PENAIR SCHOOL

DISCE UT VIVAS

Attendance Policy

Policy holder:	Mrs Lisette Neesham
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ATTENDANCE POLICY

"Safeguarding and Attendance are everyone's responsibility"

School Motto: "Disce ut vivas" – learn in order to live

Mission Statement: To create and sustain a caring, learning school community of high quality where everyone is valued for who they are and for what they may become.

Penair School values: Pride, Learning, Belonging and Opportunity

Legal Requirements for all Schools

- **Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that children between the ages of 5-16 should attend school regularly.**
- **Schools must keep 2 registers: an admission register which serves as the school roll, and an attendance register.**
- **Attendance registers must be called twice a day, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session by the class teacher.**
- **The register must show whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity, off-site or absent.**

This policy has been developed with the Penair Partners School group to ensure a common approach across our schools along with our key stakeholders of pupils, parents/carers and staff.

The schools are:

Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School
Bosvigo Primary School
Devoran Primary School
Kea Primary School
Perran-ar-Worthal CP Primary School
St Erme with Trispen School
St Mary's C of E Primary School
Tregolls Primary School

1. Legislation and guidance

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 - GOV.UK. 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

Mandation Data Sharing 2024
Registration Regulations 2024

PN Regs 2024
The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

This policy also complies with our school's funding agreement and articles of association.

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

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Penair School recognises its responsibilities to ensure children are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all pupils registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. This policy will be applied fairly and consistently while also considering the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all children are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance and punctuality habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age-related learning expectations. A pupil whose attendance

drops to 90% each year will miss 20 full school days or 100 lessons in each year over their time at school; this will be approximately just over 4 half-terms of learning.

2. Key Principles

The Governing Body of Penair School places a high priority on achieving standards and feel that excellent pupil attendance and punctuality are essential. They undertake this role by:

a. Monitoring whole school attendance termly and take appropriate action should it affect standards
b. Nominating a named Governor for Attendance. For children to achieve their potential, pupils must be highly motivated to learn and keen and eager to attend school. Regular punctual attendance will establish good habits which will support them throughout their lives. To achieve this, the Governors and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 96% attendance throughout the school.

The Government expects us to:

c. Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (less than 90%) and severe absence (less than 50%)
d. Ensure every pupil has access to a suitable education, to which they are entitled; and act early to address patterns of absence.

This attendance policy ensures that all staff, parents and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance. The core values of Penair school are those of **Pride**, **Learning**, **Opportunity** and **Belonging**. There is a fully inclusive school culture that prides itself on supporting parents and carers to get the very best out of their child.

This support culture underpins the school's supportive approach for all pupils to record high attendance to help secure progress and take advantage of all opportunities we have on offer.

Through this policy we aim to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) to:

e. Improve pupil's achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
f. Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all pupils, apart from those with chronic health issues
g. Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
h. Raise the awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a pupil's education
i. Work in partnership with pupils, parents and staff and other support agencies so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence

j. Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in children a sense of their own responsibility
k. Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
l. Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially form/class teachers, Student Welfare Officers (SWOs), Personal Development Officers (PDLs), our Home School Attendance Officer (HSAO) and our designated senior leader responsible for attendance (our 'Attendance Champion'), in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

m. Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils
n. Ensuring that parents understand the responsibility placed on them for making sure their pupil attends regularly and punctually
o. Equipping pupils with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development
p. Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters
q. Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness
r. Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance
s. Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school

The 1996 Education Act, (section 444) states that parents (including non-related adult carers in the child's household) have a legal responsibility to ensure that those of compulsory school age are educated, either by 'regular' attendance at school or 'otherwise'. The 2008 Education and Skills Act, (section 155) specifies the same requirement regarding regular attendance at alternative provision.

The duty on parents is to ensure that their children are educated, either at school or 'otherwise'. Education is therefore compulsory. In terms of 'otherwise,' children may be educated by their parents at home, by a private tutor or in establishments other than schools, i.e. – F.E. colleges from the age of 14, special units, hospitals or in alternative educational programmes or work experience. The law allows parents to choose the alternative options, provided they can demonstrate to the Local Authority that the education is full-time and 'suitable' to the child's education needs, up until the relevant leaving-date for all young people. The school expects attendance of at least 96%. We recognise that some children may be affected by health or special educational needs which can impact on attendance and will always take account of this making reasonable adjustments where necessary
It is important for pupils to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Governors to support good attendance and to

identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Parents should ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed.

