



# MANFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY

## Attendance Policy

<b>REVIEW PROCESS</b>	
REVIEWED	March 2022
NEXT REVIEW	Sept 2024

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

Mansfield Primary Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

## **AIMS:**

It is recognised that

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in Mansfield Primary Academy in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

## **Objectives:**

- Meet 96%+ attendance target
- Enforce a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers

## **We expect the following from all our pupils:**

- That they attend the academy regularly
- That they will arrive on time and be fully prepared for the day.
- That they will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

## **We expect the following from parents:**

- To ensure their children attend the academy regularly and punctually.
- Ensure their children are in their classroom each morning for 8:45am.
- To inform the academy by 9am whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework.
- To contact the academy in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school.
- To avoid taking holidays in term-time. Applications for time off need to be made to the Principal prior to time off. Forms can be requested at the main office. The Principal will review each application but time off will only be authorised under exceptional circumstances. Term time absences, especially during SATs and examination periods, may seriously affect the progress of your child.

## **Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:**

- Clear communication regarding the attendance procedure and expectations of the Academy
- Maintenance of thorough attendance data
- Clear registration practices
- Follow up of absences and lateness where communication to the Academy has not been received from parents /carers - first-day absence phone call initially, followed by a home visit.
- Informing parents /carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences
- Maintaining systematic tracking of daily attendance/lateness
- Reporting to Targeted Support where attendance requires involvement with a child
- Communication with all shareholders; Parents, Greenwood Academies Trust, Local Authority, and Government about attendance
- Consistently administer agreed attendance procedure
- Enforcement of Government guidelines regarding authorisation of holidays within term time and the implementation of fines
- Implement a set target of rewards for good attendance

## **Registration**

Registers will be maintained in line with the attendance codes listed below

### **Key to codes**

/ Present (AM)

\ Present (PM)

B Educated off site (not Dual reg.)

C Other authorised circumstances

D Dual registration

E Excluded

G Family holiday (not agreed)

H Family holiday (agreed)

I Illness

L Late (before registers closed)

M Medical/Dental appointments

N No reason yet provided for absence

O Unauthorised Abs

P Approved sporting activity

R Religious observance

T Traveller absence

U Late (after registers closed)

V Educational visit or trip

W Work Experience

# Planned whole or partial school closure  
Y Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

X Non-compulsory school age absence

Z Pupil not on roll

## The Schools response to non-attendance

If a telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone by the Attendance and Welfare Officer this will be followed up by a welfare check as we continue to make contact

We review overall attendance over blocks of six weeks (may be slightly more or less depending on length of half terms) ○ When attendance falls to 95% pupils are registered on the red list – on the first day of absence parents are contacted, Parents Support can be offered and contact with the

Attendance and Welfare Officer can be made in order to prevent the attendance falling

- If this target is not met the Attendance and Welfare Officer will become involved in supporting the family.
- If attendance still does not improve sufficiently you will be invited to attend a meeting. Any unauthorised attendance may result in a fine. ○ **Remember, 90% attendance sounds good if it is in a test, but attendance throughout your child's school career means over one year's absence.**
- When we have clear confirmation from a doctor, practice nurse or hospital that a child should not be at school for medical reasons, these days will not contribute towards unauthorised attendance
- At each parent consultation meeting (parent's evening) you will be informed of your child's attendance figure

### Principal:

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, pupils and parents.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence
- To oversee and make a decision on applications for exceptional absences during term time

### Class Teacher:

- To complete registers accurately and on time.

### Attendance and Welfare Officer (or other office staff if Attendance and Welfare Officer not present):

- To produce the attendance profile for the whole academy.
- To implement the attendance policy on a day to day basis.
- To follow-up immediately any unexplained absence by contacting parents.
- If parents can't be contacted initially then continuous attempts should be made to contact them including use of emergency contact info and home visits by the Attendance and Welfare Officer
- To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence
- To record all reasons for absence in the register
- To inform Principal of concerns in a timely manner
- Maintain absence records from SIMS and InVentry

## **The Interventions Team Local Authority:**

The Education Enforcements Officer (EEO) complements the role of the school.

