



**St Chad's**  
CofE Nursery and Infant School

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## Attendance Policy

**School Leader:** K Leach

**Link Governor:** P Geary

**Policy Approved** Signed: P Geary Date: 07.06.17

Policy Reviewed Signed: P Geary Date: 06.06.18

Policy Reviewed Signed: Date:

Policy Reviewed Signed: Date:

Policy Reviewed Signed: Date:



## Statement

St Chad's CofE Nursery and Infant School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that:  
"The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:-

Regular attendance at school is vital if children are to make good progress and to benefit from the opportunities that school offers. Patterns of punctuality and attendance begun at school often continue into adulthood and future employment. Encouraging children to have a responsible attitude towards school attendance helps prepare them for their adult lives. It is important to ensure that the most vulnerable children are given the same opportunities. This may require additional intervention and support.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, the local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and the school will liaise with home and other agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and be recognised as such by the school.

## Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is normal by:
  - ✓ ensuring children are only absent due to illness
  - ✓ encouraging parents to notify school on the first day of absence
  - ✓ rewarding 100% attendance
- To promote a classroom ethos where punctuality is expected and late arrivals are aware that they are disrupting routines and learning opportunities
- To encourage visits to country of origin and other family holidays to be taken during school holidays by not authorising requests for absence during term time except in *very* exceptional circumstances (see 9 Request for Leave of Absence)

## Objectives

- To involve the children in their school attendance
- To have good communication with parents about attendance
- For all school staff to see responsibility for promoting good attendance and recording attendance as part of their role
- To have effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To have an effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service



## Legal framework

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)

This policy also has regard to statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to the following:

- Children Missing Education Guidance Sept 2016
- Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance Sept 2016

This policy also has regard to non-statutory DfE guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2016) 'School Attendance'

## Roles and responsibilities

- The governing body has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Attendance Policy and procedures of St Chad's CofE Nursery and Infant School.
- The governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- The governing body has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- The Head of School is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the Attendance Policy and procedures of the school.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for following the Attendance Policy and for ensuring children do so too. They are also responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, are responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- Parents are expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child during term-time.
- Parents are expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that their child attends school every day.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the school defines:

### "Absence" as:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Not attending school for any reason.

### An "authorised absence" as:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.



- **An “unauthorised absence” as:**
  - Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
  - Truancy before or during the school day.
  - Absences which have never been properly explained.
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
  - Day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed.
  - Leaving school for no reason during the day.
- **“Persistent absenteeism” as:**
  - Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

### Training of staff

- The school recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk children
- Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction.
- Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

### Attendance and Absence

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- i. Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
- ii. Unauthorised (where the school will not approve pupil absence)

It is expected that parents/guardians will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, in person at the school or by appointment. If contact is not made by the parents, then the school will attempt to contact the parents on the first day of absence and on subsequent days.

If absence due to sickness is causing concern, for example attendance has fallen below 90% and the absence pattern is unexplained or made up of several isolated days, a child may be referred to the school nurse and will be referred to The Education Welfare Service. The Head of School may decide that they will only authorise the absence on receipt of suitable medical evidence. This could include a prescription form, appointment card or conversation with health personnel. Parents will be notified about this requirement by letter.

The Head of School will regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

### Completing the Register

The twice daily requirement to register pupils should be perceived as an opportunity to welcome the children formally. Class teachers take the register every morning and afternoon that school is open to pupils. Totals are noted for fire and emergency purposes. Each absence is recorded with the correct code using the symbols advised by Derby City Education Welfare Service.



The Attendance Officer monitors the registers after registration every morning and contacts the parents of first day absentees who have not notified the school.

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the latest versions of Keeping Pupil Registers – Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations and Absence and Attendance Codes – Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities both are published by the Department of Education.

The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that the importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all children. They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law. Any alterations should be visible and explained.

The Governing Body is responsible for registering the computerised registers with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018. The Electronic copies of the register have to be printed out once a month and kept in the same way as manual registers. These are legal documents.

### Contact information

- Parents are responsible for providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Parents are responsible for updating the school if the details change.
- Parents must provide school with a minimum of three emergency contact phone numbers on induction.

### Lateness

**Whole school morning sessions begin at 9:00am.** All children are expected to be in school for registration at these times. Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

All lateness, after the registers are closed (thirty minutes after the start of each session), will be treated as unauthorised absence and the same procedures as for absence will be followed.

