



Attendance Policy

Effective September 2023



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1. Aims & Objectives

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

- Ensuring that our whole community understands the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring pupils have access to an exciting and high-quality education to which they are entitled.
- Regularly analysing data and patterns to address absence and punctuality concerns in a timely way.
- Engaging parents in overcoming barriers to attendance and punctuality for children of compulsory school age.

2. Procedures

PARENTS will:

Ensure their children attend school regularly and on time

Notify the school on the first day of absence before 8:30 am by phone

Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances

Provide medical evidence when needed for extended periods of absence due to illness

Meet with a member of staff to discuss their child's attendance when necessary

CLASS TEACHERS will:

Complete registers at the start of each session (morning and afternoon sessions)

Talk with parents or carers about any initial concerns they have around attendance or punctuality

Monitor daily patterns of attendance and report any ongoing concerns to the Deputy Headteacher

Discuss and take action to improve class attendance regularly in phase meetings

Provide work for children to complete at home if absence is due to a long illness, disability or other circumstances

Understand the safeguarding implications of punctuality and attendance concerns and report immediately to a DSL

ADMIN STAFF will:

Ensure registers are completed on time and follow up on unknown absences

Print off official reports for monitoring purposes

Monitor patterns of lateness / attendance alongside the Deputy Head

Make first day absence calls and record reasons for absences, challenging supportively where appropriate

DEPUTY HEAD will:

Monitor official registers and data to take actions where concerns have been identified

Share and discuss patterns in attendance data as a regular leadership agenda item

Inform Governors of attendance records



Inform parents of individual pupil's attendance records at the end of the summer term in annual reports
Take a strategic view on what the school is doing to improve attendance and punctuality

GOVERNING BODY will:

Monitor whole school attendance and take appropriate action should it affect standards

3. Late Procedures:

Children who arrive late after the doors close must enter school via the front office. A parent / carer must give a reason for lateness.

Any child arriving after 15 mins or more after doors close for any other reason other than medical, will be marked with a 'U' (late after registers closed).

Children who frequently arrive late will be monitored; parent / carers will be contacted and a referral to the Pupil Entitlement team will be considered.

4. Holiday in Term Time Procedures

Children attending Summerlea School are not allowed absence for holidays. Any absence, other than that for illness or emergency medical treatment will be coded as 'unauthorised (G)' – family holiday not agreed or 'unauthorised (O)'.

Parents / carers may choose to complete an absence request form and outline 'exceptional circumstances' stating why they are removing their child during term time. Please see the locality statement in Appendix 1 for further information.

5. School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing in Education

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in the future (please refer to latest KCSiE and Children Missing in Education guidance documents).

All schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a period of 10 sessions in a 10-school week period.

6. School Refusal and Anxiety



The school is committed to working with parents and other professionals to tackle absences related to an increase in anxiety amongst young people. The aim is to have all of our young people regularly attending school. The Deputy Head and / or a member of the Inclusion Team will meet with parent in the first instance. The following guidance will be shared with all families.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-issues-affecting-a-pupils-attendance-guidance-for-schools>

Attendance Expectations

Authorised absence:

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent contacts the school to explain the absence.

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. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school and gives the reason that they are unable to get their child to school because the parent/carers have to be elsewhere, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence:

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

Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Attendance of 95% or lower is considered poor by the Department for Education. Attendance that is 90% or lower is classed as **persistent absenteeism**.

We monitor persistent absentees termly and let parents / carers know if a child's absence is 95% or lower.

Good school attendance has been proven to be vital for the success of pupils and their wellbeing.

The attendance policy should be read alongside other safeguarding policies including the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

7. Illness

It is the school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases a parent / carers' note or telephone message explaining the nature of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. However, we may on some occasions ask parent / carers to provide further evidence of a child's illness.

