



ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy was adopted: September 2026

This policy was last reviewed: This version replaces the 2025 version

This policy will be reviewed: September 2026

Source:

Local Authority Guidance/ School/DfE guidance/EPS ARNA guidance

Our School Vision and Core Values

Berry Hill's ethos of "Be Kind, Work Hard, Be Brave" centres around supporting pupils to be brave enough to aim high, to work hard to achieve their goals, whilst at the same time helping our young people to grow into thoughtful and considerate members of society. This framework is entirely reliant on good attendance

ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE POLICY

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent is responsible for making sure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education that is suitable for the child's age, ability and aptitude.

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Aims

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promote good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Build strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Roles and responsibilities

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

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where

appropriate

- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding 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 monitoring pupil attendance.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The 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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising [role] to be able to do so
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is Carla Oaksford-Smith.

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office. This needs to be completed by 9.15am at the very latest.

School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the head teacher / Key Stage Lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)
- Parents are expected to:
- Make sure their child attends every [day/timetabled session] on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before [time, e.g. 9am] on the day of the absence ([add if your school expects this] and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- [Insert if you and/or your local authority use attendance contracts] Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

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

Attendance

School gates will open daily at 8.42am and children can enter the classrooms from 8:45am. Registration is at 8:55 am. Children arriving after 8:55 am but before 9:25 am will be given an 'L' late mark (denoting that the child arrived late but before the registers closed). After 9.25 am, children will be given a 'U' late mark (denoting that the child arrived after the registers closed) and meaning unauthorised absence. We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Absence

Only the school within the context of the law (Section 199 of the Education Act 1993) can approve absence, not parents/carers. If school does not accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence (having conducted further investigation) or where there is no explanation forthcoming at all, the absence will be treated as unauthorised. In the event of any unauthorised absence, the school will contact the parent/carers enquiring as to the reason/s.

Absence will usually be authorised in the case of illness, leave for medical or dental appointments, family bereavement and days of religious observance. The school will request evidence of medical and dental appointments and may ask for evidence to be provided for sustained periods of illness.

Unplanned absence for medical reasons

Berry Hill Primary & Nursery has an established system in place to enable parents/carers to report their child's absence because of illness.

They should phone the school on the morning of their child's absence, leaving a message on the school answerphone if they are unable to speak to a member of staff, giving details of their child's name, class and reason for absence. It is reasonable for the school to ask the nature of the illness, ask the parent/carer the expected length of absence and make arrangements for the parent/carer to call school again if the situation changes. Should you fail to report your child's absence, you will be contacted by telephone by a member of staff to establish the reason for your child's absence.

Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School has a right to consider whether to accept the parent/carers position with regard to medical absence as there are occasions when parents falsely report absences to the school as medical absence. If the school has concerns that the illness may not either be genuine or warrant the amount of absence accruing, the school may ask the parent to substantiate the illness by asking to see additional evidence such as an appointment card or medical certificate. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher whether to authorise absence and they can refuse to authorise absence if, after considering all the available information, they believe that the pupil's absence does not appear to be caused by genuine illness. If the school chooses not to authorise the absence it will notify the parent or carer of this.

Unfortunately there are occasions when a child can suffer from more sustained health problems. If this is the case, the school will contact the medical professionals involved with the child in order to be able to support the child in the most appropriate manner. The school would like the parent/carer to give permission for the medical professionals to be able to speak to the school about the best way to support the child. In these circumstances it is not appropriate for the parent/carer to contact the school every day and a more appropriate frequency of communication will be established with the parent/carer. This bespoke arrangement will be put into place by the Headteacher or deputy headteacher. It will be monitored on a four weekly basis and reviewed to see if this response is still appropriate.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

Each individual request will be considered taking into account the circumstances, such as:

- The nature of the event for which leave is sought
- The frequency of the request
- Whether the parent gave advance notice and whether the absence was avoidable
- The possible impact on the pupil's progress or attainment
- Possible impact on learning or examinations

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical*/dental appointments *in the circumstances where a family has elected to have a medical procedure done abroad rather than use the NHS, this may not be authorised.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

Following up absence

If the school has not been notified of an absence, the school will phone parents/carers as soon as possible. Office staff will check with the class teacher to discuss if they have been contacted by parents/carers about the absence. Where school has been unable to talk to a parent/carer and the reason still remains unknown for the absence, they will attempt to call the parent/carer again.