In order to support parents doing multiple school drop-offs in the morning, the school gate opens at 8:45am. Parents are actively encouraged to drop-off as close to 8:45am to allow children to settle before starting their formal lessons at 9:00am.

The school also operates a Breakfast Club from 8:00am-8:45am. Parents with punctuality concerns are encouraged to bring their children to Breakfast Club to help facilitate a successful morning routine.

### Monitoring and Referral

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Attendance Officer who will report concerns to the Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA and the Education Welfare Officer.

- Extended Schools and Attendance HLTA will contact parents to arrange an appointment to discuss non-attendance
- If non-attendance continues parents will be invited to school for a formal meeting with the Attendance Officer and/or Community Engagement and Attendance HLTA and Education



Welfare Officer. (if parents fail to attend without explanation the Education Welfare Officer will accept the case work responsibility).

- The Attendance Officer will monitor for a 4 week period the pupil's attendance.
- If no improvement in the pupil's attendance the Education Welfare Officer will be informed and the full case work responsibility will be transferred to the Local Authority.

### **Persistent Absence**

New regulations require that the school monitors Persistent Absence. Any child who has an attendance level of 95% or below on a regular basis is classed as at risk of becoming a persistent absentee by the end of the academic year. This information will be collected every half-term and parents will be informed by letter if their child's attendance places them in this category.

### **Leave of absence**

- No holidays during term time will be authorised.
- Leave of Absence will only be authorised by the Head of School.
- School will continue to authorise up to two days leave per year for religious observance provided a leave of absence request is completed.
- Following guidance from Education Welfare Services the exceptional circumstances, for an absence to be authorised will be:
  1. Significant family bereavement, i.e. Mother (step), Father (step) principal carer or sibling;
  2. Significant family illness to Mother (step), Father (step), sibling or principal career;
  3. Disclosure of significant abuse where a short leave of absence may be beneficial to recovery;
  4. Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or in criminal proceedings.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

Parents/Guardians may receive a Penalty Notice payable up to £60 per parent per child for unauthorised leave of absence or MAY result in the child losing their school place.

### **Home Visits**

During all inductions, parents are required to provide a minimum of three emergency contact phone numbers. If a child is absent and his/her parent/carer has not notified the school, the school may consider a Home Visit if all three emergency contact numbers have been tried and there is no answer.

All Home Visits must be authorised by the Head of School or a member of the Senior Leadership team in her/his absence. Staff carrying out Home Visits must travel in pairs and take a mobile phone. The Head of School must be notified of the address and an approximate return time. Staff must not enter the property as the purpose of the visit is to only verify why the child is not in school. If there is no answer at the property and the whereabouts of the child cannot be affirmed, then the Head of School and/or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will decide whether a referral to Social Care is needed.

In cases where there is the involvement of a Family Social Worker, the Head of School or Deputy Safeguarding Lead may inform the child's Family Social Worker in the event of an absence of school instead of carrying out a Home Visit.



### Attendance officer

If they are persistently absent, children will be referred to the attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices to parents.

### Term-time leave

At St Chad's, our aim is to prepare children for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the school holidays as prescribed.

- The Head of School is unable to authorise holidays during term-time.
- The Head of School is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications will be made in advance and the Head of School will be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term-time leave.
- The Head of School will determine the amount of time a child can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Head of School.
- Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods.
- When a child's attendance record shows any **unauthorised absence**.
- Where a child's authorised absence record is already above 10% for any reason.

If parents take their child out of school during term-time without authorisation from the Head of School they may be subject to sanctions such as penalty fines.

### Truancy

Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

- All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of children, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- All children are expected to be in their classes by 9:00am and 1:00pm, where the teacher will record the attendance electronically.
- Immediate action will be taken in line with the school's safeguarding procedures when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting.

### Missing children

Children are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have an authorised reason which has been agreed by the school's attendance officer e.g. a medical appointment.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing child will inform the Head of School, Senior Leader or Deputy Safeguarding Lead immediately.



- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Head of School, Senior Leader or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

The following areas will be systematically searched:

- All classrooms
- All toilets
- All outdoor play areas (including the Undercroft)
- Changing rooms
- The Learning Zone
- The Sensory Room
- The kitchen
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the child has not been found after 10 minutes, then the police and parents of the child will be contacted.
- The missing child's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- If the missing child has an allocated social worker, is a looked after child, or has any special educational needs, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
- When the child has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the child to ensure they are safe and well.
- The Head of School, Senior Leader or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will take the appropriate action to ensure the children understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the child has been located.
- The Head of School, Senior Leader or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the school's Behavioural Policy.
- A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

### Children Missing from Education

- School will enter children on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the child will attend the school. If a child fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts and consider notifying the EWO at the earliest opportunity.
- School will monitor childrens' attendance through their daily register.
- School will agree the intervals at which they will inform EWO of the details of children who fail to attend regularly, or have missed ten school days or more without permission.
- School will monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. Where a child has not returned to school for ten days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days preparations can be made to remove from the admission register when the school and EWO have failed, after jointly



making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child. This only applies if the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.

**The child can only come off roll once the EWO has confirmed that they can be removed.**

### Religious Observances

School will authorise a maximum of two days leave in an academic year for religious observances but any further days will have to be accompanied by the relevant form and will only be authorised by the Head of School.

Parents are required to inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

### Appointments

As far as possible, parents will attempt to **book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours**. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card will be sent to the school office. If the appointment requires the child to leave during the school day, they will be signed out at the school office by a parent/guardian. Children will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

### Leave during Lunchtime

Parents are permitted to take their child away from the school premises during lunchtimes. Our lunchtime hours are 12pm-1pm. Children must be picked up and dropped off promptly by their parents. Parents are required to meet their child at the school office when taking them off premises. The child will be signed out and back in using the lunchtime register at the school office. The Head of School reserves the right to withdraw the permission for home dinners at any time. This may occur, for example, where there are attendance concerns or concerns over behavior/conduct/food and self-care concerns.

### Attendance Monitoring Procedures

1. The school monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.
2. Our school attendance target is 96 percent.
3. Attendance is discussed by classroom teachers. Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers are passed immediately to the Attendance Officer and Head of School.
4. Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any child absence not reported. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the child is absent for a reason not yet provided;
5. Contact is made to the parents of any child marked using the N code. Any N codes not established during the day are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
6. If a child's attendance falls to 94-95 percent, the class teacher is notified and speaks to the parent to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how the school can help to improve their attendance. A letter is issued from the Attendance Officer.
7. If a child's attendance falls to 90-93 percent, the Head of School is notified and a letter is sent home raising concerns that their attendance has fallen below the school's expected standard. A meeting with the Head of School and parents may be arranged depending on the pattern of absence.



8. If a child's attendance falls below 90 percent, a meeting with the parents and Head of School is arranged. A letter is sent home explaining that the child's attendance is now being monitored, and the attendance officer contacts the EWO to discuss this. A Home Visit may be carried out.
9. If targets are not met, the education welfare protocol is followed, and a parental contract is drawn up. A four-week monitoring period is established and, if there are no improvements, a final written warning is issued to the parents. If there is no improvement after an additional four weeks, a fixed penalty notice is issued.

### Rewards

We encourage parents and children to understand that '*Every day counts*'. We run a number of attendance initiatives to help encourage and reward good attendance as part of our Attendance Matters campaign.

- We reward the class with the best weekly attendance every Friday on arrival in school.
- The class with the best weekly attendance is entered into a weekly raffle. There is a 'winning prize draw' at the end of every half term.
- The class with the best weekly attendance is awarded 'Chad' (the attendance bear) to proudly display in their classroom.
- Certificates for personal attendance are rewarded at the end of each term: Bronze (96-97%), Silver (98-99%) and Gold (100%).
- At the end of the academic year, we run a raffle for all children with 100% attendance. They receive a prize, for example a bike.

### Monitoring and Review

- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff and parents.
- This policy is reviewed annually.