- Will liaise with the Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Where a referral is accepted, the team will undertake home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary.
- Where necessary the team will instigate legal proceedings on behalf of the Local Authority including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and applying for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- Will accept referrals that meet their criteria at the time
- Will provide feedback to schools
- Will support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

## **METHODOLOGY**

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities....

### **Categorising Absence:**

- **Only the school**, in the context of the law **can authorise absence**, a note or explanation from parents does not guarantee authorisation
- Emerging patterns of absence should be reported to the Principal
- Reasons for absence should be entered in the register by the appropriate code symbol

### **Authorised or Unauthorised Absence:**

**Authorised absence** is where the academy has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence

All other absence must be regarded as **unauthorised** The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Exceptional Circumstances for absence
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.

### **Family Holidays:**

As an academy we follow the government guidelines of zero tolerance of holidays during term time. If you consider your request to be exceptional circumstances then you can apply for the time of using a holiday request form from the office. This must be completed prior to any absence and given to the Principal who will review each application. Feedback will be provided to the applicant by either the Principal or the Attendance and Welfare Officer.

## **Lateness:**

The academy should actively discourage late arrival by challenging pupils who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.

Under the Education Regulations 1995, Mansfield Primary Academy is responsible for the upkeep of an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and afternoon sessions of the school day. The register will also indicate whether the child has an authorised or unauthorised absence.

The Academy day begins at 8.45am and registers close in line with national guidance at 9.15am. Afternoon registers are taken at 1pm.

When a pupil arrives late but during the period when the register is open, they will be marked present, late before registers close.

Children arriving after 8:45am will be marked in the register as L – Late (before registers close). Those arriving after 9:15am will be marked U – Late (after registers closed), unless proof of the absence can be provided, i.e. medical appointment. If evidence is provided, the absence will be marked with the appropriate authorised code where necessary.

Pupils who arrive late may be asked to stay in at breaks to catch up on the work they have missed; this will certainly be the case if they are persistently late.

Lateness is monitored on a daily basis and letters are sent to parents/carers of children who need to improve their punctuality. Improvements in punctuality are recognised in a letter to parents/carers.

## **Information from Local Authority**

The Local Authority have provided us with the following information, which is communicated to parents when they apply for a period of absence, i.e. holiday.

*An unauthorised leave of absence of more than 3 days/6 sessions (over a 6 week rolling period) may lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine which if paid within 21 days is £60 28 days is £120*

*It is important to note the actual fine is £120. It is reduced to £60 for payment within 21 days and not doubled as some people may believe to be the case.*

*Where a fine remains unpaid the matter may be enforced at the Magistrates Court. The maximum fine for this offence is £1000 per parent, per child.*

*The local Authority will not issue more than two penalty notices per calendar year to any person taking more than two periods of unauthorised absence. Where further absences occur or where the local authority deem it appropriate, enforcement may be dealt with directly by the court.*

## **Monitoring Attendance**

We monitor attendance at Mansfield Primary Academy as described below:

- A record of absence is kept on the computer system. This details the child's class, year group, late minutes, contact with parents/carers and year to date, termly and weekly attendance percentage figures.

