



St Mary's Wavendon CofE Primary School

Attendance Policy

June 2025 – September 2026

This is our school. With God's help we care for one another, are curious in our learning, and know we are all loved.

Luke 10:27 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'

As a part of Inspiring Futures Through Learning Trust we adhered to all their policies and our school policies are adopted in conjunction with IFtL policies.

Policy name:		Attendance policy
Version:		V3
Date relevant from:		June 2025
Date to be reviewed		June 2026 This policy will be reviewed every year unless legislation dictates otherwise. Recent changes in Legislation will need to be read and used to review this policy
Role of reviewer:		SMW Head of School SMW Executive Head
Statutory (Y/N)		Y
Published on website*		Y
Policy Level **:	3	
Relevant to:	All those within SMW school community	
Bodies consulted:	School/ department governance bodies	
Approved by:	SMW Governors	
Approval date:	10th June 2025	

Attendance policy 2024-25

This attendance policy aligns to [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Aims and Objectives

To promote good attendance (96% and above) which is vital to children's educational achievement, wellbeing and keeping them safe.

Good attendance is defined as:

- 96% and above
- Children attending every day the school is open
- Children arriving on time
- Children being collected on time
- All leave, unless deemed exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher, to be taken in school holidays

Give parents clarity on school's expectations for children's attendance and the processes that will be followed should good school attendance not be achieved.

To work with the Local Authority to ensure statutory attendance processes are followed.

To have a policy in which school support parents with improving school attendance.

To ensure all work with families on attendance is contextual to each individual and children's needs.

The needs of the child and family, in line with the Equality Act 2010, will always be considered when monitoring attendance.

For our school's attendance to be at least in line with National figures (including attendance, persistent absence and punctuality).

Roles and responsibilities of parents and carers

At St Marys Wavendon, we believe close and collaborative working relationships with parents / carers are very important and central to all children being as successful as they can be. Parents and carers are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together.

In line with government recommendations and requirements, St Marys Wavendon Primary School will not be able to authorise absences unless they are deemed exceptional circumstances by the Headteacher. It is always in the child's best interest to keep absences to the bare minimum. Where absence is authorised, for exceptional circumstances only, evidence for the school records will be requested.

Parents / carers are required to make routine medical and dental appointments outside of school time wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, the office should be informed in advance and given evidence for this appointment (for example, a medical letter). A 'present' mark can still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole session.

Should your child be absent for an unplanned reason, please see Appendix 2 for the process to follow.

For planned absence, see Appendix 3.

Recording attendance

St Marys Wavendon will continue to adhere to the DfE requirements [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

It is important to note that attendance continues to be mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends school every day where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education (schools must notify as per requirements).

St Marys Wavendon Primary School value the relationships with their families and children and therefore will work in close collaboration to support families and children to be in school every day.

Whatever the reasons for absence, St Marys Wavendon Primary School will work closely in partnership with families and the children to fully explore their reasons and support all children attending school every day.

Although we will do everything we can to work closely with our families and children to support and reassure them, we will be clear with them that their child (when of compulsory school age) is in school every day the school is open, unless a statutory reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc.).

Attendance monitoring

Fortnightly, the attendance team will analyse the school attendance data and follow up with any absences or concerns that arise from this meeting. During this meeting, patterns will be analysed including those of all key vulnerable groups and any additional targeted and identified children within school. Any specific concerns that arise during these meetings will be discussed with the parent or carers of these children and actions will be set. Additionally, in these meetings, we will review any child/children whose attendance has fallen below our thresholds and appropriate action will be taken in line with our procedures below. These meetings will also offer the opportunity to celebrate success where attendance or punctuality of individuals or key groups has improved as a result of the actions taken.

Attendance procedures

In a school day, there are 2 sessions – AM and PM registration marks.

The school gates will open at 8.30am and remain open until 8.40am. Registers open at 8.30am and will remain open until 9am. Drop off after 8.40am will be marked as Late (with an L code) and drop off after 9am will be marked as an Unauthorised Absence (with a U Code).

Below 96%

If your child's attendance falls below 96%, you will receive a leaflet of signposted support (Appendix 4). Please contact the school office if you wish to discuss this further with a member of the attendance team.

Your child's attendance will continue to be monitored until they are at 96% or above.

