt continuity of learning. We must be alert to emerging patterns of authorised absence. We may authorise absence retrospectively where we are satisfied as to the explanation offered. Absences of pupils of compulsory school age without valid reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness. If we are satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness the absence will be treated as authorised.

Where we have reason to doubt the validity of an explanation offered in respect of a particular absence, further information will be requested by the school from the child's parents/carers. If the school continues to be dissatisfied then the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

Leave for medical or dental appointments will be given (i.e. the absence will be authorised) where appointment confirmation has been received from the parent/carer or on production of an appointment card/letter (where possible to is recommended that medical appointments, especially dental appointments, are made outside if the school day).

5. Reporting of Absence Procedure

Parents/carers are expected to telephone school before 10am on the first day of absence. When making this call you will be asked specific details of the child's absence in order for us to be able to record the absence appropriately. This will allow the Family Support Officer to interpret the category of absence. If information is not received, The Family Support Officer will try to telephone to discover the cause of the absence. If the family is not contactable by telephone, a home visit will be carried out and a non-contact letter delivered (Appendix 8). The FSO will keep all notes, notes of telephone messages and a note of any verbal explanations, dated, in the first response/absence file. This will be added to the schools CPOMs system electronically.

Where a pupil is present for registration but then has to attend an appointment, school need take no action beyond recording the fact that (for the purpose of emergency evacuation) the pupil, although registered, is not physically present. Similarly, the school must note the presence of a pupil (again for purposes of emergency evacuation) who was not there when the register was being taken but returns later from an appointment. Office staff will make a note in the relevant day's column in the register as to the times the child came or left so that there is information on the child's whereabouts in the event of emergency evacuation.

6. Categorising Absence

Our policy deals in general with the categories of absence and cannot cover every eventuality. It will be necessary on occasion to exercise reasonable discretion when investigating some absences. However, the following key points must be remembered: -

a. Registered pupils of compulsory school age are required by law to be in school;
b. Whilst it is right that schools should recognise that individual pupils and families may have problems, the aim should always be to expect regular attendance;
c. Lateness should be actively discouraged;
d. Where a pupil is absent without prior authorisation, an explanation is required. If one is not forthcoming (for whatever reason), the absence must be treated as unauthorised and the register completed accordingly;
e. We are not obliged to accept parental notes where there is reason to doubt the validity of the explanation offered;
f. Explanations such as birthdays, looking after other children, or shopping trips within school hours will not normally be acceptable reasons for absence;
g. Parents/carers should not expect, or be led to expect, that, as of right, schools will agree to family holidays during term time. Holidays will not be authorized in term time;
h. Even where absence is authorised, we should be alerted to emerging patterns of absence, which may seriously disrupt continuity of learning;
i. In promoting regular attendance, we will work in partnership with appropriate Local Authority and external agency personnel.

7. Lateness

It is our policy to actively discourage late arrival. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. In recognition of local circumstances (such as bad weather or occasional public transport difficulties), we may keep registers open for a reasonable period. Particular attention will be paid to emerging patterns of late arrival.

Where a pupil does arrive late and misses registration, his or her presence on site will still need to be noted for purposes of emergency evacuation. Anyone arriving late must report to the Reception, and the child's name and class will be entered in the relevant late book. Our registers open from 8:55am to 9:25am. Anyone arriving after 9:25am will receive a 'U' in the register which is classified as an unauthorised absence.

In responding to lateness, we will of course need to take account of the individual circumstances of each case. In some instances, enquiries may reveal that the late arrival stems from difficulties at home or other genuinely unavoidable circumstances. Teachers of pupils who persistently fail to arrive on time with valid reason need to inform the Family Support Officer and the Headteacher whom will seek an early meeting with parents. If the parents do not have any valid reason for the child's persistent lateness the school's Family Support Officer consults with the Headteacher and may arrange a meeting in school to discuss further (Appendix 6).