Concerns about attendance are raised with parents/carers via letter/phone calls which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Education Welfare Service for additional support. The Education Welfare Officer works closely with school staff, parents, and other professionals to identify and address any barriers to a student's education, such as attendance issues, behavioural challenges, or social and emotional difficulties. Continued persistent absences that are not authorised by the school may lead to the EWO initiating legal proceedings against parents/ carers. This may involve penalty notices (see section on Penalty Notices) and/ or prosecution in the Magistrates Court. A first warning will be issued, then an educational planning meeting will take place, before a final warning. From this point, if there are no further improvements, the LA will be consulted about court proceedings.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and if they fail to do so, may commit an offence under Sections 7 & 444 of the Education Act 1996. Although our aim is always to resolve matters without needing court action.

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

For most students, the expected first day of attendance is the first day of the school year.

3. School procedures

Our school will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- work with parents to improve individual pupil's attendance and punctuality
- regularly update and train staff on attendance matters
- maintain appropriate registration processes
- maintain appropriate attendance data
- communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils
- keep consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness
- follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school
- inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence
- strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time
- refer to the Admissions and Attendance Officer any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve
- report attendance statistics to Cornwall LA and the DfE where requested

- staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Personal Development Leader and Student Welfare Officer and the designated senior leader responsible for attendance

Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. **It is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day.** Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a student checklist in respect of health and safety issues – e.g. Fire Drill. Each year a school calendar is sent out and is also on the website, which clearly indicates the days when your child is expected to be in school.

The attendance register will be taken twice daily, at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes

Form tutors will monitor attendance by:

- Speaking with tutees about their attendance.
- Marking a register at 8.30am and 12.00pm daily using Classcharts electronic registration (where this is not possible, paper copies will be taken and returned to the student enquiries office as soon as possible).
- Ensuring a three-day absence letter is sent when information about an absence has not been supplied by the third day of the absence (in liaison with the respective Student Welfare Officer).
- Passing to the respective Personal Development Leader and Student Welfare Officer any serious concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.
- Tracking patterns of absence within the tutor group each half-term and suggesting appropriate intervention strategies to the PDL/SWO/HSAO.
- Track patterns of lateness in liaison with the PDL/SWO/HSAO.

Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible.

Parents should use the Classcharts app in the first instance to report your child's absence or email Ms Vingoe (mvingoe@penair.cornwall.sch.uk), copying the form tutor into the e-mail, with reasons for the unplanned absence.
Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Lateness and punctuality

Any pupil who comes into school after 8.35am will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late before the register has closed, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for school later than 9.00am (30 minutes after start time) when the register has closed will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning (Attendance code U).

Pupils who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.00am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (attendance code M). Routine dentist or doctor's appointments should be made outside of the school day.

Pupils who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness the PDL/SWO will meet with the parent/carer to create an action plan to improve punctuality. Should punctuality not improve the Local Authority may be approached to give consideration for a fixed penalty notice.

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equal days' worth of teaching lost in a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer 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 home visit or contact the education welfare officer for

further support and in rare cases, utilise the support of the police or social care services

- Identify whether the absence is authorised 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 school days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

Reporting to parents

Parents are kept up to date on their child's attendance and absence levels through the reporting process for each year group through the course of the year. We also encourage all parents to monitor their child's attendance via the Classcharts app.

4. Attendance Monitoring

The School Information Officer in collaboration with the designated senior leader responsible for attendance will have the responsibility for ensuring that all the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Classcharts attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss all attendance patterns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings, such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.

Student Welfare Officers and form tutors monitor pupil absence on a weekly basis. Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. Parents are expected to call the school each day a child is ill. If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this. If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

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. We will then target support for individual pupils and cohorts of pupils.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with governors.

