



ROECROFT
Lower School

ATTENDANCE Policy

Reviewed by:	Lin Gibson
Approved by:	Full Governing Body
Date:	6 October 2026
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Review Period:	Annually
Reviewed:	September 2026
Next Review:	September 2027

Amendments in this Issue	
1.	Section 7 – Clarification of reporting absence via Arbor
2.	Section 12 – Removal of Natalie Pateman as Enrichment Teacher.

CONTENTS

Section	Page Number
1. Introduction	2
2. Aims	2
3. Attendance and the law	3
4. Responsibilities	4
5. Taking the register	6
6. Understanding types of absence	6
7. Reporting absence	8
8. Leave of absence	9
9. Education of pupils with medical needs	10
10. Strategy for improving attendance	11
11. Monitoring and protocols for dealing with absences	11
12. Additional Tailored Support	12
13. Non-compulsory age attendance	12
14. Rewards system	12

APPENDICES

A School attendance procedure	13-14
B Trigger 1 letter	15
C Trigger 2 letter	16
D Trigger 3 letter	17
E Improved attendance letter (93-97%)	18
F Attendance Update letter (below 90%)	19
G Cause of concern re lateness letter	20
H Unexplained Absence letter	21
I Unexplained Absence Follow-Up	22
J Support Plan	23-25
K Attendance/register codes	26
L Leave of Absence request form	27-28

1. **Introduction**

It is the right of every young person to receive full-time education. Young people who fail to attend school regularly cannot receive a coherent education programme, as absence disturbs the continuity of the curriculum and also damages social relationships. Absence from lessons can result in pupils falling behind in their learning.

It is our expectation that children attend school on time, every day and well equipped. The minimum acceptable attendance target at Roecroft Lower School is 97%.

Good attendance and punctuality are vital, and establish positive life habits necessary for not only current, but future success. Regular attendance also encourages children to build friendships and develop social groups, working together as a whole team, sharing ideas and developing on life skills. They will also inevitably miss out on teaching and learning, this teaching missed is often the same area of the curriculum and leads to a child missing a huge proportion of the same subject, for example phonics sessions daily.

The school displays a positive and pro-active ethos that places high value on attendance and punctuality, as well as valuing its partnership with parents/carers to promote good attendance. The school advocates close working relationships with all stakeholders to provide a cohesive approach to tackling attendance.

In addition, this policy is in place because attendance at school is known to be a key protective factor in safeguarding children and young people. At Roecroft we are 100% dedicated to safeguarding our children.

Year Group	Drop-off window	Morning Register Closes	Afternoon Session	Afternoon Register Closes	Collection Window
Reception, Year 1 and Year 2	8.35am – 8.45am	8.55am	1pm – 3.20pm	1.10pm	3.20pm – 3.30pm
Year 3 and 4	8.45am – 8.55am	9.05am	2.15pm – 3.30pm	2.20pm	3.30pm – 3.40pm

2. **Aims**

2.1 To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone at Roecroft and to develop and implement an effective attendance policy that touches all aspects of school life, and relates directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.

2.2 Staff particularly strive to:

- i. encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others; to have a positive attitude to life-long learning;
- ii. value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and actions.

2.3 This attendance policy is designed to encourage pupils to attend school more regularly by the implementation of specific measures, e.g.:

- i. Registering pupils accurately and efficiently.
- ii. Setting attendance target for the school.
- iii. Contacting parents the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised.
- iv. At least half termly monitoring of pupil attendance and punctuality.

- v. Regularly reporting school attendance statistics to parents, the Local Authority School Attendance Officer (SAO) and the Department for Education (DfE) as appropriate.

3. **Attendance and the Law**

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated Local Authority officers, Headteachers (& Deputy Headteachers authorised by them) and the police to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

3.1 **When a Penalty Notice may be issued**

On 19th August 2024, statutory guidance from the Department for Education came into effect to ensure that there is a single consistent national threshold for when a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) must be considered by all schools in England.

The DfE has introduced a national threshold of 10 sessions of Unauthorised Absence in 10 school weeks and has placed a duty on Headteachers to consider issuing a penalty notice each time an individual pupil meets this threshold. Changes have been made to the amount of the Fixed Penalty Notice and the number of occasions these may be issued within specific time periods.

There is also the introduction of a Notice to Improve being issued following receipt of a referral from a school to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for non-attendance cases (not Unauthorised Holidays). The Notice to Improve allows a fixed period of time for no further absences to occur and which would mean the FPN would not be issued if this happens.

Further information can be found in the DfE Parent Hub at the following weblink:

[What you need to know – The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](https://blog.gov.uk/what-you-need-to-know-the-education-hub/)

In Central Bedfordshire, schools and academies may ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice.

A Penalty Notice may be issued when:

- a pupil is taken out of school during term time for a holiday which has not been authorised by the school.
- a child's school attendance has been poor and his/her school believe that the issuing of a Penalty Notice may lead to an improvement in the child's attendance (for example, when a child is persistently late for school and his/her parents fail to address the situation).

