

Attendance Policy

Trustees	Board of Trustees
Staff	RRC
Review Due	Spring 2025
Ratified by Trustees	Spring 2024

POLICY: TAVERHAM HIGH SCHOOL

Mrs S Dalglish: Attendance Officer

This policy is available on our website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parents about this policy when their children join our school with reminders throughout their time here.

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1: INTRODUCTION AND AIM

Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Taverham High School we believe that regular school attendance enables children both to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind and can put them at risk of wider harm. We value the attendance of all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

Our attendance policy aims to give clear guidance to staff, parents, carers, pupils' and governors to:

- Support pupil's achievement by establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance
- Provide a clear framework for monitoring and responding to pupil absences
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities and ensure their children have access to the education to which they are entitled.

We recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community, Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement supported by our policies on safeguarding, preventions of bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also considers the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation.

2: LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. At child is of compulsory school age at eh beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child

ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- And act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

3: DEFINITIONS

The Education (Pupils Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended by 2016 regulations, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupils was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at an approved educational activity
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

“Absence” as:

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

Regular attendance as:

- Attendance at every session the school is open to pupils unless their absence has been authorised

An “authorised absence” as:

- 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 or unavoidable cause

An “unauthorised absence” as:

- 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
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

“Persistent absenteeism” (PA) as:

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

“Parent” as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person

- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

4: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At Taverham High School, we believe that improved school attendance is a responsibility shared by governors, school staff, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

ROLE	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Attendance Lead	Ms R Ricketts	R_ricketts@taverhamhigh.org 01603 860505
Attendance Officer	Mrs S Dalglish	Email: attendance@taverhamhigh.org Tel: 01603 860505 ext 276
Named Trustee for Attendance	Callum Perry	c.perry@taverhamhigh.org

The Trustees of Taverham High School will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with
- Agreed school attendance targets and submit these to the Local Authority with the agreed timescale each year and where appropriate link these to the Performance Management of Senior Leadership within the school
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Trustees' meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

The Senior Management Team at Taverham High School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues

- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with
 - Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
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- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time
 - Report the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governors and on a half-termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
 - Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils including those who are educated off-site are implemented
 - Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
 - Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
 - Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
 - Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated
 - Set out how Pupil Premium will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance

All staff at Taverham High School will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Identify and report children missing from education.
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families

Pupils will:

- Be aware of the school's attendance policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents' and the school timetable
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact their attendance
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class
- Follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation

The member of staff responsible for attendance will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. The

member of staff responsible for attendance will support good attendance, response to concerns and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance data
 - Undertaking regular meetings with the Designated Safeguarding Leads and other relevant members of staff
 - Implementing the identified strategies for promoting good whole school attendance
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- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance
 - Managing individual casework files
 - Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including liaising with relevant staff who are able to instigate an EHAP or Family Support Plan (FSP) and/or the implementation of a parenting contract
 - Ensuring the first day calling procedures are adhered to, if a child is absent from school without contact from parents
 - Taking an active lead in delivering whole school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes
 - Making referrals to appropriate external agencies

Taverham High School requests that parents will:

- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Ensure their child has regular attendance at school
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. We ask that parents contact school by 8.00am on the morning of each absence (email: attendance@taverhamhigh.org or tel: 01603 860505 select Option 1 answerphone service)
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical, dental and optician appointments outside of school hours
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their school-work or home and family life
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues

5: CATEGORISING ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE

The table at appendix 1 of this policy outlines the nations codes which enable all schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and comply with the regulations and Department for education advice. When marking our registers, we will apply these codes to accurately record and report attendance.

Leave of Absence

Since September 2013, change to the Government regulations and guidance mean that Headteachers can no longer authorise leave of absence for the sole purpose of a holiday (unless in exceptional circumstances). All absence associated with a holiday (without exceptional

circumstances) during term time will be marked as unauthorised within the register. Any parent known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority and be issued with a penalty notice fine or referred to the Local Authority to consider prosecution

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are times where a parent may legitimately

request leave of absence for a child due to 'exceptional circumstances. At Taverham High School, leave of absence shall not be granted unless there are 'exceptional circumstances. This may only be granted at the discretion of the Headteacher. Taverham High School will response to all applications for leave of absence in writing.

Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence during term time must apply in writing to the Headteacher at least a month before the planned leave. Parents are requested to complete the leave of absence form which can be accessed on the school website. If a written request for leave of absence is not completed and the leave is taken without a request being submitted, the leave will not be considered by the Headteacher and it will be marked as unauthorised. Taverham High School will treat each application individually and discuss the circumstances of the application before a decision is made. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. In such cases the school may make a referral to the Local authority to request that a penalty notice fine is issued or consider prosecution.

A penalty notice request or a referral for prosecution may be submitted to the Local Authority school:-

- The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave
- An application for a leave of absence is not agreed by the Headteacher but is still taken
- A longer period is taken in excess of the agreed number of days

When absence is granted by the Headteacher, the parents will need to agree a date of return, If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents school will seek advise from the Local Authority. This could result in possible children missing from education procedures being instigated.

Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours where possible, Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment. If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must sign out at Reception. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent/carer. We will invite parents to attend school-led Attendance Support Panel as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support we may seek consent from parents and the pupil, as appropriate, to make a referral to the 5-19 Healthy Child Programme team and / or liaise with the child's healthcare professional. Taverham High School use the Joint Medical Protocol Forms (JMP.)

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with parents to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with 'Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school'. We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

Pupil absence for the purpose of Religious Observance

Taverham High School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside the school holiday period or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school.

There are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. Schools and Local Authorities can make a big difference to their life chances through:

- Clear high expectation of all pupils, regardless of their background
- An inclusive culture that welcomes all communities
- Strong engagement from parents

In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because:

- The parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place
- That the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and
- If the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted

This provision applies only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving a suitable education when not in school.

When a family is trading otherwise conducting their business in or around Norfolk if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Taverham High School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended Taverham High School in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily whilst away from their base school; in such cases, the pupil's school place at Taverham High School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming traveling patterns as soon as there are known and before they happen; and
- Inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absence is at the discretion of the Headteacher. Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include but are not limited to:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms
- Arrangements or appointments for cutting the pupil's hair
- Closure of sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes
- An unwillingness to attend school, or inability to attend owing to inadequate personal/family organisation
- A refusal to attend school on health grounds but where the pupil is considered well enough to attend
- Holidays taken without the authorisation of the school

6: ATTENDANCE PROTOCOLS

Register Keeping and Recording

Late Arrival at School

At Taverham High School all pupils are expected to arrive on time for every day of the school year. The school day begins at 8.30am. We advise all parents to ensure their child is on site prior to this. The warning bell goes at 8.25am. The school register will be taken at 8.30am. All pupils arriving after this time are required to sign in at Reception/Attendance Officer providing a reason for the absence. If their arrival is before 9.00am it will be recorded as late – L code (Late before the close of register). If there is an unexpected valid reason for lateness, parents are required to contact the Attendance Office to provide the reason and expected time of arrival.

The school register will officially close at 9.00am. All pupils arriving on or after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session – U code (Late after the close of register). This is categorised as an unauthorised absence for the session. Parents will be contacted to discuss patterns of late arrival. Repeated arrival after the close of registration will result in appropriate interventions being instigated and may also result in a penalty notice being issued or prosecution.

Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of afternoon register for the PM session.

Expected absence procedure for parents:

A parent has a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly. If a child is unavoidably absent from school parents are expected to contact school by telephone call on the first

day of absence and each subsequent day, identifying the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If no contact is received, then absence protocols will be instigated.