For information on how the school collects and stores attendance data, please refer to the schools Privacy Notice.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. All staff will have high aspirations for children and reinforcing the link between

good attendance and academic success at every opportunity in line with school expectations (96% - 100%).

The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have:

Governing Board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Approving the attendance policy
- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
    - Making sure that the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authorities
    - Making sure that 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, through termly attendance review meetings
- 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, including with teachers from across the trust, 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
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across the trust and providing regular opportunities for staff from different schools to come together, learn from each other and share resources
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers, and share effective practice between schools
- Enlisting the support of a link governor for attendance to offer support and challenge to the 'Attendance Champion' in monitoring pupil attendance

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- Ensuring that school-level absence data is monitored and reported to governors
- Ensuring that staff are supported in the monitoring of attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the Local Authority to issue fixed-penalty notices (see section on Penalty Notices), where necessary and/or authorising the 'Attendance Champion' to be able to do so
- considering requests for absence and to organise for staff to meet with parents to discuss such requests as necessary
- Working with the parents 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 through all available channels.

Designated senior leader responsible for attendance (also known as the 'Senior Attendance Champion')

The 'Senior Attendance Champion' is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff, including facilitating at least weekly meetings of the staff to monitor and review attendance across the school – for individual students, vulnerable groups and the whole school
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

With the support of the Data Manager, the Senior Attendance Champion is also responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- 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 and severe absence
    - Advising the headteacher/ the Senior Attendance Champion (authorised by the headteacher) when to request the issuing of a fixed-penalty notices (see section on Penalty Notices)

The attendance officer is Ms M Vingoe and can be contacted via 01872 245133 or mvingoe@penair.cornwall.sch.uk
The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Mrs L Neesham and can be contacted via 01872 274737 or lneesham@penair.cornwall.sch.uk

Senior Leadership Team

- monitor attendance and where concerns are identified, consult with parents/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues
- inform Governors of attendance data through leadership reports
- inform parents of attendance percentages for their pupils in line with the school's reporting procedures
- promote excellent attendance and punctuality by pupils and provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance/punctuality.

Personal Development Leader/Student Welfare Officer/School Information Officer/Home School Attendance Officer

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality by pupils and provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance/punctuality.
- Overall monitoring of school and year group attendance, including for those pupils who are educated off-site
- Work with external agencies to maintain good attendance, contribute to multi-agency meetings to review progress and agree on actions and to support the student/family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality to school
- Work with relevant external agencies if a students' attendance becomes a concern
- Maintain a range of strategies to encourage good attendance by means of rewards
- Identify trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- contact families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- monitor individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- make referrals to the Education Welfare Service
- meet parents/carers in danger of being issued a first warning
- liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence
- keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Headteacher
- inform the designated Senior Attendance Champion for attendance where there are concerns and acting upon them
- provide background information to support referrals
- monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- follow up absences with immediate requests for explanation via telephone calls or e- mail
- ensure attendance issues are raised by teachers at parent consultation evenings where necessary
- collate and record registration and attendance information
- take and record messages from parents regarding absence
- contact parents of absent children where no reason for absence received
- record details of pupils who arrive late or go home
- send out standard letters regarding attendance
- Office / reception staff are expected to take calls/e-mails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record them on the school system. They will also transfer calls from parents and pupils to the Personal Development Leader/Student WelfareOfficer/Home School Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Class Teacher/Tutor

- are the child's first point of contact and will monitor daily attendance to offer support

as needed

- records attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes
- take registers accurately and on time within the first 5 minutes of a lesson
- highlight concerns regarding attendance with parents
- discuss attendance during parent consultations or at individual parent meetings
- raise concerns with the Personal Development Leader/Student Welfare Officer/Attendance Intervention Mentor where necessary
- Notify the Behaviour Team via ClassCharts when a student is absent from a lesson but has previously been marked present.

The designated teacher for looked after children will as far as possible:

- Ensure that any looked after child attends school regularly and achieves high educational standards.
- Considering attendance across pupils known to be vulnerable/open to a Social Worker
- Liaise with Social Worker
- Consider attendance of cohort and whether individual support plans/adjustments are needed

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator will as far as possible:

- Ensure attendance is a target in any personalised plans and ensure this is regularly reviewed.