- On the first day of absence, if there has been no correspondence from parents by 9am, the office staff will telephone the parents/carers to find out the reason for the absence and follow up calls and home visits will commence.
- The Principal reviews the levels of authorised absence and unauthorised absences weekly.
- If a parent wishes to take their child out of school for a holiday, then it needs to be in 'exceptional circumstances' and they need to complete a Leave of Absence Form 4 weeks prior to leave date. They may be invited to come and talk about this so that they get a chance to state their reasons. We cannot authorise holidays that are not 'exceptional circumstances'. If a request for an authorised holiday is declined and the parent chooses to still take the child out of school, an unauthorised mark will be given in the register and a fine may be implemented. If the holiday results in 5 days unauthorised absence in a 6 week rolling period, the parent's/carer's details will be passed to the local authority for them to issue a fixed penalty notice.
- Children who have attendance below 90% are classed as persistently absent and are unlikely to have any absence authorised without provision of appropriate medical evidence to support why that child is absent.
- Pupils who have an attendance of less than 90% are sent a letter with details of their child's absences and notification of a monitoring period. During the monitoring period, parents or carers will trigger a fixed penalty notice if they accrue 5 days of unauthorised attendance.
- The following processes allow us to consistently monitor attendance and particularly target children attending below 90% of their learning time: Monitoring of attendance below 90% due to illness
  - Lates notifications
  - Improved attendance on the previous term
  - Individual letters – personalised as appropriate.

On the following two pages is a copy of the leave of absence request form. Please refer to the above information before deciding to take your child/children out of school during term time.



MANSFIELD  
PRIMARY ACADEMY

**APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR CHILD'S EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE  
OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME**

**EVERY DAY COUNTS**

**GOOD ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL = GOOD PROGRESS**

Attached is an application form for you to request permission for your child to be absent from school during term time. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully:

- The law states that you do not have the right to take your child out of school during term time. The Local Education Authority works with schools to reduce the numbers of children missing school because of holidays taken in term time and schools can refuse your request to take your child out of school.
- If you wish to take your child on holiday during term time, you must apply for permission **in advance** in writing using the attached form. Head Teachers/Principals are no longer permitted to agree for parents to take their children on holiday during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. Please note the School Year is from September to July.
- Absence for holidays in term time due to the following reasons will **not** be authorised:
  - Availability of cheap holidays
  - Parental availability due to work commitments
  - Availability of desired accommodation
  - Poor weather experienced in the school holiday period
  - Overlap with the beginning or the end of term
  - Holidays booked before checking with the school
  - Birthdays
  - Day trips, shopping or visit to hairdresser, dentist or similar
- There are certain times of the year when a child may experience extra problems because of missing school. These include examination periods, at the time of starting a new school and at the start of a new school term. In deciding whether to authorise your child's absence and give permission for a holiday in term time, the school will take these and other factors into account.
- If the school refuses your application and you still take your child out of school the absences will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Penalty Notice or a Summons being issued against you for irregular school attendance.
- Nottinghamshire's use of penalty notice fines for non-attendance and pupil absence rates is currently judged by if the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) in total over a 6 week rolling period. The school can issue or ask the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom persistent absence applies.
- What is the persistent absence threshold? School-age pupils are persistent absentees if they miss more than 10% of their possible sessions in a school year.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child to accompany you on holiday during term time then please complete the application attached.





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**Application for exceptional absence in term time**

Parents/carers wishing to apply for absence due to exceptional circumstances during term time should complete this form and return it to school for consideration by the Principal as far in advance of the proposed holiday as possible. A different form must be completed for each child.

Child's first name:		Child's surname:	
Child's date of birth:		Child's class:	
First name of parent / carer:		Surname of parent / carer:	
Address:			
Telephone number:			
Date of last day at school:		Date of return to school:	
Total number of school days to be missed:			
Reason for exceptional absence:			
<i>I make application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.</i>			
Signature of parent / carer:		Date:	

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE**

**Please do not book your holiday until you know that the school will authorise your child's absence**

**School section:**

Exceptional absence	Yes	No	Additional notes:
Number of days approved:			
Number of days not approved:			
Signature of Principal:			
Date Authorised:			

### Term Time Absence Flow Chart

Requests for term time absences (holidays and non-holidays) in 'exceptional circumstances' must be made using a request form and sent to the Principal at least four weeks prior to the event. The application will be considered by the Principal and a response given within 5 working days.

If the time off is deemed 'exceptional circumstances' by the Principal and is agreed, your child will be given authorised leave and no further action is required.

