

**The Castle Partnership Trust**

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## **Attendance Policy**

**Date: July 2017**

**Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson**

**Headteacher at Court Fields School: Rachael Bennett**

**Lead Person: SLT with Responsibility for Attendance**

### **Purpose:**

- to ensure and encourage a high level of attendance for all students in order that they maximise their educational achievement.
- to ensure no unauthorised absences.

### **Key Points:**

- Effective monitoring of attendance is vital.
- Registers must be accurate and kept in accordance with this policy.
- The appendices to this policy outline the roles (Appendix 1) and expectations of everyone involved in ensuring good attendance. These include
  - Parents
  - Students
  - Form Tutors
  - Heads of House
  - Pastoral Support Assistants/Attendance Officers (School)
  - Return to Learning Manager (The Castle School only)
  - Deputy Heads / Assistant Heads
  - Education Attendance Officer (County)

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Across the Trust good, excellent and outstanding attendance and punctuality are acknowledged and rewarded.

- Governors and staff within the Trust recognise the high correlation between achievement and attendance and strive to maintain high levels of attendance for all students.
- Parents have the responsibility to ensure attendance at school. Unless there is a major health concern attendance should rarely drop below 96%.
- We ask for the cooperation of all parents in helping the school to monitor attendance closely.

Any planned medical absence should be notified by telephone or letter. As far as possible, appointments should be made out of school hours.

- Once the school has obtained confirmation the school will authorise the absence if the reasons given are considered appropriate e.g. illness, unavoidable medical appointment etc. If the reasons given are not appropriate the absence will be considered as unauthorised and the parent contacted. The school will follow up any absence which has not been notified.
- **Holidays/leave of absence in term time will not usually be authorised because they will affect a student's education.** There is **no automatic right** to take children away from school for a holiday. A leave of absence will only be given for exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances **may** include:

- ✓ Emergency service / forces personnel with proof of enforced holiday period
- ✓ Forces personnel returning from or embarking on active service.
- ✓ Holiday industry employees with proof of this being the **ONLY** time period allowed by employer
- ✓ A transcontinental leave request to see a terminally ill close relative.

If a leave of absence in term time is requested the following procedure must be followed:

- Parents should complete the House specific pro forma (collected from the school office) and return

to the school office (see example in Appendix 2)

- If the request is due to work commitments preventing time off at other times then evidence from the workplace should be provided.

### **Penalty Notices**

The Trust follows DfE guidance and will take legal action against parents/carers who do not send their children to school regularly. We do try to work with parents to ensure there are no barriers to school attendance. If strategies for supporting regular attendance do not work, the Trust will take legal action. In the first instance, a Penalty Notice will be issued. If this does not result in improved attendance, a fine will be issued (Appendix 3). The Trust works closely with the Education Attendance Service to ensure full attendance and adherence to procedures.

### **Lateness**

Lateness of more than 30 minutes after registration will count as an absence from that session and will therefore require a note/telephone call from parents. *If there is no good reason this will count as an unauthorised absence.* Lateness to school will be subject to sanctions unless there is a genuine reason.

## APPENDIX 1

### Post Holders at The Castle School:

Headteacher:	Mrs S Watson
Deputy Head with responsibility for attendance:	Mr J Lamb
Deputy Head with responsibility for RTL:	Mr J Lamb
Pastoral Support Assistants / Attendance Officers:	Mrs A Woodford & Mrs K Waugh
Welfare Officer:	Mrs A Horsley
Return to Learning Manager:	Mrs S Marney/Mrs S Thomas
Data Manager:	Mrs J Slinger

### Post Holders at Court Fields School:

Headteacher:	Ms R Bennett
Assistant Head with responsibility for attendance:	Mr S Appleby
Inclusion Manager:	Mrs A Huggett
Pastoral Support Assistant:	Mrs D Penberthy
Achievement for All Centre Manager:	TBC
Data Manager	Mrs K Reed



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## REQUEST FOR TERM TIME LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Reminder to parents/carers: there is no automatic right to holidays within term time. We believe that children need to be in school to make the most of their education. There are situations which may be authorised, please refer to the Attendance Policy for further details. If your request is not authorised you run the risk of being fined.

