



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES

CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

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## Pupil Attendance Policy

March 2024



## Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Statement:

We are a partnership of Catholic schools.

Our aim is to provide the very best Catholic education for all in our community and so improve life chances through spiritual, academic and social development.

*By placing the person and teachings of Jesus Christ at the centre of all that we do, we will:*

- Follow the example of Our Lady of Lourdes by nurturing everyone in a spirit of compassion, service and healing
- Work together so that we can all achieve our full potential, deepen our faith and realise our God-given talents
- Make the world a better place, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, by doing *'little things with great love'* St Thérèse of Lisieux

<b>Date Issued</b>	January 2023
<b>Governors' Committee Responsible:</b>	OLoL Trust Standards Committee/Executive Board
<b>Updates</b>	<p><b>January 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarified persistent and severe absence</li> <li>• Exceptions in main body of the policy.</li> <li>• Clarified Headteacher responsibilities.</li> <li>• Updated how school will work with families.</li> <li>• Added Appendix T – Cumulative absence chart.</li> <li>• Added Appendix U – parent friendly leaflet.</li> <li>• Additional letters added.</li> <li>• Stepped guidance added for clarity.</li> <li>• Further exceptional circumstances guidance added.</li> </ul> <p><b>March 2024</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated attendance table</li> </ul>
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## Contents

Our Lady of Lourdes Mission Statement: .....	1
1. Core Principals. ....	5
2. Legislation and guidance .....	5
3. Roles and responsibilities .....	6
4. Recording attendance.....	7
5. Implementation .....	8
6. Aims.....	8
7. Expectations: .....	8
8. Encouraging Good Attendance in School: .....	9
9. Punctuality .....	10
10. Leave of Absence and Responding to Non-Attendance. ....	11
11. Leave of Absence during Term Time.....	13
Exceptional circumstances could include:.....	15
What are NOT considered 'exceptional circumstances' .....	15
12. Truancy.....	16
13. Off-Site Provision.....	17
14. Children Missing in Education .....	17
15. Anxiety Related Non-Attendance (ARNA) .....	17
16. Agency Liaison .....	18
17. Data Protection Act.....	18
18. Stepped Approach .....	19
Appendix A: Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT Schools and Designated Local Authority. ....	21
Appendix B: The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.....	22
Appendix C: Optional information for school newsletter or leaflet.....	24
Appendix D: Nursery to Reception Letter .....	26
Appendix E: 95% and under attendance letter 1. ....	27
Appendix F: 95% and under attendance letter 2.....	28
Appendix G: 90% and under attendance letter. ....	29
Appendix H: Penalty notice warning letter .....	30
Appendix I: Penalty notice letter .....	31
Appendix J: Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence(s) .....	32
Appendix K: Formal notice about unauthorised absence .....	33

Appendix L: Agreeing a request for a holiday in term-time .....	34
Appendix M: Declining a request for a holiday in term-time.....	36
Appendix N: After an unauthorised holiday.....	37
Appendix O: After an unauthorised no notice holiday .....	38
Appendix P: Punctuality.....	39
Appendix Q: Action Plan for supporting positive attendance. ....	41
Appendix R: Nottinghamshire County Council Penalty notice request form. ....	43
Appendix S: Improving attendance letter .....	43
Appendix T: (To be sent out to parents at the beginning of the academic year):.....	47

## 1. Core Principals.

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust (CMAT) is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all students. The trust sincerely believes that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the trust will do as much as it can to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any issues, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

Student performance and well-being go hand in hand. Students can't learn if they don't feel safe or if ill health problems are allowed to create barriers.

The law states that parents/carers have a legal obligation to ensure that children within their care attend school regularly. Schools and the local authority have a duty to ensure that poor school attendance is dealt with swiftly.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, section 23, sub-section (1) added two new sections (444A and 444B) after section 444 of the Education Act 1996. These new sections introduced penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty. The offence of irregular attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 has not changed.

Within Our Lady of Lourdes (CMAT) we have schools operating under Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and Derbyshire County Council's Code of Conduct. (See Appendix A)

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

- **Persistent** absence refers to pupils who miss 10% or more of school
- **Severe** absence refers to pupils who miss 50% or more of school.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

#### The CMAT board

Ensures that the attendance policy is updated annually and monitored through reports to the board.

#### The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

If you have a link governor for attendance, or a committee responsible for attendance, add details of their role in the monitoring of pupil attendance.

#### The headteacher

##### The headteacher is responsible for:

- Making good attendance a central part of our school's vision, values and ethos.
- Account for attendance in school improvement priorities and regularly reviewing our approach to improving attendance.
- Ensure there is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for improving attendance.
- Ensure there is a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for improving attendance.
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of pupils and communicate these regularly to pupils and parents.
- Promote and visibly demonstrate the benefits of good attendance.
- Recognising that children missing education can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues.
- Implementation of this policy at the school.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### The attendance officer (if you have one in school)

##### The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **[Class teachers/form tutors]**

[Class teachers/form tutors] are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **School [admin/office] staff**

School [admin/office] staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

**See appendix B for the DfE attendance codes.**

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by [time] on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time].  
The register for the second session will be taken at [time] and will be kept open until [time].



## **5. Implementation**

This policy received the full agreement of the executive board: February 2022

## **6. Aims**

**Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT recognises that;**

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education 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 parents/carers to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Some pupils and their parents/carers may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of pupils, parents or carers may impact on attendance. We will, with agreement and support of parent/carers, 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 society.

## **7. Expectations:**

**We expect the following from parents/carers;**

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually
- To ensure that they contact their children's school on the first morning of absence whenever their children are unable to attend, as appropriate. This should always be the first day of absence and everyday thereafter until the child returns to school
- 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 their children's school whenever any problem occurs that may affect performance
- That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending

**We expect the following from all our pupils;**

- That they attend school regularly
- That they will be on time and be appropriately equipped for the day.

**Parents and students can expect the following from Our Lady of Lourdes Trust;**

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance

- Early contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing a reason
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us
- Rewarding good attendance
- A quality education
- Education welfare officer working across the academy trust to provide support, advice and guidance to students, parents and carers for all aspects of school attendance

## **8. Encouraging Good Attendance in School:**

### **Attendance is encouraged in the following ways;**

- Accurate completion of registers in school
- Attendance checks at appropriate times
- Recording of good attendance on individual progress reports
- Our school will aim to provide an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who works either in our school or across our academy hub to identify and provide support, advice and guidance to pupils and their families who have attendance issues in the feeder primary school as part of any transition work between KS2 and KS3 or an Inclusions officer who will provide the above assistance in their own school.<sup>1</sup>
- Establishing a mechanism for supporting those parents and carers who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty attending, including home visits by the education welfare officer if necessary
- An efficient use of computerised registration systems can provide valuable attendance data which can assist speedy analysis and timely responses by the academy
- Sending parents termly/weekly absence figures as appropriate including positive letters of encouragement
- An 'improved attendance' award for any students showing a significant improvement in attendance, as appropriate
- Celebrating outstanding attendance during achievement assemblies every half term in school, as appropriate.