When a Penalty Notice is issued, it is issued on a per child/per parent basis. This means that if a mother and father have two children and take both children out of school they may be issued with a total of 4 Penalty Notices – one to each parent for each child.

3.2 **Issuing a Penalty Notice:**

A Penalty Notice can now be issued when the number of unauthorised absences a child has had amounts to at least 10 sessions (one session is half a school day) over a rolling 10 school week period.

This can be met though any combination of unauthorised absences (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term), in the same or across different schools.

Once a Penalty Notice has been issued, there is no statutory right of appeal, although there are circumstances in which the notice may be withdrawn, such as the parent providing satisfactory retrospective specific medical evidence for any absences.

3.3 **Payment of Penalty Notices**

A Penalty Notice is initially for £80 (per child per parent).

If this £80 is not paid within 21 days from the date of issue it rises to £160.

If after 28 days of the date of issue the £160 is not paid, the council will prosecute the parents under *Section 444 of the Education Act 1996*. This will lead to an appearance in the magistrates' court and may result in a fine of up to £2,500 for each offence.

If your child is a registered pupil at a school you are legally responsible for ensuring that they attend that school regularly and punctually. If you fail to do this you may be liable to be prosecuted by the council under *Section 444 of the Education Act 1996* and summonsed to appear in court if convicted

There are two strands to the legislation:

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 you may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 *Section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996* you may be liable to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months in prison.

4. **Responsibilities**

4.1 **Parents**

Section 7 and 8 of the Education Act 1996 states it is every parent's legal responsibility to ensure that their child when between the ages of 5-16 receives a full and efficient education either by attending school or otherwise. Failure to ensure your child attends school may result in legal action being taken against you.

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- all parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law).

To help fulfil parents'/carers' important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents/carers are requested and encouraged:

- to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- to notify the school if their child cannot attend for any reason – this is for the child’s safety as well as regulatory reasons.
- to request authorisation for all ‘leave of absence’, including holidays and appointments in school time.
- to monitor their child’s attendance level via the Arbor app.
- to work with the school, the School Attendance Officer (SAO) and Education Supervision Orders Officer (ESO) to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence.
- to attend meetings as required in relation to their child’s attendance.
- if late, pupils must be signed in at the office.
- If pupils are required to leave the premises during the school day they must be signed in and out at the at the school office.

4.2 The School

The school’s Governing Body is legally responsible for many aspects of the school’s management, including the attendance register. It is therefore registered with the Data Protection Registrar (ICO) under the Data Protection Act 2018. However, the Headteacher manages the day-to-day running of the school and, in doing so, takes responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The Headteacher will update the Governing Body about attendance data and issues via the termly Headteachers Report. The Governing Body will review this policy annually.

The school will:

- maintain two registers:
 - a. an Admissions register (known as the school roll)
 - b. an Attendance register for all pupils, including those that are not of compulsory age.
- contact parents/carers if a call/Arbor email is not received by the start of the day (8.45am) on the first day of absence.
- monitor attendance and punctuality at least on a half termly basis.
- submit the details of the level of absence within the school through the termly School Census.
- report attendance data to parents/carers and all other appropriate bodies such as the Governors and School Attendance Officer on a termly basis.
- ensure all staff are aware of, and know how to implement care, guidance and support policies, in order to recognise where there may be issues affecting pupil attendance and to be pro-active in dealing with issues in the appropriate way.
- implement strategies to support pupils and their families who have difficulties in attending school regularly and do not reach the school’s expected attendance target.
- ensure class teachers are aware of their class’s attendance percentage and are pro-active in addressing issues.
- reward good attendance.
- ensure class teachers contribute to the reduction of absences by insisting on good attendance and punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils – staff may well discuss absences with families at varying points over the school year if they are noticing it impacting a child’s progress both academically and socially.
- follow the procedures regarding attendance and absence, as outlined in this policy (Appendix A).

5. **Taking the register**

- Registers are treated as legal documents and they may be used as evidence in court cases, for this reason they are retained for a minimum of six years.
- The Legal register is held on our MIS (Management Information System).
- The register will be taken twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and again at the start of the afternoon session.
- Registers are also taken in the event of an evacuation.
- Once the school has been officially notified of the reason for the absence, the appropriate registration code will be inserted by the school office (Appendix K).
- The register must clearly differentiate between whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised by the school.
- It is the policy of the school that no absences are unaccounted for.

6. **Understanding Types of Absence**

6.1 **Authorised Absence**

Authorised absence is absence with permission from the Headteacher. This includes absences for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided, e.g. ill health. Even when pupils are engaged in an Approved Educational Activity off-site, they must not be marked as present, as good Health and Safety practice requires that the school needs to know who is on the premises in the case of a fire drill or real emergency.

The school may authorise absence in the following circumstances:

- i. Personal illness (excessive or extended absences will require medical evidence)
- ii. Medical Appointment (we may request to see a copy of the appointment)
- iii. Family bereavement
- iv. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to a child's health and safety
- v. Religious observance (limitations apply)
- vi. A travelling child's absence
- vii. Involvement in a public performance (limitations apply)
- viii. Approved sporting activity
- ix. Exams and competitions (limitations apply).