Further specific responsibilities of staff are contained in the school's Operational Attendance Strategy.

Lead Practitioners

There are number of Lead Practitioners in school with a specific lead on attendance:

Teaching and Learning Lead

Eg consider data strategically and think about whether proper catch-up arrangements are in place

Behaviour Lead

Eg by supporting the development of good behaviour and fostering a sense of belonging
By identifying pupils who need additional support with behaviour early
consider data strategically to see if there is any whole school approach needed to manage behaviour

Pupil premium Lead

Eg consider data strategically to see if whole school or targeted initiatives are needed eg breakfast clubs
- additional targeted liaison with families

Parents/Carers

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/Carers are responsible for:

- Providing at least **two** emergency contact details to the school
- Ensuring that their child attends school every day and on time, properly equipped, unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school on the first morning of absence (before 8.30am on the first day of absence, giving the reason for absence and an indication of when the pupil will be returning to school) and each subsequent day of absence. Contacting again if for some reason the pupil is to be absent longer than was originally indicated.
- Parents/carers are responsible for providing full details of the reason for absence, and avoid using phrases such as "poorly" or "sick". Parents must repeat this for every day of absence, unless by prior agreement with the school. This helps us to safeguard your child as we will otherwise not know if they have left home and not arrived at school.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter/prescription paperwork)
- As far as possible ensure that appointments are made outside of the school day
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any pupil's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.
- Supplying a note to the form tutor explaining absence **only** if a phone call has **not** been made.
- Contacting the Form tutor/Student Welfare Officer/Personal Development Leader if the reason for absence is caused by something other than illness, eg worry about school work, friendship problems etc. Contact the school early if you are at all worried about your child - no matter how small the concern so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with and, if you are aware of any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g., a sick parent/carer., please let us know as soon as possible.
- Understanding that Penair School must decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Supporting us in only allowing pupils to be absent for reasons that the school would authorise eg illness, bereavement, family issues, emergency dental work etc.
- Not allowing pupils to stay at home for reasons that the school would **not** authorise eg family holiday, shopping trips, hair appointment, birthday treat.
- Contact the Headteacher in advance, in writing, for a Leave of Absence request Form if time

is requested away from school. The request should be made 15 days in advance of the event. If holidays during term time are taken, then the Headteacher will inform parents about the legal action that will be taken by the school in informing the Local Authority by way of them issuing fixed penalty fines.

- **Become aware of dates of all relevant external exams eg GCSEs, Speaking and Listening Tests in Languages, before booking an unavoidable trip. Parents can obtain this information by contacting the school.**
- Help your child to understand the link between attendance and progress
- Actively supporting the work of the school.

Working Together

Parents and carers have an important role to play and can provide necessary information about the child and their needs, whether the child is at home or in hospital. Parents and carers will always be consulted before new provision begins.

Pupils will also be involved in decision making from the start. How a pupil is engaged should reflect their age and maturity. This will help ensure that the right provision is offered and encourage the pupil's commitment and engagement. In all cases, effective collaboration between relevant services (local authorities, Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS), NHS, Penair school, school nurses, where relevant, etc) is essential to delivering effective education for children with additional physical or mental health needs. Penair school will endeavour to provide support for children who cannot attend school because of physical or mental health needs.