If school is still unable to make contact with the parent/carer, they will phone down the emergency contact list provided by parents/carers.

If contact still has not been made or the reason for absence not ascertained, two members of the Senior Leadership Team will conduct a home visit.

If there are still concerns and no contact has been made, the school may call the police and ask for a welfare check to be made. All attempted contact with the parents/carers will be recorded on the child's information file.

On day 10, if contact has not been made and the child is still not attending school, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Children Missing in Education team.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9.25 will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 9.25 will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Parents will be contacted if children are continually late over a period of time so that support measures can be put in place.

A Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority if your child is persistently late for 10 separate instances over a period of 6 school weeks.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a health and well visit, or contact the police if they have significant concerns.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was

absent

- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention, as appropriate.

Reporting to parents

Attendance will be reported to parents, carers and guardians at Parent's evenings and in the end of year pupil report. It may also be considered during SEND review meetings, Team around the child meetings, Early Help meetings, or in meetings specifically to support and improve attendance and punctuality.

Reducing persistent absence or lateness

Attendance will be monitored at the end of each term.

Pupils attending below 95% will be identified.

Key Stage Leaders will consider support for pupils whose attendance is between 90- 95%. This may include additional parent contact, a tailored reward programme, pupil voice initiated support or access to the school ELSA.

For pupils working below 90%, an Attendance Monitoring letter will first be sent (Appendix 7), offering parents a meeting which will be held with a member of Senior Leadership to discuss support and set targets for improvement over the next three weeks. Support may be sought from Early Help at this point by referral. If attendance fails to improve over the next three weeks, and the pupil misses nine sessions in a six week block, Attendance enforcement (a legal sanction) may be sought through the Early Help Pathway, or where parents fail to engage with school, a legal sanction may be issued.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- > Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- > Attending an interview
- > Study leave
- > A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- > Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least [insert number of weeks] before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via [insert where parents can access the form]. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. [Insert if relevant to your setting] If a pupil is over compulsory school age (e.g. sixth form), leave can be requested or agreed by the pupil or a parent they normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)
- Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):
 - Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
 - Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
 - Attending provision arranged by the local authority
 - Attending work experience
 - If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice. If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period

- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Promoting attendance

Absence from school is a potential Safeguarding risk, and school has a role in monitoring this in order to keep children safe. In the longer term, better school attendance is linked with better attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes. Children who attend school well have better social and educational outcomes, feel more settled and are better able to keep up with learning.

Within school, support may be offered for both parents and pupils affected by attendance issues. This could include, and is not limited to, check in sessions, additional interventions, increased communications, target setting through an Improving attendance plan, buddy support for social situations, tailored praise and encouragement when pupils do attend. Where previously monitored attendance improves, school will write to parents / carers to acknowledge the efforts at home of achieving this and ensure that the pupil receives recognition for the improvement also.

Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

Teachers and senior leaders will work together with children and families to support with complex barriers to attendance. Action plans will be devised and reviewed at very regular intervals to support with removing barriers to good attendance and improve attendance rapidly.

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Bespoke action plans and timetables may be required to support children with physical ill health or SEND. These will be produced as a result of meetings with the headteacher, and/ or Key stage leads, alongside the school SENCO. We follow the Nottinghamshire County Council 'Improving attendance Toolkit' to support with this.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

Pupils will be supported to reintegrate into school after lengthy or unavoidable periods of absence with daily check ins and bespoke action plans and timetables.