For periods of extended absence because of illness, the school will seek the advice of the school nurse and will only authorise the number of days that have been advised by health officials for the illness.

6.2 **Unauthorised Absence**

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the Headteacher. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

The school is unlikely to authorise absence in the following circumstances:

- i. No explanation is offered by the parent/carer.
- ii. The Headteacher views the explanation offered as unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, minding the house, tired, no transport, refusing to attend etc.).
- iii. If a pupil's attendance percentage is below 90% in the first term and then 93% in subsequent terms and no medical evidence has been supplied.
- iv. Leave of absence which is taken without the school's prior consent or knowledge and/or is in excess of the time agreed by the school.

- v. Special occasions such as birthdays.
- vi. Minding siblings.
- vii. Parent/carer or sibling illness.
- viii. Family holidays in term time.

Unauthorised absence from school is considered truancy. This can take the form of absence from school for complete or part days or lateness. Each of these is as serious as the other, but the strategies for supporting change may need to be different

When parents are unaware of such absences there may be a significant danger to the young person's safety, as it is likely that their whereabouts are unknown by a responsible adult.

Unfortunately, there may be occasions when truancy is condoned by parents. If such collusion occurs, it is the duty of the school to work with the pupil and family to change their attitudes towards school, thus encouraging full attendance

If a pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absences during a 10 week period, the parents/carers can be issued with a Fixed Penalty notice by the Local Authority (see section 3.2).

The Local Authority will also be informed if a pupil hasn't attended continuously for either 10 days when an absence is unauthorised, or 15 school days or more if the absences are either authorised or unauthorised.

6.3 **Persistent Absenteeism**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised.

The 10% threshold translates to the following number of missed sessions in each half-term:

	(Please note: There are 2 possible sessions per day - am or pm)
Autumn half-term 1	7 sessions or more
Autumn half-term 1-2	14 or more sessions
Spring half-term 1-3	20 or more sessions
Spring half-term 1-4	25 or more sessions
Summer half-term 1-5	31 or more sessions
Summer half-term 1-6	38 or more sessions

Circumstances will always be taken into account; however, the school may refer any individual child whose attendance is 90% or below to the School Attendance Officer. At this point, legal proceedings could follow (Appendix A).

If a child is experiencing Emotional-Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) the school will work with the family to ensure a plan is in place that is acceptable to both the family and the school. No absence below 90% will be authorised unless in extenuating circumstances such as long term illness; all persistent absenteeism will be tracked and reported to the Governing Body.

6.4 **Home Visits**

Where we have concerns around a child's attendance we seek advice from our school attendance officer. On some occasions they may suggest a home visit to check the family are well. These visits will usually be arranged at a time convenient to the family; however, if we have urgent concerns regarding a child's absence from school, the Head Teacher may visit a family without prior notification.

6.5 **Punctuality and Lateness (arrival)**

A child will be registered as late in the morning if they arrive after the doors have closed.

The 'Late' will be recorded on our management information system as 'L'.

Arrival after the register closes at 9.30am, is automatically coded as 'U', unless otherwise authorised by the Headteacher.

If lateness becomes persistent, the school will contact the parent/carer (Appendix G). If this does not improve, the School Attendance Officer (SAO) may be informed.

6.6 **Lateness (collection)**

When a child has not been collected from school at their usual collection time we will exhaust all contact information for the family, including emergency contacts, pick up lists and email addresses. If we do not have a response by 4:30pm, we will contact Children's Services to seek advice and follow their guidance.

6.7 **Temporary School Closures**

Where a school has to close due to severe weather conditions, problems with amenities such as water or heating, fire, structural damage or in-service training, no attendance registers are needed. This will be coded appropriately.

7. **Reporting Absence**

- The staff contact for day-to-day absence is Lin Gibson (Office Manager and attendance co-ordinator).
- It is the policy of the school that no absence should be unaccounted for.
- For safeguarding purposes, on the first day of absence parents/carers are expected to:
 - a) Contact the school office before the start of the school day (8.45am)
 - b) Give the reason for the absence and the expected date of return.
- Absences can be reported via **the Arbor app or parent portal**, email or calling the school office on 01462 730336 and leaving a message on the absence line by pressing option 1. Alternatively, you may wish to speak directly to a member of the office team by pressing option 3. A written note will be taken as to why the child is absent, including how the message was received, **verbal/voicemail/Arbor/email**.
- If the date of the return is unknown, regular contact on a daily basis should be kept with the school.
- School will contact families daily if they do not keep regular contact with the school.

7.1 **Unexplained Absence**

If the school receives no contact a member of the office team will:

- a) Arrange to check if the child is in the lesson that they should be in. If he/she is present, the register will be marked accordingly. If he/she is absent, they will telephone the parent/carers.
- b) If contact cannot be made, the school has a duty of care to ensure the child is safe and will continue to attempt to make contact with the parents/carers throughout the day and will attempt contact with other members of the child's emergency contact list (as supplied by the parents/carers) until a reason for absence is provided.
- c) If this still fails, the Head Teacher may visit the child's home unannounced to check on their wellbeing, the Local Authority advised and the police may be alerted that the child is missing.