If a child is absent, the following actions will be initiated by the school:

- The first day calling procedures will be activated for all pupils who are not in school after the close of register at 9.00am and where no reason for absence is known.
- If there is still no contact made from the pupil's parents, further contact will be made to the child's named emergency contacts.
- If school cannot contact a parent and are concerned about a pupil, a home visit may be carried out
- School will telephone home if made aware that a pupil leaves school without permission

In certain circumstances the School may also:

- Visit the home of the pupil
- Write to the parent of a pupil to highlight attendance or punctuality issues
- Invite parents to discuss how school can support the family to make improvement
- Refer to an external agency/support services to offer support, guidance and advice
- Refer to the Local Authority for joint enquiries to be made to establish the whereabouts of the child through Children Missing Education procedures
- Refer to the Local Authority to consider issuing a penalty notice or to consider prosecution when all other interventions have failed, or an unauthorised leave of absence has been taken
- Refer the matter to an appropriate external agency for multi-agency support, such as, an EHAP, implementing a Family Support Plan or consulting with the Children's Advice and Duty Service or the police, where there are safeguarding concerns

7: ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE AND REWARD SYSTEM

The Attendance Officer will provide attendance data to the Heads of Year and Form Tutors to enable dialogues and meeting to occur.

Good attendance is promoted through form time and assemblies. Attendance figures and the importance of good attendance and punctuality is shared with parents through letters and attendance certificates.

As part of the reward systems the school complete a weekly prize draw to celebrate students in each year group with 100% attendance and no late marks. Students with 100% for the term are invited to attend the celebration events held at form time.

Students who are late to school on a frequent basis will be placed in a detention and may go onto attendance report. The sanction is as follows:

- Students who are late 3 times in a week to school or lessons: level 2 detention
- Students who are late 4 times in a week to school or lessons: level 3 detention
- Students who are late 4 or more times in a week to school or lessons: level 4 detention

Students with attendance concerns will initially have conversations with either their form tutor or Head of Year and if applicable will go on attendance report.

Students with under 90% attendance will be invited to attend a meeting along with parents/carers to discuss the student's attendance and where appropriate to implement an attendance support plan.

At Taverham High School we will investigate any pupils who are on track to be persistently absent (PA). Parents will be invited to attend an attendance support plan meeting where a range of support strategies will be discussed.

The Government categorise those students with 50% or lower attendance as S.A. 'severely absent'. This will trigger a safeguarding concern to be raised.

Support Systems

At Taverham High school we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to

inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example: bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that maybe required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

Strategies we may use to support you include:

- Attendance report
- Attendance support plan
- Phased return to school
- Late gate pass
- Access to Gateway in the mornings
- Supported lunch and break times
- Time with student support
- Mentor
- Positive report
- Attendance Rewards
- Parental meeting
- Wishes and Feelings

In order to plan the correct support, we will invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance, Support offered to families will be child-centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils.

Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance dips to 90% and below for **any** reason. Over a full academic year this would be 38 sessions (19 days). Absence at this level causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice, consideration of an Education Supervision Order or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 up to a three-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

Reduced timetables

All schools, academies and free schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement one for a time-limited period to meet a pupil's needs and only where it is safe to do so. A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil.

Deletions from the Register

At Taverham High School we will add and will only delete pupils from our school roll in line with the Pupil Registration Regulations. In most circumstances, we will know in advance about pupils leaving our school; this will be planned and discussed with the parent in advance of the pupil leaving. At Taverham High School we will always work with families to gain information about the pupil's next school and/or address before the pupils leaves to reduce the risk of pupils becoming a child missing education through lack of shared information.

We follow Norfolk County Council's Child Missing Education procedures and will inform the Children Missing Education Team of all removals from our school roll not later than the date the child is removed in line with statutory responsibilities.

If a child is removed from roll to home educate, we can only de-register the child if we receive, in writing, the parent's intention to educate their child other than at school. The pupil will be de-registered on receipt of such a letter and Norfolk County Council will be informed of the removal from roll as outlined above. We will also inform Norfolk County Council's Services to Home Educators Team by completing a referral form.

Taverham High School will follow Norfolk County Council's Children Missing Education procedures when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, and the school will carry out joint enquiries with Norfolk County Council to establish the whereabouts of the child.