ARNA

Anxiety about going to school at any age, children and young people can find going to school difficult. Young Minds identified that 1 in 6 young people will have significant anxiety at some point during their school life. Anxiety is a natural response to something that is perceived as threatening and is a normal emotion around new, different, stressful or changing situations. It is therefore very common for children and young people to experience anxiety around school at some point in their education, particularly during periods of significant change or uncertainty. For most young people, this anxiety is usually short lived. However, for others the prolonged anxiety can lead to a period of non-attendance at school. In Nottinghamshire we refer to this as Anxiety Related Non-attendance (ARNA). Berry Hill will work with parents and pupils to support those experiencing ARNA. (Appendix 2)

Excluded Pupils

Where a pupil has been temporarily excluded he/she will remain on the school roll. The absence will be treated as authorised. Where a pupil has been permanently excluded, his/her absence will be treated as authorised while

any review or appeal is in progress but, on conclusion of that process, if the permanent exclusion is confirmed, he/she will be struck from the school roll. While the pupil remains on the school roll, the school will recognise the responsibility towards the pupil out of school by setting work.

Attendance monitoring

Senior leaders at our school monitor pupil absence on a half termly basis.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

This data is collected and stored in the school office, helping staff to :

- track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

The school is set an absence target by the Local Authority and we aim to achieve this by reducing holidays in term time, encouraging and supporting punctuality, supporting pupils and parents to attend well, and working with outside agencies where necessary.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Mr XXX & Ms XXX
XXX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

I note your application to takeout of education for days to go on holiday. Schools are only allowed to agree a leave of absence during term time in very 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 5 days/10 sessions (over a 10-week rolling period) for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods.

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

Yours Sincerely



Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Mr XXX & Ms XXX
XXX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

The registers at X Academy show that, to date, your child has missed X days (X sessions) of school due to unauthorised absences over the last X weeks.

You, as parent, have legal responsibility under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, for ensuring that your child attends school regularly. As such unless your child's attendance improves you will be referred to the local authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure the regular attendance of your child.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated absence periods.

Should your child (Insert name) any further absence which result in them having 5 days (10 sessions) over a 10-week rolling period we will request that the local authority issue a penalty notice of up to £160 for each child who is absent. The notice can be issued to both parents/carers for each child whose absence meets the Penalty Notice threshold.

Please take immediate steps to ensure your child gets to school on time every day and obtain medical evidence if he/she is too ill to attend. Any other reason for absence should be discussed with the school and it is the school's decision whether to authorise any absence that is not covered by medical evidence.

Yours sincerely



Mr Trenowden
Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 3: Example letter advising parent that school have requested Penalty Notice to be issued for unauthorised absence

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr xxxxxl & Ms xxxxxx

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

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 of 5 days over a 10-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.

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

Yours sincerely



Mr Trenowden
Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 4: Example letter advising parent that school have requested Penalty Notice to be issued for leave of absence in term time.

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr xxxxxl & Ms xxxxxx

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

On (Date) we wrote to you to explain that theAcademy would not authorise(child name) absence from school for..... days for a holiday. 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 a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

In some circumstances the local authority may decide a prosecution via Magistrates court is more suitable, for instance lengthy or repeated leave of absence periods. This would include circumstances where a parent/carer has already had two fines forover a 3-year rolling period.

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

Yours sincerely



Mr Trenowden
Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 5: Example letter advising parent that school suspect an unauthorised leave of absence

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr xxxxx & Ms xxxxxx

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

Between (date) and (date) your child was absent from school. We suspect this was for the purpose of a holiday in term time. This absence has resulted in your child having 5 days / 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10 school week period.

Please contact the school by (date) to provide evidence this was not the case. If reasonable proof is not provided a request will be made to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure that your child attends school regularly.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Oaksford-Smith
Attendance Officer, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Mr XXX & Ms XXX
XXX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX & Ms XXX

Child X (dob XX/XX/XXXX)

As per our letter dated XXX your child xxxx was excluded for the period of xxxxx to xxxx. You were advised XXX was not to be in a public place for the duration of this exclusion. XXX was seen on XXXX(date) at XXX (time) in XXX (place). I am consequently requesting the local authority issue a penalty notice under Section 103(3) of the Education And Inspections Act 2006, in that the said child who was a registered pupil at XXXX and excluded on disciplinary grounds, was present in a public place on the XXXXX at a time during school hours on a school day being one of the school days to which the exclusion related contrary to the said Section 103(3) of the Education And Inspections Act 2006

Yours sincerely



Mr Trenowden
Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 7: Example letter advising parent that school are concerned about attendance

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX and Ms XXX

Child X (DOB)

As part of our termly monitoring of attendance, as of the end of XXX term, your child XXX's attendance is a cause of concern at XX%. I am writing to bring this to your attention in order that we might work together to improve this. I enclose an attendance certificate for your information. If you feel a school meeting / home visit / telephone discussion to further discuss ways we can support your child would help, please contact us to arrange.

