# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Policy produced by the school

Adopted by Full Governing Body -Academic year 2026/27
Review date- Academic year 2027/28

We want to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education to maximise opportunities, attainment, well-being and wider life chances for everybody to realise their potential. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the school community to strive for excellence and enjoyment in education. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually.

At St Patrick's School our objectives are to develop an ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers, and the wider community the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning and children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. There is a renewed national focus on maximising pupils' time in the classroom, as evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school (including primary school) gain the best GCSE and A Level results.

Parents and carers are asked to sign up to this policy in the signing of the Home School Agreement.

**Our Senior Attendance Champion is Ms Toop, the Head of School. Please make an appointment to meet the Head of School for support with attendance.**
Other people you can contact about attendance issues are:

- Your child's class teacher
- Assistant Headteacher and SENCO

Please telephone or email the school office to make an appointment.

**Attendance target**

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School intends to maintain its high levels of attendance each year. Our current target for 2026/27 is 96%.

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

We will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling, and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the country.

Throughout the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our Weekly Newsletter and we ask for your full support.

**Term dates**

School term dates are published in advance and can be found on the school website.

Whilst every effort is made for common term dates across Camden council, there are times that term dates may differ if you have children attending more than one school. Please check the term dates on each school website and do not assume each school will have the same term dates.

They are also available from the school office and will be regularly highlighted in the school newsletter.

Staff training days (inset days) are included in the term dates schedule. Parents or carers will receive written notice of any changes in term dates. Those changes would also be published in the calendar on the weekly school newsletter.

The Department for Education does not consider a holiday or any absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance and any such absence will not be authorised by the school.

**Why Regular Attendance is important:**

**1. Learning**

We know from experience and from studies that regular absence and poor punctuality can have a detrimental effect on a child's learning. When a pupil is absent or arrives late it disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning not only of that pupil but also that of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in a penalty notice or prosecution.

**2. Safeguarding and access to support services**

At St Patrick's, we believe every pupil should be able learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn and participate in all school activities in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers. Safeguarding is about offering early help and

support to children and families and difficulties with attendance and lateness may be signs that something is worrying the child or that there are difficulties within the family. Poor or irregular attendance, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding matter if this places your child at risk of harm.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school; safeguarding and promoting the welfare and life opportunities for children encompasses:

Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti- bullying, protecting children from abuse and neglect, online safety, radicalisation and extremism, awareness of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

To allow us to safeguard the children in our care it is important that parents and carers provide the school with their current contact details and provide at least three other contact numbers in case of emergency.

It is also important for parents to let school know of any specific vulnerability in relation to their child or home circumstances. If you are uncertain about what would be considered a vulnerability, please speak with Miss Toop the Head of School.

Other people you can contact about attendance issues are:

- Your child's class teacher
- Mrs Marsh – Assistant Headteacher and SENCO
- Ms Jess – Office Manager

Please telephone the school office on 0207 267 1200 to make an appointment.

We will seek advice on attendance concerns from Camden's Attendance and Children Out of School (ACOS) and where appropriate we will seek consent to refer to other support services that can help support pupils and their families to improve attendance.

**Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils, and all members of school staff.

**To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Provide parents / carers with regular details on attendance
- Report to parents on how their child is performing in school with two written reports a year on what their child's attendance and punctuality rate is and

how this relates to their attainment and progress.

- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates, and outings/events
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.
- Contact parents in a timely manner if there are concerns around their child's attendance to attend a meeting with the school

**Telling the children about the importance of good attendance and punctuality**

Children receive guidance from teachers on an individual, class and school level about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. If a child has concerns about their attendance or punctuality, they are encouraged to speak to their class teacher.

Children are encouraged to go to bed at an appropriate time so that they are not tired the next day. They are encouraged to prepare for the school day on the night before as much as possible, so they are not rushed in the mornings.

There are incentive schemes in place to promote good attendance and punctuality amongst the children.

**The Law relating to attendance and safeguarding**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

> *the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:*
> *(a) to age, ability, and aptitude and*
> *(b) to any special educational needs, he/ she may have either at school or otherwise*

Compulsory School Age: A child is compulsory school age from the beginning of the next term after their 5th birthday until the last Friday of June in the academic year of their 16th birthday.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

This policy is written in relation to the following acts of Parliament and guidance relating to attendance:

- Education Act 1996
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- We will also take account of all new legislation and initiatives.
- DFE School attendance guidance

**Types of Absence**

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why, information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

**Authorised Absence**

An authorised absence is where the school has either given permission in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered is accepted as satisfactory justification for absence.

Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness, medical appointments - appointments should always be made outside school times where possible
- Unavoidable cause (which is expected to be an emergency and unavoidable)
- Days of religious observance
- Traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents' employment

**Unauthorised Absences**

An unauthorised absence is where either no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is not considered acceptable by the school.

This includes:

- Parents / Carers keeping children off school to assist with translation
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a late mark – See lateness section
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

If an absence is recorded as unauthorised the school may refer this to the Local Authority's **Attendance and Children Out of School (ACOS)** department. The Local Authority can use various sanctions to promote regular attendance such as issuing a penalty notice fine or initiate court proceedings. (Further information below.)

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, it can sometimes be that they are reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers, and the child wherever possible.

If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

**Persistent and Severely Absent pupils (PA and SA)**

A pupil is a 'persistent absentee' if they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason.

A pupil is 'severely absent' if they miss 50% or more of their sessions across the school year for whatever reason.

Absence at both these levels is causing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA or SA thresholds or is at risk of moving towards that level, is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

All our PA and SA pupils and their parents/carers are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

If your child has or is at risk of reaching the threshold for Persistent Absence or Severely Absent, you will be asked to provide evidence for any future absence. This may be medical evidence for illness which can be in the form of prescription, appointment cards, medicine packaging or hospital letter. Where we have concerns about your child's health, we may ask you to talk to the school nurse or for permission to contact their GP or other medical professionals for advice.

**Absence Procedures**

**If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and give an expected return date. You need to call every day thereafter to advise school of your child's progress.
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who may arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

**If your child is absent, we will:**

- Telephone, text or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Head of School or Assistant Headteacher.
- Consult with the Attendance Children Out of School (ACOS) if attendance moves below 96% and at least 10% or more of the absences are unauthorised.

## The Camden Attendance, Children Out of School Officer (ACOS)

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems affecting or likely to affect attendance together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consult with the Attendance Children Out of School (ACOS) officer. If other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. They may also apply for an Education Supervision Order through the Family Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Attendance Children Out of School Officer (ACOS).

## School staff who may deal with attendance are:

- Head of School
- Assistant Head teacher / SENCO
- Your child's class teacher

## The role of Governors

There is a School Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance and who is responsible for school attendance policies and issues. It is their role to be aware of general attendance issues and along with the whole Governing Board inform and oversee school attendance performance initiatives.

Reports and statistics and initiatives to improve school attendance will be shared and consulted on with the Governing Board and documented in Governors meeting minutes (made available to all parents) and the Governors Annual Report.

## The Head of School's Role

The Head of School will consider every request for leave on its individual merits. Ultimately the Headteacher will be the final arbiter of the authorisation of any leave.

The Head of School oversees the collection and reporting of attendance data and the publication of statistics and reports on attendance to parents, pupils, governors and to Camden Council. Data used to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohort who need it most. Data will also inform the annual review of schools attendance policy and practice. An attendance audit is carried out and reported at the end of every term. This is available to the local authority and the Department of Education (DfE)

The Head of School will work to devise a working attendance policy, reviewed at regular intervals and based on school attendance data.
They will monitor weekly attendance patterns and trends and identify whole school strategies and support for children who are missed school.

## The role of teachers

All class teachers have a responsibility in keeping an attendance register. This is a legal document and must be completed accurately. It is a legal requirement that the attendance register must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Absences are coded according to the information received from the parent of the child.

The class teacher monitors the register daily and is encouraged to be attentive and discerning to any emerging patters of absence and lateness or any alarming changes in this area.

Class teachers encourage patterns of punctuality and good attendance by praising those children who came to school each day and arrive on time.

The class teacher reports any concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality to the Head of School. This can sometimes then be referred to the LA if a Penalty Notice or legal action is being sought.

Ensure that information about absences is passed on to the appropriate person.

Welcome back pupils after an absence.

## Legal sanctions and actions

The school will make every attempt to contact the parent or carer by telephone and in writing. In the first instance we would invite them to discuss the problem unless the absence relates to leave in term time without permission. Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, attendance may be enforced where necessary through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education. A referral may be made to the LA under the following circumstances based on the national framework for penalty notices:

- A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of ten sessions (usually equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling ten school week period, may span different terms or school years. This will include unauthorised absence for lateness Code U.
- A term time holiday taken without permission would count towards the ten sessions.
- A national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the third (or subsequent) offence(s) other legal prosecution will be considered.