Reporting an absence, verbally or in writing, does not guarantee authorisation.

8. **Leave of Absence**

8.1 **External Appointments within school hours**

The school recognises that there are occasions when pupils need to leave school for an appointment (e.g. doctor, dentist, optician etc.). If at all possible, all appointments should be made outside of school hours.

If an appointment is necessary during the school day, the parent/carer are expected to inform the class teacher or a member of the office team in advance.

The school acknowledges that there are occasions when requests cannot always be made in advance, as appointments at doctors and dentists etc. can sometimes only be made on the actual day.

We require all pupils leaving for an appointment to be collected by a parent/carer in person and signed out at the office. The process needs to be repeated on their return.

8.2 **Leave of absence within Term Time**

The latest amendments to education law (August 2024) make it clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. The purpose of this change in the regulations was to highlight the crucial link between pupil's attendance and their success within school and to ensure Headteachers take a firmer approach towards parents/carers who remove their children from school during term time in order to go on holiday. The school will therefore consider every absence application individually, although our policy will be NOT to grant leave of absence, other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Holidays in term time can no longer be agreed by the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will use their discretion to grant authorised absence in a school year if the parent/carer that the child normally lives with applies to the school completing a Leave of Absence form (Appendix L), with appropriate evidence, at least 2 school weeks in advance of the intended holiday.

Special reasons or exceptional circumstances that may be agreed to are:

- A family funeral of a close relative;
- Holidays for fostering or adoption purposes;
- Religious observance (limitations apply);
- Service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays during normal school holiday times (evidence may be requested);
- Involvement in public performance;
- Exams and competitions;
- Approved sporting activity.

In some circumstances the above reasons may require more discussion or more detail/evidence.

The school is unable to authorise absence because of:

- Availability of cheap holidays;
- Availability of desired accommodation;
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;

- Overlap with the beginning or end of term;
- Another sibling in another school where the holidays do not coincide;
- A special treat for the child.

Families with children with SEND and Applications for Leave of Absence during term time:

There are occasions where the parents of a child with SEND needs, may make an application for 'Leave of Absence in Term Time' as they feel that the airport they are flying from will be too busy for their child during the school holidays.

If this is a concern, rather than request 'Leave of Absence' during term time, which will impact on their child's education and the provision that is in place for them, parents are advised to make prior contact with either the Passenger Support Service or Additional Needs Team at the relevant airport. These Teams can often support in the provision of or the identification of quiet areas where families can wait until boarding. There are also occasions where these teams can support with Early Boarding which lessens the queuing time.

Some airlines will also support families in early boarding in this situation, although it is advisable to have prior communication with them first.

Further information and advice can be found on the attached link from the National Autistic Society:

[Holidays – guide for parents and carers](#)

Authorisation will not be considered during assessment times for Year 1 (end of Key Stage Examinations and Phonics testing) or during the National Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check period.

Should the application not be authorised and the holiday is taken, The Access and Inclusion Service, in consultation with the school, may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

8.3 Procedure in School

On receipt of a written Leave of Absence form (Appendix L), the following will occur:

- The request will be considered according to the above criteria.
- If insufficient information is received, further details will be requested from the parent/carer. Please note that in the case of a holiday request, this may include supporting evidence (for example, confirmation of flights or accommodation, or invitations to special events) to verify the dates requested.
- If appropriate, the parent/carer may be requested to attend a meeting to discuss the circumstances.
- Parents will be notified of the outcome by the return of the form.

9. Education of Pupils with Medical Needs

In response to the guidance - Access to Education for Children & Young People with Medical Needs, DfES 0732/2001 – Roecroft recognises its responsibilities 'for all pupils unable to attend school for medical reasons. Young persons should be able to access education without stigma or exclusion.' The school's aim is to ensure pupils have access to as much education as their medical condition allows.

9.1 Pupils covered by this may:

- i. Be recovering from an illness or injury, keeping the pupil away from school during recovery;
- ii. Have a long term or recurring illness;
- iii. Have an illness or clinically defined mental health disorder which causes them to be absent for a period in excess of 15 days, where medical opinion states they are still unable to access mainstream school.

9.2 The Head of SEND and Inclusion will be responsible for:

- i. Ensuring that Medical Needs Referral Forms (Request for Involvement and Request for Medical Information forms) are completed and passed to the relevant agencies as quickly as possible
- ii. Ensuring that the pupil is transferred to the SEND Register, and that, working with the necessary member of staff, a Learning Support Plan or SEND Support Plan is drawn up where relevant.
- iii. Arranging for the relevant member of staff to meet with the appropriate professionals involved to plan appropriate work and a programme of action and review.
- iv. Ensuring that all pupils covered by this policy have access to statutory testing.
- v. The school will also be responsible for requesting special arrangements, for example a part-time or reduced timetable, where necessary.