Our hope is that attendance improves but to be transparent, should our joint efforts to improve attendance be unsuccessful, the school may have to consider referring for enforcement action.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Oaksford-Smith
Attendance Officer, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 8: Example letter advising parent that attendance has improved

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX and Ms XXX

Child X (DOB)

As part of our termly monitoring of attendance, we wanted to write to acknowledge the improvement in XXX's attendance. At the last monitoring point, their attendance was XXX% but that has improved to XX%.

We just wanted to formally acknowledge this progress and thank you for working to improve this. If you feel there are any ways we can support you to maintain this, please let us know.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Oaksford-Smith
Attendance Officer, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 9: Example letter advising parent that school are referring for enforcement only

Mr xxxxxxx & Ms xxxxxxx
XX Meadow Lane
Nottingham
NG7 5HP

Dear Mr XXX and Ms XXX

Unfortunately since our recent contact with you sharing concern around XXXX's school attendance there has been no improvement. As you do not consent to support to improve XXXX's attendance the school have made a referral for enforcement action to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely



Mr Trenowden

Headteacher, Berry Hill Primary & Nursery School

Appendix 10: Supporting Anxious learners

Anxiety about going to school

At any age, children and young people can find going to school difficult. Young Minds identified that 1 in 6 young people will have significant anxiety at some point during their school life. Anxiety is a natural response to something that is perceived as threatening and is a normal emotion around new, different, stressful or changing situations. It is therefore very common for children and young people to experience anxiety around school at some point in their education, particularly during periods of significant change or uncertainty. For most young people, this anxiety is usually short lived. However, for others the prolonged anxiety can lead to a period of non-attendance at school.

In Nottinghamshire we refer to this as Anxiety Related Non-attendance (ARNA). Regular attendance at school is crucial for social, emotional and academic development. Not attending school over a period of time can impact social interactions with peers, self-esteem and mental health and emotional wellbeing, in both the short and longer term.

How ARNA presents, differs from individual to individual. However, a parent/carer may have noticed some of the following signs:

- Reluctance or refusal to attend school;
- Physical responses to anxiety:
 - headaches, sickness, stomach ache;
- Emotional responses:
 - tearful, anger directed at others or objects or withdrawn;
 - Behaviour: difficulty separating from you, refusal to leave the home or bedroom;
 - Worrying about school which may increase on Sunday evening or following a school holiday;
- Difficulties with sleeping.

There may notice a reduction in these difficulties when the child is not in school, for instance during the holidays. Likewise, if he/she is allowed to stay at home on a school day then they may report a temporary relief from such feelings. This is because the source of anxiety has been removed. However, ***missing school is not a solution to the emotional difficulties a child is experiencing and actually is a short-term fix with potentially long-term problems associated with it.***

There is an established graduated response within the local authority. This will include:

An initial conversation with parents about the difficulties they are experiencing - listening to both parent and child's view

- Work with parents to plan a way forward
- Make constructive suggestions, for example changes to the timetable, Identify a key person in school to be the point of contact for parent and child
- Continue to monitor child's attendance
- Continue to communicate with parent regarding child's progress and well-being

At Berry Hill, we have a range of strategies which may be employed in supporting parents and pupils with anxiety around attending school. These could include:

- Meet and greet
- Home visits
- Key worker
- Neutral work area
- Removal of anxiety triggers - no involvement with peers/involvement with selected peers.
- Reduced timetable for transition
- RAG -rated timetable to reduce anxiety

- Home learning to support before lessons are experienced
- Laptop to support home learning
- Meetings with parents, pupil or professionals to discuss strategies.
- Seeking support from a wider group of professionals.