Below 90% (Persistent absence)

If your child's attendance falls below 90%, they are considered to be a persistent absentee and you will be invited to a 'Connections Meeting' with the attendance team to discuss ways in which we can work together to improve your child's attendance in school.

Below 88%

If your child's attendance falls below 88%, we will follow a Tiered approach to support.

Tier 1: You will be invited in to complete a formal action plan (Appendix 6) alongside school to support your in improving your child's attendance. An Early Help Assessment will be offered to you.

Tier 2: While the action plan is in process, school will be monitoring trends in your child's attendance. If your child's attendance drops to 85%, you will be invited to a panel meeting with attendance teams from St Marys Wavendon Primary School and Whitehouse Primary School where next steps will be discussed. (See Appendix 5)

Tier 3: Despite Tier 1 and 2, if your child's attendance drops to 80% or below, school will make a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub for external support to improve your child's school attendance. As part of this referral, we will involve the Local Authority.

Below 50% (Severe absence)

If your child's absence falls below 50%, they are considered to be a severe absentee. At this point, the Local Authority are responsible for the support and sanctions in place.

Punctuality

Being on time to school (prior to 8.40am) allows your child the best chance to settle and be prepared for the day.

8:30-8:40am Gates and registers open.

Arrival between 8:40-9am will result in a Late mark (L Code).

Arrival from 9am onwards will result in the U Code; this counts as 1 unauthorised session. Please see section on Fixed Penalty Notices for more information.

If your child has 2 lates (L Code) in a week, you will receive a phone call from someone in the attendance team to check in and see if there are any ways we can support you. You will receive a Helpful hints guide on how to ensure your child gets to school on time. (See Appendix 7)

Over a half term, if your child's late marks total 20% or more, someone from the attendance team will give you a call to check in and see if there are any ways we can support you. You will receive a Helpful hints guide on how to ensure your child gets to school on time. (See Appendix 7)

If we don't see a sustained improvement after this check in, you will be invited in for a 'Connections Meeting' to discuss support mechanisms. This may include an Early Help Assessment to support you in improving punctuality.

Leave of Absence

To request a Leave of Absence, please complete a Leave of Absence Form (Appendix 8) and hand this into the school reception team. Upon doing this, you will be contacted by the school attendance team for a Connections Meeting to discuss this absence request. If the absence is greater than 10 school days, this meeting will be held in conjunction with Whitehouse as part of our unified approach to keep school attendance high (providing your child is statutory school age). Please note if your child attends our nursery (Pre School) provision, and their attendance drops below 63% for the funding block in which the leave is taken, you will be invoiced for the nursery fees for the entire block, as per the nursery contract and Government guidelines.

You will be told within this meeting if the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Please note, we follow the guidance as set out by the DfE - [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/124444/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024.pdf) Following the meeting, a letter will be sent to confirm what has been discussed and, for the duration of the absence, the registers will reflect the outcome of the conversation. Please note we will need evidence of flight details if travelling abroad, or of booking details if staying within the UK – following our Safeguarding practice. Please note, this evidence is required even if, for any reason, the Leave of Absence meeting has not taken place.

Authorised Absence (Illness)

Any absence taken within term time should be minimal and will only be authorised if considered exceptional circumstances. This **may** include: recognised sporting events, immediate family funeral or wedding, hospital visits and religious observances. Please note, only one day will be authorised for these circumstances.

If your child is feeling mildly unwell, it is always best to send them into school. We can monitor them and administer Calpol if required. We would contact parents if we feel they are becoming worse. The NHS guidance – [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/child-illness/) - outlines when it is best to keep your child off school.

Absence for illness will be authorised. If your child is off due to illness, we will follow the procedures outlined in Appendix 2. This is to ensure children's wellbeing and safety and, if any support is required, we are able to do so.

If your child has repeated periods of illness throughout the year, a member of the attendance or pastoral team will contact you to offer support and signpost to further help if required.

Attendance Codes

Inactive Codes

H, Y and J. If any service children require Holidays in term time than schools should use the code **C**.

The **J** code has been replaced by a new code **J1** and has changed from and Approved Educational Activity to Authorised Absence.

Other new Codes

K Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority

(its set in place by the LA and not the school)

Q Unable to attend the school because of access arrangements.