School: The Castle School  Court Fields School

NAME(S) OF STUDENT(S) .....

TUTOR GROUP(S) .....

If you have children in another school who will also require leave of absence please give their names and school.

NAME(S) ..... SCHOOL .....

Please state your reasons for requesting term time leave of absence. If this is because your employer will not grant holiday during school holidays please attach a supporting letter from your employer:

**DATES REQUESTED:**

**FROM:** ..... **TO:** ..... (inclusive)

Please continue overleaf if necessary

**Please return this form to the Front Office.**

A confirmation letter will be sent to you by post once a decision has been made.

**For office use only:**

**Current Attendance Percentage:** ..... %

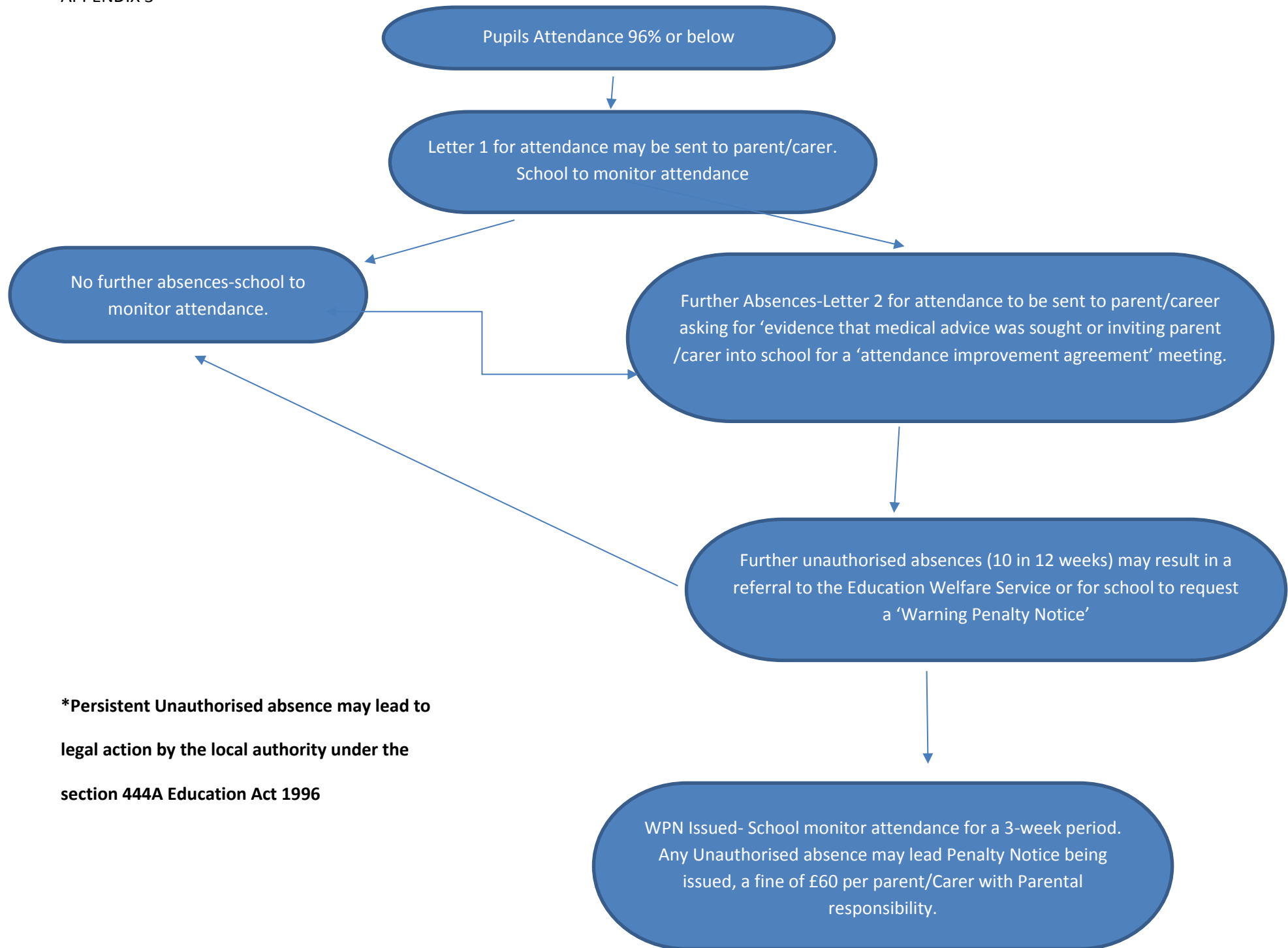
Leave of absence authorised? **YES/NO** By whom ..... Date .....

