



The Castle School

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Attendance Policy

June 2019

Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson
Head of School at The Castle School: Fran Gormley

Due for review: Autumn term 2020

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)
 - Deputy Heads / Assistant Heads
 - School Attendance Officer
 - Education Attendance Officer (County)

Attendance and Punctuality

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

- Governors, Directors 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. The school may request a Penalty Notice for over 10 sessions of unauthorised absence where the student's attendance falls below 95%.

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 a form from the school office and return it 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. At The Castle School, regular attendance is classed as attendance of 95% or more. Attendance below this level could result in the issue of a Warning Penalty Notice, Penalty Notice or court action.

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.

Executive Headteacher:

Mrs S Watson

Post Holders at The Castle School:

Head of School:

Mrs F Gormley

Assistant Heads with responsibility for attendance: Mr M Randle/Mr J Thomson

SLT with responsibility for RTL:

Mrs F Gormley

Attendance Officer:

Mrs A Holley

Pastoral Support Officer:

Miss K Ridgway

Welfare Officer:

Mrs A Horsley

Return to Learning Manager:

Mrs S Thomas

Data Manager:

Mrs J Slinger



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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.

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.

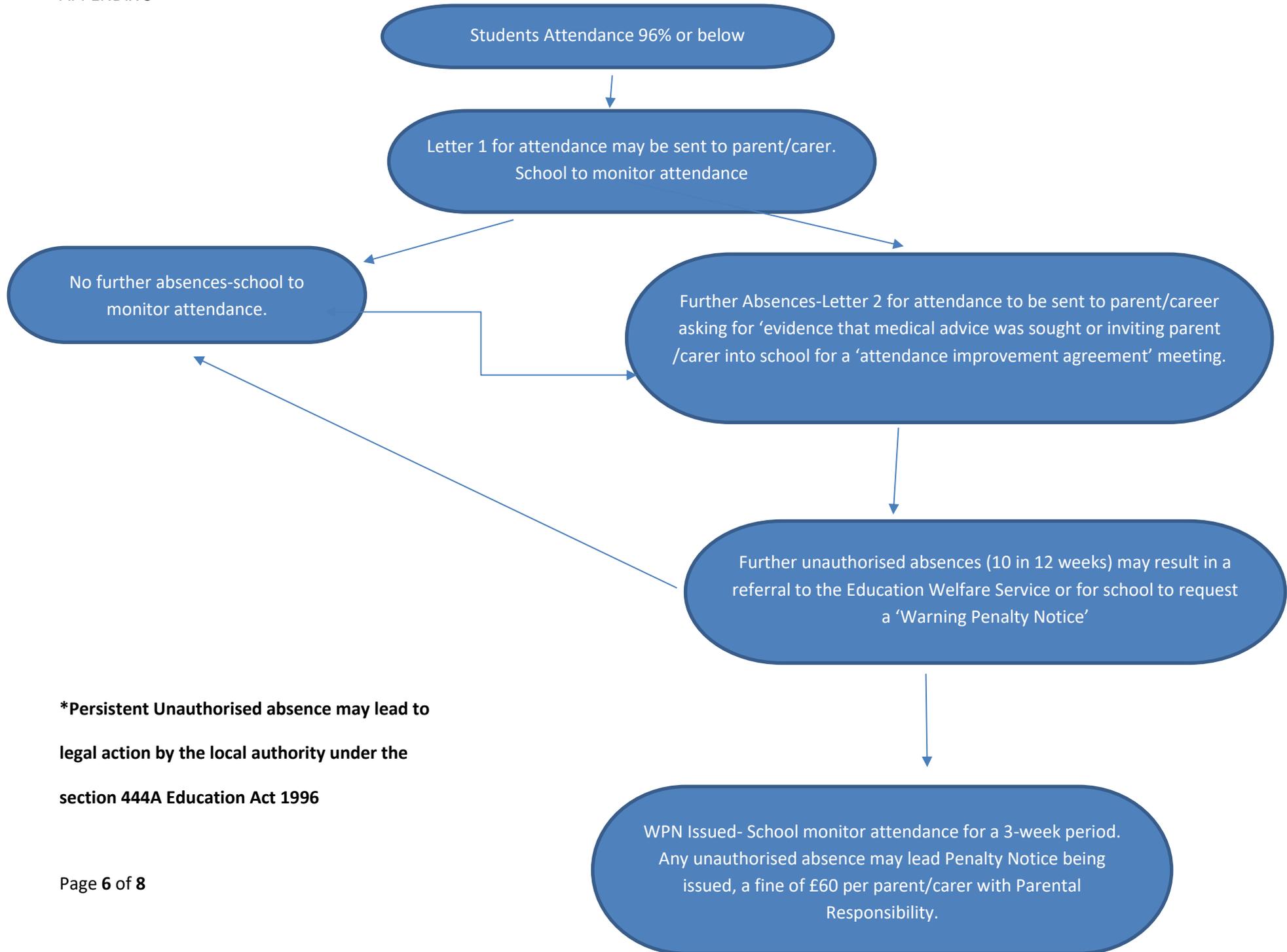
For office use only:

Current Attendance Percentage: %

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

Reason:

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



***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 students have to work harder when they come back. Students 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.

100%	Excellent Attendance
Above 98%	Good Attendance Students with attendance above 98% have had less than 4 days of absence in the year.
Attendance Drops Below 96%	If your child's attendance drops below 96% you will receive a letter highlighting this.
94%	If your child's attendance drops to 94% you will receive a letter and be asked to attend a meeting.
92%	If your child's attendance drops to 92% the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will become involved.
90% and below.	Persistent Absentee (PA) as defined by the Dfe. Students with 90% attendance have had 19 days over the year. Students with this attendance level are missing a month of school per year and may drop at least one GCSE grade. Parents of Students with this level of attendance may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice or have legal action taken against them.
85%	Exceptionally Low Attendance/Persistent Absentee Students with 85% attendance have had 29 days' absence over the year. These Students 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 or emailing the relevant school.
- 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

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.

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.

Please note: We never ask for 'doctor's notes' so please do not approach your GP asking for this.