Appendix 1 – Locality Statement



Littlehampton Locality

Locality Leave of Absence Guidelines (to be read alongside each school's Attendance Policy)

Leave of absence in exceptional circumstance

Headteachers may only grant leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. The following examples of acceptable and unacceptable exceptional circumstances have been drawn up collectively by the Headteachers of the schools in the Littlehampton Locality.

However, every request will be considered on an individual basis and will take into account:

- The specific circumstances relating to the request
- The impact on the pupil's academic progress
- The pupil's attendance over the academic year
- Whether the leave falls within any key stage national tests or exams.

Examples of exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time (subject to evidence being provided on request):

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

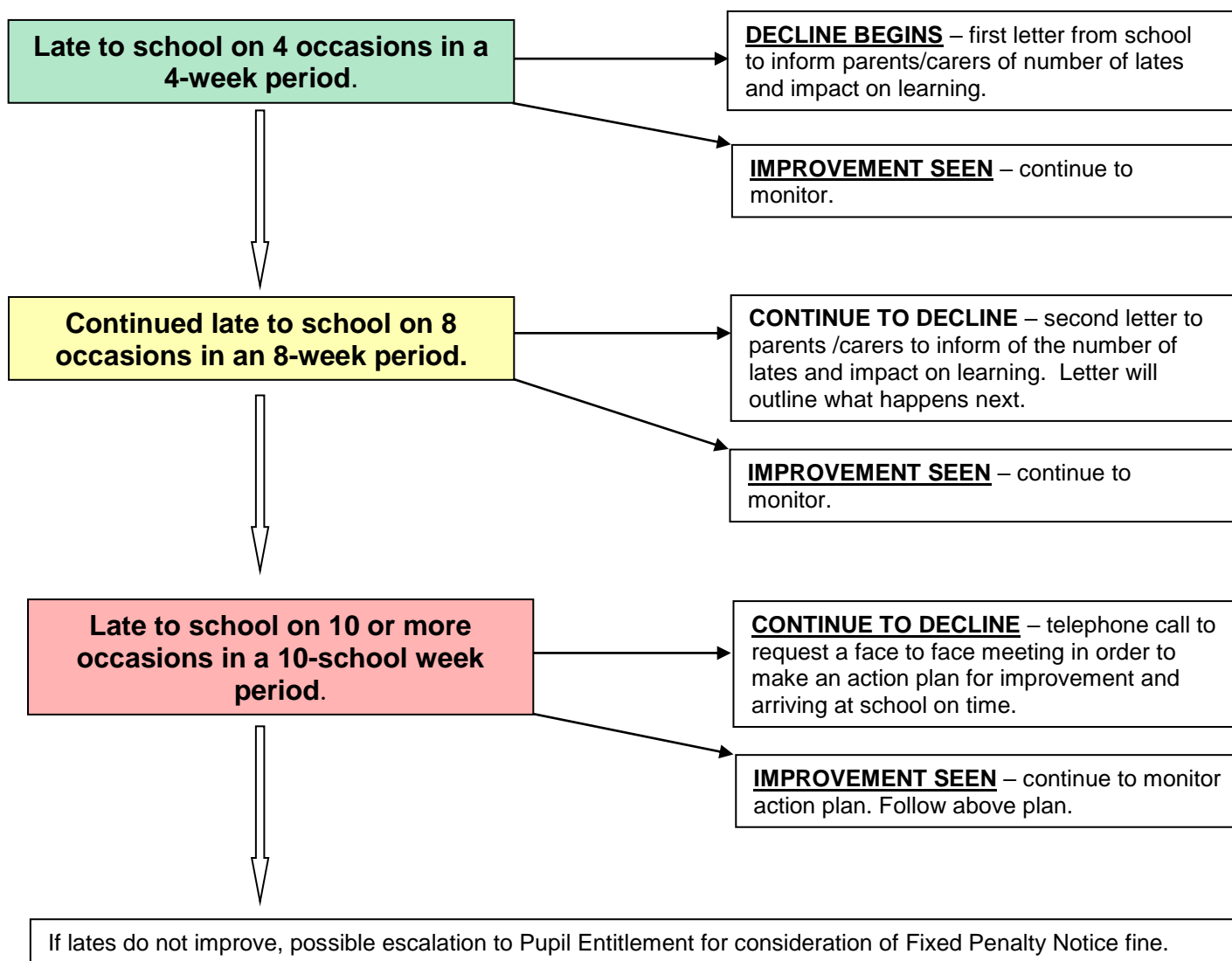


- Time-off to accompany traveller parents or carers who are temporarily migrating from the local area for occupational purposes.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional:-

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

Appendix 2 – Late Procedures





Appendix 3 - Late Letters

Late Letter 1

Dear (Parent / Carer)

Your child, (name) has been identified as having poor punctuality.

We are sure that you are aware that (X) can enter school from 8:20am to enable (him / her) to be in class for registration by 8:30 am.

Please note that children arriving after 15 mins or more after doors close will be recorded as unauthorised late (U) for the morning session, this will affect your child's attendance record. May we also remind you that if children arrive late a parent / carer should accompany them to the office to sign them in.

As you may be aware, the law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice fine by the local authority if late arrivals are not resolved.

I have to advise you as a parent / carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

Poor punctuality can lead to your child ...

- Feeling embarrassed in front of their friends
- Missing the beginning of key learning
- Missing important instructions for the rest of the school day
- Learning bad habits which could affect their employability in the future

If your child is having difficulties that you wish to discuss, please contact myself or Mrs Viney (Pupil Premium Leader & Family Support), via the school office. Becca Byatt, Family Support Worker with the Dedicated Schools Team is also available to support families who are struggling to get children to school on time.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Strong
Deputy Headteacher



Late Letter 2

Dear (Parent / Carer)

I last wrote to you on (date) with regards to my concerns about your child's poor punctuality.

These concerns have continued to escalate. (Name of child) has continued to be late (X) time in a (X) week period.

Arriving late after 15 mins or more after doors have closed will be recorded as an unauthorised; late for the morning session; this has impacted on your child's attendance record.

I have to advise you as a parent / carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to a child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. (Education Act 1996)