### **We will Monitor and analyse data to identify those that need support**

#### **We will ensure that:**

- Our school will Regularly analyse data to both identify and then provide support to pupils or cohorts that need it.
- Our school will look at historic and emerging patterns and develop strategies to address these.

#### **To do this we will:**

- Monitor weekly patterns of attendance and deliver targeted support to pupils and families.
- Provide regular attendance reports to appropriate staff to facilitate discussions with pupils
- Conduct thorough analyses of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends.

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<sup>1</sup> Amend as necessary for your school or LA circumstances.

- Benchmark our data against local, regional and national levels to identify areas for improvement.
- Use our data analysis to devise specific strategies to address poor attendance.
- Monitor the impact of these strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the governing board.

**We aim to engage with families, understand barriers to attendance and work together to remove them.**

**In the first instance our school will support pupils and parents by:**

- Working together to understand and address any in-school barriers to attendance.
- Meeting with the families of those at risk of persistent or severe absence and agreeing actions or interventions to improve the situation.
- Making referrals to services and organisations that can provide support.

**Where absence intensifies, we will provide additional support, such as:**

- Holding more formal conversations with the parents and pupils.
- Working with your local authority (LA) and other relevant partners.

**Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or not been engaged with, we will work with our LA to put formal support in place. Such as:**

- Use a parenting contract or an education supervision order.
- Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe.

## **9. Punctuality**

**The importance of arriving at school on time;**

- Arriving late at school may cause embarrassment for the child
- Pupils' arriving late is disruptive, not only to their own learning but the learning of others.
- Pupils may miss something important such as lesson plans or instructions on how to complete a piece of work
- Lateness can affect how students form friendship groups. Social interaction with peers before school is important.
- Pupils are marked present. The register is not only a legal document it also provides evidence that pupils have arrived in school and are safe.
- Punctuality shows reliability and is a valuable attribute for future working life. Future universities, colleges and employers look for reliability. A good record of attendance and punctuality is an indication of this and they may request to see this in the future.

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 (DfE Guidance July 2019). Our Lady of Lourdes recommends that the register closes 30 minutes after it is opened.

Arriving after the session closes, is recorded as an unauthorised absence. It is important to note that this will mean a full session of absence is recorded on the register and therefore has an impact on a pupil's overall attendance figure. If unauthorised absence continues, parents/carers will be contacted and a meeting will be arranged to discuss this. If no improvement is made, a Penalty Notice may be requested from the relevant Local Authority.

#### **10. Leave of Absence and Responding to Non-Attendance.**

Parents should report absences on the first day of any illness before the start of the day and continue to report on subsequent days. Only persons with Parental/Carer Responsibility can report absences. Parents/Carers can report via their school's Gateway app/School Coms/texting or via email. CMAT Schools will not accept a verbal message from a child. If we do not receive a message, the absence will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

**Home visits where pupils don't attend school:** When a pupil is absent from school, and no reason for absence is received, the school will contact parents/carers by text message and phone calls. In the event we are unable to make contact regarding the absence, the school may try other contacts held on a child's record and/or reserve the right to make an unannounced home visit.

**Medical Appointments:** Parents must notify the school in advance of any medical appointments and provide evidence of the appointment. Wherever possible, medical appointments should be made outside of school hours.

**Medical sick notes:** where students have had on-going regular absence, medical evidence would need to be provided.

Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT has a structured response for dealing with attendance concerns. When attendance falls below the expected level of 97% close monitoring will be put in place.

We will communicate our concerns with parents/carers if attendance falls below our expected levels. This may be in writing, by telephone or in person – through home visits or parent meetings.

#### **Education Welfare Officer**

The academy trust employs an education welfare officer/Inclusions officer who works with families to overcome any barriers that may be preventing a student from attending regularly. (\*take out as appropriate)

#### **Attendance meetings**

Parents/Carers of students with poor attendance may be invited to attend an attendance meeting. This may include a variety of professionals involved with student welfare. The aim

of this meeting is to improve future attendance and prevent the need for referral to the relevant Local Authority to begin legal processes.

Should poor attendance continue then a referral shall be made to the relevant Authority for further action (see below)

**Add below what your LA's policy is, delete the links not relevant to your situation – *delete this line.***

**Nottingham City Council** – should a student accrue 10% unauthorised absence over a 10-week period, a request for service, for a Penalty Notice or enforcement action may be made to Nottingham City Council Education Welfare Service.

**Nottinghamshire County Council** - should a student accrue in excess of 3 days over a 6-week rolling period, a request for a Penalty Notice may be made, or a referral made to the Family Service for enforcement action.

**Derbyshire County Council** – the Attendance Team may decide to issue instead of taking legal action through the Magistrates' Court system. A Parent/Carer can be issued with a penalty notice if:

- They fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a 6-week period.
- They allow their child to take leave of absence during term time without school authorisation.
- They fail to return their child to school on the agreed date after a period of authorised leave of absence.

**Lincolnshire<sup>2</sup>:** Fixed term penalties will only be issued in circumstances where the LA is satisfied that the criteria for prosecution would be met if the option of a fixed penalty notice is not taken up by the parent. The circumstances in which a notice may be issued are:

- Where a child is absent from school due to unauthorised absence of 15% or above over a six week period. This will include lateness after the close of registration when code U is used.
- Where a child is present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of any exclusion.

Below are links advising how to issue a penalty notice.

[Register a school fine – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

[Pay a school fine – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

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<sup>2</sup> [Fixed penalty notices - code of conduct \(lincolnshire.gov.uk\)](http://lincolnshire.gov.uk)

**North Lincolnshire<sup>3</sup>:** Each school has a named Education Welfare Officer. They offer support to parents and carers and services to improve attendance at school.

If the leave of absence the parent has requested is not agreed by the school and the child's total unauthorised absences as outlined in the bullet points below amount to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or odd days within the previous three months, the Education Inclusion Service will be notified and a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

- A parent has made a request to a school for a period of absence in term time and this has not been agreed by the school
- A parent has not applied for leave of absence in advance (the regulations do not allow for approval after the holiday)
- A parent keeps the child away from school for longer than was agreed, the extra time is recorded as unauthorised.
- The school has marked the absence as unauthorised, as they have reason to suspect this was in relation to an unapproved holiday in term time and no alternative evidence has been provided.