Penalty notices are issued to each parent or carer for each of their children, for example two parents with three children would receive a total of six penalty notices, one parent with two children will receive a total of two penalty notices.

From September 2024, each penalty notice is £80 if paid in the first 21 days, from days 22 to 28 the fine doubles to £160 for each penalty notice.

For the second offence issued to the same parent for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period being charged at a higher rate of £160 for days 1 – 28, with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

The Attendance and Children Out of School has asked us to point out that it is not possible to pay these fines by instalments or lower the cost when they have increased, or to simply fine one parent.

Payment can be made online and instructions on how to pay are included on the penalty notice letter. Any problems with paying online should be discussed as early as possible with the Attendance and Children Out of School by ringing 0207 974 1007.

If a penalty notice is not paid or the Attendance and Children Out of School feels that the level of absence warrants court action, the local authority will arrange for a court hearing. There are a range of sentencing options available to the magistrate including the maximum penalty of a fine of up to £2500 per parent for each offence as well as the possibility of up to three months in prison.

**What happens after a long absence?**

The school is sensitive to the needs and circumstances of pupils returning after significant periods of absence and will support the smooth reintegration of pupils both academically and socially. In such circumstances the school will work with parents, carers and pupil towards an agreed reintegration plan which may include opportunities for counselling and feedback, peer support and mentoring, along with an agreed review period.

**Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information / instructions and news for the day. Late arriving pupils can also disrupt lessons, and this can be embarrassing for the child. This can encourage absence.

**How we manage lateness**

Any child can attend Breakfast Club from 8am. The doors open at 8.40am for children to go to their classes and begin Early Morning Work. Registration is at 9am. Children arriving after 9.00 am are recorded as late. Where children repeatedly arrive late, the school will set up a meeting between the Head teacher and in some cases, the Local Authority Attendance Children Out of School (ACOS), and the parent.

At 9.30am the registers will be closed. If your child arrives after that time, they will receive an unauthorised absence mark that shows them to be on site but **not**

counted as a present for statistical / legal purposes. This means the possibility of a Penalty Notice(s) if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Head of School and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

The school day ends at 3.30 pm. Where parents continually fail to make arrangements to pick up their children at the end of the school day the school may have to consider referring the matter to Social Services, Early Help and/or Camden's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that s/he collect their children from school on time every day.

**Exceptional Leave in Term Time**

**The legal situation…**

It is an offence to take unauthorised pupil leave during school term time. Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks (of which there are 13 weeks a year). Working Together to improve School Attendance states that "The DFE does not consider a need or a desire for a holiday or any other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance."

There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from school in term time. Taking leave in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any monetary savings you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

All applications for a leave of absence must be made in advance to the Head of School and will only be considered if there are exceptional circumstances. In deciding the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time. The Head of School will be the final arbiter as to the authorisation of any leave.

If exceptional leave is agreed you will receive a letter from the school. If you do not get a letter DO NOT, assume that permission has been granted. Only the headteacher can decide if they will grant exceptional leave – no one else in school has permission to do so and leaving an application form is not permission to take leave.

If leave has been granted and a child returns late outside of the agreed dates either before or after, the school will reserve the right to unauthorise the entire period of leave taken.

If exceptional leave has not been granted, a penalty notice can be issued.

**Penalty notices**

Penalty notices are issued to each parent or carer for each of their children, for example two parents with three children would receive a total of six penalty notices, one parent with two children will receive a total of two penalty notices.

From September 2024, each penalty notice is £80 if paid in the first 21 days, from days 22 to 28 the fine doubles to £160 for each penalty notice.

For the second offence issued to the same parent for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period being charged at a higher rate of £160 for days 1 – 28, with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

The Attendance and Children Out of School has asked us to point out that it is not possible to pay these fines by instalments or lower the cost when they have increased, or to simply fine one parent.

If parents have any comments, concerns, or complaints regarding the school attendance policy these can be addressed in writing to the Head of School, or an appointment can be arranged for discussion with the Head of School. If any parents wish to work with the school in partnership to promote and implement good school attendance practice this is encouraged and applauded. If a parent believes the school can support or assist them in their child's school attendance, we would be happy to accommodate this.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Attendance and Children Out of School themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is 0207 974 1653 or you can email acos@camden.gov.uk

**Examples of requests that do meet the exceptional leave criteria…**

A situation where a parent/carer has to book airline tickets the following day due to a family emergency such as a death. Documentary evidence such as a photocopy of the airline booking will be required.