(use this code where the LA has failed to arrange transport for the student, Y1 is used if the organised

transport is not available)

- Y1 Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Y2 Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Y3 Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Y4 Unable to attend due to whole school being closed
- Y5 Unable to attend due as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Y6 Absent in accordance with public health guidance or Law
- Y7 Unable to attend because of other unavoidable Cause
- C Leave of Absence for exceptional circumstance (Guidance changed for this Code)
- C1 Leave of Absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance (Or employment paid or unpaid, Continue to use W for Works Experience)
- C2 Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

Codes where schools MUST record nature of activity

B Attending any other approved educational activity

(Not Sporting Activity OR Works Experience)

Examples of nature of activity

- 1) Attending taster days at college
- 2) Attending courses at college
- 3) Attending unregistered alternative provision arranged by the school

K Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority

(A pupil attending a provision arranged by the school should use the code P or B)

Examples of natures of provision

- 1) Attending courses at college
- 2) Attending unregistered alternative provision such as home tutoring

Y7 Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

The DfE has not given any examples for the nature of the unavoidable cause

From the working together document

Fixed Penalty Notices

Appendix 3 outlines the school's process for planned absence which may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

A fine becomes effective if a child has had more than ten unauthorised sessions or five days absence in a 10-week period, beginning from the first unauthorised absence. Further details of the FPN are included below. If a holiday is taken without it being authorised, the school is required to report the absence to the Local Authority.

A FPN can be issued to each parent, per child.

A fine of £80 per child per parent is payable in 21 days and, if there is a failure to pay after that time, it rises to £160 per child per parent payable in 28 days.

If a second leave of absence is taken within 3 years, a fine of £160 per child per parent is payable in 28 days (with no reduction for early payment).

If a third leave of absence is taken within 3 years, a fixed penalty notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Magistrate's fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in a Magistrates Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period will be considered for a fixed penalty

notice (this includes a child being late after registers close).

Appendices

Appendix 1

Roles and responsibilities of staff and Governors

It is the schools' responsibility to update parents on their child's attendance and the parent/carers responsibility for informing the school of any absence.

St Marys Wavendon Primary School shared data with the local authority to monitor and review attendance across the county. We also review attendance data within school, as mentioned in the

policy above. Data is also shared with Governors who challenge us in improving attendance and reduce absence.

Staff responsible for Attendance:

