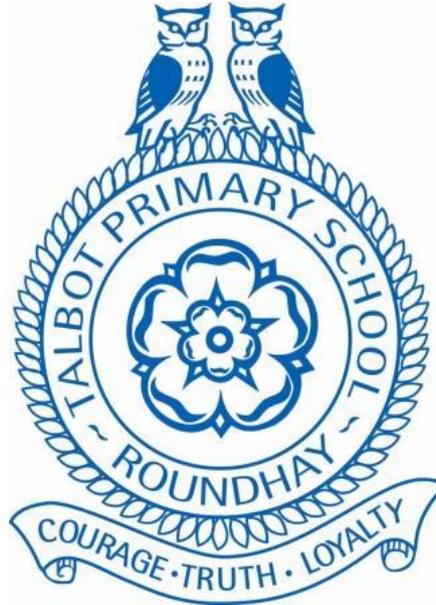


Talbot Primary School



Attendance Policy

Reviewed/Revised: June 2017

Next review: June 2019

Office use:

Statutory	-
Web	✓
Staff Notices	-

Please note that this policy has been written and agreed by schools across the Alwoodley, Roundhay and Moortown Cluster of schools. As a school within this cluster, Talbot Primary has committed to this policy

Mission

Attendance is defined as the participation in a programme of educational activities arranged by the school, which might include an off-site provision. A child's attendance record will follow them throughout their statutory education.

Excellent attendance and punctuality is the key to ensuring that children and young people have the best life chances and opportunities. As a Cluster we strongly believe that having access to and receiving a good education is the best way we can ensure that all children achieve the best possible outcomes, empowering them to make the best and most positive choices about their future lives. It is the responsibility of all schools, parents/ carers and pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all our children and young people receive an appropriate education suitable to their needs. We need to work with families to identify reasons for poor attendance and support them to resolve difficulties.

Our attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is part of all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying and Behaviour.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.
- Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers

Safeguarding and Attendance

Children and young people may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child and young person is everyone's responsibility and within the context of the A.R.M Cluster, promoting the welfare and life opportunities of all children and young people encompasses:-Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety Access to the Curriculum, Anti- bullying

Principles

- Children must attend regularly to achieve their full potential.
- Children who miss out on school can feel vulnerable and left behind.
- Absence in term time is disruptive and can seriously affect a child's education.
- Unauthorised absence can lead to prosecution.

% Attendance expressed in number of days absent

Attendance / absence is presented as a percentage figure, but it's helpful to equate this to number of days off:

98% = fewer than four days absent in a school year
95% = fewer than ten days absent in one school year
90% = 4 weeks absent in one school year (equates to a ½ day each week)
85% = 5.5 weeks absent in one school year (approaching a whole half-term in the school year)
80% = 7.5 weeks absent in one school year (equates to one day each week or a whole half-term)

Over 5 years children with an average attendance of 85-90% will have missed half a school year of education while children with an average attendance of 80% will have missed a whole school year.

Parental Responsibility on reporting absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- Parents need to bring to the school evidence of dates of medical appointments, e.g. copy of medical letter
- Medical evidence may be required if your child has above average illness this could be a copy of a prescription, labelled medication or an appointment card.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you, this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.
- We may refer the matter to the Leeds City Council School Attendance Service if absence falls below 90% (Appendix two: school based interventions)
- If we believe that your child is absent due to a holiday you may be issued with a penalty notice £60 per parent per child.

Persistent Absences

The Department for Education regards attendance of 90% or below as persistent absenteeism.

HALF TERM	90%
1	7 sessions
2	14 sessions
3	20 sessions
4	25 sessions
5	31 sessions
6	38 sessions

Authorised Absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Headteacher's discretion)
- Religious observance (no more than 2 days per academic year)
- Approved leave in term time where there are *exceptional circumstances*, as agreed by the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absence is defined as:

- Holidays in term time (following the Department for Education’s Guidelines)
- Absence in term time where permission has **not** been given by the school in accordance with the A.R.M Cluster Attendance Policy. This means that parents/ carers do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time.
- Late, after the registers have closed (a ‘U’ code will be used)
- Any absence that the school has not been informed of by letter or by telephone;
- Unexplained absence. Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for an extended period (10 days) will be referred to the local authority as a child missing education (CME)
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment.
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives;
- Going shopping or having a haircut;
- Birthdays, Weddings or Anniversaries;
- Transport issues e.g. car broken down;
- Travelling to airport to meet relatives/friends;
- Translating

Punctuality

Being late to school has a significant impact on the amount of learning time lost over a school year. The table gives you an indication of how much time is lost if regularly late.