North Lincolnshire information for parents: [Penalty notice \(northlincslocaloffer.com\)](https://www.northlincslocaloffer.com)

Pay a school fine: [North Lincolnshire Council \(e-paycapita.com\)](https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/e-paycapita)

**North East Lincolnshire<sup>4</sup>:** The Education Welfare Service is responsible for attendance audits in schools. All the schools in North East Lincolnshire send termly attendance reports to the Education Welfare Service so absence levels can be monitored.

If a child's attendance becomes a concern, the school will contact their Education Welfare Officer and request action is taken. The Education Welfare Officers also carry out truancy patrols with Humberside Police.

Pay a school fine: [NELC - ePayments \(e-paycapita.com\)](https://www.nelc.gov.uk/e-payments)

## 11. Leave of Absence during Term Time

Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Each school within the trust will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

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<sup>3</sup> [School attendance and absence - North Lincolnshire Council \(northlincs.gov.uk\)](https://www.northlincs.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [Education welfare service - NELC | NELC \(nelincs.gov.uk\)](https://www.nelc.gov.uk)

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and is **not a parental right**. In accordance with government guidelines, the application must be made **12 school days** in advance by completing a leave of absence request form. The application form is available from individual schools within the academy trust by request. The head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave.

If parents take pupils on holiday during term time Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT schools will not provide extra work; students will be expected to catch up with any work they have missed when they return from the holiday.

**Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT schools may agree a 'leave of absence' in the following exceptional circumstances:**

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. The number of days to be agreed with the headteacher.

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a family wedding of a close family member.
- Important religious observances (but only for the ceremony not travelling time).
- Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the headteacher agrees to consult with the DPS team prior to any authorisation being given to the parent.

What are NOT considered 'exceptional circumstances'

- The family cannot afford to go on holiday in school holiday time, or have a special holiday offer for term time.
- To visit family members abroad (unless they are severely ill which may be considered).
- To spend time with a family member who is visiting from abroad in term time.
- Because you or your partner cannot get time off work during school holiday time.
- You have a family tradition of going at a certain time of year.
- Going away for a birthday celebration (including the child's birthday)

**Our Lady of Lourdes Trust will not agree a 'leave of absence in circumstances such as:**

- Availability of cheap holidays;
- Availability of desired accommodation;
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term.

Leave of absence that has not been approved will therefore be unauthorised and may lead to a referral being made to the local authority for action.

- Schools within Nottingham City Council, a Penalty notice will be requested if an unauthorised holiday is taken of 5 continuous days (10 sessions).
- Schools within Nottinghamshire County Council, a Penalty Notice will be requested if an unauthorised holiday is taken in excess of 3 days/6 sessions (over a 6-week rolling period)
- Schools within Derbyshire County Council; a Penalty Notice will be requested if parents/carers fail to ensure that their child attends school, or other education provision regularly, usually defined as six or more unauthorised absence sessions over a 6-week period.



- Schools within Lincolnshire; a Penalty notice will be requested where a child is absent from school due to unauthorised absence of 15% or above over a six week period. This will include lateness after the close of registration when code U is used.
- Schools with North Lincolnshire; a Penalty notice will be requested where a child's total unauthorised absences amount to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or odd days within the previous three months.
- Schools within North East Lincolnshire; a Penalty notice will be requested if an unauthorised holiday is taken of 5 continuous days (10 sessions).

Penalties are set at £60.00 per parent per student if paid within 21 days of issue, if not paid within 21 days the fine doubles to £120 if paid within 28 days. Where a fine remains unpaid the matter may be enforced at the Magistrates Court, under Section 444, Education Act 1996. The maximum fine for this offence is £1000 per parent, per child.

**Nottingham City Council** will not issue Penalty Notices on more than three occasions for an individual child, in an academic year.

**Nottinghamshire County Council** 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.

**Derbyshire County Council** will not issue parents with more than two penalty notices per child in any one 12-month period. Thereafter, parents may be liable to other statutory action.

**Lincolnshire:** Use of fixed penalty notices will be restricted to two per child per academic year. In situations where a parent meets the criteria for more than one penalty notice to be issued, because there is more than one child with irregular school attendance multiple issue may occur.

**North Lincolnshire:** Use of fixed penalty notices will be restricted to two per child per academic year. In situations where a parent meets the criteria for more than one penalty notice to be issued, because there is more than one child with irregular school attendance multiple issue may occur.

**North East Lincolnshire** will not issue Penalty Notices on more than two occasions for an individual child, in an academic year. However, if the absence is due to unauthorised holidays, then more notices will be issued linked to the number of unauthorised holidays.

## 12. Truancy

Pupils who are discovered to have truanting will be spoken to by the designated member of staff will be informed of what has happened. Pupils will be asked for the reasons for their truancy to see if there are underlying problems as the root cause. Parents will be contacted and kept informed of events. As a punishment, the truant will be expected to make up the

number of hours they have missed in school detentions. All incidents of truancy will be recorded as unauthorised.

As a follow-up the student will receive an appropriate sanction.

### 13. Off-Site Provision

Where the school uses off-site providers the responsibilities for external partners is to ensure the following:

- Accurately register student(s) on placement.
- Notify the academy before 10.00am of any student absence.
- E-mail/post weekly attendance registers to nominated member of staff at the academy.
- Alert school, (Attendance Officer or nominated staff) immediately in the event of a student leaving the provider's premises without prior authorisation from academy.

### 14. Children Missing in Education

- Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
- The designated staff will monitor unauthorised absences and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority particularly where children go missing on repeat occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day in conjunction with '**Children Missing Education: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities**<sup>5</sup>
- Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

### 15. Anxiety Related Non-Attendance (ARNA)

Insert support offered by your Local Authority, we have included the Nottinghamshire support links.

Where a student is believed to be experiencing anxiety, the academy will liaise with parents/carers and make initial assessment by interview and completion of the ARNA Attendance Policy assessment documentation.

If agreed strategies fail to improve school attendance and the wellbeing of the student, further strategies will be considered. The academy will ensure that the school systems adhere to the document **Guidance to Schools: A Graduated Response to School Non-Attendance** (which must be used for SEND/SEMH needs), in order to best support early identification of anxiety related issues.

The academy will ensure that the existing systems around analysing absence are able to identify the different types of unauthorised absence i.e. anxiety related, truanting or parent/carers condoned and appropriate support implemented.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

Should a parent/carer have any concerns regarding their child's mental health or wellbeing, they should contact the academy immediately.