If your request is not deemed 'exceptional circumstances' by the Principal and you wish to appeal against the decision you should put your case in writing within 10 working days to be addressed to the Principal. A final response will be issued within 10 working days.

Unauthorised absences will be recorded on your child's on-going record and will be passed onto their next school/academy.

#### **Unauthorised absences of 5 days in any six-week period\***

If your child's unauthorised absence is less than 5 days your child will be given unauthorised absence marks but no fine will be incurred. This is reviewed weekly so future unauthorised absences could result in a Penalty Notice being issued where a child has 5 days or more unauthorised absence in any six-week period.

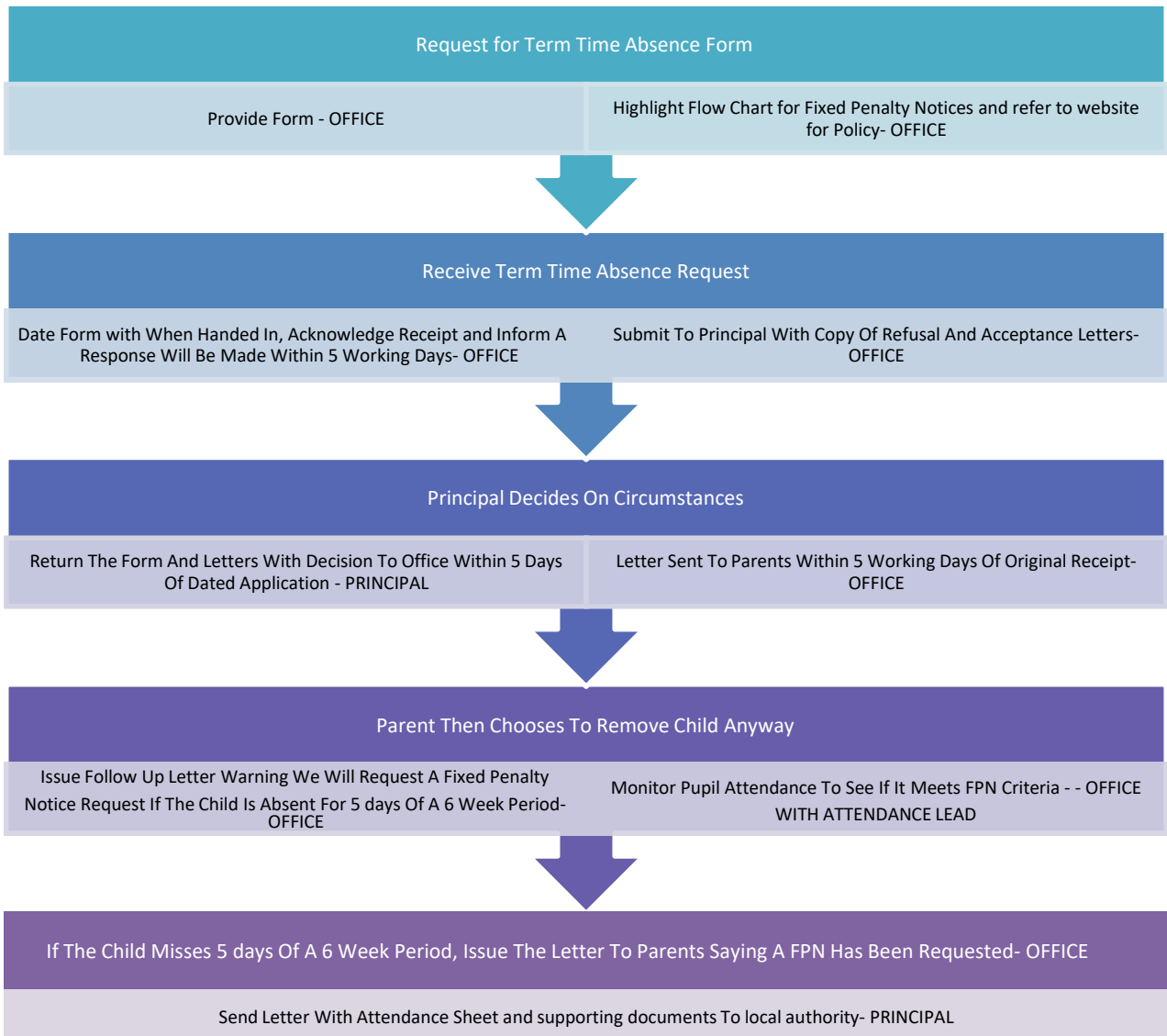
#### **Unauthorised absences of more than 5 days in any six-week period\***