Minutes late per day	Number of days over 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

Pupils arriving after the register has closed will receive a ‘U’ code ‘Late’ an unauthorised absence mark. In the A.R.M cluster schools actively discourage late arrival and are alert to patterns of late arrival, which could provide grounds for prosecution or a penalty notice being issued.

Exceptional circumstances

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. Absence in term time will only be considered if parents/ carers make a request to the school on the appropriate form (appendix one) giving exceptional reasons why the application for absence has been requested and provide information to support their application.

Please note that the definition of ‘exceptional’ means ‘very unusual’. Therefore, a second request for absence based on ‘exceptional circumstances’ is extremely unlikely to be regarded as such and therefore will not be authorised.

The Headteacher will decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

Parents/carers, who take their children out of school during term time without authorisation, may be issued with a penalty fine of up to £120 and face a possible prosecution in court.

Continuing concerns regarding attendance

If attendance or punctuality continues to be of concern then this will lead to a referral being made to the A.R.M Cluster, Guidance and Support Group. This is a multi-agency meeting where concerns are discussed and appropriate support is then offered. Alternatively a referral may be made directly to The Leeds City Council, School Attendance Service.

Ultimately parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council, School Attendance Service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the local authority in order to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education.

Where necessary statutory action can and will be taken under section 444 Education Act 1996 or Education Supervision Order under the Childrens Act 1989 this may take the form of a penalty notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrates Court resulting in a fine, or a statutory order.

This document is compiled with reference to:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>

The following two Department of Education documents:

https://www.gov.uk/.../Advice_on_school_attendance_sept_2014.pdf (mainly regarding Schools' responsibilities.)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401467/parental_responsibility_measures_for_school_attendance_and_behaviour.pdf.pdf (Mainly regarding parents' responsibility)

Appendix One – Exceptional circumstances request form



EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES REQUEST FORM

SCHOOL:

DATE OF REQUEST:



Name of Children:	First Name	Surname	Class
Leaving date:		Date due back in school:	
Length of absence applied for (number of school days only):			days
Siblings in other schools: Please note this request information will be shared with the attendance lead in the school in which the sibling/s attend	First Name	Surname	School
Contact Details			
Parents: (eg. Mother, Father, Grandparent, Carer):	First name:	First name:	
	Surname:	Surname:	
	Address:	Address:	
	Postcode:	Postcode:	
	Email:	Email:	
	Home phone number:	Home phone number:	
	Mobile:	Mobile:	
	Alternative number while away:	Alternative number while away:	
Reason for absence including full explanation (use a separate sheet of paper is necessary)			
The exceptional circumstances are...			
Point of departure (eg. Airport, Coach, Train Station etc.):		Destination:	
Time of departure:		Flight numbers and name of airline:	

Emergency Contact Details (preferably someone who is staying in Leeds):	*Provide copies of travel plans to support your request.*
First Name:	If child is not leaving with parent(s) who is accompanying them?
Surname:	
Address:	Who will be caring/responsible for the child?
Postcode:	
Relationship to the child:	Why is/are the parent(s) not leaving with the child?
Contact Number:	Name:
	Relationship to child:
	Address: Postcode :

Statutory Declaration

Legal responsibility

As a parent/guardian I understand all children aged between 5 and 16 are required by law to receive an education, and under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, it is my responsibility as a parent to ensure the regular school attendance of my children and that failure to do so could result in legal proceedings being taken by the Local Education Authority.

I understand that requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are exceptional circumstances, and holidays are not considered exceptional. They must also be made to the school in advance, as the Department for Education has told schools that they cannot authorise any absences after they have been taken.

Fines

I understand if my request is unauthorised I am most likely to be fined, £60 per parent, £60 per child (for example a family of 4 with 2 parents and 2 children will be fined a total of £240).

Once the penalty notice is issued, I have 21 days in which to pay the fine. If I fail to pay in that time period, the fine will double and I then have another seven days in which to pay, taking the total time in which to make payment to 28 days.

If I fail to make payment after 28 days then the local authority has the power to prosecute me in the magistrate's court for the offence of failing to ensure my child attends school regularly. A guilty verdict at court can lead to a fine of up to £1000, and a criminal record which can affect employment opportunities.

School places

I am aware that a referral will made to the Local Authority Children Missing from Education Team (CME) if my request is unauthorised and my child hasn't returned to school on the agreed date. This can result in my child losing their school place.