Clare McGonigle– Attendance Officer

Hannah King – Deputy Head

Hayley Cook – Interim Head of School

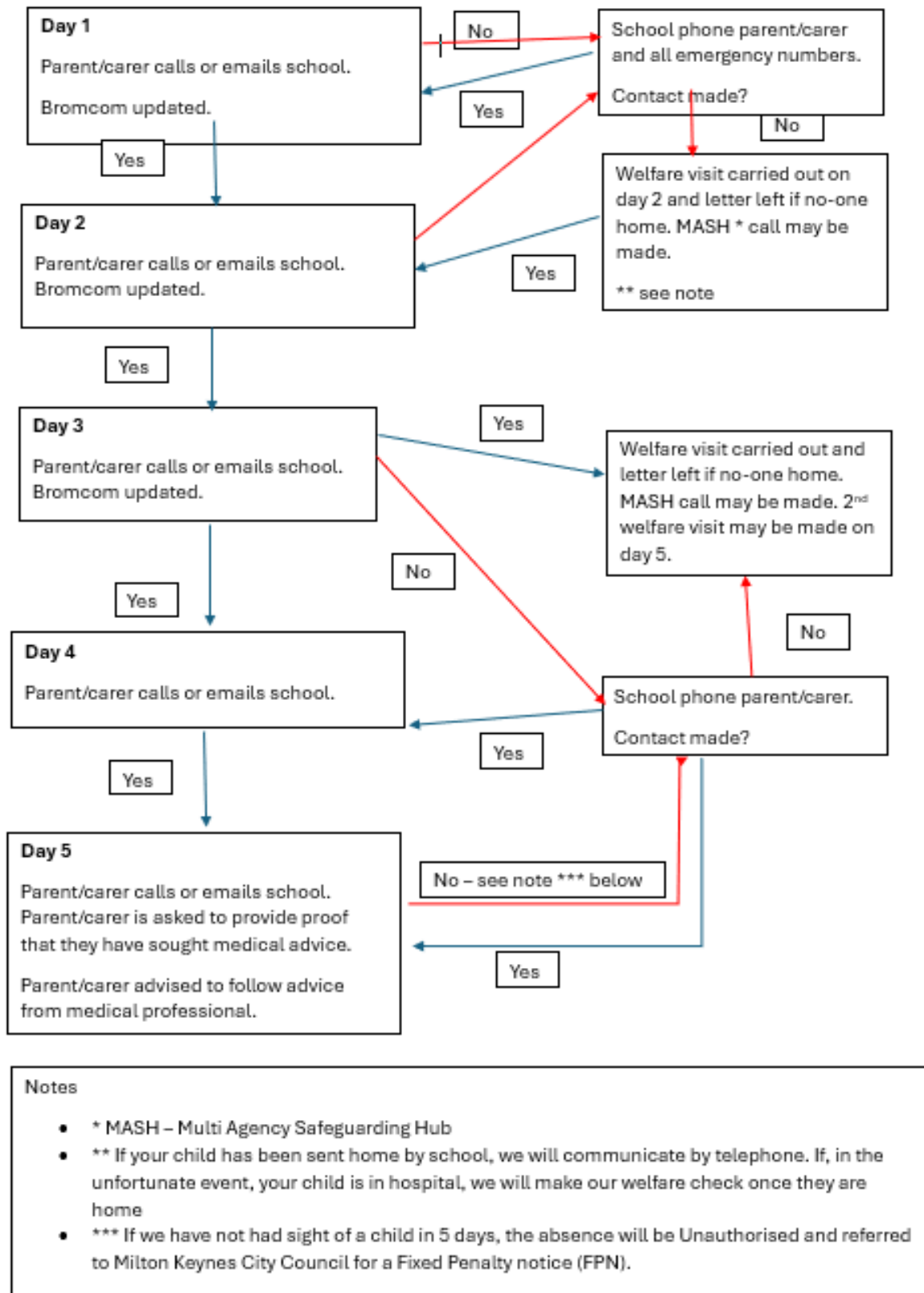
Attendance Governor:

David Hopkins (Safeguarding Governor)

IfTL:

Victoria Blackmore (Safeguarding Lead for IfTL)

Unplanned Absence Process



Appendix 2

Planned Leave of Absence Process

Parent/carer contacts school to request a Leave of absence form and book a meeting.
Please arrange this at least 4 weeks in advance of the dates required.

Parent/carer attends meeting with a member of the attendance team – bringing completed form with them. If the Leave of Absence is over 10 school days, this meeting will be held with a panel consisting of St Marys Wavendon Primary School and a IfTL School attendance representatives.

Attendance team explain the current guidelines regarding attendance and outline next steps (letter sent, Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) request sent to council) dependent on child’s age and number of days requested. Please note, an absence of 20 school days or more may result in your child being removed from roll.

Appendix 4

Leaflet of support: Improving attendance

Letter sent to parent and Bromcom updated.

Under 5 years – unauthorised but no FPN issued.

Under 5 days, unauthorised but no FPN issued.

Over 5 years old/over 5 days FPN sent to Milton Keynes City Council on return from leave of absence.



HELPFUL HINTS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Why am I receiving this?

Your child's attendance has dropped below 96% which is the minimum expectation for children in our school. They will continue to be monitored until they are above 96%.



Why is this important?

Being at school everyday allows your child to build on their friendships and feel a sense of belonging at school. It ensures they follow the carefully planned curriculum and there are no gaps in their learning.



Setting high expectations

By continually setting the expectation that your child comes to school everyday ensures they have the same view! This also includes booking holidays in the school holidays.

Positive language

When children are feeling poorly, it is easy to fall into negative language. By empathising with our children and then using school as a way of seeing friends and a distraction, they will see it as a positive place, even when under the weather!

External support

If you are worried that your child is often poorly or run down, school can support with a school nurse referral to help support you as a family.



We can support

We have a wonderful medical team and they are happy to do check ins with your child and administer calpol if needed.

Tier 2 – Panel meeting for below 85% attendance

Date/time of meeting:	
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Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Parent/carer name:	

Present at meeting:	
Current attendance:	

Previous actions agreed at Formal Action Plan – home and school	
What is working well? (Interventions, attainment, engagement in school)	What needs to improve?

