



# Perranporth C P School

*Revised: Jan 2023*

# Attendance Strategy & Policy

2023-2026

**Approved by:**

Silvia Lowe

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**Next review due by:**

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## 1. Vision for Attendance

We all have high aspirations for the children who attend Perranporth School– we want them to enjoy life in the school and beyond, to achieve well and to thrive as part of a strong and inclusive community and economy. Good attendance at school is vital if they are to realise this ambition and reach their full potential.

As a school we therefore aim to reduce avoidable pupil absence to an absolute minimum in order to ensure that all pupils achieve the highest levels of attendance possible.

## 2. Why Good Attendance Matters

Evidence shows that securing excellent attendance at school is key to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people. Missing lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind, creating gaps in their learning, and diminishing their self-confidence.

Good attendance habits must start from the earliest stages of education. We know that children who regularly miss school in Reception class will most likely go on to have poor attendance at secondary school. Research by Universities UK indicates that children with poor attendance are 5 times less likely to achieve 5 strong passes at GCSE, preventing them from going on to Higher Education or into employment.

We also know that poor attendance at school can lead to poor emotional health and wellbeing. Children and young people who miss school, on a regular basis, can become socially isolated; they can lack confidence and have low self-esteem. Children can feel like they don't fit in with their peers and this can lead to loneliness. We also know that young people who regularly miss school are at greater risk of anti-social behaviour and are more likely to become victims of crime.

These are not the life outcomes and experiences we want for our children. School is not just about academic success and attainment; it is about learning about the world, about relationships and about ourselves. It is about trying new things, making new friends, and finding our place in the world. To miss school is to miss the many, many experiences that shape the choices we make, the opportunities we have and the quality of life that we lead. There is a wide range of international evidence that tells us that children who attend school regularly go on to achieve better outcomes, to live healthier, wealthier and more enriched lives - and we want to make sure we are all doing everything that we can to make that happen for all of our children.

## 3. Returning to a Culture of Good Attendance

At Perranporth we have worked hard over many years to improve pupil attendance as a whole school and for targeted groups of pupils. We have developed and employed strategies which have positively impacted upon our attendance year on year prior to the Covid outbreak.

We have always faced certain challenges relating to attendance and the socio-economic make-up of our catchment area, together with the large reliance on the tourist industry for employment many of our families have. 40% of our pupils are from the most deprived 30-40% of homes nationally according to the latest IMD data. These facts mean that our families are much more likely to take advantage of the pricing policy applied by the holiday industry at present, with term-time holidays being significantly cheaper than those offered during the school closure periods. Additionally, families working in the tourist industry usually cannot take holidays during school holidays as this is their peak times of work. These tendencies are clearly shown through our analysis of pupil absence data. Whilst we have regularly asked parents to avoid taking holidays during term-time we have not fined parents who do so. This is in part in recognition of the financial difficulties faced by many of our parents, and a need to maintain a positive working partnership with them, but it also directly relates to the strategic

position taken by Cornwall LA and EWO Service which has made the process of applying for Fixed Penalty Notices for Term-Time absence a difficult one.

The COVID-19 pandemic created huge disruption for children, families, and educators. Attendance at school became more challenging for all. The disruption to learning created by the closure of schools and the creation of remote learning packages was unprecedented. We feel it is important that we work with our families and other agencies to overcome the challenges created by the pandemic and make sure all our children are supported to attend to school with the high expectations we had pre-Covid in terms of school attendance.

We know that for some children and young people the return to school, following the pandemic and lockdown, was an anxious time and it is important that we all work together to understand that and make sure the right support is in place. Our Attendance Strategy covers the next three years from 2023 to 2026 and will direct our work in improving school attendance over that time.

#### 4. Facts about Poor Attendance

Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999 require all maintained schools to open to educate their pupils for at least 190 days (380 sessions) in each school year.

The Table puts absence in the context of the days children miss at school based on a school being opened for 190 days per year and Table 2 puts absence in the context of the days children miss at school over a six week period.

Number of days absence	Equals attendance one school year
9.5 days	95%
19 days	90%
28.5 days	85%
38 days	80%
47.5 days	75%
57 days	70%
66.5 days	65%
Number of days absence	Attendance over past six weeks
2 days	93%
3 days	90%
5 days	83%
8 days	73%
10 days	67%
15 days	50%

## 5. School Procedures

### (a) Registration Processes

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher at 8.45am and 1.00pm.