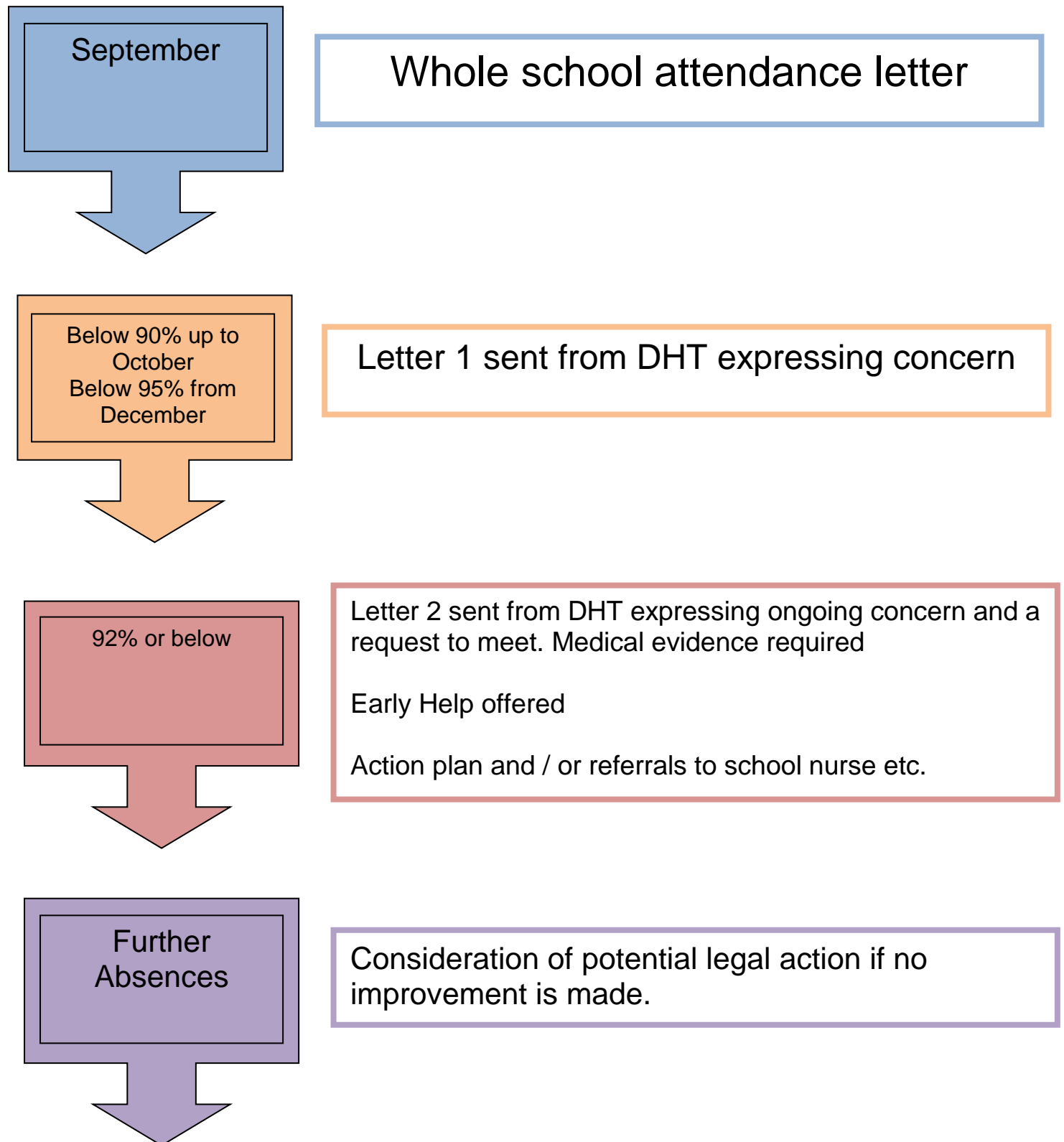
The law treats some persistent lateness in the same way as irregular attendance and parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice fine by the local authority if late arrivals are not resolved.

We would like to meet face to face with you to help identify the barriers to your child / children getting to school on time and draw up an action plan to support improvement in punctuality. Please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Strong
Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 4 – Attendance Flow Chart





Attendance Letter 1

Dear XXX,

We are writing to you to let you know that (child's name)'s absence has fallen below (90% / 95% or 92%) and is currently at XXX%.

The average attendance for your child's class is XXX%.

Your child has attended XXX sessions out of a possible XXX.

Attendance of 95% or lower is considered poor by the Department for Education. Attendance that is 90% or lower is classed as **persistent absenteeism**.

As a school we acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different, and we want to work in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. We also know that children do get ill and should not be at school if this is the case.

Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We will continue to monitor the absence data and may ask you to meet with us to discuss how we can all work together to improve attendance should the absences continue.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact (child's name)'s class teacher, Phase Leader or myself.

Yours sincerely,

XXXX
Deputy Headteacher



Attendance Letter 2

Dear XXXX,

We are writing to you to let you know that (child's name) 's absence has continued to fall below XXXX%.

I wrote to you on the (DATE OF FIRST LETTER) when HIS/HER absence was at XXX%.

His/Her current absence is XXXX%.

As a school we acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different; we want to work in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child. **However, we would like to meet with you as soon as possible to discuss how this matter can be addressed and improved.** We may also ask you to provide us with medical evidence.

Pupils' welfare and progress in school is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

Please make an appointment at the school office as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXX
Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 6 – Request for Leave



SUMMERLEA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL REQUEST FOR AUTHORISED ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

As from 1st September 2013, the Education Regulations 2013 amended Regulation 7 to prohibit the Headteacher of a maintained school from granting leave of absence (including holidays) to a pupil, except where an **advance** application has been made and the Headteacher considers that there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to it.