Parents/carers are expected to be full collaborative partners in the process of ensuring all pupils maximise their attendance. Where difficulties arise, parents/carers must be able to access information, advice and support during a pupil's illness. Opportunities to allow the pupil to be involved in decision making and choices will also be arranged.

10. **Strategy for Improving Attendance**

Our strategy for improving and maintaining attendance levels are to:

- Promote a positive, welcoming, safe, and supportive environment.
- Raise awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put strategies in place.
- Build relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

11. **Monitoring and Protocols for dealing with Absences**

The member of office staff with responsibility for day-to-day attendance will monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns (including punctuality) and report to the Headteacher at least on a half termly basis.

If a child's attendance falls below 90% in the first term and 93% thereafter (school target is 97%) a 'Trigger Letter 1' (Appendix C) will be issued as per our Attendance Procedure (Appendix A).

Persistent Absentee pupils will be tracked and monitored carefully. If the attendance rate continues to deteriorate, the school will begin to follow the procedure for subsequent trigger points (Appendix A). We will look to work together with parents to identify requirements for additional support and improve attendance through meetings, phone calls and home visits. The Head Teacher will sensitively consider

the reasons for absence and a formal written agreement/Parent Contract may be created with a personalised action/support plan (Appendix J). Where necessary, the Head Teacher may contact the School Attendance Office (SAO) and/or Education Supervision Orders Officer (ESO) to formalise support.

97-100%	Attendance levels are good to excellent	Well done – Best chance of success.
93-96.9%	Attendance levels are beginning to cause concern	Attendance monitored weekly. Head Teacher notified and if necessary a phone call home to discuss.
90-92.9%	Attendance levels are causing more significant concern	School Attendance Officer notified and Trigger Letter 1 sent home.
Below 90%	Classified as a persistent absentee	Trigger Letter 2 sent home. Support plan may be introduced.
Below 85%	Severe risk of underachievement	Trigger Letter 3 sent home. Referral to Local Authority to formalise support.

12. **Additional Tailored Support**

The school recognises that at times families and children may need additional support and that circumstances need to be considered individually. We always endeavour to work in a supportive partnership with families and the following staff can be contacted for more tailored support if needed:

Mrs Jemma Pepper – Deputy Head Teacher and Safeguarding Lead - jpepper@roecroft.co.uk

Mrs Clare Valpy – Pastoral Support – cvalpy@roecroft.co.uk

Mrs Natalie Pateman – Enrichment Teacher – npateman@roecroft.co.uk

The Head Teacher, Mrs Hollie Cross, will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school.

Contact details: hcross@roecroft.co.uk

13. **Non-Compulsory Age Attendance**

Attendance is a vital foundation for a child's learning, but to get the most benefit a child must attend regularly and promptly. In order to promote and establish good attendance from the outset, and provide good habits for the future, our attendance procedure for non-compulsory age children will be followed as standard. Nevertheless, parents of non-compulsory school age (below the age of 5) children do not have a legal duty to ensure their children receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at a school (this includes home education). However, if a child is registered at a school, parents do have a responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

The school census now collects absence data in relation to pupils who are aged 4; hence the need to ensure good attendance habits with non-compulsory aged pupils is now heightened for all schools.

14. **Rewards System**

The school uses class certificates at the end of each half term and where appropriate will be celebrated in the newsletter.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE
First day calling for all absences

- In the event of a pupil's absence from school, the parents/carers contact the school by 8.45am.
- The parent/carer should give details of the cause and indicate how long the absence is likely to last.
- If the absence goes beyond this, a subsequent call should be made.
- If there is no contact, a member of the office team will check in lessons to see if the pupil is present. If not, a member of the office team will ring home.
- Where no contact can be made by telephone the office staff will continue to attempt to make contact with the parents/carers throughout the day, send an Arbor Email (Appendix H), and will attempt contact with other members of the child's emergency contact list (as supplied by the parents/carers) until a reason for absence is provided.
- If contact is still not made, the police may be **informed that the child is missing**.
- The absence will be an immediate unauthorised absence.
- When the pupil returns to school, the reason for the absence will need to be confirmed. Where this is not forthcoming, a written reminder (Appendix I) will be sent home if the confirmation is still not received

If a pupil is to be absent for more than five consecutive school days and the pupil is not hospitalised, medical proof (i.e. doctor's note/fit note) will be requested.

If a child is hospitalised for an extended period of time, hospitals often provide supervised educational activities. Evidence may be available for this.

At the start of the Academic Year, any pupil whose attendance was a cause for concern in the previous academic year, will still remain a cause for concern. An attendance meeting may need to be called. This will be reviewed after 4 weeks. If attendance becomes an issue again, they will be fast-tracked to Trigger Point 2.

At the start of the Academic Year, any pupil who had been referred to the School Attendance Officer (SAO) in the previous academic year, may be invited to attend an attendance meeting with their parents/carers, Headteacher and SAO. If attendance becomes an issue again, they will be contacted further by the SAO.