8. Persistent Absences

A pupil becomes a '**persistent absentee'** when they miss 10% or more of school across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will damage the child's education and the school needs parental support and co-operation to tackle this. As a school, we thoroughly monitor all absences and the reasons given on a regular basis. When pupils who are persistently absent or in danger of being persistently absent are identified, the school will take action as detailed below:

If pupil attendance falls below 90%, the School Attendance Officer along with the Headteacher will arrange a meeting with the family to implement a plan to improve attendance. The Family Support Officer will complete a register check to monitor and review all children when attendance is 90% or below. Where necessary a plan to improve attendance will be implemented. A letter will be sent to parent/carers to inform them of an attendance monitoring period for their child. Failure to comply with the attendance plan may result in the Local Authority issuing a fine: The Education Act 1996 places legal obligation on the Local Authority to provide education suitable to a child's age, aptitude and ability to any special educational needs that they may have.

'If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority,' (DFE School attendance parental responsibility measures, January 2015)

9. Role of the Family Support Officer

The role of the Family Support Officer is to:

a. liaise where appropriate, between home and the school;
b. investigate irregular attendance or lateness which may give rise to concerns that a child may be at risk;
c. complete a daily register check; giving advice to pupils, parents and carers on improving attendance;
d. work with children who are experiencing problems with attendance and/or punctuality and preparing to transfer to secondary school.

10. Children's Services – School Attendance Team (Statutory Level)

Fens Primary School work in partnership with the Hartlepool Local Authority School Attendance Team to support regular school attendance of all pupils. This level agreement reflects the statutory functions of the School Attendance Team is to improve attendance in school and support parents and carers to ensure full school attendance for all pupils where possible. The agreed provision and the role of the School Attendance Officer is set out below:

Role of School Attendance Team (Local Authority)

The Attendance Team discharges the local authority statutory duties in relation to; School Attendance

a. Currently, Local Authorities are the only body that can instigate legal proceedings against parents for their child's non-attendance at school and therefore we will continue to present cases to Magistrates which meet prosecution criteria and respective legislative and regulatory requirements under S444. S444(1A) will include the completion of (PACE) Police and Criminal Evidence.
b. The Team will accept referrals from school if attendance is 70% or below, all absences must be unauthorised in the 39 weeks prior to the referral. School must also be able to demonstrate that have tried to address the attendance prior to referral. Referrals will be actioned within 10 working days.
c. Where a pupil has had unauthorised absence for a period of three continuous weeks or more and school have been unable to contact parent/carer, a referral should made to the Attendance Team. The officer will endeavour to make contact parent/carers within 10 working days establish and reason for absence. This information will be will be shared with school and the referral closed.
d. The Team will publish a code of conduct for Penalty Notices and issue Notices in line with the policy and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
e. The Team will undertake one register check per academic year.
f. On receipt of a Children Missing from Education referral form the Attendance Team will track and attempt to locate pupils who go missing from education, or fail to start school when reaching compulsory school age. The Team will continue to track pupils once they have been removed from the school roll (4 weeks from referral) and inform school of destination, and maintain a list of all pupils whose whereabouts are unknown.

The Team works with schools, young people and their families, alongside partner agencies, to address attendance issues. The Team has the specialist and practical experience of meeting extensive legislative and regulatory requirements. The Team is represented at all local, regional and national networks to ensure up to date and best practice is maintained.

Referrals can only be made through the Family Support Officer or Headteacher. A referral form will be completed for each pupil and forwarded to the Local Authority School Attendance Team securely. Progress reports on referrals will be given to the school at regular intervals by the Family Support Officer (as agreed between School and the Local Authority School Attendance Team). Details of the procedure followed by the School Attendance Officer can be found in the Local Authority Attendance Handbook.

When making a referral to the Local Authority School Attendance Officer, it is important that the following information is included:

g. action taken to date by school to resolve any identified problems;
h. parents/pupils' attitudes towards school;
i. parental reasons for non-attendance;
j. information regarding any special educational needs the pupil may have, academic attainments and support being provided by the school;
k. any known risk factors around home visits and/or parental communication needs.

11. Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality

As well as taking appropriate action against parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their children, we will take steps to reward good attendance and punctuality at Fens Primary School. This will take the form of certificates and other rewards for attendance measured at the end of each half-term for children achieving 100% attendance. Fens Primary School will issue a certificate and rewards for those pupils who achieve 98% and above attendance for the whole year. Alongside this, as it is not often the child's fault for not getting 100% attendance, some rewards will also be given for a significant improvement in attendance.

The weekly merit reward is given to pupils who have attained 100% attendance for that week and who has demonstrated that week's Commando Joe's character value.

For any children that are persistently late, school will contact parents to put actions plans in place to look at improving punctuality. Rewards will be given for a significant improvement in punctuality.

If a pupil is collected early from school, even if they have been marked in the register, this may affect their chance to receive an attendance reward (e.g. a child is collected for a medical/unspecified appointment, but no evidence is given, or a child is collected to go away on holiday (which also requires a pre-holiday/absence request with school).

12. Handover: Arrival and Departures

It is important that as part of your child's admission and exit in and out of the school grounds, measures are in place to ensure the safe and fluid arrival and exit of all of our pupils. Staff will always be present on arrival to answer any queries or questions you may have, on departure of pupils we ask that all parents wait until all children are dismissed before they approach staff with any queries or questions. This is to ensure the safe handover of all pupils and to prevent staff from being distracted in doing so. We also ask that parents maintain a safe distance from pupils at handover so that school staff have a clear viewpoint of children and parents at all times. This ensures that all children remain safe entering and exiting our premises.

13. National Thresholds

From September 2024, schools will need to consider a Penalty Notice if a pupil misses 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 weeks. Half a day (am or pm) is considered a 'session'. The threshold of 10 sessions can be met with a combination of unauthorised absence, for example, eight sessions of unauthorized holidays in term time and two sessions for any other unauthorised reasons. The ten-school week period may span different terms or school years, for example: 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 in the Autumn Term.

Unauthorised absences

A child may receive an unauthorised absence for the following reasons:

- A child is absent from school for a holiday that is not deemed as exceptional circumstances.
- A child's attendance is below 90% for the academic year to date and medical evidence has not been provided to verify the absence/illness. Medical evidence can include appointment card/proof of antibiotics/medical letter.
- Absence from school where no reason is given for the absence. Please ensure you always telephone school on first day of absence to ensure a valid reason for the absence is recorded.
- A child arrives at school late after the register is closed.

14. Holidays in Term Time

Schools are required to provide education for their pupils for 190 days a year and as parents/carers/guardians you are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. Fens Primary School believes that excellent attendance at school is vital for all pupils to ensure they reach their full potential both academically and socially.

In line with DfE guidelines, it is the policy of Fens Primary School to discourage and unauthorise any term time holidays. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

Holidays in term Time

Parents/carers should complete a Holiday Form (Appendix 1), if they intend to remove their child from school for this purpose. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. On receipt of the completed holiday form, The Family Support Officer will mark the absences on the register and a letter will be sent out to parents/carers which will remind them the absence will be marked as unauthorised. In the case of separated parents, a letter will be sent out to both parents, not just the parent requesting the holiday.

Procedure for requesting Holiday in Term time:

Parents should complete a Holiday Form (appendix 1) and return it to Family Support Officer (via school office) at least two weeks prior to the intended holiday. Holiday forms can be collected from the school office.

Parents will be notified in writing the holiday will be unauthorised and if the National Threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period is met as a result of the holiday, a referral will be made to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice.

Penalty Notices

Under the new national framework, Fixed Penalty Notices will be considered when a child has missed ten or more sessions (five days) due to unauthorised absence in a period of ten school weeks.

In September 2024, Penalty Notices (fines) charged to parents will rise to £80 (if paid within 21 days) or £160 (if paid within between 22 and 28 days). Where a penalty notice is unpaid, legal action would be pursued.