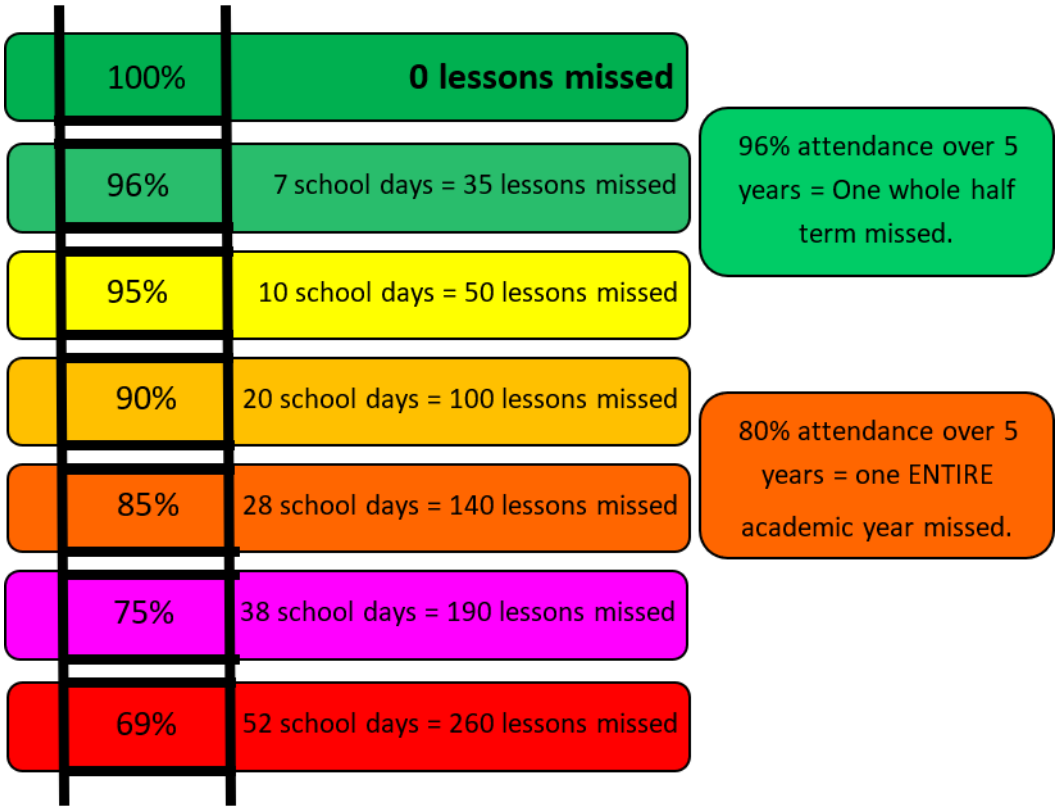
The guiding principles are set-out in:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/657995f0254aaa000d050bff/Arranging_education_for_children_who_cannot_attend_school_because_of_health_needs.pdf
and
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a75090f40f0b6360e472d23/Supporting_pupils_with_medical_conditions_-_templates.docx

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Talk to a trusted adult if anything is worrying them that is affecting their attendance
- Attend school every day on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- Attend all timetabled lessons on time. Truancy, (ie non-attendance of lessons **in or outside** the school grounds), will be investigated and appropriate sanctions given.
- Aim for high attendance (the expected minimum attendance is 96%)
- Take pride in attendance and punctuality
- Register at student enquiries if for any reason they are late after 8.40am. They must not go to any lessons until this has taken place. Pupils may be marked absent for the morning session if they arrive after 9.00am and absent for the afternoon session if they arrive 10 minutes after their pm registration without good reason

- Obtain a signature from the form tutor/Student Welfare Officer/Personal Development Leader if they need to leave Penair during the day. This is given on receipt of a request note or telephone call/e-mail from the parent/carer. The pupil hands one section of the slip in at Reception on leaving school and keeps the other half - handing it back to Reception on return to school that day.
- Attendance Ladder:



Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an electronic 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.30am and ends at 3.00pm.

Pupils must arrive and be in school and in their form room by 8.30am on each school day or they will be deemed late.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.00pm.

5. Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with full details of the reason for their absence. Please avoid using phrases such as "poorly" or "sick".

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence (and no response to efforts to contact parents) the absence is recorded as unauthorised (attendance code O).

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.

6. First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then parents will be contacted by staff daily. If no response is received other contacts held for the child will also be contacted. If we have not heard from any contacts, then a home visit may be conducted.

If no response is received to this home visit the child is referred to the Local Authority as a possible Child Missing Education. Contact may also be made with Children's Services and/or the police in line with safeguarding procedures.

7. Illness

When pupils have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their schoolwork.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact support services to investigate how further bespoke education can be provided.

Where over the course of an academic year, a pupil has repeated periods of illness, the school may write (this depends on personal circumstances) to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

8. Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of the Headteacher to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year. Instead, the Headteacher will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied that ***exceptional circumstances*** exist.