These registers are completed electronically using the Arbor system. If this system is unavailable for any reason then a paper copy of the register will be provided by, and should be returned to, the school office.

It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

The original entry

The amended entry

The reason for the amendment

The date on which the amendment was made

The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See **Appendix A** for the DfE attendance codes.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

### (b) Attendance Codes

Please See **Appendix A** of this policy.

### (c) Pupil Lateness Procedures

- If any child is late (ie arrives after 8.45am), they will be recorded as late.
- Parents will receive a daily message if their child is late: "Your child arrived late at school today" or similar (if the parents did not drop off the child at school).
- Half termly report to the Headteacher of late marks and letters sent to the parents of children with more than 5 late marks over the half term.
- Messages and letters will be escalatory.

- Following review of termly attendance, letter sent to parents requesting a meeting with the Headteacher as needed, to discuss ways of improving lateness.
- If children arrive after the school gates are closed at 8:45am, they must enter the school through the main Office. Office staff will record the child as 'late'.
- Obviously, we will use our discretion, eg if a parent phones to say the car has broken down and their child will be late, they will not receive a message.
- We recognise that if a child arrives late to school, it is almost never because of something they have done and we will not in any way make them feel responsible.
- The Education Welfare Officer will be notified if lateness becomes a regular occurrence.

#### **(d) Pupil Absence - Parental & School Responsibilities**

##### **Unplanned Absences**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. The school may contact a child's surgery in relation to safeguarding concerns, including those linked to a child's attendance.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where, despite seeking clarification from parents/carers, we have not received reasons for a child's absence then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O).

##### **Repeated or Long Term Illness**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

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

Where, over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from parents for the school to make their own enquiries.

##### **Medical or Dental Appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

### **Granting Approval for Term-Time Absence**

With effect from September 2013 headteachers may no longer grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional circumstances' are that they are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'.

#### Guiding principles for term-time absence approval

It is not possible to write a definitive list of occasions which may be classed as 'exceptional circumstances'. However, these may include religious observance, attendance at a funeral or to visit a seriously ill family member.

Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. The Headteacher will rightly prioritise attendance, and it is unlikely that holidays taken in term time will be deemed to fall into the definition of being 'exceptional circumstances' and are therefore likely to be classed as unauthorised.

The default school policy should be that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

The decision to authorise a pupil's absence is wholly at the headteacher's discretion based on their assessment and merits of each request.

If an event can be reasonably scheduled outside of term-time then it would not be normal to authorise absence for such an event – holidays are therefore not considered 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

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

If a child is absent from school without authorisation, a parent will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by

the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates’ Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

A copy of the Parental Request for Leave of Absence during Term Time form is attached as **Appendix B**.

**(e) First Day Contact**

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers from 8.45am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for this.

**(f) Children Missing in Education**

“Where a pupil has not returned to school for **ten days** after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for **twenty consecutive school days**, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.”

DfE CME, September 2016 See also **Appendix D - CME Action Plan**

**6. Monitoring & Reporting Strategy**

The school expects attendance of **at least 96%** for each child.

The percentage categories used for attendance are:

	Attendance %	Broken Weeks%	Occasions of Lateness
Excellent Attendance	100%-98%	0%-3%	0-1
Good Attendance	97.9 - 96%	4%-9%	2-3
Attendance Requiring Improvement	95.9% - 94%	10%-18%	4-9
Poor Attendance	93.9% - 90%	> 18%	>9
Persistent Absentee (DfE defined)	< 90%	n/a	n/a

These attendance bands are based upon a rolling year.

\* A broken week is any week which was not completed in full.

**(a) Weekly**

Each week the class teacher and the school office will monitor individual absences and report concerns to the HT or DHT as appropriate.



### (b) Termly

At the end of term, the HT will analyse pupil attendance data for the whole school, for particular focus groups (see below), and for individual pupils. This will then inform further steps and targeted action as detailed in section 9 of this policy.

A Half termly **Attendance Meeting** will be held between The Attendance Officer (AB) and The Headteacher, a nominated governor may also be invited as part of a monitoring role.

This meeting will review overall trends in attendance for the whole school, focus groups and individuals. A review of intervention strategies and progress will be made and any relevant adaptations made.

Reports to parents at each termly teacher consultation meeting detailing their child's current attendance %, with a discussion about how this might be improved.

Reports to Governors as part of the HT Report to the FGB

### (d) Annually

Reports to parents are contained in the end of year report detailing their child's attendance %, in that year.