If a child has long term absence, the academy endeavours to maintain regular communication with the student and family. School will seek support from professional outside agencies to provide additional help to the student and family.

Please refer to: **Anxious Learners & Anxiety Related Non-Attendance (ARNA): Guidance for Schools<sup>6</sup>**

## 16. Agency Liaison

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the full range of support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

There are the many support services we can work with to improve the outcomes for our students

- Faith in Families
- Targeted Support; Family Services.
- Educational Psychologists.
- School health
- Social care
- Youth Offending Team
- Police
- CAMHS
- Missing in Education Teams
- Admissions Team
- Education Welfare Service
- Children Missing in Education

## 17. Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard to the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or is in need of safeguarding.

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<sup>6</sup> [AL and AR \(ARNA\) support guidance for Nottingham County Council Secondary Schools.](#)

<https://www.em-edsupport.org.uk/Event/73352>

## 18. Stepped Approach

All letters regarding notice of penalty and actual penalty notices need to be sent to both parents and or additional adults in the household as there could be a potential fines for both parents or additional adult.

Included in the Appendices are letters which we support schools to communicate attendance concerns with parents. Within ScholarPack/Arbor these can be set up and automatically set up for pupils within you MIS, please contact support to detail how this can be completed.

<b>Record any concerns, patterns, or trends on CPOMs.</b>		
Optional letter at the beginning of term. School may wish to send their own versions.		Optional information for school newsletter or leaflet sent at the beginning of term ( <a href="#">Appendix C</a> ) Nursery to Reception letter ( <a href="#">Appendix D</a> )
	Children have 100% attendance	Half termly and yearly certificates. Children who have 100% attendance will be rewarded.
	Children have attendance above 95%	Children contribute to the weekly attendance award for their class – which leads to special events and rewards.
<b>Attendance falls below 95% due to illness or unauthorised absence</b>		
Step 1	Letter 1 to inform of a low level of attendance.	95% is a start for concern. This letter is to inform and advise. It starts the beginning of a <b>4 week monitoring period.</b> ( <a href="#">Appendix E</a> )
Step 2	After 2 weeks of monitoring, attendance has still not improved, and/ or there are additional absences – Letter 2 is sent.	Letter 2 explains the reasons given for absence so far, and that this has led to an unacceptable attendance level. If attendance has dropped below 90% your child is now classed as a persistent absentee.  It also states that unless there is a significant improvement, a meeting will be held in school to form an attendance action plan.  This is the beginning of a <b>second monitoring period of 2 weeks.</b> ( <a href="#">Appendix F</a> )
Step 3	First attendance meeting.	If attendance remains below 95%, a meeting is called with the <b>Attendance team.</b> At this meeting, targets are set and an attendance action plan is formed with the family.  If the family do not attend, the plan will be made by school and sent home.
<b>Case will be referred to Education Welfare as a record of poor attendance *delete or amend to your school's LA and circumstances as necessary.</b>		
Step 4	Letter to state that sickness must be evidenced.	If a child has attendance below 90% due to an unusual amount of sickness, this letter makes it clear that they will be marked as unauthorised absences unless there is a form of medical evidence. ( <a href="#">Appendix G</a> )  After sickness <b>24-48hrs at the discretion of the HT</b>
Step 5	Second attendance meeting	If attendance is still below 90% after the attendance action plan ( <a href="#">Appendix Q</a> ), this meeting is held to make clear what the next steps are, and what letters will be issued after the meeting.
Step 6	Penalty Notice warning letter	This letter states that there are serious concerns regarding the child's attendance, and that, unless there is significant improvement the case will be referred to the LA for penalty notices. ( <a href="#">Appendix H</a> )  <b>This begins the final monitoring period.</b>

Step 7	Penalty Notice letter	This letter states that the school has referred the attendance case to the Local Authority, and that there is to be a penalty notice issued. ( <a href="#">Appendix I</a> )
<b>Unauthorised Absence Letters</b>		
	Unauthorised absence(s)	Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence(s) letter. To be used for periods of absence that have not been authorised by school. ( <a href="#">Appendix J</a> )
	Formal issue of penalty notice	Formal penalty notice linked to unauthorised absence. ( <a href="#">Appendix K</a> )
<b>Holidays</b>		
Step 1	Agreeing a request	Agreeing a request for a holiday in term-time is up to the Headteacher's discretion ( <a href="#">Appendix L</a> ) letter, however, there are guidelines within this policy and further advice in ( <a href="#">Appendix Q</a> )
Step 2	Declining a request	Declining a request for a holiday in term-time and warning parents that if they take the child out of school during these times, a penalty notice will be issued. ( <a href="#">Appendix M</a> )
Step 3	Holiday Absence	After an unauthorised holiday this letter informs parents that they may be issued with a penalty notice. ( <a href="#">Appendix N</a> )
Step 4	No notice holiday absence	If a family go on holiday, without informing the school this letter for a no notice holiday penalty can be issued. ( <a href="#">Appendix O</a> )
<b>Other useful letters</b>		
	Punctuality letters	<a href="#">Appendix P</a>
	Exceptional Circumstances	<a href="#">Appendix R</a>
	Nottinghamshire Penalty Notice Form	<a href="#">Appendix S</a>
	Celebrate improved attendance	<a href="#">Appendix T</a>

**Appendix A: Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT Schools and Designated Local Authority.**

<b>Nottingham City Council Schools:</b>	<b>Nottinghamshire County Council Schools:</b>	<b>Derbyshire County Council:</b>
<p>The Trinity School            St Marys Hyson Green            Our Lady of Perpetual Succour            St Teresa’s Aspley            St Augustines St Anns            Blessed Robert Widmerpool Clifton,            Our Lady &amp; St Edward St Anns            St Patrick’s Catholic Primary and            Nursery School Wilford            St Margaret Clitherow Bestwood</p>	<p>The Becket School West Bridgford            St Edmund Campion Catholic            Primary            Christ the King Arnold            The Good Shepherd Arnold            Sacred Heart Carlton            Holy Cross Hucknall            All Saints Mansfield            St Philip Neri Mansfield            St Patricks Mansfield            St Joseph’s Ollerton            Holy Trinity Newark</p>	<p>St Joseph’s Shirebrook.</p>
<b>Lincolnshire</b>	<b>North Lincolnshire</b>	<b>North East Lincolnshire</b>
<p>St Mary’s, Boston.            Our Lady of Good Counsel.            St Mary’s, Grantham            St Hugh’s.            Our Lady of Lincoln.            St Norbert’s, Spalding.            St Peter and St Paul.            St Augustine, Stamford.</p>	<p>St Augustine Webster.            St Mary’s, Brigg.            St Norbert’s, Crowle.            St Bernadette’s            St Bede’s.</p>	<p>St Marys, Grimsby.            St Joseph’s.</p>

**Appendix B: The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance.**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>/</b>	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
<b>\</b>	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
<b>L</b>	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



## Appendix C: Optional information for school newsletter or leaflet.

Dear Parents and carers,

The schools of the Multi Academy Trust are committed to working together with parents and carers to ensure the highest possible attendance, which will in turn support the progress of our children.