8: RELATED POLICIES

To underpin the values and ethos of our school and our intent to ensure that pupils at our school attend school regularly and reach their full potential the following policies are integral to this approach:

- Safeguarding including child protection
- Medical needs
- Admissions

- Anti-bullying
- Special Educational Needs
- Teaching and Learning
- Behaviour and Rewards (Including suspensions and exclusions)

9: STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- School attendance parental responsibility measures, DfE (January 2015)
- Children missing education, DfE (September 2016)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (September 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children DfE (2018)
- 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' DfE, Published May 2022

10: APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Department for Education Attendance and Absence Codes

Absence and Attendance Codes	
Present at School	
/ \	Registration code / \ : present in school / = am \ =pm
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.
Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity	
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.
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.

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.
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.
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.
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.
Absence codes when pupils are not present in school	
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
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.
H	Holiday authorised by the school. Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher 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 Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.
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.
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.
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.
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.
T	<p>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, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Unauthorised Absence from School	
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher. 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.
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).
O	Absent from school without authorisation. If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
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	
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.
Y	<p>Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or • The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or • A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. <p>This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because the pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).</p>
Z	Pupil not on admission register. This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.
#	Planned whole or partial school closure. This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.



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Headteacher Dr Roger Harris

Sent via email to:
Year 7 to Year 11 Parent/Carers

5 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Regular School Attendance and Parent's Legal Responsibilities

At Taverham High School our aim is to collaborate with parents to ensure that all our students receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parent/carers about the law that requires them to ensure that their child/ward attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child/ward should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The Important Legal Information

The Local Authority operates a system where any student with at least **9 sessions (4½ school days) of unauthorised absence within 6 school weeks** meets the criteria for legal intervention. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any student at Taverham High School who meets that criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If issued, the penalty notice is £60 when paid within the 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. When penalty notices are issued, each parent/carer will receive one per child/ward. Therefore, each parent/carer could receive multiple notices if they have more than one child/ward who has been absent. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

There is no right of appeal against a fixed penalty notice.

In some circumstances, the Norfolk County Council Attendance Team may choose not to issue a penalty notice and may instead choose to prosecute a parent/carer under the Education Act 1996 S444.

Cont'd.../

Requests for Leave of Absence

The DfE advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the student can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday during term time as they would not typically be seen as an exceptional circumstance.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dr R Harris', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Dr R Harris
Headteacher

Appendix 3: Example leave of absence request form

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME			
Important Information for parents/carers – please read before completing this form			
<p>We expect every pupil's attendance at school to be 100% unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence. Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time. It is the Headteacher who decides whether a period of leave during term time will be authorised or not in line with legislation. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amended in September 2013) make it clear that Headteachers cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist.</p> <p>Every request for leave of absence during term time will reviewed on an individual basis with due consideration of the circumstances but the Headteacher can only grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply. If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Headteacher will determine the length of the absence to be authorised.</p> <p>All requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed. This form must be completed in full by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time. Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised.</p>			
I have read the above information and wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school for:			
Child's full name	Date of birth	Year Group/Form Group	
Parent/Carer details (please list all parents)			
First name		Surname	
Date of birth		Relationship to child	
Address & postcode			
Telephone number			
First name		Surname	
Date of birth		Relationship to child	
Address & postcode			
Telephone number			
Siblings: please provide the name of any siblings and the school that they attend			
Child's full name	Date of birth	School	

Details of the absence					
Date of first day of absence				Date of last day of absence	
Total number of days absent				Expected date of return to school	
Please provide the reason for this request including supporting evidence					
Please read the following statement and sign to indicate you understand					
<p>I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied and my child is absent during this period. I understand that a fine will be payable per child, per parent of £120 if paid within 28 days but reduced to £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days.</p>					
Signed		Full name		Date	
Signed		Full name		Date	

To be completed by the school			
Date request received by the school		Total number of days requested	
Child's Name	Current % Attendance	Application Authorised or Declined	
Reason for school's decision			
Headteacher	Dr R Harris		
Signed		Date	

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Taverham High School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The DfE policy document entitled, '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' states:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.
- As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have **at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during 6 school weeks**. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Taverham High School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued, the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from unauthorised absence. When penalty notices are issued each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than 1 child who has been absent. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. In some circumstances, the Norfolk County Council Attendance Team may choose not to issue a further penalty notice in the same academic year and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.