Under the new framework, only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period. Where a second Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent for the same child, the charge will be £160.

Paid within 21 days		
	Total for 1 parent	Total for 2 parents
1 child	£80	£160
2 children	£160	£320
Paid within 28 days		
1 child	£160	£320
2 children	£320	£640

If a third offence is committed within a three-year rolling period, legal action/prosecution would be considered.

Illness before or after planned holiday

If your child is absent due to illness immediately before or after a planned holiday, school may require evidence to support and authorise this absence. In these circumstances, parents/carer should speak to Family Support Officer so we can advise on the evidence required to support the absence. Failure to provide acceptable evidence will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised. If this causes the national threshold to be met, the case with be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a penalty notice.

Leave of absence- Exceptional circumstances

A school can grant leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. All schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence to the specific specific circumstances set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

- **Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad**: in line with a license issued by a local authority.
- **Attending an interview**: for entry into another educational institution or for future employment.
- **A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable:** where parents and school agree the pupil should temporarily be educated on a part-time basis for exceptional reasons.
- **Exceptional circumstances:** All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. Exceptional circumstances must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with.

No absences will be authorised within the first two weeks of a new academic school year and no absences will be authorised during test/exam/assessment periods (May/June).

For requests for absence regarding wider-curriculum events (e.g. sports/music), pupils prior attendance will be considered.

Procedures for requesting a Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstances:

1. Contact the school office to make an appointment to meet with Headteacher (or member of School Leadership Team in the Headteacher absence).
2. Parents will be invited into school to discuss the application further and to complete a Leave of Absence form (appendix 9).
3 Parents will be notified in writing of the outcome of this request. In the case of separated parents, both parents will receive the same letter.
4 If the Headteacher deems circumstances are exceptional, this will be recorded on register.
5 Any absence which has not been agreed by the Headteacher will be marked as unauthorised. If the National Threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period is met, the a Fixed Penalty Notice will be considered. In the case of separated parents, both parents will receive the same letter.
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	Total for 1 parent	Total for 2 parents
1 child	£80	£160
2 children	£160	£320
Paid within 28 days		
1 child	£160	£320
2 children	£320	£640

If a third offence is committed within a three-year rolling period, legal action/prosecution would be considered.

School also monitor and address any pupils with attendance that falls below 96% using the traffic light system.

Green: Attendance that is 96% and above
Amber: Attendance that is between 93% & 95.9%
Red: Attendance that is below 93%

Information on individual child's attendance will be communicated throughout the year.

(Appendix 1)

Holiday Absence Form

If a child is to be absent from school for any period of time, school must be informed of the reasons prior to the absence. Please complete all sections of this form and return to Family Support Officer.

In line with Department for Education guidelines, it is the policy of Fens Primary School to discourage and unauthorise any term time holidays.

Name of Children	DOB	Class

Parent 1

Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	

Parent 2

Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	

Separated families (please ensure both parents details are completed above)

I have informed my child's mother/father of this holiday request	Yes	No
I understand that my child's mother/father will be informed by school of this holiday request.	Yes	No
I understand that any family disputes relating to holiday requests is a legal matter and not a school	Yes	No

Holiday details

First day of absence		
Last day of absence		
Total number of days absent from school		
Which parent/legal guardian is child on holiday with	**Parent 1** Name: Relationship to child:	Parent 2 Name: Relationship to child:

Parents signature	
Print name	
Date	

School Section (To be completed by school staff)

Date holiday form received	
Dates of previous holiday requests	
Date of referral to Local Authority	

Fens Primary School– Attendance Monitoring Procedure & Responsibilities (Appendix 2)