See trigger flow chart overleaf

School Attendance Target – 97%

Trigger Point 1 - Below 90% in the first term and 93% thereafter

Headteacher informed of attendance rate by
Office staff.
Open an attendance file.
Trigger 1 letter sent home.
Medical evidence needed for all future absences.
Monitor for 4 weeks.

Improvement after 4 weeks

Send home improved attendance letter if above 93%. Send home update letter if improved but still below 93%.

Improvement after 4 weeks

Send home improved attendance letter if above 93%. Send home update letter if improved but still below 93%.

No Improvement - Trigger Point 2

Headteacher informed of pupil's attendance weekly.
Medical evidence needed to authorise absence.
Send Trigger Letter 2 home.
Keep correspondence in attendance file.
Arrange a meeting to support if necessary. Complete support plan/parent contract.
Alert the SAO.

No Improvement/further decline - Trigger Point 3

Class teacher and Headteacher informed of pupil's attendance weekly.
Medical evidence needed for absence but unauthorised unless there are extenuating circumstances.
Send home Trigger 3 letter.
Formalise Support. Arrange a meeting with parent/carer, SAO and Headteacher.
Complete/update support plan/parent contract.
Attendance Officer and Headteacher to continue to monitor and review.
Further meetings called if required.
In some circumstances the SAO may make a referral to the ESO Officer (Education Supervision Orders Officer).

TRIGGER LETTER 1***Attendance below 90% in the Autumn Term or 93% in the Spring or Summer Terms***

Dear (PARENT NAME)

School Attendance – Trigger Point 1

At Roecroft Lower School we promote and encourage good attendance as it is a major contributor to good attainment. Children who attend regularly generally achieve better outcomes at school and consequently in their futures.

As per our attendance policy and in accordance with the Local Authority, it is our duty to inform parents when a child's attendance drops below 90% in the Autumn term or 93% in the Spring/Summer term. I am writing to let you know that (NAME)'s attendance has now fallen to xx%.

While (NAME)'s attendance is below our target of 97% we will continue to monitor and update you periodically. We also ask you to provide us with medical evidence for all future absences, including appointments. (Prescribed medicines, prescriptions, doctor's notes, hospital letters and appointment cards only).

Whilst I understand that children do become ill on occasion, it is essential that they form good habits of regular attendance at school from the earliest age. Children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning.

Please contact the school if you feel that we can help and support (NAME) in increasing (HIS/HER) level of school attendance or if you would like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

TRIGGER LETTER 2

Attendance below 90% in the Autumn Term or 93% in the Spring or Summer Terms – NO SIGN OF IMPROVEMENT

Dear (PARENT NAME)

School Attendance - Trigger Point 2

At Roecroft Lower School, we promote and encourage good attendance as it is a major contributor to good attainment. Children who attend regularly generally achieve better outcomes at school and consequently in their futures.

Unfortunately (NAME)'s attendance has now fallen to xx%.

In accordance with our attendance policy and the Local Authority guidelines, we are now required to ask you to provide us with medical evidence for all future medical/illness absences, including appointments. (Prescribed medicines, copies of prescriptions, documented evidence that (NAME) is advised not to attend school, hospital letters and appointment cards only).

While (his/her/their) attendance is below 90%, we will not be able to authorise any further absences unless there are extenuating circumstances such as long term illness.

If (NAME)'s continues to decline or no improvement is shown, you will be invited to a meeting with myself and the School Attendance Officer (SAO) to formalise support and find ways of improving your child's attendance.

If you have any concerns that you feel may have an impact on your child's attendance, or if we can support you in any way to help improve (NAME)'s attendance rate please do not hesitate to contact myself or your child's teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

TRIGGER LETTER 3

Attendance below 90% in the Autumn Term or 93% in the Spring or Summer Terms – FURTHER DECLINE OR NO IMPROVEMENT IN ATTENDANCE

Dear (PARENT NAME)

School Attendance – Trigger Point 3

I am writing to you concerning the continuing problem of your child's irregular attendance at school. (NAME)'s current attendance is only xx%.

We have endeavoured to seek your support with this matter, but unfortunately your child's irregular attendance has now reached a stage where the school or Local Authority may need to consider further action with external agencies.

To avoid this, I would like to invite you to a meeting with myself and the Local Authority School Attendance Officer (SAO) to find ways of improving your child's attendance and hopefully avoid the need for further action. We will be in touch to arrange a convenient date.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

Improved Attendance 90-97% in the Autumn Term 93-97% in the Spring and Summer Terms

Dear (PARENT NAME)

School Attendance - Improvement

I am writing to acknowledge that (NAME)'s attendance has now risen to xx%. While it is still below our target of 97%, and therefore being monitored, I would like to take this opportunity to say we are very pleased to see that (his/her/their) attendance level has improved.

As (NAME)'s attendance is still below 97%, in accordance with school's policy and Local Authority guidelines, we do still ask you to provide us with medical evidence for all future absences, including appointments. (Prescribed medicines, prescriptions, doctor's notes, hospital letters and appointment cards only)

Thank you in advance for your support in continuing to make attendance and punctuality matter and for recognising their positive impact on children's progress and achievement.