I am also aware that there is a shortage of places in the area, so if my child loses their school place it could result in having to travel to a school out of area or my child without a school, being a detriment to their education and causing implications to my own employment.

Parent's Full Name:

Parent's Signature:

Date:

Parent's Full Name:

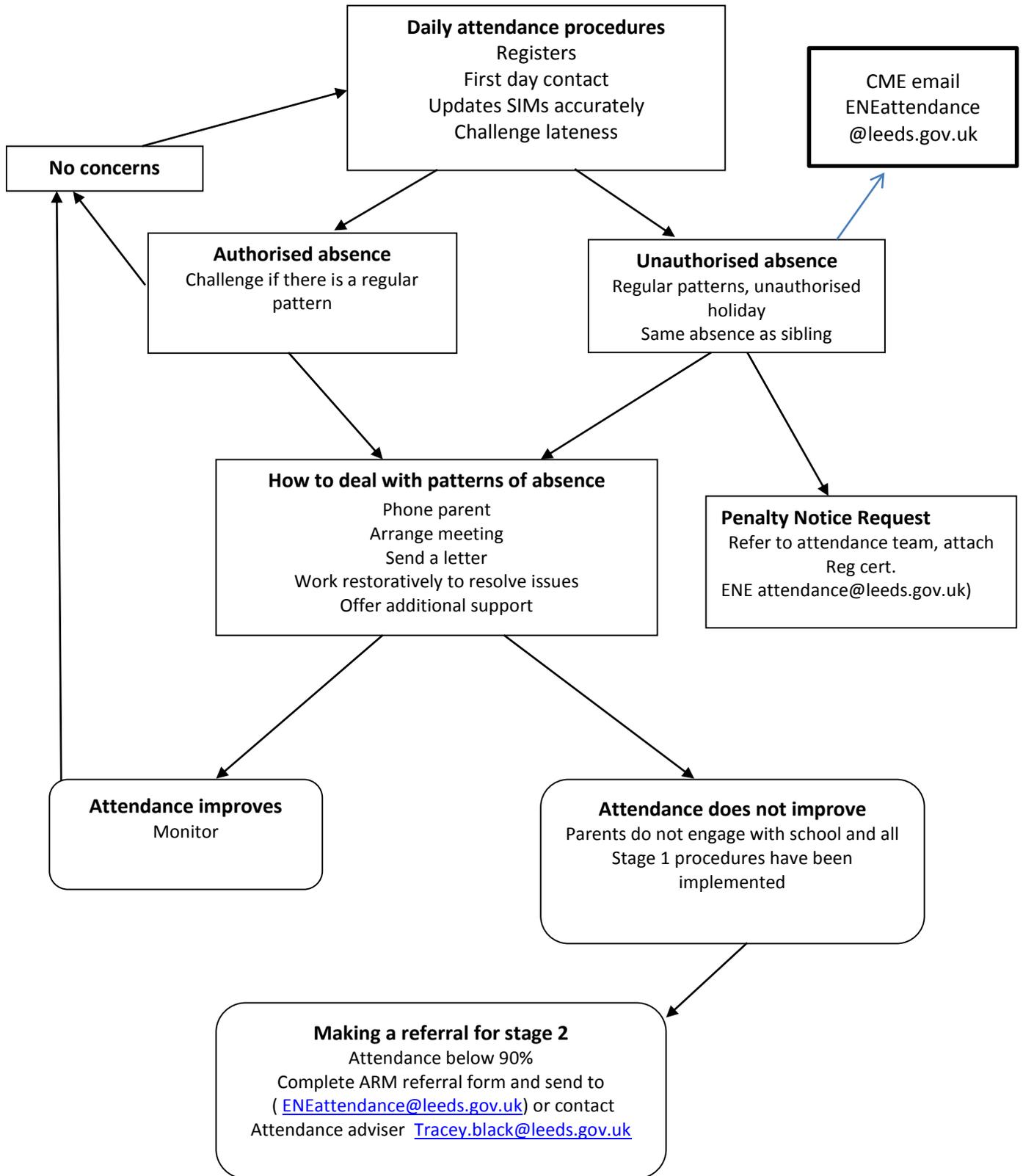
Parent's Signature:

Date:

<u>School Section</u>	Is the requested absence during exams		
Any previous request Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Reason for refusal/Comments			
Authorised/Approved <input type="checkbox"/>		for School days	
Unauthorised /Not Approved <input type="checkbox"/>		for School days	
Headteacher's Signature			

Appendix Two – Attendance process and guidance Stages 1-3

Stage 1



Stage 2