It is important for parents to remember that the occasional or few days off due to illness, holidays or family events can mount up and lead to children's attendance levels falling. This can have a negative impact on their progress in school and affect their wellbeing.

With this in mind, you can support the school, and your child, to achieve attendance targets by:

- Making sure your child attends school regularly and on time.
- Contacting school on the first day of any absence on (Insert School phone number)
- Informing school of any problems that may impact on your child's attendance, punctuality and learning
- Arrange routine medical appointments outside of school time. If this is not possible, please bring your child in prior to their appointment and ensure they return to school afterwards.
- Ensuring children are ready for school by having good morning and bedtime routines.
- Consider whether it is appropriate to bring your child into school in the morning if they feel a little under the weather. The school office will contact you if we feel they need to go home.
- Ensure that you do not book holidays in term time. **Please note:** In line with government regulations we are advised not to authorise holidays taken in term time.
- If you feel your child is too ill to come to school, please try to provide medical evidence. This can be prescription medication, an appointment card or a prescription.

**Below is a table of how school absence could affect your pupil's ability to access the curriculum.**

We all look forward to working with you to ensure the best possible education for your children.

Yours Sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix D: Nursery to Reception Letter

Dear parent/carer,

### **Child's name and attendance figure**

It has come to my attention that your child will be joining us full time in September. In reception, teachers work hard to embed positive attitudes towards school and learning. In addition to setting the expectations for children's behaviour and building a sound understanding of key concepts such as reading and numbers.

Attending school regularly is important for your child's future. You, as a parent or carer are responsible for making sure your child receives a full-time education. If your child does not attend school on a regular basis, you could get fined or prosecuted.

### **You can help prevent your child missing school by:**

- having a routine from an early age and sticking to it
- making sure your child understands the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- making sure they understand the possible implications for themselves and you as a parent if they don't attend
- taking an interest in their education - ask about schoolwork and encourage them to get involved in school activities
- discussing any problems they may have at school and letting their teacher or Headteacher know about anything that is causing concern
- not letting them take time off school for minor ailments or holidays during term time.

Please see your child's attendance (above) and note that this level of attendance is unacceptable in Reception. If you require any support, it is available. Please come and see us if you have any attendance concerns. Contact reception if you would like to speak with me.

Yours Sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

**Appendix E: 95% and under attendance letter 1.**

Dear Parent/Carer,

Child:

I am writing to you today to make you aware of your child's low school attendance.

Children who do not attend school regularly often struggle to catch up with work missed or become anxious learners so it is important school attendance is taken seriously. Attached is a copy of your child's attendance certificate for you to look at. If you would like support around school attendance or would like discuss further, please do not hesitate to contact school to arrange an appointment.

Equates to <b>2</b> days off a year.	99%	Excellent attendance
Equates to <b>5</b> days off a year.	97%	Good attendance
Equates to <b>10</b> days off a year.	95%	Slight concern
Equates to <b>20</b> days off a year.	90%	Concerned
Equates to <b>30</b> days off a year.	85%	Very concerned

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix F: 95% and under attendance letter 2.

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Second attendance monitoring period of additional 2 weeks

I'm writing to express my concern at (name's) continued high levels of absence from school.

(His/her) current attendance has continued to fall to (percentage). This continued poor attendance will likely have an impact on (His/her) academic achievement.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

As I have already stated, our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We want to make sure that we can support (name's) education in the best way possible, including looking into how we can help (His/her) to address gaps in learning due to absence.

Please contact the school office on (number) as soon as you can so we can arrange a meeting to discuss this.

**Please note your child's absence has been closely monitored for the past 4 weeks and will continue to do so for a further 2 weeks, after this time if their attendance has NOT improved then the Local Authority will be contacted regarding a possible penalty notice being issued.**

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix G: 90% and under attendance letter.

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Attendance is below 90%

I have been analysing (name of school) Voluntary Catholic Academy's attendance data. It has come to my attention that your child has now hit the target percentage attendance of (insert %) and is now classed as a persistent absentee.

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education, taken from the DFE Working together to improve school attendance May 2022.

*"School attendance remains mandatory and all the usual rules continue to apply. Enabling children and young people to attend their education setting regularly continues to be a national priority."*

- *The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.*
- *Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.*
- *All schools have a continuing responsibility to proactively manage and improve attendance across their school community.*

Please look at your child's individual registration certificate (see attached) and note the number of absences. Home visits will now be undertaken for each absence (delete as required).

Our children have already missed such an incredible amount of important learning time, it is crucial that your child attends school regularly and on time.

I will now be requiring medical evidence for your child's further absences. This can include:

- Screenshots of text messages from GPs for appointments
- Photographs of prescriptions
- Appointment Card/letters

**We do not require doctor's notes.**

I urge you to put some importance on this matter and I am happy to discuss or meet with any family that may need that additional help to overcome those barriers to learning.

I look forward to working with you and improving your child's school attendance.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix H: Penalty notice warning letter

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Penalty Notice Warning Letter

On the (date), we wrote to you to explain that the (name of school) Academy would not authorise any future absences, without medical evidence.

During the last (dates), your child has had (number of days) (number of sessions) of unauthorised absences, where reasons for absences from you are still outstanding or medical evidence hasn't been provided. Attendance certificate attached.

You, as a parent, are legally responsible under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly and on time.

Please note that in November 2017 there has been a change to local and national government legislation with regards to schools initiating Penalty Notices. The change means:

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<sup>7</sup>. Please note lates after the registers have closed will count towards this figure.

You are hereby informed that (child's) attendance and punctuality will be monitored until the (date), so if there are more than 3 days of unauthorised absences, within a 6 week rolling period<sup>8</sup> we will request the Local Authority issue you with a Penalty Notice. Once issued, a Penalty Notice incurs a fine of £120 if paid within 28 days, or it reduces to £60 if paid within 21 days. The fine would be per parent and would be payable to the Local Authority and not (school).

Please take steps to ensure that (child) gets to school every day and on time. Please notify school as soon as possible, if (child) is going to be absent for any reason. Please provide medical evidence for any absences, as absences will not be authorised without medical evidence.

We thank you for your support in ensuring (child) is not absent from school during term time in future.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

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<sup>7</sup> Please insert your correct LA guidance and requirements.