School Responsibilities Parent/Carer Responsibilities	Attendance Monitoring - 1st Response/Punctuality Monitoring	Rewards Systems
School Responsibilities Letter sent to all parents and carers detailing the school and parent/carer responsibilities in respect of their child's attendance. Parent/Carer Responsibilities • Contact the school to provide a reason for their child's absence, on the first day of the absence. • Provide proof of medical appointments in advance when possible.	Family Support Officer Contact parents/carers of any pupil whose absence has not been reported as part of 1st day response procedures. Implementation of a Traffic Light System to monitor attendance in order to flag up concerns across whole school at below 96%.	Assemblies to develop the importance of attendance and punctuality. Weekly attendance reward assemblies. Rewards to support 100% Attendance half term awards. • Class of the Week highest attendance overall. • 100% half- term awards (individual awards). • 98% whole year attendance. • Individual punctuality awards. • Overall attendance improvement awards.
Tracking of Attendance & Punctuality – School Formal tracking of every child's attendance commences in September at the beginning of the academic year. Fens Primary School will: • Monitor pupils with below 96% attendance on a weekly basis. • Follow up unauthorised or unreported absence every week. • Follow up pupils with 5 or more late marks from start of academic year to each half-term. • Late gate procedure to meet and greet late comers. • Weekly & half termly register checks • Referrals to local authority's attendance team - below 70%. (statutory level).	Family Support Officer Analysing attendance data highlighting pupils whose attendance has fallen below 96%. Contact parents by sending attendance/ punctuality concern letters. Class Teacher Ensuring electronic registers are taken accurately and timely. Family Support Officer and Headteacher Scheduled meetings and attendance case conferences with parent or carer & Headteacher to discuss concerns.	
Half-termly Report taken from SIMS (Information Management System) to determine: • Persistent absence (90% or below). • Continued failure to provide explanations for absence. • Holidays in term time. • Other unauthorised absences.	Family Support Officer Analyse attendance data. Send appropriate letter to parents/carers. Headteacher / Family Support Officer Attend arranged meetings where necessary to discuss parents/ carers.	

REGISTRATION PROCEDURE (Appendix 3)

1. Registers will be completed as quickly as is convenient, preceding both daily sessions.

2. Children present will be so marked by a diagonal line / (am) \ (pm).

3. Children not present will be so marked by an N.

4. Children arriving at the school after registration in the mornings must report to the school office. The Family Support Officer will adjust the entry in the class register to a L. This will be interpreted in the class register as a child present at school having arrived after the close of registration. If a child arrives after 9:25am they will be signed in by school staff and the Family Support Officer or member of the administration team will adjust the entry in the class register to a U. An official appointment card/letter may authorise this absence, e.g. visit to doctor/dentist. Otherwise, it will be treated as unauthorised. However, if a child should arrive part way through a session, a note must be made in the register to show that child is present for safety, fire evacuations, etc. purposes.

5. Once school receives a valid reason for an absence, we may authorise that absence. Reporting by telephone, verbally to a member of staff or a note are acceptable. A message pad will be kept in the office to note any explanations for absence. These will be passed promptly to the Family Support Officer. A list of symbols used for demarcating AUTHORISED absence is included in Appendix 7 in this document. Only school can authorise absence. If an absence does not fit one of the categories listed, it is likely to be UNAUTHORISED.

6. Parents/carers removing their child from school during a session will be required to explain to their reason to the school's Headteacher stating the reason for this removal. Evidence may be required.

7. If the child returns to school with no notification of the reason for absence, telephone contact made.

8. If no response is forthcoming within 3 days of the letter being sent, the attendance must be recorded as UNAUTHORISED.

9. Any regular authorised/unauthorised absences or any notes or occurrences which give cause for concern should be brought to the attention of the Family Support Officer or member of the safeguarding team, who may decide to pursue it further along with the Schools dedicated Attendance Officer.

IMPROVING PUNCTUALITY (Appendix 4)

1. When children are regularly late for school or a pattern is emerging over a period of time, the Family Support Officer will send a letter home requesting an appointment to discuss the matter with the parents/carers and the Headteacher.

2. Regular updates are sent home via newsletters, emails and social media posts to emphasise the need for regular and punctual attendance at school and to also remind parents/carers of the importance of not taking holidays in term time.