Should you require any further information regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

Attendance Update

Dear (PARENT NAME)

In accordance with the school's attendance policy and Local authority, it is our duty to keep parents informed when a child's attendance falls below 90% in the Autumn term or 93% in the Spring/Summer term. (NAME) has been absent for a further (DAYS) since I last wrote to you on (DATE) and therefore (HIS/HER) attendance is now at XX%.

While (NAME)'s attendance is below our target of 97% we will continue to monitor and update you periodically and we do still ask you to provide us with medical evidence for all future absences, including appointments. (Prescribed medicines, prescriptions, doctor's notes, hospital letters and appointment cards only).

Thank you in advance for your support in continuing to make attendance and punctuality matter and for recognising their positive impact on children's progress and achievement.

Should you require any further information regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

Excessive Lateness

Dear (PARENT NAME)

As you may be aware, the school works very hard to improve both attendance and punctuality. (NAME) has been identified as having been late on (XX) occasions since (DATE).

It is understandable and acceptable that any child can be late on an odd occasion for any number of reasons, all of which should be verified by the parent/carer. However, I am sure you will agree that excessive lateness can be a cause for concern.

Lateness in school causes disruption, plus actively disadvantages the progress of the pupil that is late and the pupils whose lessons are interrupted by the late arrival. It can also lead to the late child feeling very self-conscious.

Please can I ask that your child resumes a punctual attendance pattern. Drop off times are as follows:

EYFS, Years 1 and 2 – Doors open from 8.35am to 8.45am

Years 3 and 4 – Door open from 8.45am to 8.55am.

If a child arrives at school after the registers have closed, without an adequate reason, we have to record this as an unauthorised absence.

Please make every effort to improve this situation. We will continue to monitor your child's attendance and hope to see an improvement in the coming weeks.

If we can support you in any way to do this, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hollie Cross
Headteacher

Unexplained Absence

Dear (PARENT NAME)

We have been attempting to make contact with you this morning regarding (NAME)'s absence today and have so far been unsuccessful. Please could you telephone the school on 01462 730336 as soon as possible to update us with the reason for (HIS/HER) absence.

Kind regards,

The School Office

Unexplained Absence – Follow-Up

Dear (PARENT NAME)

(NAME) was absent from school on (DATE). Please could you telephone the school on 01462 730336 as soon as possible to update us with the reason for (HIS/HER) absence.

Kind regards,

The School Office

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PLAN

STUDENT:

YEAR GROUP:



ATTENDANCE INFORMATION			
OVERALL %	NO. OF DAYS ABSENT	REASONS GIVEN	
ANY PATTERNS IDENTIFIED/Background Information			

PLAN / DO / REVIEW

BARRIER/NEED/DIFFICULTIES-To be completed with student and parent/carer

OUTCOME (relating to points above)	ACTIONS: STUDENT	ACTIONS: PARENT/CARER	SUPPORT FROM SCHOOL

INTERVENTION / SUPPORT REQUIRED (not outlined above)

DATE AND TIME OF REVIEW 1 (NO MORE THAN 4 WEEKS MAXIMUM FROM DATE OF THIS MEETING)

SIGNED BY MEMBER OF STAFF:

SIGNED BY STUDENT:

SIGNED BY PARENT/CARER:

DATE:

DATE:

DATE:

OUTCOME (relating to points above)	ACTIONS: STUDENT	ACTIONS: PARENT	SUPPORT NEEDED FROM SCHOOL
1			
2			
3			

INTERVENTION / SUPPORT REQUIRED (not outlined above)

DATE AND TIME OF REVIEW 2 (NO MORE THAN 4 WEEKS MAXIMUM FROM DATE OF THIS MEETING)

SIGNED BY MEMBER OF STAFF:

SIGNED BY STUDENT:

SIGNED BY PARENT/CARER:

DATE:

DATE:

DATE:

REVIEW (4 weeks after initial meeting)

DATE AND TIME OF REVIEW I			
ATTENDANCE INFORMATION	OVERALL % INCREASE/DECREASE	NO.OF DAYS ABSENT	REASONS GIVEN
	ANY PATTERNS IDENTIFIED		
FEEDBACK FROM YEAR TEAM (to be collated prior to the meeting and to include most up to date attendance %)			
UPDATE/FEEDBACK FROM STUDENT			
UPDATE/FEEDBACK FROM PARENT/CARER			

PLAN / DO /REVIEW

BARRIER/NEED/DIFFICULTIES 1. 2. 3.
--

FINAL REVIEW (8 weeks after initial meeting)

DATE AND TIME OF REVIEW I			
ATTENDANCE INFORMATION	OVERALL %	NO. OF DAYS ABSENT	REASONS GIVEN
	INCREASE/DECREASE	ANY PATTERNS IDENTIFIED	
FEEDBACK FROM YEAR TEAM (to be collated prior to the meeting and to include most up to date attendance %)			
UPDATE/FEEDBACK FROM STUDENT			
UPDATE/FEEDBACK FROM PARENT/CARER			

