



# The Milford Academy

## Attendance and Absence

### Policy

Ratified at Governors 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2023

**M** - Motivated

**I** - Independent

**L** - Learning

**F** - Forward Thinking

**O** - Outstanding

**R** - Respect

**D** - Determined

DOCUMENT ORIGINS			
Organisation	The Milford Academy	Version date	October 2023
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Senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance at school	Louise Butler		
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Revision date	Author of changes	Summary of changes
Oct 2023	Louise Butler	Time register will be marked by.
		Remove school comms text sent on first day of absence.

## Statement of intent

School attendance is everyone's responsibility. The Milford Academy believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow 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 them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

## 1. Legal framework

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

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

**The governing body has overall responsibility for:**

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

**The Headteacher is responsible for:**

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to be an 'Attendance Champion'.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

**Staff are responsible for:**

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.

- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Form positive relationships with families and build trust between school and home.
- Rewarding good attendance.
- Ensuring that children feel safe and happy to attend school

**The attendance team is responsible for:**

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.
- Assisting parents and pupils with problems which may affect school attendance
- Rewarding good attendance.
- Referring to other agencies where there are specific needs and concerns.

**Pupils are responsible for:**

- Recognise they have to attend school
- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.

**Parents are responsible for:**

- Bringing their children to school on a regular basis and for them to be prepared for their day when they arrive.
- Arriving on time
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.

**Family support worker is responsible for:**

- Supporting families
- Establishing good school routines

**Education Welfare Service are responsible for:**

- Providing a communication link between school and the Local Authority (LA)
- Helping parents to understand their legal responsibilities and rights within the Education system
- Advising parents who to contact within the LA for specialised assistance.
- Liaising with identified school staff

- Undertaking home visits, either pre-arranged or without notice as considered necessary on receipt of a detailed referral.
- Instigating legal proceedings on behalf of the LA including parental prosecutions in the Magistrates' Court and if deemed appropriate, apply for Education Supervision Orders through the Family Court.
- Planning and reviewing casework.
- Providing feedback to schools.
- Offering strategic/policy advice, support and training in relation to matters of attendance and absence from school.
- Working together with schools in the management and promotion of improving school attendance.
- Advise and support schools in the use of penalty notices and parenting contracts within the provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- Hold termly targeted support meetings

### **3. Definitions**

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

#### **Absence:**

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

#### **Authorised absence:**

- 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 (Evidence will be required)

#### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily and/or without an authorised reason
- Absences which have never been explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays etc.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### **Severely Absent**

- Missing 50% or more of schooling across the year for any reason

## 4. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

School gates open at **8:45am** and children have 15 minutes to arrive in their classroom. The school day starts at **9:00am**, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by **9:10am**. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark
- The morning register will close at **9:25am**. Pupils will receive a mark late after register closes mark (U code) which denotes as an unauthorised absence
- The afternoon register will be taken at **12:45pm** in FS2 and nursery and at **1:05pm** in KS1 and KS2.

### WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

<b>0 – 2 DAYS OFF</b>	99-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance matters sessions</li> <li>• Acknowledge consistent weeks and 100% weeks</li> <li>• Discuss tutor group/ overall class attendance and offer praise to movers</li> <li>• Tutor/teacher to discuss 96% attendees with Attendance Officer</li> </ul>
<b>4 – 7.5 DAYS OFF</b>	96- 98%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Request notes for unauthorised absences and update relevant systems</li> <li>• Talk with parents and students regarding attendance levels dropping</li> <li>• Trigger first attendance letter for children falling within 96-98% attendance category and phone call home</li> <li>• School to complete home visit</li> </ul>
	93-95%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge improvement in attendance for the students who have moved into this category from the below categories</li> <li>• School staff to have weekly check ins</li> <li>• School to complete home visit</li> </ul>

<p><b>9.5 – 17</b> <b>DAYS OFF</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School to consider Early Help assessment to highlight barriers to learning and offer support (<i>requirement for LA</i>)</li> <li>• School to develop an attendance plan with parent at a parent meeting (<i>requirement for LA</i>) – <i>second letter to be sent</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>19 – 25</b> <b>DAYS OFF</b></p>	<p>90-92%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge improvement in attendance for the students who have moved into this category from the below categories</li> <li>• At 90% - letter to parents advising them that EWS will be informed of their child's attendance</li> <li>• At Targeted Support Meeting discuss individual students; agree Attendance Panels.</li> <li>• School to complete EWS referral for suitable cases. Education Welfare Specialist to approve referrals.</li> <li>• School to maintain contact with the family and continue with their attendance procedures; telephone calls, home visits etc</li> </ul>
<p><b>27 +</b> <b>DAYS OFF</b></p>	<p>Under 89%</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge improvements in attendance</li> <li>• Letter to parent/s informing them that a referral has been made to EWS</li> <li>• EWS procedure begins</li> <li>• Attendance Panel. Education Welfare Officer to attend.</li> <li>• School to maintain contact with the family and continue with their attendance procedures; telephone calls, home visits etc.</li> </ul>

## 5. Absence procedures

### Illness and other legitimate reasons.

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone, email or via School Comms on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

The school will decide in all cases whether to authorise an absence on the basis of the evidence available.