**Information for Parents** (available on the school website and in Slovak)

**Attendance Matters: 'Every day counts'**

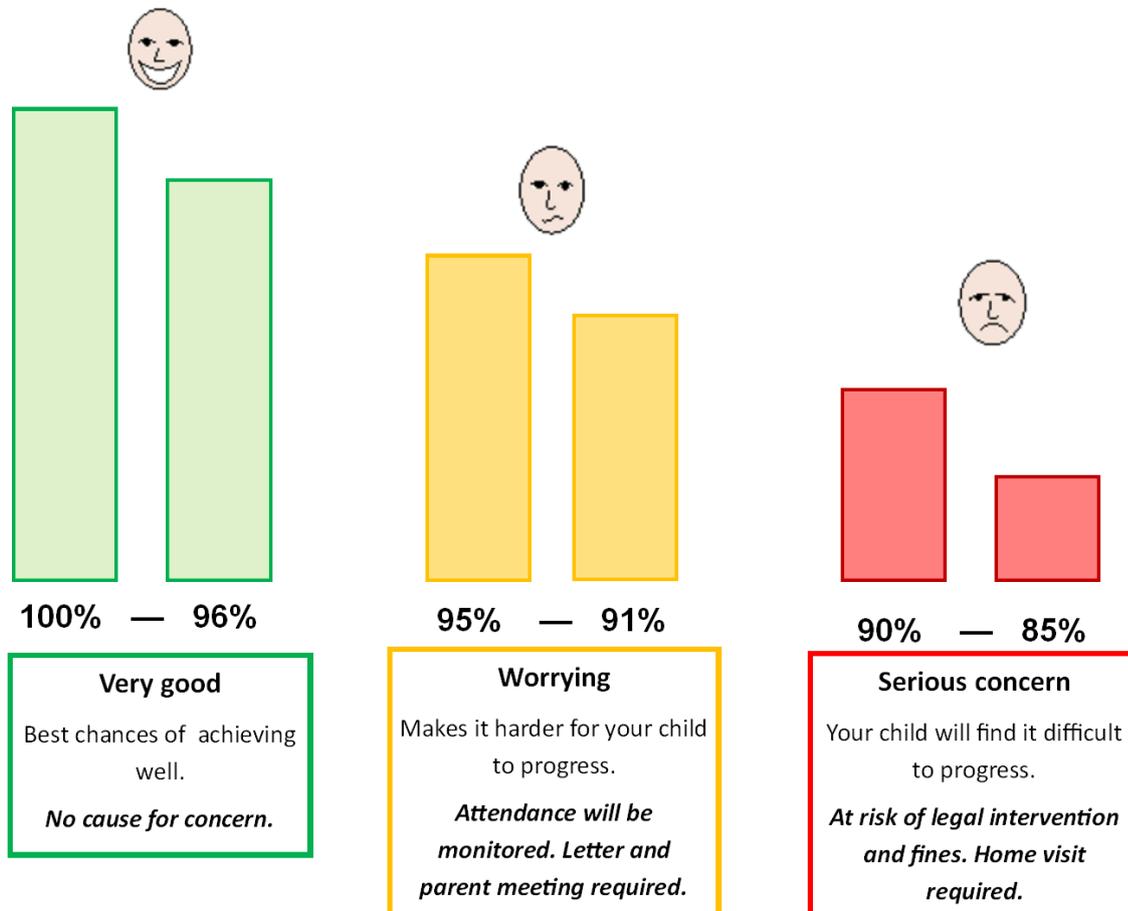
At St Chad's, we are committed to ensuring that each of our children gets the best possible start to life. One way that we can do this is through ensuring regular school attendance. For our children to achieve their full potential we encourage parents and children to understand that 'Every day counts'. We want all of our children to have excellent attendance and arrive in school on time. As a school we strive to achieve a goal of at least 96% attendance.

There are 190 school days in a year (52%). This leaves 175 days (42%) non-school days to spend with family, have visits, take holidays and attend appointments.

We monitor and report attendance and award 'Chad' (the Attendance Bear), stickers and a 'Golden' raffle ticket to the class with the highest attendance rate each week. We also award certificates for personal attendance achievements at the end of each term: Bronze (96-97%), Silver (98-99%) and Gold (100%).

Good attendance is being at school at least 96% of the year!

**Every day Counts**





| Attendance % | Number of days attended  | Number of absent days | Equivalent to....         | Number of missed lessons: 'Lost Learning'   |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 100%         | 190 school days attended | 0 absent days         | 0 weeks off               | 0 missed Phonics lessons<br>0 missed Maths lessons<br>0 missed English lessons    |
| 95%          | 180 school days attended | 10 absent days        | 2 weeks off school        | 10 missed Phonics lessons<br>10 missed Maths lessons<br>10 missed English lessons |
| 90%          | 171 school days attended | 19 absent days        | Over 3 weeks off school   | 19 missed Phonics lessons<br>19 missed Maths lessons<br>19 missed English lessons |
| 85%          | 161 school days attended | 29 absent days        | Almost a month off school | 29 missed Phonics lessons<br>29 missed Maths lessons<br>29 missed English lessons |

**Punctuality**

Not only is it important to come to school every day, but it is equally important to make sure your child arrives on time. **Our gates open at 8:45am and close at 9am.**

**If you arrive after 9am, your child will be marked as late.**

Being late to school means that your child is missing learning time and most probably their early morning activity. We begin our school day with phonics – this is an essential lesson to support your child’s communication, reading and writing.

