



LOCATION: SCHOOL HANDBOOK, SECTION I, DOCUMENT 26

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**Date policy first adopted:** January 1997

**Date reviewed:** June 2023

**Reviewed By:** Vicky Aspin

**Date ratified by Governing Body:** n/a

**Date of next review:** Summer 2025

### I. Introduction

This policy sets out the systems and procedures at Abbey Court School for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance. We encourage the whole school community to be involved with systems and procedures. The policy is closely linked to our Partnership with Parents (School Handbook, Section I, Policy No 10) and Home School Agreement Policies, which should be read in conjunction with it. We have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This Policy represents our commitment to striving for 100% attendance, which is achievable, and achieved by many children. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the school will undertake. Strategies, sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor Attendance and Punctuality are also detailed, as well as rewards for, and benefits of good attendance. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published annually in accordance with current legislation and guidance. The DfE guidance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022](#) states that attendance to school is “essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances”.

### Principles

- Receiving a full-time, suitable education is a child’s legal entitlement.
- It is the parents /carers’ legal responsibility to ensure this happens.
- Attending school regularly aids intellectual, social, and emotional development and is essential if children are to benefit fully from their school life.
- Attending school regularly safeguards the welfare of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents.
- All children whose attendance is poor will be treated as vulnerable.

These principles are enshrined in British law, within the Education Act 1996, the Children Act 1989, and other associated pieces of legislation.

## 2. Aim

The aim of the policy is to ensure the regular attendance of all pupils to ensure that they receive their legal entitlement, and can benefit from full-time education and their school experience. This includes attainment, well-being, social development, wider life chances and which offers the best opportunity for their needs to be identified and support provided.

## 3. Objectives

To ensure the regular attendance of pupils we will:

- i) provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and know that their presence is valued.
- ii) ensure parents are aware of the school's expectation of attendance to be at least 95% and raise awareness that attendance is a high priority, through parent/carer meetings, our school newsletter and other communications. (National statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 96%)
- iii) Work with families in a supportive way to remove any in-school barriers and to explain what good attendance looks like and why it is so important.
- iv) implement comprehensive registration procedures and processes which are set out and reinforced in staff induction/training and team meetings
- v) ensure attendance is monitored by Senior Leaders in the School, using the school's system i.e. SIMS, and all absences are rigorously followed up (this includes lateness)
- vi) report all unexplained absences to the Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA).
- vii) Liaise with the Local Authority (LA) and other relevant agencies as needed for those children whose health needs do not allow them to attend school full-time.

For the purpose of this policy, a parent means:

- all-natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).

We expect parents to:

- Provide up-to-date contact numbers and changes of address.
- Provide details of at least two contacts for emergency use.
- Notify the School when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, on the first day of the absence.
- Telephone the School after the first day of absence to advise the School if the absence is continuing.
- Keep the School well informed, in cases of lengthy absence. Parents/carers will be encouraged to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a child's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the Headteacher.
- Provide medical evidence indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor, or optician before the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen, this could be a letter/appointment card. Whenever possible all appointments should be made outside of school hours.

- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day.
- Let the School know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; or if an urgent appointment has been made.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child, aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Provide written explanations of any absence and medical evidence for whole-day appointments as well as medical evidence for persistent absence from school due to alleged illness.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the Headteacher creates an offence in law.

Examples of types of absence that are not considered reasonable and which will not be authorised under any circumstances include:

- Going shopping with parents, Birthdays
- Minding other younger children in the family
- Sibling unwell
- Staying at home because other members in the family are unwell
- Day trips and holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances that have been approved by the Headteacher
- Arriving at school too late to get a present mark (After the close of registration)
- Truancy
- Death of a pet

#### Reduced Timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary/ reduced timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents them from attending full-time education and a reduced timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. ([Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)).

A reduced timetable would only be considered for the shortest time necessary. This can only be agreed by the Headteacher who will consider each case individually. Where this has been agreed, there will generally be clear expectation to return to full-time as quickly as possible and this will be reviewed regularly approximately every 6 weeks with the parent. In this case it will be recorded as an authorised absence.

#### 4. Registration

- 4.1 The register is taken twice a day, at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions (9am and 1.15pm). The class teacher takes registration electronically via the SIMS database (should the system be inaccessible then the teacher must take a handwritten register of attendance and ensure this is immediately taken to the office). A registration sheet is printed and taken to the office following both morning and afternoon registrations. Cut off times for the class teacher to complete the register are 9.20am and 1.20pm, which is the close of each registration period. In the event of a fire evacuation, the print outs will be collected and used by the fire warden to confirm which pupils are present.
- 4.2 The register will show whether the pupil is present, absent or engaged in an off-site activity.
- 4.3 Absences for all pupils of compulsory school age show whether the absence is one where: the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be out of school or HAS ACCEPTED an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for absence. Any absence which is either not approved or remains unexplained within 2 weeks of the absence, will be recorded as unauthorised.
- 4.4 All other absences will be recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to the school's Attendance Advisory Practitioner.

**NB** Parents may not authorise any absence; only the Headteacher may do this. All absences are treated as unauthorised until the school agrees and accepts an explanation as satisfactory. It is up to the parent to put a request into the Headteacher or provide an explanation for the Headteacher to consider.

- 4.5 Registers are legal records and we will keep every entry in attendance or admission register for 3 years from the date of entry.
- 4.6 Pupils will be entered on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend school
- 4.7 Registration codes are used at Abbey Court as follows:  
(The school records data in the SIMS database.)

/ = Present (AM)

\ = Present (PM)

B = Educated off site

C = other authorised circumstances

D = Dual registration

E = Excluded (no alternative provision made)

G = Family Holiday (not agreed or days in access)

H = Family holiday (agreed)

I = Illness (not medical/dental)

J = Interview

L = Late (before registration closed)

M = Medical/Dental appointments

N = No reason yet provided for absence

O = Unauthorised absence  
P = Approved sporting activity  
R = Religious observance  
S = Study leave  
T = Traveller absence  
U= Arrived in School after registration closed  
V = Educational visit or trip  
W = Work experience  
Y = Enforced Closure  
Z = Prospective Pupil not on admission register

If the school is temporarily closed (e.g. due to severe weather/heating failure etc), a 'Y' code will be applied to the registers.

## Monitoring of Absence

Procedures for monitoring absence are as follows:

<b>9.00 am Register taken</b>	<b>9.20 am Registration Closes</b>
<b>1.15 pm Register taken</b>	<b>1.20 pm Registration Closes</b>
The school office will check registers on a daily basis and make a note of all pupils where messages explaining absence have not been received from parents/carers. Telephone calls will be made to parents in all cases where a message about a child's absence has not been received. The process for this is as follows: -	
<b>STEP 1</b> Clerical Officer to identify absent pupils from the completed register.	
<b>STEP 2</b> Checks to be undertaken to establish whether the absence is known (i.e. reported previously in the contact book as a medical appointment).	
<b>STEP 3</b> Telephone calls to be made to parents/carers of absent pupils from 9.30 am requesting an explanation for the absence (if a call in to school has not been received). Call attempts will be made to all available contact numbers.	
<b>STEP 4</b> Pupil absence telephone call log to be updated with details of call and outcome of conversation.	
<b>STEP 5</b> If a message is left, the call will be repeated if a return call has not been received within 2 hours. Calling from a school mobile phone and sending to parent(s) email will also be attempted.	
<b>STEP 6</b> If no contact has been made with the family by this point, the information will be passed to the Leadership Group. (If Social Workers have active involvement and interest, the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will decide whether or not to advise them of the pupil's absence.)	
<b>STEP 7</b> If no explanation has been provided, office staff will send home via home delivery, standard forms to parents, for their completion to enable the school to consider whether to authorise absences.	
<b>STEP 8</b> Where no authorisation can be gathered from letter or telephone contact with parents or known family members, and the absence is 3 days or more, the Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) will be advised and the School's Safeguarding Team for any absences incurring more than 10 days	
<b>STEP 9</b> On the basis of the outcome of Steps 1-8, the School will make a decision, whether the Late (L) code or Unauthorised (U) code will be used.	

- 5.0 Each term, the AAP will attend the school to meet with the attendance Lead (Assistant Headteacher/Deputy Head Teacher) to discuss pupils whose attendance is under 95% (without medical impact) or where there are cases of unauthorised absence. Percentage analysis of attendance is carried out prior to each visit to identify pupils for discussion. At the meeting, each pupil is reviewed and a course of action is agreed between the AAP and school with consideration of early help, parenting contract/agreement or social care involvement.

5.1 A follow-up discussion takes place at the next meeting to ensure there is an audit trail on actions until the attendance level improves and meets expectations. An agenda is set by the AAP and formal minutes are taken. A summary report is provided to the Headteacher/Governing Body. The AAP also reviews school policy relating to attendance, receives the school's annual attendance returns and undertakes register checks at both sites.

6. Deleting pupils from the school roll

6.1 The school will seek advice from the LA (as appropriate) before removing a pupil from the school roll.

6.2 Whenever possible, the parents of a pupil moving to another area or school will advise the school of the name of the new school, the date they will start and new contact and address details. This will be confirmed with the receiving school. A Common Transfer File (CTF) will be sent or received to/from the new school to exchange information on the transferring pupil.

6.3 The AAP and Child Missing in Education Officer (CME) will be advised and a referral completed if parents:

- move out of the area;
- if a pupil has disappeared without explanation;
- if the pupil has not returned to school on the agreed return date for holiday taken in term time.

6.4 Whenever a pupil joins or leaves the school (outside of usual start/finish periods within the academic year), the school will submit the relevant 'Reduced Timetable' referral to the Local Authority and review this approximately every 6 weeks in accordance to the process.

6.5 Pupils who are transitioning into a new phase of education should be clearly tracked (this includes Year R (EYFS), Year 3 and Year 7) to ensure the safeguarding of these pupils. Once the school has ascertained the pupil has not arrived at their school (on school roll), there is a clear process to report to the Local Authority's School Admissions Team. Once relevant investigations are made and the pupil is confirmed as not on roll, a referral will be made to the Children Missing Education Officer (CME – AASSA). The CME officer will liaise with social care and family solutions to ensure cross-directorate communication and the safeguarding of the pupil. The pupil will be tracked by the CME officer (AASSA) until the pupil is in receipt of education.

7. Collating and analysing attendance data

7.1 The School office is responsible for the collation and analysis of attendance data. This task is undertaken regularly.

7.2 Senior staff are alerted by the office staff of:

- any pupil who is absent
- any pupil who has an unauthorised absence
- any pupil who has authorised absence of more than one week's duration (e.g. has been sick for more than one week)
- any pupil on an agreed reduced timetable

- 7.3 Senior staff will investigate and contextualise the data further (e.g. Examine a pupil's previous attendance history, discuss the absence with classroom/nursing staff to verify illness etc). If parents repeatedly fail to provide satisfactory reasons for the absence, Senior Staff will make a referral to the AAP. Patterns and trends of absence will also be reported to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner.
- 7.4 The AAP will then decide on the action to be taken, including legal action if appropriate.
- 7.5 The AAP attends regular (termly) meetings at the school in order to follow up on previous pupils referred to AASSA, and to be made aware of any new concerns. The AAP also supports the school in monitoring absences.
- 7.6 The lead attendance officer shall take advice from AASSA for any absences incurring more than **5** days and the School's Safeguarding Team for any absences incurring more than **10** days.
- 7.7 The school has a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing education (CME). The AAP from AASSA will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

The school will complete regular data collection checks throughout the year and encourage parents to provide updated information as soon as there is a change.

#### 8. Leave of absence for holidays

School may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance. Requests for holiday absences are dealt with on an individual basis and only after the parents have made a written request to the school. The school requires a period of notice of (14 days) to consider a request. The Headteacher will make the decision and ensure a letter is sent to parents authorising or declining a leave of absence (LOA) request.

Should parents decide to take their child/ren on a leave of absence, despite being informed the absence will be unauthorised, a referral may be made to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner with a request to issue a Penalty Notice. Parents must pay £120 for each pupil within the household within 28 days, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay within 28 days will lead to prosecution.

#### 9. Illness, medical and dental appointments.

It is noted that some pupils at Abbey Court may have high numbers of these appointments because of their complex medical needs. If a pupil is an irregular attendee, the parent/carer must provide the school with a copy of an appointment card/record or medical letter confirming the appointment. Office staff and class teachers will keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to the site via the class register and the signing-in/out system in case of an emergency. Class teachers must advise the office of any notes from parents in home-school contact books referring to appointments during the school day. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, senior staff will refer to the school nursing team, school medical officer, the Attendance Advisory Practitioner and or the pupil's GP. All pupils receiving medical treatment on the school site are marked in the register as present.



#### 10. Long-term sickness (authorised by medical personnel).

We support pupils who are absent for long-term medical reasons. For example, we provide parents with advice on the delivery of IEP targets at home, provide homework, promote access to our equipment, loan libraries and liaise with other supporting professionals e.g. hospital schools/home tuition services.

#### 11. Consequences of Poor Attendance /Punctuality

For pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality fails to improve, after a range of interventions and support measures have been tried by the school, the ultimate consequences may be one of the following:

- 1) From February 2004, new measures introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 have made it possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence from school amounting to 10 sessions (5 days) can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. These Penalty Notices require the recipient to pay a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, or £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in prosecution.
- 2) The Local authority may initiate court action under Section 444 1/1A of the Education Act 1996, which could lead to fines of up to £2,500, or even imprisonment.

In some cases, action may be taken under the Children Act 1989 to protect the welfare and development of the child.

#### Leavers and children who cease to attend without prior notice (CME) procedures

Parents must inform the school in writing if they are planning to remove their child from Abbey Court School. This must include the details of the new school the child is planning to attend or that they are exercising their right to educate their child otherwise. All Education Otherwise information will be passed to the Home Education Officer and the Inclusions Team at Medway Council, who are responsible for monitoring all children who are educated otherwise. Abbey Court School will notify the home education officer, when the parent/carer informs them of their intention to home educate, to enable sufficient time to liaise with parents/carers and ensure.

If, after ten day of continuous absence, the school has been unable to ascertain the whereabouts of a pupil, they will refer the child's details to the Local Authority, in order to perform further checks that are not available to the school.

#### Non-starters

Pupils who are allocated places but fail to start are also treated as CME. If the school has been unable to make contact with the family during a ten-day period after their expected arrival, they will refer the pupils to the Local Authority for further checks.

#### Vulnerable Children

Children who are In Care (CIC), subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) or Children in Need (CIN) will be treated with the highest priority and will be known to the Attendance Officer. Any unexplained absence will be followed up immediately by a telephone call to the home. Any outside professionals who are also working with the children and family will also be notified of the absence (Social worker, AAP etc). Children with Special Educational Needs (SEND) will be treated with similar priority in order that their time in school can be maximised, and their learning supported to the greatest extent possible

## 12 Evaluation Monitoring and Review

- a. The AAP will undertake a scrutiny of all registers termly to ensure practices are being followed appropriately and that:
  - absences are being rigorously followed up
  - data is being effectively analysed
  - senior staff are taking appropriate course of action in respect of non-attendance.
- b. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the School Leadership Team in consultation with staff, Governors, parents and other involved professionals (e.g. nursing team/AAP) to ensure the needs of pupils are being met. The policy will be deemed to be effective if attendance rates remain high. This will demonstrate that the policy supports regular attendance and ensures that non-attendance is dealt with efficiently and effectively.
- c. The policy will also be reviewed in light of changes in DfE Legislation / Ofsted requirements / LA requirements.

Reference: The Educational (pupil registration), (amendment) regulations 1997  
Education Act 1996  
Children Act 1989  
Supporting Guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance May 2022 'and related legislation to which it refers', applies from Sept 2022 and replaces all previous guidance on school attendance  
Public Sector Equality Duty

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Authorised and Unauthorised Absence  
Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for Pupil Discipline Committee  
Appendix 3: Missing Out letter  
Appendix 4: Late letter

## **Appendix I**

### **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

Parentally-condoned unauthorised absence is a serious problem in some schools. Although requiring a different response to child-initiated truancy, it amounts to the same thing: the unauthorised absence of a pupil of compulsory age.

By law only the Headteacher can approve absence, not parents. School staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence, whether written, telephoned or given in person, if they doubt the explanation.

Any further investigation should be handled sensitively, but if after this, questions remain (or where no satisfactory explanation is forthcoming), the absence must be treated as unauthorised. Where parentally-condoned unauthorised absence appears to be a problem with a particular pupil, schools should involve the AASSA at an early stage.

Excessive amounts of authorised absence can also seriously disrupt continuity of learning and encourage disaffection. School staff should therefore look out for emerging patterns of authorised absence by individual pupils or groups of pupils.

### **Illness, medical and dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is authorised absence. Parents should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card is required for the absence to be authorised for all pupils.

If a pupil is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, or goes home because of illness, no absence need be recorded for that session.

Schools should keep a record of pupils leaving or returning to site in case of an emergency.

### **Days of religious observance**

This is an absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.

Abbey Court School will be sensitive to such requests and parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.

### **Interviews with prospective employers or for a place at another school (including entrance examinations)**

School staff should normally ask for advance notice and proof of the appointment, for example a letter of invitation.

If the interview takes place during Year 11 and the school is satisfied that it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as approved educational activity.

## **Study Leave**

Study Leave should be granted sparingly, not exceeding 15 school days and should be for Year 11 only. The most appropriate time to grant study leave is during the actual examination period itself.

If possible the period of study leave should be less than the examination period. Regard should also be paid to the individual pupil's ability to manage study leave and benefit from it. Study Leave cannot be counted as an 'approved educational activity' as it is unsupervised.

## **Exclusions**

A pupil excluded for a fixed period remains on roll and the absence should be treated as authorised as it results from a decision taken by the school. Similarly, the absence of a permanently excluded pupil is treated as authorised while any review or appeal is in progress.

In the case of a permanent exclusion the pupil's name should be removed from the school roll on the first day after the day on which:

- i) the independent appeal panel upholds the permanent exclusion
- ii) the independent appeal panel does not uphold the permanent exclusion, but does not direct the pupil's reinstatement.
- iii) the prescribed period for lodging an appeal has expired and the parent has not lodged an appeal.
- iv) the parent has, before the expiry of the prescribed period, advised the LEA in writing that he does not intend to appeal.

In the meantime, the absence is to be recorded as authorised.

The school is responsible for setting work for an excluded pupil who remains on the school roll.

## **Traveller child when the family is travelling**

To help ensure the continuity of learning for traveller children, dual registration is allowed. This means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling.

While the traveller is away, the base school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised.

Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at the school.

## **Family Bereavements**

Abbey Court School will respond sensitively to requests to attend funerals or associated events and have the discretion to authorise such absences.

## **Child caring for a sick or disabled family member (young carers)**

In a genuine crisis, a school can approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made. The school should set a time limit for the absence and set some school work so the pupil does not fall behind while at home. Referral to outside agencies should be done

sensitively, recognising that a child may fear being 'put into care' if the parents are seen as unable to cope. In the final analysis, it is important to remember that in accordance with the Children's Act 1989, the interests of the child are paramount and that advice should be sought from Social Services.

### **Family prison visits**

Schools should authorise requests which will enable a child to visit his or her parent in prison.

### **Birth of a child**

Support should be directed to keeping the pupil in school wherever possible and to her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth.

A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks of authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

### **Special occasions**

Schools should consider each request individually. Only exceptional occasions warrant a leave of absence. For example, attending the wedding of an immediate family member would be acceptable, but a day out of school for the pupil's birthday or for a shopping trip would not.

Schools should consider; the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off or likely to become a regular occurrence); whether a parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's overall attendance pattern.

### **Public performances, including film or TV work**

The production company must have applied for a permit to perform and the Local Authority will licence a pupil to take part in a public performance if all necessary paperwork is submitted.

Agreed participation should be treated as authorised absence.

### **Lateness**

Schools should actively discourage late arrival and be alert to patterns of lateness as unauthorised absences, which could provide grounds for prosecution.

Thirty minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable, but schools can set shorter periods. For health and safety and educational reasons, it is important that a late book is kept to note the children who arrive after the registers are closed. These records are invaluable in the event of an incident such as a fire.

In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, schools may keep the register open for a longer period.

Pupils at Abbey Court School will be referred to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner once 6 late sessions have been recorded.

### **Phase Returns**

Where a pupil has had a period of medical absence, the school will discuss with the parent, the basis for a phase return to school where this is needed. This would usually be over a period of 2 weeks

and will be agreed with Parent(s), who will sign a Parent Agreement, unless medical evidence is provided, in which case, an alternative arrangement such as a Reduced Timetable will be followed.

***Parents should encourage good routines in the morning so school transport is not regularly being missed.***

In the event, there are ongoing issues with Transport, School may also liaise directly with Medway SEN Transport.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Terms of Reference for Pupil Discipline Committee**

#### **Membership**

The committee shall consist of three members.

Neither the Headteacher nor non-governors may be members of this committee.

#### **Quorum**

Three.

#### **Clerking**

A meeting will be clerked by a member of the school's administration team.

#### **Responsibilities**

To receive representations from parents whose child has been excluded for any period.

To consider the circumstances of any pupil excluded permanently or for more than five days in a term or who will be unable to sit a public examination as a result of exclusion.

To decide whether to direct reinstatement of any such pupil so excluded.

#### **Appeals**

An independent panel established by the Local Authority deals with appeals by parents against the decision of the Pupil Discipline Committee.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Missing Out Letter**

Dear

#### **Missing School Means Missing Out!**

**It is important that Government guidelines regarding attendance are followed during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Missing school means missing out – this is a simple but very important message.

Missing out soon adds up. Throughout their 12 years of compulsory education, a Medway pupil can lose out on more than a whole year of education if they are absent for half a day each week or one day each fortnight.

Family holidays in term time can have more of an effect than parents realise. Two weeks off in each school year for 12 years is equal to missing two full terms of education, which will have a negative impact on children's success at school and seriously affect their future. Headteachers are not obliged or expected to authorise absence from schools by pupils, including family holidays, except in the most serious and exceptional circumstances.

Your child's current attendance is \_\_%. At Abbey Court School, the expectation is that pupils achieve at least 90% attendance every year. We work very closely with the Local Authority to monitor and improve pupil attendance. I am sure that, as a parent, you will want to help me in this by ensuring your child improves their attendance and that you are not supporting or condoning any absence.

If the school feels there is a need to further review the situation to improve your child's attendance, you may be invited to a meeting to discuss this further.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school or request to arrange a meeting if you would like to further discuss this letter or feel you require any additional support with your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

[Designated Attendance Lead]



## **Appendix 4**

### **Late Letter**

Dear

**NAME:**

**DOB:**

**SCHOOL:**

During a recent meeting at Abbey Court School, the school and I discussed the fact that \_\_\_\_\_ has arrived late for school on several occasions, and was not present for registration. Children arriving in class late cause disruption to other pupils. I enclose a copy of the attendance sheet highlighting \_\_\_\_\_ late days.

The law states that children must attend school regularly and punctually, and if not present for registration may be marked as absent. The school will refer to the Attendance Advisory Practitioner service when 6 or more late arrivals are recorded, where this does not relate directly to known Transport service issues.

I shall be grateful if you would look at the reasons causing \_\_\_\_\_ lateness, and identify ways in which late arrivals can be prevented in the future.

Yours sincerely

**[Designated Attendance Advisory Practitioner]**

Copies to:  
School and File