<sup>8</sup> Please insert your correct LA guidance and requirements.

## Appendix I: Penalty notice letter

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear Parent/Carer,

### Penalty Notice Letter

On (date), we wrote to you to explain that the (School name) Academy would not authorise any further absences from school, without medical evidence or exceptional circumstances. We also informed you that this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued to you.

I am now writing to advise you that a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue you with a Penalty Notice because between (dates), (student name) was absent from school for (number of days) days (number of sessions), due to unauthorised absences where medical evidence hasn't been provided. Attendance certificate attached.

The Local Authority in due time will issue you with the Penalty Notice, which will have details on how to pay the fine or appeal its issue.

Please be aware that only 2 Penalty Notices can be issued within a year<sup>9</sup>. If there is a third instance to request further action for either an unauthorised holiday or unauthorised absence, this matter would be referred to the Magistrates Court for enforcement/prosecution and not dealt with as a Penalty Notice, in line with (Insert Local Authority) guidelines.

If an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular. Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, his/her parent/carer (s) are guilty of an offence. Please also note that if you have more than one child, each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The Local Authority may take formal action against you for failure to comply with the law. Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution, but may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to the attendance issues.

Therefore, your child's irregular attendance could result in one of the following actions:

1. A Penalty Notice being issued. Each penalty notice is £60 if paid within the first 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22-28 days. Failure to pay will result in prosecution
2. Prosecution. This could lead to fines of up to £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment
3. The Supreme Court in April 2017 clarified the definition of regular attendance to be 'attendance in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school'.
4. Therefore, if an absence is not authorised by the school, the pupil's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

Yours Sincerely,  
Headteacher

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<sup>9</sup> Please amend for your Local Authority



## Appendix J: Concerns about a pupil's unauthorised absence(s)

**Use this letter as the first step to address unauthorized absence.**

### RE: Unauthorised absences from school

#### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear (Insert Parent's names)

#### Penalty Notice Warning Letter for unauthorised absences from school

I'm writing to express my concern at (name's) recent unauthorised (absence/absences) from school. (Name) has been absent from school for a total of (number) unauthorised sessions ((number) days) on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

[date]

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Our pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

**Amend the line below based on your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices: e.g. 6 days in a 10 week period.**

Please note that unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued if your child has more than (number) unauthorised absences within (time period). You can find more information about penalty notices in our school attendance policy. Copies of the policy are on the school website, or available from the school office.

Please contact the school office on (number) as soon as you can so we can arrange to discuss this.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix K: Formal notice about unauthorised absence

Use this letter if:

- You have previously tried to address a pupil's unauthorised absence
- The pupil's unauthorised absence has reached the threshold set by your local authority for the use of a penalty notice.

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear (Insert Parent's names),

### Penalty Notice Letter for unauthorised absence

Further to our letter dated (Insert Date) notifying you that your child had incurred unauthorised absence from school and that any further absence may result in a request to the Local authority to issue a Penalty Notice fine.

We are now writing to advise you that because your child (insert name) has had unauthorised absences in (Add your LAs requirements here e.g. excess if 3 days over a six week period) a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to you for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

These absences occurred on the following dates:

[date]

[date]

[date]

In line with our attendance policy, and the local authority's code of practice, we have to now request a penalty notice be issued by the local authority.

On receipt of the notice, you must pay:

- £60, if paid within 21 days
- £120, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If payment is not made within 28 days, the local authority may decide to pursue further legal action.

We would like to invite you in for a meeting with (appropriate member of staff), so we can discuss how we can support you to help improve (name's) attendance.

Please contact the school office on (number) urgently so we can arrange this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## Appendix L: Agreeing a request for a holiday in term-time

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear (Insert parent name)

Thank you for your request to take (child) out of school between (date) and (date).

Having considered the exceptional circumstances set out in your application, I'm able to agree to your request.

I haven't come to this decision lightly. Our school is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

Each request for a holiday absence is considered on its merits at the time. Please note that my decision in this instance does not set a precedent and does not mean I'll be able to agree to a similar request, from you or other parents, in the future.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

**APPLICATION DECISION ON CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM  
SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME  
Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT**

<b>Pupil's Name:</b>	<b>Year Group:</b>	<b>Home Address:</b>			
<b>You applied for your child to be absent from school during the following dates:</b>					
<b>First Day of Absence:</b>		<b>Date of Return to School:</b>		<b>Total days applied for:</b>	
<b>The reason you gave for the application for leave of absence during term time:</b>					
<b>The decision in response to your application:</b>					
<b>The leave is considered to be Authorised:</b>		<b>The leave is be considered to be Unauthorised:</b>			
<p><b>This application for leave was considered using the Trust's Attendance Policy and guidance for leave of absence requests. The application was reviewed by the Headteacher.</b></p> <p><b>If you wish to discuss this decision further, please contact (insert contact details of either the school or the school's EWO)</b></p>					
<b>Signed on behalf (insert school's name) part of the Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT,</b>					

**Penalty Notices are set at £60.00 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Penalty Notices are per parent, per child. Failure to pay will result in prosecution under Section 444, Education Act 1996.**

## Appendix M: Declining a request for a holiday in term-time

### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear (Insert parent name)

### Penalty Notice Warning

I note your application to take (child) out of education for (number of days) days to go on holiday. Schools are only allowed to agree a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances.

I have considered your application and do not feel it meets the exceptional circumstances criteria and therefore your request has been declined. Should you decide to remove your child from school on the dates indicated in your application then their absence will be marked in the register as unauthorised.

An unauthorised leave of absence of more than 3 days/6 sessions (over a 6 week rolling period)<sup>10</sup> for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £120 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child.

If you do remove (child) from school for the period stated in your application I will request that the local authority issues a penalty notice.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

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<sup>10</sup> Insert your LA's guidelines.

## Appendix N: After an unauthorised holiday

### Holiday absence

#### Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear (Insert Parent's names)

#### Penalty Notice Letter

I'm writing about your action in taking (name(s)) out of school for a family holiday between (date) and (date). On (Date) we wrote to you to explain that the (Insert school name) Academy would not authorise (child name) absence from school for (insert number of days) days for a holiday. We also informed you that this could lead to a Penalty Notice being issued to you.

We're treating this as an unauthorised holiday because (explain the evidence you have). Therefore, a request has been made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to you for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

Our school works with parents to provide the best education for each child and believes that regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

We expect you to consult the school before booking holidays that means your child will be absent, or before making any plans that will involve your child's absence from lessons or other commitments, 12 school days in advance by completing a leave of absence request form.