Actions agreed in Panel Meeting	
School	Home

Attendance target:	
Timescale for improvement (no more than 2 weeks):	

What is the progress of the Early Help Assessment? If declined, would this be a benefit now? If not, please state reasons.	
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Date for review meeting:	
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Despite Tier 1 and 2, if your child’s attendance drops to 80% or below, school will make a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub for external support to improve your child’s school attendance. As part of this referral, we will involve the Local Authority.

I confirm that these Panel Meeting actions were agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... School Representative from IfTL

..... School Representative from St Marys Wavendon

Parenting Contract Template – Action Plan

Tier 1 – Formal Action Plan for below 88% attendance



Date/time of meeting:	
Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Parent/carer name:	
Present at meeting:	
Current attendance:	
Previous actions – home and school	
What is working well? (Interventions, attainment, engagement in school)	What needs to improve?
Actions agreed	
School	Home
Attendance target:	
Timescale for improvement (no more than 1 month):	
Would parents/carers benefit from an Early Help Assessment to support with improving school attendance? If no, please give details.	
Date for review meeting:	

I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... School Representative

HELPFUL HINTS TO IMPROVE YOUR CHILD'S PUNCTUALITY

- 1**

Relentless Routines

Start the morning with the same clear routines and expectations. Ask school if you would like support with creating visuals to help with the routines at home.
- 2**

Be prepared

Try to be as prepared as possible. Get lunches ready the night before or ensure you are ready before getting the children up!
- 3**

5 minutes count!

Setting your alarm, or your child's alarm, 5 minutes early does make a difference!
- 4**

Check the weather

Wet or windy weather is not a reason for your child to be late. If you drive, leave earlier to avoid the traffic.
- 5**

Ask for help

Mornings can be tricky, we understand that. Please ask for help from any member of staff to support your child getting to school on time.

Leave of Absence Form

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR YOUR CHILD DURING TERM TIME

Applications can only be made for EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES that are unavoidable. Please see our attendance policy for clarification on the process around requesting absence.

I understand that taking an absence that is unauthorised can result in a fixed term penalty fine of £80.00 per child, per parent, rising to £160 if not paid within 21 days.

Name(s) of pupil(s) for which leave of absence is being applied for

Name of Child	DOB	Years/Months	
Child 1			Class
Child 2			Class
Child 3			Class

Dates (inclusive for which leave of absence is being applied for)

From:
To:

How many school days do you require the pupil(s) to have leave of absence for?	Destination
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On which date will the pupil(s) return to school?
.....

Please use the space below to justify the 'exceptional circumstances' for which the leave of absence is being requested (Use overleaf if necessary).

If the leave of request is to return to your home country, please give an address in your home country and contact number where you can be reached on.

Address and contact number where you can be reached on whilst on holiday. Address..... Contact Number	Notes from discussion about the leave request.....
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<p>The school will consider these points before authorising leave:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child's previous attendance history, which currently stands at _____% Your child's stage of education and ability to catch up on missed schooling The time of year (Assessments) The nature of the request (e.g. exceptional circumstances) 	
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You are also required to provide copies of evidence to support your justification of 'exceptional circumstances'. Please state below the evidence you have attached.

Does your child attend the B & A Club	YES / NO
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Does your child attend extra paying Nursery sessions? If so, how many hours do you pay for?	Yes: Extra Hours Per Week
	No

Further evidence required: Yes /No

If your child has a medical/dental appointment, please can you provide evidence of the appointment.

Full name of parent(s) making the application and who will be responsible for the pupil whilst they are absent from school	Parental signature	Date
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.

For office use only			
Decision	Code for register	Code	Signed & Date: Head of School
Unauthorised Or Authorised	G – Holiday not authorised		
	O – Unauthorised absence		
	C – Other authorised circumstances		
FPN	Is this application subject to referral to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice	Yes / No	
School Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previous holidays checked Supporting evidence required Headteacher to authorise Education welfare to be informed 		

Reason for refusing leave of absence:



Approval: Attendance Policy 2025

This policy was ratified by the Governors

Date: 10th June 2025

Signed: HKing

Next Review on or before:

September 2026

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Governors at on an annual basis.