### Holidays in term time (family holidays)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that schools can no longer grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If families, choose to take their child out of school during term time for an unauthorised holiday/leave of absence they will be referred to Education Welfare for a penalty notice to be issued.

- Penalty notices are issued per parent per child. They are £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid then the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings against you under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of this offence you could be fined up to £1000
- A referral will be made for a Penalty Notice to be issued if the school is informed or suspect that a family has been on holiday whilst suggesting to the school another reason of absence. It will be up to the family to prove that they have not taken a family vacation
- Children/young people taken out of school for a holiday will have the non-attendance recorded as an unauthorised absence 'G' code
- A child or young person who does not return to school at the end of the recorded unauthorised holiday date will initially be subject to enquiries being made by the school.
- If after ten days of the expected return date, the child/young person has still not returned to school, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for further enquiries to be made.
- Following the above information, if a parent/carer still intends to take their child on holiday during term time, they have a duty to inform the school of this action and give at least 6 weeks' notice of the event
- Parent/carers must complete a 'Leave of Absence' form, obtained from the school office (Appendix 1)

### Responding to non-attendance

The following actions may be applied when addressing concerns around non-attendance to all pupils:

- Parents are asked to phone and leave a message on the school answerphone system. A telephone call will be made to all pupils who are absent and school have not received a message from the family.
- Failure to inform the school of reasons of absence will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded. A second text message will be sent explaining this.

- If face to face or telephone contact appears to be deliberately avoided, we will, as a school, consider unannounced home visits
- Any child, who is absent for more than 3 days, is required to bring in medical evidence as proof of illness. Failure to inform the school of a child's reason of absence may result in a home visit from a member of our Attendance Team
- Teacher will contact parents if a child has 3 days of absence within a half term to discuss if there are any problems or concerns that they could support with. These 3 days do not have to be consecutive but should also give parents more of an insight into gaps in learning and the knock-on effect these days can have.
- Pupil attendance is reviewed every week

### **Persistent Absentees**

All pupils with an attendance rate of **90%** and below are considered as persistent absentees and will be closely monitored. The following actions are highly probable for such cases:

- A text message will be sent to inform the family of their child's attendance has fallen below 90% along with an 'Attendance Reach-out' questionnaire
- A letter will be sent out to inform parents of the actions if their child's attendance remains or continues to fall below 90%
- Further absences will be unauthorised unless one of the following is shown to school: a medical certificate, a letter from a medical practitioner, dated prescribed medication or an appointment slip/text message.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend an attendance clinic in school if there is little or no improvement in their child's attendance. This may require parents to work alongside our Family Support Worker to improve their child's attendance and routines.
- An Attendance Improvement Plan will be put in place and reviewed. Copy will be given to parents.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend a formal review with our Deputy Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer if attendance shows no improvement
- Removal of F1 placement will be considered
- A formal request for intervention will be made to the Education Welfare Service for legal action to be considered
- For any child whose attendance falls below 60% - agencies will take full account of all that is known about the child and consider completing a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) for additional support from Children's Social Care
- Whenever possible, the school's Attendance Leads and/or Family Support Worker will offer support and guidance to avoid poor attendance levels. Looking at alternative support to help avoid those external barriers preventing a parent from bringing a child to school.

### **Lateness**

Registration periods last for 10 minutes after which time the register will close. Any pupil arriving after the start time, but within the ten minutes will be recorded as an 'L' code which signifies late.

Any pupil arriving after 9:25am will be recorded as 'U' code which signifies that they arrived after the official close of the register, which denotes an unauthorised absence.

Issues relating to punctuality will initially be addressed with the parents/carers in the following ways:

- If there are 2 or more lates in a one-week period, parents will receive a text message
- If this occurs for 3 occasions, a call will be made to parents to discuss
- If no improvement is made, parents will be informed that we will monitor lateness with U codes
- If there is still no improvement, formal meetings in school will be arranged where attendance targets will be agreed.
- If The Local Authority will be asked to issue a Penalty Notice on the school's behalf for any pupil registered late (recorded as U) 10 sessions or more in a six-week period.
- The school may request that a Penalty Notice is issued where there has been persistently lateness that results in unauthorised absences being recorded.