NEXT STEPS

--

SIGNED BY MEMBER OF STAFF:	SIGNED BY STUDENT:	SIGNED BY PARENT/CARER:
DATE:	DATE:	DATE:

APPENDIX K

Code	Description
/	Morning session – present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
\	Afternoon session - present at the school when attendance register begins to be taken
B	Attending a place for any other approved education activity
C	Absent with leave for exceptional circumstances
C1	Absent with leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Absent with leave for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual Registration at another school
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
G	Absent without leave - Holiday not granted by the school
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment). Unable to attend because of illness
J1	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority
L	Late arrival before the registers close
M	Absent with leave for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
N	Absent - Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstance
P	Participating in an approved sporting activity
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements by Local Authority to facilitate their attendance
R	Religious Observance
S	Absent with leave for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
U	Absent for registration – arrived in school after registration closed
V	Attending an approved educational visit or trip
W	Attending approved work experience
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of pupil's home and transport to and from school normally provided is not available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and pupil cannot be accommodated in parts of the premises that remain in use
Y4	Whole school closed when school was due to meet for a session, but session has been cancelled
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance to public health guidance or law Travel to or attendance at school would be contrary/prohibited by guidance/law relating to incidence or transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on admission register

<u>Request for Absence During Term Time - Exceptional Circumstance</u>		 ROECROFT Lower School																		
This application will be considered carefully and Roecroft Lower School will authorise in exceptional circumstances only*																				
Child's Full Name Class Period of Absence: for days, from to (inclusive) Reason (Please provide additional information outlining why the absence must be in term time) <i>(Please read the information overleaf before completing this).</i>																				
Signed.....Parent/Carer Date..... Name..... Relationship to child.....																				
Please indicate if your child has siblings at any of our cluster schools: <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>Etonbury Academy</td> <td></td> <td>Fairfield Park Lower school</td> <td></td> <td>Gravenhurst Academy</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Langford Village Academy</td> <td></td> <td>St Mary's Academy</td> <td></td> <td>Robert Bloomfield Academy</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gothic Mede Academy</td> <td></td> <td>Samuel Whitbread Academy</td> <td></td> <td>Pix Brook Academy</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> If other please specify.....			Etonbury Academy		Fairfield Park Lower school		Gravenhurst Academy		Langford Village Academy		St Mary's Academy		Robert Bloomfield Academy		Gothic Mede Academy		Samuel Whitbread Academy		Pix Brook Academy	
Etonbury Academy		Fairfield Park Lower school		Gravenhurst Academy																
Langford Village Academy		St Mary's Academy		Robert Bloomfield Academy																
Gothic Mede Academy		Samuel Whitbread Academy		Pix Brook Academy																
SECTIONS BELOW TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL STAFF ONLY																				
<table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> SCHOOL ACTION: Current attendance.....% </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Class teacher consulted</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Headteacher to authorise</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Previous holidays checked</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supporting evidence required</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </td> </tr> </table>			SCHOOL ACTION: Current attendance.....%	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Class teacher consulted</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Headteacher to authorise</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Previous holidays checked</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supporting evidence required</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Class teacher consulted		Headteacher to authorise		Previous holidays checked		Supporting evidence required									
SCHOOL ACTION: Current attendance.....%	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Class teacher consulted</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Headteacher to authorise</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Previous holidays checked</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supporting evidence required</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Class teacher consulted		Headteacher to authorise		Previous holidays checked		Supporting evidence required												
Class teacher consulted																				
Headteacher to authorise																				
Previous holidays checked																				
Supporting evidence required																				
Application for Leave of absence during term time return slip To..... (Parent/Carer) <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>☐ Permission has been granted</td> <td>☐ Non-Compulsory Age</td> </tr> <tr> <td>☐ Permission has not been granted</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> For: to be absent fordays from.....to..... (inclusive) Reasons given (if appropriate)..... Signed..... (Headteacher) Date..... (PTO)			☐ Permission has been granted	☐ Non-Compulsory Age	☐ Permission has not been granted															
☐ Permission has been granted	☐ Non-Compulsory Age																			
☐ Permission has not been granted																				

Exceptional Circumstances



***Exceptional circumstances are defined as:**

'For service personnel and other employees prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education; and when the family needs to spend more time together to support each other after a crisis'.

NB: The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and Central Bedfordshire expect schools not to authorise absence because of:

- * Availability of cheap holidays;
- * Availability of desired accommodation;
- * Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;
- * Overlap with the beginning or end of term;
- * Another sibling in another school where the holidays do not coincide;
- * A special treat for the child.

We trust that Parents/Carers will work with Roecroft to ensure their child achieves the best possible attendance. Should your application not be authorised and the holiday is taken then a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued.

Once completed, this form must be returned in hard copy to the school office

For more information please call the office or refer to the schools Attendance Policy which can be found on our website www.roecroftlower.co.uk