Failure to return to school following a holiday due to airport delays. Documentary evidence of the delay such as a letter from the airline company will be required.

N.B If a pupil fails to return on the agreed date, it is an unauthorised absence. The pupil may, in some circumstances, lose their school place.

**Examples of requests that do not meet the exceptional leave criteria…**

Booking a family trip in advance to visit extended family who are unwell.

Booking a family trip in advance to attend a family event such as a wedding or funeral.

**Why is pupil leave during term time unacceptable?**

Pupils miss important lessons leading to 'gaps' in their understanding of key concepts. They often find it difficult to catch up on their return. This can have a serious impact on their academic attainment, particularly in mathematics. Teachers can use valuable time trying to help pupils to catch up following a period of pupil leave. This can have a negative impact on the attention given to other pupils in the class.

Pupils can find it challenging to manage adjustments to friendships and the class dynamic when they have missed key school events e.g. end of term or beginning of term events.

Parents often ask teachers to put together 'remote' learning programmes for pupils to use during their period of extended leave. This uses up teachers valuable time and can have a negative impact on the attention given to other pupils in the class.

Our school operates individual intervention programmes ( eg 1-1 tutoring). Pupil leave can result in valuable resources being wasted.

**Children Missing from Education**

If you move from the area and your whereabouts are unknown, the school can legally remove your child from the roll after 20 school days of unauthorised absence. It is vital that if you keep school informed of any change of details and regularly update them if details change. Your child may be at risk of losing their school place if your whereabouts are not known.

It is also important that emergency contact information is kept up to date and that if you are leaving the area, you provide details of where and how you can be contacted. If you do not do this and the school is unable to trace your child, this would be treated as a safeguarding matter.

**Help & Support**

If you need help with attendance, it is important that you contact school about the issues as soon as possible. The quicker we know what the problem is, the quicker that we can work together to solve it and put a plan together which will meet your child's needs and ensure your child can benefit from all that school has to offer. Where needed we can also involve other services to make sure that your child and your family gets the right support, at the right time from the right people.

**Summary**

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

**The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

Head of School: Ms Toop

Governor: Ms Harvey

Attendance lead: Ms Toop

| Absence | Action | Outcome |
|---|---|---|
| Day 1 | Every day the Office Manager prepares a list of all children absent, contact with parents and any reasons provided. The Head of School decides on next steps for each pupil absent.<br><br>If no reason received: contact – telephone call / text / email.<br>(Remember to ask for expected return date and for regular updates if absence more than one day). If no contact, then consider trying emergency contacts | Parent provides acceptable reason – authorised absence (AA).<br>Reason provided is unacceptable - unauthorised absence (UA)<br>Unable to contact family – check if child is identified as vulnerable –refer to Attendance / Safeguarding Lead who may contact a child's social worker. |
| Day 2 onwards | If no response at day 1 – repeat above –<br>The Head of School decides on next steps for each pupil absent. | If no contact made then outcomes may include:<br>Outcomes may include<br>Check with support staff, school friends, other parents<br>Check with any sibling schools to see if known and ask for advice<br>Contact social worker where appropriate<br>Check with local authority attendance service<br>Contact MASH<br>Contact police<br>Home visit if no response leave note – if appropriate check with neighbours (mindful of data protection). |

## Absence escalation percentage table

| Percentage | Responsibility | Action |
|---|---|---|
| 91% - 96% | School Action: Attendance Lead / Attendance Officer | Review attendance – consider is absence authorised (is it one period of absence of several individual days - look for patterns)<br>If authorised may decide to monitor.<br>If unauthorised – write to parents advising them of attendance level and of concerns / expectations and possible next actions.<br>If unauthorised has it reached the threshold for Penalty Notice Warning. |
| 90% or below | School Action + ACOS / other agencies where appropriate. | Review attendance – consider if absence is authorised – review reason and pattern. If child has a medical condition is a referral to Medical Needs Service appropriate. If they are subject to CP plan or other safeguarding concerns raised, then discuss with Designated Safeguarding Lead / allocated Social Worker. If low attendance is authorised due to exclusions have all inclusion options been considered (primary may seek advice from the re-integration service. Home visits should be made to ensure vital information is not missed. Consider absences using Emotional Based School Avoidance guidance. At less than 90% attendance a child is a Persistent Absentee and absence requires further investigation and possible statutory intervention depending on reason for absence. Long term illness should have been referred to Medical Needs Team; exclusions to School Inclusion Service. |