### **Safeguarding/leave of absence in term time/extended leave of absence**

Any safeguarding issues pertaining to a child being taken out of school in circumstances that cause concern will be addressed directly to the Social Care Duty Team via a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).

Any child absent from school for more than 20 days will be referred to the Children Missing Education(CME) team after all relevant checks made by school.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures and Attendance Policy:

- Parents are expected to contact school on the first day of absence
- School will contact parents if no reason of absence has been given to school, initially by School Comms text, if there are attendance, welfare or safeguarding concerns this will also include a telephone call
- School Comms text and phone call if no contact has been made, on the previous day, additional emergency contact numbers will also be called
- Potential home visit if no contact is made, and contact made with any additional agencies who are working with the family (who may be in a better position to visit the family)
- Referral to CME if information is gained that the family have moved out of area
- Referral to CME if child has not returned after 10 days with no contact from the family after efforts made by school, if we believe the child should or may be removed from roll whether the onward school is known or not
- The Children Missing Education (CME) Officer within the Education Welfare Service will work closely with the school to try to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination
- Both parties will then agree an appropriate time and category to remove the child from the school roll. This includes those children and young people who are expected to move swiftly into appropriate provision; this is in line with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- After 20 school days of absence and efforts by both the school and CME to find the child prove unsuccessful, the CME Officer will consult the school to discuss whether to remove their name from the school roll. The final decision about removal from a

school roll remains with the Headteacher following consultation with the Local Authority via CME

- The school will create a 'lost pupil' record on the national Lost Pupil's Database School to School (s2s) to assist future schools and Children Missing from Education Officers to identify and locate children
- It is the duty of both the Education Welfare Service and school to collaborate in finding the pupil before deleting them from the register
- For further information please contact the CME Officers directly - [cme.educationwelfare@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:cme.educationwelfare@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

## 6. Attendance register

The school uses SIMS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

## **7. Authorising parental absence requests**

### **Leave of absence**

At The Milford Academy, we request that all applications for leave of absence must be made 6 weeks in advance by the parents/carers or corporate parent that the pupil normally resides with. We request that a Leave of Absence form (see Appendix 1) and a conversation with the attendance team be completed. Then, a written response will be provided.

Any leave of absence granted by the school is recorded as authorised absence using the appropriate national code. Periods that are refused are recorded as unauthorised absences. At The Milford Academy, when considering such requests we take into account the following:

- Circumstances of the request
- Purpose of the leave
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record over the last twelve months
- The amount of time requested
- Length of the proposed leave
- The proximity to SATs
- General welfare of the pupil

As mentioned, such requests receive a response in writing that addresses the following points:

- The expected date of return
- That the parents are expected to contact the school if anything delays the pupil returning to school when expected
- What action will be taken if the pupil fails to return when expected
- Additional family contact numbers/email addresses

A letter will be sent out should a request be refused. This will state what action will be taken if the parents/carers ignore the refusal and keep their child away; (Appendix 2) with a follow up letter after their return stating that a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for a request for service and/or a penalty notice to be issued (Appendix 3)

### **Healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible and appointments need to be made during

school hours, parents will be expected to provide proof of appointments (appointment cards, letters, texts, emails etc.) to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointment. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least two weeks' in advance.

In Nottingham city one day for each religious festival should be counted as authorised absence. The Pupil Regulations 2006 state that absence for religious observance should be treated as authorised (absence) *'on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs'*. Additional days off for shopping or for extended celebrations should be treated as unauthorised absence.

In respect of pilgrimages, school may request to see copies of visas. Dates of return should also be agreed prior to the period of leave.

## **8. SEND- and health-related absences**

The Milford Academy recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the school's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

### **Managing absences of pupils with health care needs**

- Parents are advised to contact the school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness
- Absences of pupils with health care needs will not be authorised unless the family has had prior discussion with school staff about the challenges and difficulties presented by their child's needs; this will enable school to understand the context and complexity of their child's additional health care needs. The Milford Academy is committed to supporting all children regardless of their needs and is very much interested in offering support, guidance and referral to the relevant agencies
- Absences of known pupils due to health needs will be authorised (using the relevant codes) unless the school has genuine cause for concern which will trigger attendance and/or safeguarding procedures

- The school will continue to provide support to pupils who are absent from school because of health needs by liaising with the pupil's parents to arrange schoolwork as soon as the pupil is able to cope with it and if available facilitate online access to the curriculum from home
- To help ensure a pupil with additional health needs is able to attend school following an extended period of absence, a personalised or part-time timetable will be considered. Agreed periods of absence due to a part-time education timetable will be recorded with a C code for pupils of compulsory school age and an X code for non-compulsory school aged pupils

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Early Help Assessment
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable for a limited time.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and break times.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **9. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's

levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the attendance team will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance team will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance team will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

#### Appendix:

Appendix 1 Leave of Absence Form.

