



Primary Attendance and Absence Policy

Murrow Primary Academy

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Statement of intent

The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust (DLPT) believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2020) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education 2021'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education.'
- DfE (2021) 'Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behavioural Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

- Attendance Officer Home Visit Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The DLPT Board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The attendance officer (may be delegated to the school) is responsible for informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:

- Are being educated from home.
- No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
- Have an authorised medical note.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
- Have been permanently excluded.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

Persistent absenteeism:

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

4. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

5. Pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA)

The school will ensure it provides support to pupils at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities, where necessary.

The SLT will:

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:

- Sending letters to parents.
- Having a **weekly** teacher review.
- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Using fixed penalty notices.
- Creating attendance clinics.

The governing board will engage in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care.

Where a pupil becomes at risk of PA, the school will:

- Welcome pupils back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Lead weekly check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Make regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND

6. Absence procedures

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence. This is required even if the parent has already contacted the school. Alternatively, parents may call into school and report to the school office where arrangements will be made to speak to a member of staff.

A telephone call will be made before 10am to the parent of any pupil who has not reported their child's absence on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the school attendance officer. The school will inform the DLPT Attendance Officer, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the DLPT Attendance Officer will be informed, and a formal meeting will be arranged with the pupil's parent.

7. Parental involvement

The school will build respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance, and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. Education inclusion Family Advisor, Early help from School/Local Authority (EHA), social care.

Parents will be expected to:

- Treat staff with respect.
- Actively support the work of the school.
- Call staff for help when they need it.
- Communicate with the school about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

8. Attendance register

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

8.1 The School Day

- The classroom door is opened at 08.35 am.
- All external classroom doors are locked at 08.45 am.
- Once the external classroom door has been locked, entry to the school is via the main entrance.
- Registers are open at 08.35 am and closed at 08.50 am. Pupils who arrive at school after this time will be recorded as L, late on the register.
- Pupils who arrive at school after 09.15 am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as U, unauthorised late which then impacts on their overall attendance level.

See 10. – lateness

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence / Use when TRTT is not expected at school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment

- Y = Exceptional circumstances/ School closed
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment. When using Arbor – use the notes facility for the individual absence to track the changes.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

9. Attendance officer

If they are persistently absent, (below 90%) pupils will be referred to the Headteacher who will attempt to resolve the situation through a parent agreement (this may be delegated). If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Headteacher will inform the Trust Attendance Officer who will work with the LA who have the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

Attendance cases can be listed for court, the possible outcomes should a parent be found guilty:

- A fine of up to £2500.
- A conditional discharge – a set amount of time in which to improve a child's attendance.
- Absolute discharge - case proved – does not receive a penalty but will receive a criminal record.
- Imprisonment – aggravated offence and repeat offenders, up to 3 months.
- Education supervision order.
- Parenting order.

The Headteacher will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address absence and will

provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures.

10.Lateness

The school will regard punctuality as of the utmost importance and lateness will not be tolerated. Pupils should be in their classroom on time.

Registration takes place between 08.35 to 08.50 . This is also when the teacher informs the class of their daily timetable of learning and prepares the pupils for the day ahead. Pupils who arrive after the registration period and up to 09.15 will be marked as late. Any pupil who arrives after 09.15 will be marked as an unauthorised late – U. Children who are persistently late to school will miss a significant amount of their education.

Should lateness continue, Parent/Carers will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their child's lateness.

If there is no improvement, despite the school's attempts to address unauthorised absences, a referral could be made to the Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO) for pupils who are of statutory school age.

11.Term-time leave

The school will require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed; therefore, the headteacher will be unable to authorise holidays during term-time in the vast majority of cases. The headteacher will be only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the headteacher will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave. The headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term-time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the headteacher. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 percent for any reason

If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the headteacher, they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

12. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning. All pupils are expected to be in their classes at the start of school, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must be signed out by their parent/carer at the school office and be signed back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, parents will be contacted immediately. A letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

13. Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The library
 - Any outbuildings
 - The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found after 10 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behavioural Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

14. Religious observances

The school will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days of absence required for religious festivals. Parents will be required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

15. Appointments

As far as possible, parents will be encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours, for example routine dental checks will not be authorised.

Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office.

If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent. Pupils will be expected to attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

16. Modelling, sport and acting performances/activities

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances/activities (whether they, or another person, receives payment or not), which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and

- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and
- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

17.Young carers

The school understands the difficulties that face young carers, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as through their time at the school. A caring and flexible approach will be taken to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

The school, in conjunction with relevant authorities, will implement support for pupils who are young carers, to encourage their sustained and regular attendance at school in line with the school's expectations.

18.Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96 percent – full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the headteacher. The next scheduled review date for this policy is November 2024.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendices:

A. Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Each school in the DLPT has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

1. A spreadsheet is sent to the SLT and school attendance officer detailing weekly and annual attendance to date.
2. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers and pupils record their attendance in their planners. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the SLT.
3. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the SLT and attendance officer daily.
4. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
5. If a pupil's attendance falls to 96 percent, the attendance officer speaks to the pupil in school to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. The attendance officer also makes a phone call home to discuss this with parents, if necessary.
6. If a pupil's attendance falls below 96 percent, a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. The letter also has an attached leaflet outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance.

Appendix B: Letter 1

7. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90 percent, a letter is sent home explaining that the pupil's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer contacts the parents to discuss this. **Appendix C: Letter 2**
8. The pupil's attendance is monitored for two weeks and, if attendance does not improve after this time, parents are required to attend a meeting in school with the classroom teacher and set targets for their child. If parents are unwilling to cooperate, or are genuinely unable to attend, a referral may be required to the local education welfare officer (EWO), who will then conduct a home visit.