## 7. Focus Groups

Monitoring and reporting will give a particular focus to the following groups of pupils:

- Child Missing in Education
- Looked After Children
- FSM and Pupil Premium Children
- Young Carers
- EAL Children
- SEND Children

## 8. Targeted Intervention Strategy/Attendance Support Plan

The graduated approach is a framework of staged interventions. Interventions from Stage 2 to Stage 4 will be carried out in response to data monitoring/analysis or intelligence received.

### (a) **Stage 1 - All pupils**

This stage refers to the variety of school-based interventions to celebrate and promote attendance and secure good attendance levels for all.

### (b) **Stage 2 (mainly for pupils who are at risk of being persistently absent)**

This stage deals with early intervention and a family response to early challenges with children's attendance. This intervention will be carried out in response to concerns about a pupil's attendance based on monitoring data or concerns raised by staff. This will include a focus on overall attendance patterns, broken weeks data and lateness.

#### Response Escalation in **Stage 2**

1. Stage 2 concerns raised via data monitoring or intelligence received.
2. The class teacher will contact the parent to raise concerns and offer support
3. The Headteacher will contact the parent/carer to raise concerns and offer support.
4. Following the contact from the Headteacher, updates will be given staff as required/appropriate. This may include;

- a. The pupil's class teacher
  - b. The SENDCo/Pupil Premium Lead (if the child is Pupil Premium)
  - c. The School Admin Staff (e.g. where adaptations have been agreed)
5. A review date will be set, and this cycle may be repeated if there is a belief that progress is being or can be made. If no improvement is evident the case will move to Stage 3.

**(c) Stage 3 (mainly for pupils who are persistent absentees)**

This stage uses targeted intervention and brokering multi-agency support:

1. The Headteacher will write a formal letter notifying the parents/carers that their child's absences are now classified as Persistent Absence. The letter will enlist the parent's support in addressing the issue and offering support. If the child's absence is predominantly due to absence due to illness/medical appointments, then the letter may request medical evidence for any future absences. Without medical evidence, further absences will not be authorized.
2. If absences persist, the Headteacher will arrange a formal meeting with the parents/carers and an Attendance Contract will be put in place (Appendix C). This will set out any support that may be appropriate, and targets for improvement. A review date will be set, and the parent will be made aware that a failure to achieve improvement may result in the case moving to Stage 4 and a referral for statutory intervention from the LA.
3. The Attendance Officer will make referrals to any multi-agency partners as detailed in the meeting above.
4. A review meeting will be held on the date set to look at the progress made. It may be appropriate to repeat this cycle and to put in place a further Attendance Contract with revised targets and support, or it may be considered necessary to move to Stage 4. Where good progress has been achieved the case may be de-escalated to Stage 1.
5. Attendance Officer referral to LA for Statutory Intervention

**(d) Stage 4 (for persistent absentees and/or term time holidays)**

This stage moves on to statutory intervention through the local authority.

1. The Headteacher/Attendance Officer makes a referral to the LA for Statutory Intervention
2. The school liaises with the LA in addressing the concerns with parents/carers.

**Term Time Holidays**

\*Stage 4 Statutory Intervention may also be used to make Fixed Penalty Fines for families taking term-time holidays where the LA criteria has been met.

Follow this link to make a referral for an unauthorised term-time holiday  
<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/schools-and-colleges/services-for-schools/school-forms-linked-from-sla-online/unauthorised-absence-holiday/>

## APPENDIX A

### Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census system. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The codes are:

#### Present at school

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in school during registration. If a pupil were to leave the school premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

- **Registration code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm Present in school during registration.**

- **Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed**

Schools should have a policy on how long registers should be kept open; this should be for a reasonable length of time but not that registers are to be kept open for the whole session. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be marked absent with code U, or with another absence code if that is more appropriate.

#### Present at an approved off-site educational activity

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

#### Code B: off-site educational activity

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

#### Code D: dual registered - at another educational establishment

This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question.

Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

**Code J: at an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment**

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P: participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V: educational visit or trip**

This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

**Code W: work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

**Authorised absence from school**

Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

**Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows:**

**Code C: leave of absence authorised by the school**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

**Code E: excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion.

Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code

**Code H: holiday authorised by the school**

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

**Code I: illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness.

Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

**Code M: medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

**Code R: religious observance**

Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

**Code S: study leave**

Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

**Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, occupational boat dwellers and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

**Unauthorised absence from school**

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence.