Where a child has 5 days or more unauthorised absences in any six-week period the Principal will request that Nottinghamshire County Council issue a Fixed Penalty Notice on behalf of the academy. The penalty is set at £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Fines are issued per parent per child for a six-week period.

\* A six-week rolling period is defined as a six-week period of time from any given date.

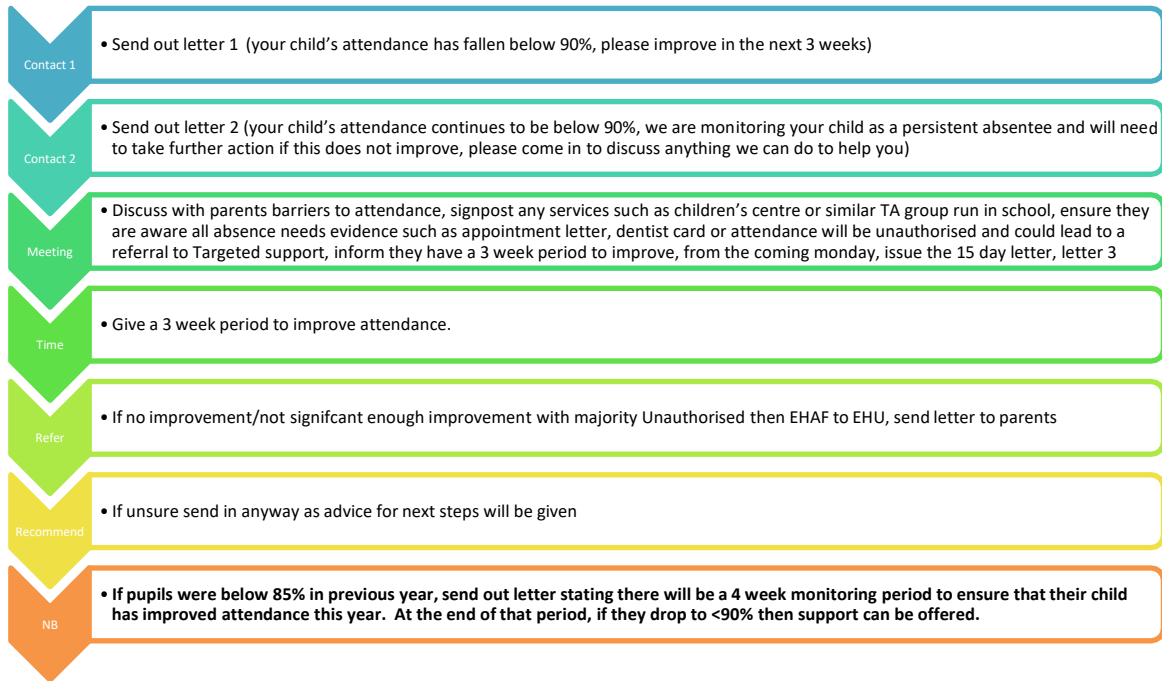
\* Unauthorised absences are absences not agreed by the Principal. Illness/medical absences are usually agreed absences but we may require a doctor's note or appointment card as proof.

## Fixed Penalty Notice For Holiday Absence During Term Time



## Flow chart for action for Pupils Dropping below 90%

*All pupils with attendance between 90-96% at the end of the first 4 weeks of September receive a letter to remind them of importance and school target.*



## Criteria for EHAF to EHU