Appendix D: Letter 3 Invite for meeting

Appendix E: Letter 4 can be used to set targets in parents absence.

9. After the two-week monitoring period, and if targets are met, a letter is sent home from the SLT to congratulate the pupil and their parents on improving attendance. Monitoring and communication with the parents continues until attendance stabilises to 96 percent.

If targets are not met, a referral to the Trust Attendance Officer should be made. Education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents if there is no improvement after an additional four weeks, a fixed-penalty notice is issued.

Appendix B: Letter 1
(Sent when <96%)

School Headed Paper

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

We have noticed that your child <forename> attendance has deteriorated, I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record so that you can view a detailed breakdown of your child's absence from school.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement.

We will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel
Enc Record of attendance
School Attendance Leaflet

Appendix C: Letter 2 (Sent when <90%)

Name and address of parent

Date:

Dear Parent

Re: **Name:** xxx

Dob: xxx

School: xxx

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance for the next two weeks and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If the absence is due to a medical reason please ensure that we have been informed so appropriate support can be put in place.

I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Please note if 3 or more term time leave Penalty Notices have been issued over a 3 year period then prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996, may be considered as an alternative to a Penalty Notice fine being issued. Where a parent takes a child out of school during term time for an extended period (20 days or more), not authorised by the school, prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996, may also be considered.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly or if you are concerned about your child's attendance. Support can be offered through an Early Help Assessment (EHA). Please do not hesitate to contact me.

However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel
Enc Record of attendance
School Attendance Leaflet

**Appendix E: Letter 4
(Failed to attend PCM Mtg Target Letter)**

Dear xxx

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx School: xxx

It was disappointing that you failed to attend the Parenting Contract Meeting (or equivalent meeting) which was due to be held at xxx on xxx at xxx.

As you did not attend the meeting, I am setting a target/s for xxx which is as follows:

- 90% or above attendance target over the next 6 school weeks monitoring period (insert dates)
- Absences due to self-limiting illness can be authorised in the first instance but a child who is absent frequently due to a medical reason, including repeated self-limiting illnesses, medical evidence will be required.
- Prompt communication when XXX will be absent. Parents should contact the school by xxx am as per School Attendance Policy
- xxx
- xxx

If targets are not met or unlikely to be met within the six school weeks monitoring period, then the case is likely to be referred to the Local Authority for enforcement actions to be considered. The Local Authority could issue a Penalty Notice Fine, or initiate legal proceedings through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**. This may result in a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

It is important that if you have any questions or queries, please contact me on the above number. Support can still be offered through an Early Help Assessment (EHA).

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

Enc. Record of attendance
Attendance Leaflet (delete if not appropriate)



To: _____ Date.....

I request consideration of a grant of leave of absence from school during term time for:
my child (full name)
.....

for the period from (date) to (date).....

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are:
.....
.....
.....
.....

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows

Child(ren) (full name(s))	School(s)attended
.....
.....
.....

(Signature of 1st parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

(Signature of 2nd parent/carer(s) Print Name.....

Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance.....% Last Year's Attendance.....%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time (this academic year)

Number school sessions taken as leave in the last academic year

Agreed/Not Agreed

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Rationale to decline request:

SignedHeadteacher Date

SignedTrust EWO Date.....

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to
Parent/Carer

Appendix G: Suspected Letter

Date

Name and Address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Child Name: xxx **DOB:** xxx **School:** xxx

I am writing about «**forename**»'s absence from school from <<date>> to <<date>>.

From information received from other sources we believe that this was due to term time leave. You have not followed the correct procedure for requesting leave of absence during term time.

We would be grateful if you could confirm the reason for the absence within 7 days of the date of this letter so this period can be recorded appropriately on the attendance register. However, if the absence was not due to exceptional circumstances but due to illness, please provide medical evidence to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days, «**forename**»'s absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer / Head of Year / Head teacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

Appendix H : Holiday Taken in term time Letter

Name

Address

Date

Dear

Thank you for your email/phone/holiday request form we received on the xxxxx, stating that xxxxx would not be back in school until the **date** as you were away on **holiday**.

As you know, we expect good attendance from all our pupils. The main reason for this is that continuity of learning is vital for a pupil to make good progress in school. The Government also recognises this and therefore sets demanding attendance records for schools, we are expected to have at least 95% attendance. In September 2013 the Government announced that **“Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances....”**

We have considered your application carefully and the reasons for the absence you have highlighted, however on this occasion we do not believe that the explanation provided can be justified as **“exceptional circumstances”**.

Should you still decide to continue to take your child out of school during termtime, then please note the absence will be recorded as ‘G’ denoting an unauthorised term time leave.

If unauthorised absences are recorded, a Penalty Notice Fine can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. The amount of the penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 22 to 28 days. Failure to pay will result in legal proceedings being initiated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

We know that you, as parents, want the best for your children and that having a good education helps to open up more opportunities for them in their adult life. Missing school carries costs for your child in both the short and long term. It also has a negative impact upon the class as they will need additional support when they return.

Most people would think that 90% attendance sounds very good. However, closer inspection shows that 90% attendance classes as persistent absence. It is the same as one day absent per fortnight, or 20 days absent in a year or 1 term missed over 5 years. This adds up to an extremely large amount of work missed and means that continuity of learning is very difficult, if not impossible.

Evidence from across the country shows that children of all abilities under-perform greatly as their attendance drops towards 90%. Any attendance below that causes even greater learning difficulties. I feel that I must point out that children only attend school for 190 days out of 365 and we do expect parents to take absences during the 13 weeks of school holidays.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

XXXXXXXXX Head of School On behalf of XXXXXXXX Primary Academy (part of the DLPT)