The WTTISA 2024 guidance specifically states that the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for leisure as an exceptional circumstance, therefore absence for holiday requests WILL NOT be authorised.

Should parents be considering a holiday during term time a leave of absence request form must be completed by all adults with parental responsibility BEFORE the holiday is booked. Where a holiday is not authorised, consideration will be given to requesting a penalty notice (see section on Penalty Notices) from the Local Authority for this period of absence if a child's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. ***This is defined by Penair School as falling below the threshold of 96%.*** In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 96%.

It is important for pupils to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Parents should ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed.

Concerns about attendance are raised with parents/carers via letters which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Education Welfare Service. A first warning will be issued, then an educational planning meeting will take place, before a final warning. From this point, if there are no further improvements, court proceedings will begin.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and if they fail to do so, may commit an offence under Sections 7 & 444 of the Education Act 1996.

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, but we will always work to support parents and pupils first.

Penalty notices

The headteacher can request (or someone authorised by them), the Local Authority to fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Before the school requests 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

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).

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.

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

9. Monitoring Attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely, along with the Local Authority.

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 benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Identify attendance patterns across the school to identify common issues and barriers and share effective practice between schools

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local

authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance has responsibility for ensuring that all the attendance data is accurately recorded on the Classcharts attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings, such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if possible).
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Where the absences are not authorised we will inform parents of this.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of the school. (Unauthorised holiday constitutes an unauthorised absence.)
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a pupil is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- See section above on Penalty Notices.
- A Penalty Notice will be considered if a pupil's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. This is defined as falling below the threshold of 96%. In the Autumn Term, a pupil's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

The decision on whether to request a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the Local Authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may consider:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Further information on avoidable absences and the law can be found in Appendix 2.

Granting approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be '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. Exceptional circumstances are one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form.

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion. We are not able to grant leave of absence simply because a holiday is cheaper in term-time or more convenient workwise. To ensure that we comply with these regulations, parents requesting leave of absence will need to detail the exceptional circumstance in order that these can be assessed.

Criteria are:

- Absence may not be granted if attendance is below 96% (school minimum target);
- A judgement on the impact that a child's absence will have on their education;
- The exceptional circumstances relating to the request for absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- 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
- Study leave
- Flexi-schooling requests – this will be undertaken in consultation with the school
- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the headteacher may grant term-time

holiday

If attendance or punctuality is a concern we will:

- Discuss the problem with the pupil to try and improve the situation. The school's approach to bullying is of particular significance here. Where problems outside school are identified as having an impact on a student's attendance, an appropriate level of multi-agency support will be developed.
- Inform the parent/guardian and include them in discussion about remedying the problem by way of offering support.
- Considering the use of parenting orders or prosecuting a parent/guardian after all other avenues have been pursued.

10. Strategies for promoting attendance

Evidence has shown that tackling absence can be most effective when a number of different approaches are adopted. We do this by making use of:

- Using rewards and incentives to encourage high attendance and punctuality (eg celebrating good/improved attendance and punctuality in assemblies and in displays, awarding positive ClassCharts points that may then result in a termly rewards trip)
- Involving parents
- Electronic registration
- Using the correct and appropriate attendance codes
- Making use of the data available
- Making use of first day contact
- Raising the profile of attendance with parents and the community (eg via the home-school agreement, parents' evenings, school newsletters, or other communications)
- Targeting support
- Positively reintegrating absentees
- Attendance checks
- Incorporating attendance into transition planning

During the next three years we will:

- Improve our monitoring system by reinforcing guidelines to students and parents and expanding our mentoring programme.
- Reinforce with parents the need to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time owing to the impact on educational progress. Penair School will not authorise holidays taken during term time.
- Wherever possible, liaise with parents so that students' routine appointments to doctors, dentists etc are arranged outside school hours.
- Attempt to improve attendance to a school target for 96% overall.
- Ensure the provision of appropriate guidance and support for parents, students and staff.
- Keep parents informed of their child's attendance through first day contact, letters of praise

and concern and through individual attendance clinics when appropriate.

- Regularly inform Governors about attendance issues in reports to governors.
- Monitor this policy every three years by the Headteacher and Governing Board. At every review, the policy will be shared with the Governing Board.