Schools must notify the Local Authority of children who are absent for 10 consecutive days without authorisation. Email: acos@camden.gov.uk

**Request for exceptional leave during term time**

**Please read the information below carefully.**

**If the leave you are requesting meets the exceptional category, please complete the question section of the form and arrange to meet with the Head of school.**

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**It is an offence to take unauthorised pupil leave during school term time.**

**It is an offence to take unauthorised pupil leave during school term time.**
**Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks (of which there are 13 weeks a year). Working Together to improve School Attendance states that, "The DFE does not consider a need or a desire for a holiday or any other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance."**

**There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from school in term time. Taking leave in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.**

**New regulations now state that a Head of School must not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The new regulations also require that all applications have to be made in advance to the Head of School by persons requiring leave of absence. Parents will have to prove to the satisfaction of the Head of School that their request is due to exceptional circumstances and will need to be supported in all cases by documentary evidence.**

**Penalty notices**

Penalty notices are issued to each parent or carer for each of their children, for example two parents with three children would receive a total of six penalty notices, one parent with two children will receive a total of two penalty notices.

From September 2024, each penalty notice is £80 if paid in the first 21 days, from days 22 to 28 the fine doubles to £160 for each penalty notice.

For the second offence issued to the same parent for the same child, within a rolling 3-year period being charged at a higher rate of £160 for days 1 – 28, with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

The Attendance and Children Out of School has asked us to point out that it is not possible to pay these fines by instalments or lower the cost when they have increased, or to simply fine one parent.

Payment can be made online and instructions on how to pay are included on the penalty notice letter. Any problems with paying online should be discussed as early as possible with the Attendance and Children Out of School by ringing 0207 974 1007.

If a penalty notice is not paid or the Attendance and Children Out of School feels that the level of absence warrants court action, the local authority will arrange for a court hearing. There are a range of sentencing options available to the magistrate including the maximum

penalty of a fine of up to £2500 per parent for each offence as well as the possibility of up to three months in prison.

**Examples of requests that do meet the exceptional leave criteria…**

A situation where a parent/carer has to book airline tickets the following day due to a family emergency such as a death. Documentary evidence such as a photocopy of the airline booking will be required.

Failure to return to school following a holiday due to airport delays. Documentary evidence of the delay such as a letter from the airline company will be required.

N.B If a pupil fails to return on the agreed date, it is an unauthorised absence. The pupil may, in some circumstances, lose their school place.

**Examples of requests that do not meet the exceptional leave criteria…**

Booking a family trip in advance to visit extended family who may be unwell.

Booking a family trip in advance to attend a family event such as a wedding or funeral.

**Why is pupil leave during term time unacceptable?**

**Pupils miss important lessons leading to 'gaps' in their understanding of key concepts. They often find it difficult to catch up on their return. This can have a serious impact on their academic attainment, particularly in mathematics. Teachers can use valuable time trying to help pupils to catch up following a period of pupil leave. This can have a negative impact on the attention given to other pupils in the class.**

**Pupils can find it challenging to manage adjustments to friendships and the class dynamic when they have missed key school events e.g. end of term or beginning of term events.**

**Parents often ask teachers to put together 'remote' learning programmes for pupils to use during their period of extended leave. This uses up teachers valuable time and can have a negative impact on the attention given to other pupils in the class.**

**Our school operates comprehensive and sophisticated individual intervention programmes ( eg 1-1 level 6 attainment coaching). Pupil leave can result in valuable resources being wasted.**

**If the leave that you are requesting meets the exceptional category, please complete the following questions and arrange to meet with the Head of school.**

**I am requesting permission to take exceptional leave of absence for the child/children named below:**

**Name of child/ren**_____

**Year group/s** _____

**Period of absence: From** _____**To**_____

**Number of school days absent** _____

**Date of return to school** _____

**Destination** _____

**Brothers and sisters requesting exceptional leave from other schools:**

**Names**_____

**School** _____

**Details of person to be contacted if your child does not return to school on the agreed date:**

**Name of contact person**_____

**Address of contact person** _____

**Telephone number of contact person** _____

**Reason for request of exceptional leave:**

**Date** _____

**Signature of parent/carer**_____