If in line with your local authority's code of conduct for penalty notices, add: e.g. of more than 3 days/6 sessions (over a 6 week rolling period)<sup>11</sup>

We have the power to request that the local authority issue a penalty notice for unauthorised term-time holidays.

If issued with a penalty notice, you must pay:

- £60, if paid within 21 days of receiving the notice
- £120, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days

If you don't pay the penalty within 28 days, the local authority could pursue legal action.

Continue with:

Absences like these could have a detrimental effect on (name(s)) education.

We would like to arrange a meeting so that we can discuss this further. Please contact the school office urgently on (phone number).

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

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<sup>11</sup> Insert your LA's guidelines.

## **Appendix O: After an unauthorised no notice holiday**

### **Holiday absence**

#### **Parent's Address**

**Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)**

Dear (Insert parents name)

#### **Penalty Notice Warning Letter**

The Government states that students should not be taking leave of absence during term-time and in line with this, it has been agreed that leave taken in term-time will not be authorised other than in exceptional circumstances.

As our school policy states a Leave of Absence must be made 12 school days in advance by completing a Leave of Absence Form. (Child) absence was not authorised and therefore I have requested a Penalty Notice Fine from the Local Authority.

All absences from school can have a detrimental effect on a child's education as well as personal development which is something we take seriously. We therefore, would like to bring to your attention that (Insert School) Academy notify the local authority about holidays taken in term time, truancy and unauthorised absences such as repeated lateness to school after the registers close.

Penalty Notices are issued by the local authority to all guardians with parental responsibility for that child, even if the original request for leave was only raised by one parent/carer. With this in mind, if your child is taken out of school for any future holidays or has unauthorised absence in term time, this may lead to a Fixed Penalty.

A Penalty Notice can lead to a fine of £60 per child/parent if paid within 21 days or £120 per child/parent if paid within 28 days. If leave is due to employment contractual restrictions, please forward any official documentation as soon as possible prior to taking the leave.

Should you wish to discuss any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

## **Appendix P: Punctuality.**

Dear Parents / Carers,

### **Re: Punctuality**

**We are writing to children's families to emphasise the importance of being in school on time as there have been numerous incidents of some families routinely arriving late to school.**

Children who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of lessons. This means that they are often unsettled and confused about tasks. Their teacher will not always be able to re-explain work.

It is also very important that children establish good routines and habits in preparation for the rest of their lives. Punctuality is a life skill that they need to develop whilst they are young.

It is essential that you ensure that your child arrives at school on time to prevent disruption to your child's own learning and that of others.

We will continue to focus on this area with children through class work and school assemblies

We are required to monitor children's punctuality and attendance. On-going lateness (after the class register has been taken) is classified as an unauthorised absence and this is contrary to The Education Act.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions, please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

If you are experiencing difficulties with punctuality and would like to talk to us about it, please contact myself **or your child's progress leader (if you have one in school).**

Yours sincerely,

**(Name)**

Headteacher



**Parent's Address**

**Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)**

Dear Parents / Carers,

**Re: Punctuality**

We are writing to children's families to emphasise the importance of being in school on time as there have been numerous incidents of some families routinely arriving late to school.

Children who arrive late are greatly disadvantaged because they miss starting the day with their peers and the beginning of lessons. This means that they are often unsettled and confused about tasks. Their teacher will not always be able to re explain work.

It is also very important that children establish good routines and habits in preparation for the rest of their lives. Punctuality is a life skill that they need to develop whilst they are young.

It is essential that you ensure that your child arrives at school on time to prevent disruption to your child's own learning and that of others. We will continue to focus on the importance of punctuality and regular attendance with children through class work and school assemblies. I have enclosed a copy of the current school start and end of day times for your reference, this is also displayed on the school gates and in classroom windows.

We are required to monitor children's punctuality and attendance. On-going lateness (after the class register has been taken) is classified as an unauthorised absence and this is contrary to The Education Act.

We understand that there may be rare occasions when you are unavoidably late due to unforeseen circumstances. On these occasions please make sure that you contact the school office to inform us when you will arrive.

If you are experiencing difficulties with punctuality and would like to talk to us about it, please contact **myself or (Other contact in school)**.

Yours sincerely,

**(Name)**

Headteacher

**Appendix Q: Action Plan for supporting positive attendance.**

<b>Name(s) of pupil(s):</b>			
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Attendance:</b>	<b>Number of Lates:</b>	<b>Year Group:</b>

<b>Known barriers to attendance:</b>	
<b>Child's view (if appropriate):</b>	
<b>Parents view:</b>	
<b>School's view:</b>	
<b>Agreed actions:</b>	
<b>Date of next review:</b> -----	If my child's attendance continues to decline without reason or medical evidence, I am aware this may be escalated for discussion with Education Welfare Service from the Local Authority.

**Parent/Carer**

I/we ..... confirm that I/we have parental responsibility and agree to the above attendance improvement plan

**I agree that I will...**

- Ensure my child will attend school regularly
- Ensure they are wearing the correct uniform
- Ensure my child arrives to school on time
- Contact school at the earliest opportunity should my child be too ill to attend
- Ensure I update the relevant member of staff if there are any changes to my contact details
- Try where possible to make appointments outside of school hours or provide proof of the appointment when this is not possible and ensure my child attends before/after the appointment where possible.
- Contact the school office if there are any problems or concerns
- Understand that my child's attendance will be monitored closely and reviewed regularly
- Understand that failure to comply with the above may result in a referral to the Education Welfare Service which could lead to the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution

***Failing to ensure regular attendance at school may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution. Penalty Notices are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Any legal proceedings would relate to section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.***

**Signed** ..... **(Parent(s)/Carer(s))** **Date** .....

**School**

**Staff member** .....

- I/we agree to the above attendance improvement plan
- I/we will monitor ..... attendance, which will be reviewed regularly
- If I/we have any concerns, I or someone on my behalf will contact you, the parent/carer immediately
- I/we will keep you informed of the result of any attendance reviews

**Signed** ..... **Date** .....

Equates to <u>2</u> days off a year.	99%	Excellent attendance
Equates to <u>5</u> days off a year.	97%	Good attendance
Equates to <u>10</u> days off a year.	95%	Slight concern
Equates to <u>20</u> days off a year.	90%	Concerned
Equates to <u>30</u> days off a year.	85%	Very concerned

Appendix R: Nottinghamshire County Council Penalty notice request form.

**PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST SHEET**



**NB: Please only type the details when completing this form**

Parent / Carer 1's details		Parent / Carer 2's details	
Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other	Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr/Other
Forename		Forename	
Surname		Surname	
DOB		DOB	
Full address		Full address	
Postcode		Postcode	
Telephone numbers		Telephone numbers	
Email address		Email address	

Child 1's details		Childs 2's details	
Forename		Forename	
Legal surname		Legal surname	
Chosen surname		Chosen surname	
DOB		DOB	
Year group		Year group	
Full address		Full address	
Postcode		Postcode	

<b>Please select only ONE of the options below</b>			
<b>Option 1: Complete below for a penalty notice for a Leave of Absence (LOA) in Term Time</b>		<b>Option 2: Complete below for a penalty notice for Unauthorised Absences (General attendance)</b>	
Did parent/carer request a leave of absence:	Phone call	Attendance this academic year %	Overall Attendance %
	Text/Dojo message		Authorised %

(please only tick (✓) one box)	Email			Unauthorised	%
	LOA request				
	No LOA request				
<b>Have you done the following</b>			<b>Have you done the following</b>		
1. Sent a letter in response to the above	Yes / No		1. Sent 1 <sup>st</sup> letter warning of possible penalty notice due to the number of unauthorised absences	Yes / No	
2. Sent a letter advising that a penalty notice request has been made to the Local Authority	Yes / No		2. Sent 2 <sup>nd</sup> letter advising that a penalty notice request has been made to the Local Authority	Yes / No	
3. Included an attendance certificate <b>(with the absence coded as G)</b> for the school year to date	Yes / No		3. Included an attendance certificate <b>(with the absences coded as unauthorised)</b> for the school year to date	Yes / No	
<b>Submit this request as soon as possible following the child's return to school</b>			<b>Ensure you have given the warning at the start of the required 6 week monitoring period</b>		
<p><b>Please submit all your paperwork as one combined bundle which has editing enabled if sent as a PDF.</b></p> <p><b>Ensure full details are provided.</b></p> <p><b>If either of the above is not done, the paperwork will be returned to you.</b></p> <p>The supporting information required is signed copies of all letters, LOA request/email or details of phone call/message, attendance record for the current academic year only, and copies of emails and delivery receipts (if applicable)</p>					

Details of the person completing this form			
Name		Telephone number	
Job title		Email address	
School		Date PN requested	

Any other relevant information (e.g. details of phone calls/text messages)

**For NCC EEO Officers use ONLY**

<b>PN Type</b>	<b>Leave of absence</b>	<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	<b>Unauthorised lateness</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
<b>No. of UA sessions</b>	<b>School name</b>			
<b>PN date period</b>	<b>From:</b>		<b>To:</b>	
<b>Letter from</b>			<b>Date of letter</b>	

<b>Date excluded</b>		<b>Number of days excluded</b>		<b>Date seen in public</b>	
<b>Seen in public by who and where</b>					

<b>Checked by EEO</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Initials</b>
<b>Mosaic -</b>		
<b>Capita -</b>		
<b>Experian -</b>		

## Appendix S: Improving attendance letter

Parent's Address

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Improved attendance.**

Date:	Attendance:	Date:	Improved attendance:

**I am writing to celebrate your pupil's improved attendance.**

As you can see from the above attendance figure your pupil's attendance has significantly improved. We are really pleased with Pupil's name he/she is showing clear progress, which is linked to his/her consistence attendance in school. Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous day(s). Therefore, any sustained absence will hamper educational development. We believe that being in school, is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, and their wider development.

Please pass on our congratulations to Pupil's name and the positive impact his/her attendance has had on his/her learning.

If you require any further support or information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

(Name)

Headteacher

**Appendix T: (To be sent out to parents at the beginning of the academic year):**

**Cumulative absence example for a school year (2023-4)**

	Sessions	68	138	194	254	310	380
Days absent	Sessions absent	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6

1	2	97.1	98.6	99.0	99.2	99.4	99.5
2	4	94.1	97.1	97.9	98.4	98.7	98.9
3	6	91.2	95.7	96.9	97.6	98.1	98.4
4	8	88.2	94.2	95.9	96.9	97.4	97.9
5	10	85.3	92.8	94.8	96.1	96.8	97.4
6	12	82.4	91.3	93.8	95.3	96.1	96.8
7	14	79.4	89.9	92.8	94.5	95.5	96.3
8	16	76.5	88.4	91.8	93.7	94.8	95.8
9	18	73.5	87.0	90.7	92.9	94.2	95.3
10	20	70.6	85.5	89.7	92.1	93.5	94.7
11	22	67.6	84.1	88.7	91.3	92.9	94.2
12	24	64.7	82.6	87.6	90.6	92.3	93.7
13	26	61.8	81.2	86.6	89.8	91.6	93.2
14	28	58.8	79.7	85.6	89.0	91.0	92.6
15	30	55.9	78.3	84.5	88.2	90.3	92.1
16	32	50.5	75.6	82.6	86.7	89.1	91.1
17	34	44.4	72.6	80.5	85.1	87.8	90.1
18	36	37.7	69.3	78.2	83.3	86.3	88.9
19	38	30.1	65.6	75.5	81.3	84.7	87.5
20	40	21.6	61.4	72.5	79.0	82.8	86.0

Reaching 6 days absence at any point in the year will mean overall attendance will not be over target of 97%

Reaching 10 days of absence at any point in the year will mean overall attendance will not be over 95%

Reaching 17 days of absence will mean attendance is at 90% - this is 'PERSISTENT ABSENCE'



## Appendix U: Leaflet for parents

Insert school logo here.  
Right click, select 'Change picture' and find logo to replace. Resize by dragging corners.



# Why is it important to attend school **every day**?

Having good attendance and being on time is proven to help boost your child's achievement, social development and mental health. It ensures your child feels safe and supported.

**Attendance is a priority in our school and is closely monitored.**

**You must report your child's absence to the school office.**

### DID YOU KNOW?

80% attendance over 5 years = **1 whole year** of school missed!

### DID YOU KNOW?

**One** day missed of school, can mean **three** days of catching up with learning for your child

- Research shows that young people with high levels of attendance have better SATs and GCSE results.
- Regular attendance also improves young people's social and emotional development which boost essential key life skills.
- Missing learning causes anxiety and missing playtimes really affects developing friendships.
- If your child isn't in school, it's hard for them to develop their core skills.

## How can **you** help?

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are **190 school days** in a year meaning there are **175 days left for holidays and appointments!**

- Try to arrange planned family trips and activities during the school holidays.
- Schedule doctor and dental appointments either before school or after school hours.
- If an appointment during school hours cannot be avoided, ensure your child is in school for as much of the day as possible.
- Try and set good routines at home including good sleep patterns.
- Take an interest in your child's school work and be actively involved in school, Parents Evenings and other events.
- Contact the school if attendance is becoming a problem. We can work together to improve things.