A range of strategies designed to tackle poor attendance is only a part of the school's approach to this issue. Whole-school issues such as providing effective pastoral support and effective teaching and learning are recognised as having a direct impact upon attendance.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs Neesham (the Senior Attendance Champion responsible for attendance). This policy will be reviewed and approved by the full governing board every three years.

12. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

13. **Appendix 1: Updated Attendance codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance that are effective from August 2024.

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Hospital education - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend

Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school-age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence

14. Appendix 2: Avoidable absence and the Law

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.
WARNING: If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice – see section above on Penalty Notices.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM TIME	
The Facts	**The Law**
School aged pupils in Cornwall maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are several unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, suspensions etc.) the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances. **WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER** Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations. Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates. If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as **unauthorised absence** and you may receive a £80* fine per parent per child if your child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular', falling below the Penair school threshold of 96%.	The law allows the school to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However, before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are ***exceptional circumstances*** which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient evidence / information to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from the parent with whom the child normally resides. If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance. If the child is away for a period of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. In case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.

Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised. Examples include:	**Other examples of absence from school that <u>will not</u> be authorised include:**
• Genuine illness • Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if possible). • Days of religious observance. • Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces • External examinations • When traveller children are on the road with their parents for work purposes	• Any type of shopping • Looking after siblings or unwell parents • Minding the house • Birthdays • Resting after a late night • Relatives visiting or visiting relatives • Parental appointments
Please contact the Headteacher if you wish to discuss this issue. **The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full-time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.** We hope that when you have read this policy you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.	

15. Appendix 3: Information letter to all parents (annual) – warning letter regarding unauthorised leave of absence (holidays)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Dear Parent/Carer

Here at {enter school name}, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely too ill to attend school, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of school hours or a request for leave has been agreed in exceptional circumstances.

However, the Government does not support parents taking children out of school unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances.' Any request for leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's request form. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. {Enter school name} is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

The decision to submit a request for the issue of a Penalty Notice will be considered when a child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular.' The definition of 'not regular' in this instance is when it is below the threshold set by Penair School. This attendance threshold is set at 96%, in line with national attendance data. In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous

academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

16. Request for Leave of absence during term time

Application for leave of absence – Penair School

Request for leave of absence during term time

Your legal responsibilities
If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the Headteacher **at least 15 school days** before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Leave of absence requests during term time will not be authorised unless there are ***exceptional circumstances***. We publish the dates of school terms well ahead of the current academic year. This is to help you plan your holidays outside of term time so that absence does not impact on the continuing education of your child.
You have a legal duty to make sure that your child attends school regularly and punctually. Schools have a duty to ensure that children attend school. The school and the Local Authority work in unison to monitor your child's attendance and will act if it is poor. If your child is out of school for no valid reason, or there is unauthorised absence, we must refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service who may decide to prosecute.

How absence is authorised
We are not able to grant leave of absence simply because a holiday is cheaper in term-time, or more convenient workwise. To ensure that we comply with these regulations, parents requesting leave of absence will need to detail the exceptional circumstance below, in order that these can be assessed. The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.
Criteria are:

1. Absence may not be granted if attendance is below 96% (school minimum attendance target)
2. A judgement on the impact that a child's absence will have on their education
3. The exceptional circumstances relating to the request for absence.

If you decide to take your child out of school, without permission, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to Cornwall Council who as the issuing officer will may decide to take legal action against you. A penalty notice can be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Fines are issued per parent/carer, per child. Failure to pay the penalty notice may result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and/or custodial sentences."

I request leave of absence for child's name.....**Tutor Group……. for .....days from …… to …… returning to school on…….. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. These are exceptional circumstances because**
……

……
……
……

If you have a child at another Cornish school can you please state the name of your child and the school that they attend……

Signed……

Date……

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Below to be completed by the school:

FAO – Headteacher

% Current	% Last Year	Comments

Student Name: .....
Tutor:…… Year: …….