Reason:

Parents informed? **YES/NO** by whom ..... Date .....

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APPENDIX 3



**\*Persistent Unauthorised absence may lead to legal action by the local authority under the section 444A Education Act 1996**

Attendance Information Sheet

We would like to remind you about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Missing lessons makes it hard to catch up and pupils have to work harder when they come back. Pupils attend school for 190 days per year; there are 175 non-school days a year for holiday, cultural experiences and family time. Any child with attendance of 90% or below is classed as a persistent absentee (PA) by the Government. Every school is required to take action to work with families to improve attendance. It may be useful for you to know what attendance figures mean for your child.

<b>Above 98%</b>	<b>Excellent Attendance</b> Pupils with attendance above 98% have had less than 4 days of absence in the year.
<b>96%</b>	<b>Good Attendance</b> Pupils with attendance above 96% have had less than 9 days of absence in a year. If your child's attendance drops below 96% you may receive a letter highlighting this.
<b>90% and below.</b>	<b>Persistent Absentee (PA) as defined by the Dfe.</b> Pupils with 90% attendance have had 19 days over the year. Pupils with this attendance level are missing a month of school per year and may drop at least one GCSE grade. Parents of pupils with this level of attendance may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or have legal action taken against them.
<b>85%</b>	<b>Exceptionally Low Attendance/Persistent Absentee</b> Pupils with 85% attendance have had 29 days' absence over the year. These pupils are missing 6 weeks of a school year; it will be very difficult for them to keep up with work and they may drop more than one GCSE grade. It is highly likely that a Fixed Penalty Notice will have been served and should attendance not improve significantly after this, a referral will be made for legal action to be taken against parents for not ensuring their child attends school regularly.

## Reporting an Absence

- All absences must be reported by 9.30 am each day (and on each subsequent day) by either calling the absence line on 01823 274 073 and pressing 1 or by emailing [office@castle.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@castle.somerset.sch.uk)
- If you know your child is going to be absent, please let us know in advance. If your child has been absent due to a medical appointment, please attach or email in a copy of the appointment card/hospital letter.
- Medical Evidence **may** be required if your child has a prolonged absence of more than three days. Medical Evidence **must** be produced if we have previously written to you stating that no further absence due to illness will be authorised without it.

Examples of medical Evidence (this is the responsibility of the parent to provide to the school directly):



- Medical appointment card/printed slip
- medical appointment letter
- copy of prescription showing name and date
- Prescribed medication with pharmacist label showing name and date
- Hospital Discharge letter

**Please note: we never ask for 'doctors notes' so please do not approach your GP asking for this.**

### **Punctuality**

Arriving late to school and into lesson is very disruptive for the teacher and other class members. It also means that late student themselves miss important input from teachers. Registration is at 8:50 Oam, the warning bell sounds at 8:45am.

If for whatever reason, you know your child will be arriving late, please call the absence line or provide your child with a written note. Late students must go to the library to sign in. If a student arrives late without an acceptable/genuine reason, they will be issued with a slip for a 45-minute Head of House Lunch Detention.

**Thank you for your continued support in helping to raise attendance and attainment at The Castle School.**