3. Lateness 'blitzes' are completed by the schools Attendance Officer on a regular basis. This consists of greeting latecomers to school and keeping a tally of lateness during a specified week. The parents/carers of persistent latecomers are then contacted by letter to explain the importance of punctuality, or are invited into school for a meeting to discuss.

PUNCTUALTY LETTER (Appendix 4b)

Dear [Parents Name]

Re: Punctuality – [Name]

During a recent register check at Fens Primary School [week beginning (date)] it was noted that your child [name] was late on [number of lates] occasions during the period of [date from and to].

It is extremely important that your child arrives at school on time. If they are late, they are missing the start of the school day and important learning time. Arriving late cannot only be detrimental to your child, but disruptive to the other children and class teacher.

Can I remind you that the gates open at 8.45am and close at 8.55am

If there are any special circumstances, which have, or are likely to affect your child's punctuality, it is important to contact school and we will seek to support you. Working in partnership to resolve these issues will allow you child to achieve their full potential.

If you wish to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher of the Family Support Officer.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Connor
Headteacher

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE LETTER (Appendix 5)

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Name:_____ Class: _____

Dear Parents/Carers

Your child was absent from school on the following days

_____

_____

_____

Please can you let us know the reason for the absence so that this can be noted as an authorised absence. If we do not receive the information then the absences will be marked as unauthorised.

As I am sure you appreciate, your child's regular school attendance and punctuality is of paramount importance in order for them to achieve the best education possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Connor
Headteacher

UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE LETTER (Appendix 6)

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

I am aware that_____(child's name) has had a number of unexplained absences and this will be having an effect upon his/her learning.

I would therefore like to invite you to meet with me in the school on_____at _____am/pm. I hope this meeting will give us the opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have and to work together to improve_____'s attendance.

If this time is not convenient, please do not hesitate to contact me and we can arrange a more suitable time.

Looking forward to seeing you then.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Connor

Headteacher

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS (Appendix 7)

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Non-Contact Letter (Appendix 8)

Dear,

We have tried to contact you as [Child's name] has not attended school today and we have not received any notification from you.

Staff at school have tried to contact you via telephone and text messages.

Would you please be good enough to contact school to inform us of the reason for [Child's name] absence?

Many thanks; these rigorous checks are an essential part of our safeguarding duties.

Can we also take this opportunity to ask you to check we have the correct contact telephone numbers on our system in case we need to contact you in an emergency?

Yours sincerely,

Mr C.Connor

Head Teacher

(Appendix 9)

Request for Leave of Absence- Exceptional Circumstances

A school can grant leave of absence at the Headteachers discretion. Please see the Attendance Policy for circumstances which may be considered. Please note: A holiday will not be deemed as a exceptional circumstances and a holiday form should be completed if the reason of absence is a holiday.
Please complete contact the school office to make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss this application.

Name of Children	DOB	Class

Parent 1

Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	

Parent 2

Name	
Address	
Telephone Number	

Separated families (please ensure both parents details are completed above)

I have informed my child's mother/father of this request for Leave of absence.	Yes	No
I understand that my child's mother/father will be informed by school of this request for leave of absence.	Yes	No
I understand that any family disputes relating to Leave of Absence is a legal matter and not a school	Yes	No

Leave of Absence details

First day of absence	
Last day of absence	
Total number of days absent from school	
Reason of Exceptional circumstances	
Evidence of exceptional circumstance provided (If applicable)	
Parents signature	
Print name	
Date	

School Section (To be completed by school staff)

Date of meeting with Headteacher	
Dates of previous holiday/Leave of absence requests	

Attendance for current academic year	Actual attendance	Unauthorised absence	Lates
Attendance for previous academic year	Actual attendance	Unauthorised absence	Lates
Evidence of exceptional circumstances provided	Yes	No	
Headteacher's approval	Yes	No	
Parents informed of decision by letter	Yes	No	
Date of referral to Local Authority (if applicable)			