There is **no** entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time; however, you may apply to the school for leave of absence if you believe there are exceptional circumstances.

Leave for holiday is not permitted

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken, the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

Name of Child	Class
Is this the first request for absence this academic year? YES / NO	
Dates requested	Number of days
Reasons for seeking absence during school time – please detail why you consider this to be an exceptional circumstance.	
Please also supply any supporting documentation as proof.	
Signed	Date

**Please see additional notes overleaf.*

SCHOOL OFFICE TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION			
Teacher		Teacher aware :	
Current attendance : %			
Your request is approved and the absence as set out above is duly authorised <input type="checkbox"/>	The code placed in the register will be:		
	Annual Family Holiday	H	Educated off Site
	Religious Observance	R	Approved Sporting Activity
	Other Authorised	C	Unauthorised Holiday Absence
	Educational Visit	V	Unauthorised Absence
Your Request is Not Approved . If the pupil is absent as proposed above it will be recorded as unauthorised . <input type="checkbox"/>	Reason :		

Newstaffshared/admin/attendance/absence request 2014



Signed :	Date :
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Absence on Exceptional Grounds

1. Parents do not have the right to take a child out of school for holiday purposes.
2. Only resident parents are authorised to make an absence request.
3. Requests for absence should only be in very exceptional circumstances.
4. If authorised absence of more than two weeks is requested, full details of the family's circumstances must be submitted in writing in advance. The absence must be for genuine and exceptional reason. Parents must also state why they consider it essential for the child to take such time off school. The Headteacher will ultimately reserve the right to authorise or unauthorise the requested time.
5. If any absence is granted and the child is kept away longer than the period agreed, the additional time will be treated as unauthorised. Similarly, if a child is taken out of school without prior written permission this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.
6. In Year 6 no absence will be authorised in the period from January to the end of May whilst children are preparing for and sitting National Curriculum Tests.
7. In year 2 no absence will be authorised in the period from January to the end of June or the end of National Curriculum Tests, whichever is sooner.
8. If absence of more than two weeks is authorised in an exceptional circumstance the school reserves the right to require a set level of study during the absence and/ or completion of assignments. Please note, however, that it is not the school's responsibility to provide work for children during absence from school.

Newstaffshared/admin/attendance/absence request 2014

Policy Review Form

Please complete this section when reviewing and updating this document.

Author	Name	Date
	Jane Blackman	October 2012

Reviews	Name	Review Period (to be carried out annually)
	Karla Strong	September 2019
	Karla Strong	September 2020 – Covid 19 Updates
	Karla Strong	June 2021
	Karla Strong	September 2022

**Information**

Source	Name	Date
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Change Control**Sections Amended****Author****Date**Page 3 – '8th March 2021' added.

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 1 – '(both remote and face to face)' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 2 – 'Talk with parents or carers about any initial concerns they have around attendance or punctuality' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 2 – 'ongoing' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 3 – '15 mins or more after doors close' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 5 – '(please refer to latest KCSiE and Children Missing in Education guidance documents)' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Section 5 – '& Safeguarding' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Appendix 3 - '8:45 am' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Appendix 3 – '15 mins or more after doors close' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Later letter 2 – '15 mins or more after doors have closed' added

Karla Strong

June 2021

Additional emphasis on persistent absenteeism. Updated annual letter.

Karla Strong

July 2022

Review of criteria for communication.

Appendix 7 removed

Attendance Expectations

Karla Strong

September 2022

Addition of School Refusal & Anxiety Section
Removal of Whole school attendance letter example

Karla Strong

Sept 23



This policy was approved by the governing body of Summerlea Community Primary School in:

.....September 2023.....

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sue Weeping', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Signature of Chair of Governors:

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Signature of Headteacher:

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