If your child is 5 minutes late every day for a year this will add up to over 3 days of lost learning. If your child is 15 minutes late every day for a year this will add up to 2 weeks of lost learning! The school monitors and tracks children’s punctuality daily. If your child is persistently late you will be invited to a meeting to discuss this.



*5 minutes late every day results in.....*



3 days of lost learning!




*15 minutes late every day results in.....*



2 weeks of lost learning!



**Absence**

If your child will not be attending school, please inform the school office by telephone on **01332 345997 by 9:30am on the first morning of absence.** Alternatively, report absence directly to the main reception desk.

If no contact is made to school via telephone or at the school office to report an absence, you will be contacted by phone. If no contact is made, a home visit may be carried out to get a reason for absence. You may be asked to provide evidence for the absence.

Please note that if your attendance is below 92% you may be contacted by the school office even if you have informed school about your child’s absence. Where attendance has been highlighted as a concern, a home visit may be carried out.



**Authorised Absence**

An authorised absence is when your child has been given permission to be absent from school. Regular reasons for authorised absence are illness, medical and dental appointments, religious observance, exceptional circumstances and exceptional leave. Authorised absence is at the Head of School's discretion and you may be required to provide school with evidence of the absence:

- Appointment letter or card
- Letter or note from GP
- Mediation or prescription with correct name and dates

Routine doctor and dental appointments should be booked at the end of the day and during school holidays where possible. We know that sometimes you cannot choose hospital appointments so please make sure that you return your child to school after their appointment has finished. Evidence should be provided for all scheduled appointments.

**Unauthorised Absence**

An unauthorised absence is when no explanation for absence has been given to school, or if the reasons provided doesn't meet guidelines set out by the Department for Education. Regular unauthorised absences can lead to a referral to Derby City Council School Attendance Service and the involvement of an Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

**Exceptional Leave – Need to go away?**

The Department for Education states that no child is expected to be absent from school on holiday during term time. We expect that parents will only take their child on holiday during the approved holiday breaks. There are 175 days each year when a child is on holiday from school.

If your child needs to leave the area or country and will miss school due to exceptional circumstances during term time, you must speak to the school office and fill out a *Leave of Absence* form.

If you take your child out of school without permission, the following could happen:

- You could be referred to Derby City Council School Attendance Service and may be issued a fine on your return
- Your child could lose their school place

If your child is granted exceptional leave, your child must return to school on the agreed return date. If they do not, we will have no alternative but to register your child as 'a child missing education'. This could put your child at risk of losing their place in school.



**PARENT AGREEMENT:**

As a parent/carer, I will:

- Ensure my child arrives in school on time
- Ensure my child is collected promptly at the end of the day
- Ensure my child attends regularly and inform the school of any absence
- Ensure my child wears the correct school uniform
- Support the school's 'Golden Behaviour' policy
- Encourage my child to follow the school's code, LOVE
- Attend parent's evenings and any other meetings requested by the school
- Ensure my child reads three times a week and provide opportunities for them to complete their homework
- Read all communications sent out by school to keep up to date with information
- Support the school by encouraging my child to develop a positive attitude towards our diverse and multi-cultural community
- Conduct myself appropriately at all times whilst on the school premises and communicate appropriately with all members of the school community
- Let the school know of any concerns or worries that may be affecting my child's learning or behaviour

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance Matters: Every day counts**

10 Tips to help you and your child make going to school easier:

|  |    |  |  |  |
|--|----|--|--|--|
|  | 1  |  |  | Help get your child's book bag ready the night before.                                     |
|  | 2  |  |  | Make sure your child's uniform is ready the night before.                                  |
|  | 3  |  |  | Get them to bed on time so they have a good night's sleep.                                 |
|  | 4  |  |  | Set the alarm clock early enough to allow plenty of time to get ready.                     |
|  | 5  |  |  | Make sure your child has a healthy breakfast.  |
|  | 6  |  |  | Check that your child has everything before you leave the house: coat, book bag, PE kit... |
|  | 7  |  |  | Leave plenty of time to get to school: punctuality is important.                           |
|  | 8  |  |  | If your child is finding their school work too hard speak to their teacher.                |
|  | 9  |  |  | Talk to your child about what they did in school today.                                    |
|  | 10 |  |  | If you or your child are worried or unhappy about something, contact the school.           |