Absence codes are as follows:

**Code G: holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.**

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

**Code N: reason for absence not yet provided**

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

**Code O: absent from school without authorisation**

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

**Code U: arrived in school after registration closed**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

**Administrative codes**

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census.

**Code X: not required to be in school**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

**APPENDIX B**

**Absence Application Form**

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

I/We wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school:

First date of absence from school: \_\_\_\_\_

Last date of absence from school: \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of days: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances that you would like the school to consider. This section must be completed. (Please continue on a separate sheet if needed).**

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Signature of Parent/guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**We are not able to authorise holidays during term time.**

AUTHORISED  (Headteacher)

UNAUTHORISED  (Headteacher)

Signature of Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Governor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This form is to be completed by the Parent or Carer and returned to the School Office at least one week before the leave of absence.**

\*\*\*\*\*

For School Use Only:

Attendance percentage this Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of absences this Academic Year: \_\_\_\_\_ (authorised) \_\_\_\_\_ (unauthorised)

## Avoidable Absence in Term Time

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

**WARNING:** If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice\* per parent per child, or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child’s education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

**THE FACTS:** School aged pupils in Cornwall maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER**

Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.

Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.

If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as **unauthorised absence** and you may receive a £60\* fine per parent for each child.

**THE LAW:** The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides

If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.

If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

In the case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.

**Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:**

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)
- Days of religious observance
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their parents

**Other examples of absence from school that will not be authorised:**

- Any type of shopping
- Looking after siblings or unwell parents
- Minding the house
- Birthdays
- Resting after a late night
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives

Please contact your child’s head teacher if you wish to discuss this issue.

**The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.**

We hope that when you have read this letter you will consider that your child’s education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.

\*Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21days and before 28 days



**APPENDIX C - ATTENDANCE CONTRACT**

<b>Date/time of meeting:</b>	
<b>Venue:</b>	
<b>Pupil name:</b>	
<b>Date of birth:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>School:</b>	
<b>Present at meeting:</b>	
<b>Action agreed</b>	
<p><i>EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day.</i></li> <li><i>Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence.</i></li> <li><i>Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur.</i></li> <li><i>Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed?</i></li> </ul>	
Attendance target:	100%
Timescale for improvement:	
Date for review meeting:	

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... School Representative

..... Other Agency

**APPENDIX D - CME ACTION PLAN**

<b>TIME SCALE</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE PROFILE</b>	<b>WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE</b>	<b>WHO BY/WHO WITH</b>
<b>Day 1</b>	Any absence without reason	First-day-of-absence contact	School Administrative Officer/ Attendance Officer
<b>Day 3</b>	No response or concern about explanations	Letter from school to parent/ carers	Any of the above and Head
<b>Day 6 or further 3 days</b>	No response or concern about explanations	Parents/carers to be invited to school meeting. Formal action plan to support attendance to be agreed, individual attendance targets to be included. Date set for further meeting to review plan.	Any of the above as well as any other relevant school staff, e.g. Attendance Officer, SENDCo
<b>Approx. 6 Weeks<sup>[SEP]</sup> (NB sooner if child completely absent)</b>	Further unauthorised absence Attendance below 90%	Meeting to review plan and consider either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree referral to EWO team for consideration of a Penalty Notice, in line with Code of Conduct,</li> <li>Referral to Family Support for support with underlying issues impacting on attendance</li> </ul>	As above
<b>Legal Action</b>	Further unauthorised absence below 90%	If Penalty Notice or referral to Family Support has failed to affect an improvement and unauthorised absence rate continues to be below 90%, school to consider initiating a school-led prosecution with support/guidance from ACE and unauthorised absence.  If Family Support were involved, they will retain any evidence of interventions for any potential witness statements to contribute to a school-led prosecution.	School staff/ Family Support/ EWO Service

**APPENDIX E - ATTENDANCE CONCERN FORM**

Name of Pupil \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Concern raised by \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Concern \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for concern**

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**To be completed by the Attendance Officer**

**Current Attendance      %    Broken Weeks      %    Lateness -**

**Details of Action Taken**

**Next Steps**

**Signed**

**Date**

## Appendix F: Penalty Notice Leave Refusal Letter (for school use)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Date

Dear Name of parent/carer(s)

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

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

I urge you to reconsider your decision.

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

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

Perranporth Primary is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher