



Dated: September 2022  
Review Date: September 2023

### **Attendance Policy**

Manorway Independent School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote good attendance for all our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Headteacher Juliana Dugbatey, Attendance Lead Candy Mcgough and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Manorway Independent School.

### **The Role of the School Staff**

At Manorway Independent School there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility. The wellbeing officer has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance issues.

Class teachers and form tutors complete a register at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Pupil Registration (England) Regulations 2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The class teacher or form tutor notifies the wellbeing officer of children whose attendance is causing concern.

It is the responsibility of the Wellbeing Officer to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on each day of absence by phone call.
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence.
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (See School attendance guidance May 2022)
- Following DFE guidance, all parents are informed termly of their child's attendance figure

## **Parental Responsibility**

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrives on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school by 9.00am each day of their child's absence. An answerphone is available to leave a message if the office is unattended  
Parents are expected to send in a written note of explanation for all absences on the pupil's return to school

For medical appointments during the school day, parents are expected to provide evidence in advance of the appointment.

## **Registration Times**

The lower Key stage 2 register is opens at 9:30am and again at 11:45pm.

The Upper key stage 2 register is opens at 9:30am and 12:30pm.

The Key stage 3 and 4 registers opens at 9:00am and 13:15pm.

Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L').

The Lower key stage 2 register will close at 9:45 am and 12:00pm.

The Upper key stage 2 register will close at 9:45am and 12:45pm.

The KS3 and 4 registers will close at 9:15am and 13:30pm. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U') and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for prosecution.

## **Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance**

- After 3 days of absence a medical evidence letter will be sent.
- If further unauthorised absence occurs, then parent/carer will be invited in for an attendance concern meeting with the headteacher and AAP if relevant.
- Where the level of absence is not improving and there are unauthorised absences, the school will make a referral to the Medway Attendance Advisory Service (AASSA)
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make a referral to Children's Services.

**Local Authority Action may include:**

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

**Penalty Notices Proceedings for unauthorised leave taken during term time.**

**Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Medway Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct.**

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Head teacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the case may be referred to the Inclusion and Attendance Service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of school.

**Exceptional circumstances could include:**

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.

Any examples provided are illustrative rather than exhaustive. It is acceptable to take a pupil's previous record of attendance into account when the school is making decisions. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. It is important to note that Head teachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are **guilty** of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28-day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

### **Children Missing Education**

No child will be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher, the Local authority and parent.

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

## Appendix

Appendix 1 Attendance expectation letter

Appendix 2 Additional information required to authorise absence

Appendix 3 Declining leave of absence

Appendix 4 Unauthorised absence

Appendix 5 Response to Leave Request (Not Authorising

Appendix 6 School attendance concern meeting

Appendix 7 Medical evidence letter

**PN1**

**Appendix 1**

**Parent/Carer Name**  
**Parent/Carer Address**  
**Date:**

Dear

**Excellent attendance means fulfilling potential**

**Name:**  
**DOB:**  
**Form/Class:**

Manorway Independent school is committed to ensuring all children achieve their full academic potential and believe that good attendance means good learning.

The positive impact that regular attendance has on a child reaching their full academic potential and the benefits this brings to emotional and social well-being. All students are expected to attend school regularly.

As from September, the school, in conjunction with Medway Council Attendance Advisory Service to Schools and Academies (AASSA) will be monitoring your child's attendance. In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded, a referral will be made to AASSA.

The 1996 Education Act clearly states, "If any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/carer of the child shall be guilty of an offence". The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

I do hope that you will work with us to continue to improve attendance for the benefit of your child's education. If you wish to discuss your child's attendance, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**

**Parent/Carer Name**  
**Parent/Carer Address**  
**Date:**

**Appendix 2**

Dear

**Additional information required to authorise absence**

**Name:**  
**DOB:**  
**Form/Class**

Manorway Independent School is committed to ensuring all children achieve their full academic potential and believe that good attendance means good learning.

The positive impact that regular attendance has on a child reaching their full academic potential and the benefits this brings to emotional and social well-being. The school's expectation for pupil's attendance is at least 96%.

Unfortunately, your child's attendance last academic year has caused concern, as such it is necessary to inform you that we will now require medical evidence before any further absences are authorised. Such evidence will include: an GP appointment card, letter regarding a hospital appointment, copy of a prescription or packaging/labels from medication bought from pharmacy with a receipt.

In the case of a child's absence being as a consequence of medical need, we are keen to work closely with parents/carers to ensure that education provision is maintained.

The 1996 Education Act clearly states, "If any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/carers of the child shall be guilty of an offence". The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

I do hope that you will work with us to continue to improve attendance for the benefit of your child's education. If you wish to discuss your child's attendance, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**

**Letter 1**

**Parent/Carer Name**  
**Parent/Carer Address**  
**Date:**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

**Declining leave of absence**

**Name:**  
**DOB:**  
**Form/Class:**

Thank you for your letter regarding absence from school from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

I am sure you will agree that it is important that your child's education is consistent and uninterrupted. We will not authorise term time holidays during the 190 days each year designated for school. We expect parents/carers to use the thirteen weeks school holidays available during the year.

The Department of Education (DfE) and Local Authority states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. Although we sympathise with your situation, unfortunately it is not exceptional. If your decision remains unchanged and you decide to take your child out of school, it will be recorded as unauthorised and may be subject to a Penalty notice.

From September 2013, the DfE amended the Education (penalty notices) (England) Regulations 2007, so that each parent/carers who receives a Penalty Notice for taking their child out of school during term time has to pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. Please be aware, non-payment of penalty notices, will result in Court proceedings.

In line with our school attendance policy, the Attendance Advisory Service for School and Academies (AASSA) issue penalty notices after the holiday is taken to each parent/carers per child.

If you wish to appeal the decision and you feel that the reason for leave of absence fulfils the exceptional circumstances criteria, then you should write to me upon receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely

**Head Teacher**



**Letter 2**

**Parent/Carer Name**  
**Parent/Carer Address**  
**Date:**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

**Unauthorised absence**

**Name:**  
**DOB:**  
**Form/Class:**

In response to the request submitted for your child's absence between \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ we informed you that it was not possible to authorise this absence.

Our records show that you child was absent between \_\_\_\_\_ and returned to school on \_\_\_\_\_. As a consequence, it is unfortunate that I have to inform you that this leave of absence has been formally recorded as unauthorised.

Previously we have written to you explaining that the Department of Education (DfE) states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. We informed you that although we sympathise with your situation, unfortunately it was not viewed as exceptional.

The decision you have taken may be subject to a penalty notice. The Department for Education (2007 regulations) state that parent/carers who receive a penalty notice for taking their child out of school during term time are required to pay this penalty notice (£60) within 21 days or the amount will increase (£120) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. Please be aware non-payment of these penalty notices, will result in Court proceedings.

Attendance Advisory Service for School and Academies (AASSA) issue penalty notices and they will be issued after the holiday is taken to each parent/carers per child, in line with our attendance policy.

Should you wish to discuss this, please make an appointment to meet with me.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**

**Letter 3**

**Parent/Carer Name**  
**Parent/Carer Address**  
**Date:**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

**Name:**  
**DOB:**  
**Form/Class:**

You applied for leave of absence for your child between \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ which as we informed you (insert date of letter of letter sent), was not authorised by the Headteacher.

Consequently, the leave of absence has now been taken it has been recorded as unauthorised absence and your child/ren has returned to school, the details have been passed to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) for the issue of a Penalty Notice.

The Department for Education (2007 regulations) state that parent/carers who receive a penalty notice for taking their child out of school during term time are required to pay this fine (£60) within 21 days or the amount will increase (£120) and is expected to be settled within 28 days. Please be aware non-payment of these penalty notices will result in Court proceedings.

Yours sincerely

**Headteacher**

**School letter 2 – attendance concerns meeting**

**Parent/Carer Name**

**Parent/Carer Address**

**Date:**

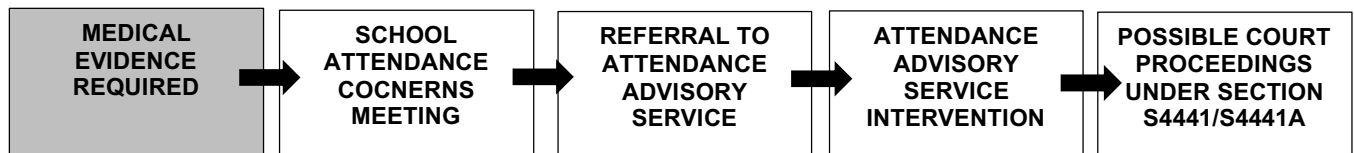
Dear **PARENT/CARER NAME**

**School attendance concerns meeting**

I am writing to express our concerns regarding your child's current level of school attendance. **PUPIL NAME** attendance is just **XXXX%** with unauthorised sessions of absence recorded. I enclose a copy of **PUPIL NAME** registration certificate for your records.

I have therefore arranged a school attendance concern meeting to be held at **NAME OF SCHOOL**, on **DATE at TIME** in order to discuss the matter and establish how an immediate improvement in **PUPILS NAME** attendance can be achieved.

You are currently at the school attendance concerns meeting stage of our Attendance Policy, and it is therefore essential that you attend the arranged meeting. Failure to attend and **PUPIL NAME** continued poor school attendance will result in a referral to Medway Council's Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA).



**IMPORTANT - If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact the school as a matter of urgency in order for alternative arrangements to be made.**

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Enc Registration certificate

**Suggested letters to Parent/Carer**

**School letter 1 – Medical evidence**

**Parent/Carer Name**

**Parent/Carer Address**

**Date:**

Dear **PARENT/CARER NAME**

I am writing to express our concerns regarding your child’s current level of school attendance. **PUPIL NAME’s** attendance is just **XXXX%** with **XXXX** unauthorised sessions of absence recorded. I enclose a copy of **PUPIL NAME’s** registration certificate for your records, which also shows their punctuality and whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

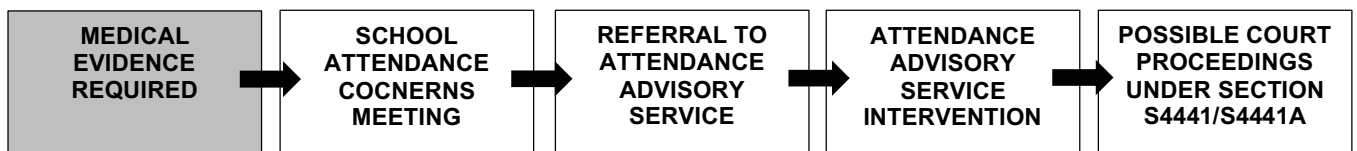
For children to reach their full potential, a good attendance is vital. The Department of Education (DfE) classes students with under 90% as ‘persistent absentees.’

Due to the concerns we have with **PUPIL NAME’s** poor school attendance, we now require medical evidence to be provided before any further absence is authorised. The acceptable forms of evidence are a doctor’s appointment card, an appointment letter from a hospital, a copy of a prescription or packaging or labels from prescribed medication. Further unauthorised absence will result in a referral to Medway Council’s Attendance Advisory Service for School’s and Academies (AASSA).

Regular attendance is extremely important, as missing school can have a significant impact on learning and can affect a student’s progress. As parent(s), it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he is registered, regularly and punctually.

Please contact us, as a matter of urgency, if **PUPIL NAME** has a medical condition that would necessitate their current level of absence, in order for appropriate support to be provided. Both as a school and, as parents, we share a vital role in ensuring that children maintain their education.

We are committed to ensuring your child’s attendance reaches the expected level and we hope that you will work with us to ensure **PUPIL NAME** fulfils their academic potential.



Yours Sincerely,

Headteacher  
Enc Registration certificate