AUTHORISED:

Request has been authorised for the following dates **only:**

____/ ____/ _____to ____/ ____/_____

UNAUTHORISED:

Signed ……. Headteacher **Date ____/ ____/ __**

Letter sent / Phone Call / other	Signed:	Date:
Action: PN Request	Signed:	Date:

Decision: **Authorised / Unauthorised** **EWO**
Yes/No

.....

Penalty Notice Model Leave Refusal Letter (for school use)

NAME AND ADDRESS Date

Dear Name of parent/carer(s)

I am writing regarding your request to take (Student Name) out of school on Date until Date. The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for pupils in 'exceptional circumstances.' Here at [Penair School], we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence; we look at each request on its own merit, before reaching a decision.

Under the circumstances, we regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If (Student Name) does not attend school on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In cases where parents subsequently report their child as ill during this period, medical evidence may be requested to support this.

I urge you to reconsider your decision.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

I would like to offer you the opportunity to contact {enter staff contact or team} at {Penair School} if you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. {Penair School} is committed to maximising the education of all its pupils and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Re: School Attendance LETTER ONE

Dear

I note from a recent register check that _____attendance was _____from the start of September. I enclose a copy of your child's registration certificate for your information.

This attendance level may include times when your child was ill or attending routine appointments. The average attendance in schools nationally is 96%. We aim to achieve this average or even better to ensure that all pupils gain full benefits from their education.

We really do care about your child's attendance and we are here to support you in being able to improve your child's attendance.

I will therefore be continuing to monitor the attendance of _____and will contact you again if their attendance continues to remain a cause for concern.

Should you wish to discuss attendance in the interim please do not hesitate to contact us at school.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXX – Personal Development Leader Year XX

Cc: File
Enc. Attendance certificate

Re: School Attendance LETTER TWO

Dear

You may recall that I wrote to you recently to make you aware that <<Chosen Name>>'s attendance was <<Percentage Attendance>>%. <<Chosen Name>>'s attendance is now <<Percentage Attendance>>% and is still a cause for concern. I enclose an attendance certificate for your information.

I am therefore inviting you into school on **[date]** at **[time]** to meet with me and our Student Welfare Officer to look at ways that we can work together to support <<ChosenName>> in improving their attendance.

If you are unable to attend the appointment date or time, then please do not hesitate to contact us to rearrange this.

We aim to work in partnership with you in order to help improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

XXXXXXX – Personal Development Leader Year XX
XXXXXXX – Student Welfare Officer for Year XX

Cc: File
Enc. Attendance certificate

Parent address

Date

Dear PARENT/ CARER NAME

At Penair school, we are committed to ensuring our pupils receive the best education possible. In order to do this all children need to be in school to take advantage of all learning opportunities that are presented to them, in addition to our wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Over a period of time pupil name has recorded a number of unauthorised absences, which we would like to bring to your attention. We understand fully that there are 'exceptional circumstances' that will sometimes arise which can affect attendance and result in your child not meeting our minimum 96% attendance target. However, consistent attendance is essential for your child's academic progress and well-being.

Contact has been previously made with you regarding your child's attendance and, unfortunately, your child's attendance has not improved as yet. Therefore, we would like to invite you into the school for a 'Critical Attendance Meeting' to discuss ways to support your child's attendance. As the Student Welfare Officer for your child's year group, I'd like to invite you to a meeting at Penair on Date and time. In addition to you and Pupil name being at the meeting, Mrs Neesham (Assistant Headteacher/DSL), myself, Mrs Ebury (Home School Attendance Officer) and Mrs Jarman (Educational Welfare Officer, Peninsula Education) will also be present.

We want to work with you, as parents, to support a positive change in attendance. We also need to highlight to you that a lack of response to this meeting request, or insufficient improvement in attendance could necessitate a penalty notice being issued. To prevent this, we would like to meet to discuss any barriers to attendance, whilst agreeing to a set of actions. A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is usually the opportunity to pay a reduced amount of £80 if paid within 21 days. We would hope that we can work together to avoid the need to start this process.

We look forward to supporting your child through any issues with attendance and look forward to meeting you in due course.

Yours sincerely

SWO name
Student Welfare Officer

Cc: Personal Development Leader; Home School Attendance Officer; Education Welfare Officer Enc. Attendance certificate