Appendix 2 Letter 1- following request for leave of absence, if leave is refused.

Appendix 3 Letter 2 – follow up letter after their return stating that a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for a request for service and/or a penalty notice to be issued.

Appendix 4 Attendance reminder sent to parents – September 2023

#### **Education Welfare & EOTAS Service letters:**

Appendix 5 Letter 1

Appendix 6 Letter 2

Appendix 7 Letter 3

Appendix 8 Letter 4



The Milford Academy

**Appendix 1**

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM**

Nottingham City Council takes a zero-tolerance approach to school absence. Our school Attendance Policy states that all family holidays should be taken during the school holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances, this includes:

- Parents in the armed forces who are on leave and wish to spend time with their families and children
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

**Authorisation will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and will be at the sole discretion of the Head Teacher.**

Any holidays taken during term time will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please note that penalty notices are issued per parent/carer, per child, and are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, any resultant legal proceedings would relate to section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Name:	
Class:	
First date of school absence:	
Last date of school absence:	
Date returns to school:	
Number of days missed:	
Reason for absence:	

I have read and understood the above and this unauthorised absence does not meet exceptional circumstances.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

ON LETTER HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 2**

DATE

ADDRESS

Dear

**Leave of Absence re: CHILD'S NAME (DOB)**

Thank you for completing a leave of absence request for **CHILD'S NAME**. I am writing to inform you that your request has been given consideration in line with The Milford Academy's Attendance Policy and guidance from the Nottingham City Local Authority and unfortunately, on this occasion, it has been declined.

If there are any exceptional circumstances that you wish to be considered please ensure that the evidence is brought into school for our attention by **DATE**

Should you choose to take your child out of school during the period requested, the absence will be marked as unauthorised on the school register and the matter may be referred to Nottingham City Council (the Local Authority), for consideration of a penalty notice.

Please note that penalty notices are issued per parent/carer, per child, and are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, any resultant legal proceedings would relate to section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

If you wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me or Mrs Butler.

Yours sincerely,

R Perkins  
Head Teacher

ON HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 3**

DATE

ADDRESS

Dear

**Leave of Absence re: CHILD'S NAME (DOB)**

Following our previous letter on **DATE**, we are aware that **NAME** was taken out of school between the following dates; **DATE** and **DATE**. **NAME** returned to school on **DATE**

Any application for leave must be for exceptional circumstances and agreed by the Head Teacher prior to travel, in accordance with The Milford Academy's attendance policy. No satisfactory evidence has been provided to authorise the absence and therefore, the matter will be referred to Nottingham City Council (the Local Authority), for consideration of the issuing of a penalty notice.

Please note that penalty notices are issued per parent/carer, per child, and are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, any resultant legal proceedings would relate to section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

If found guilty of this offence you could be fined up to £1000.

Yours sincerely,

R Perkins

ON HEADED PAPER

## **Appendix 4**

September 2023

### **\*\*\*School Attendance\*\*\***

Dear Parents & Carers,

We have a commitment to working in partnership with our parents and carers to ensure that all our children attend school as regularly as possible.

Following the release of new guidance on attendance for all schools across England by the Department for Education (DfE) we wish to inform and remind parents and carers of their responsibilities.

#### **Parents/carers must:**

- ensure your child attends every day that school is open.
- notify the school as soon as possible when your child is unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Not reporting absence will trigger a call home, and unreported sustained absence is a safeguarding issue.
- only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance - Family holidays, in most cases, are not exceptional circumstances.
- book any medical appointments around the school day where possible. A routine medical/dental appointment should not mean a child misses a full day of school.

#### **If your child is persistently (10% or over) absent we expect you to:**

- work with the school (and when necessary, the local authority) to help us understand your child's barriers to attendance.
- proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.
- proactively engage with any formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

#### **In return the school will:**

- regularly update you on your child's attendance.
- always follow up absence that is unauthorised and/or not notified.
- use enforcement through the Local Authority if your child's absence triggers a referral – this may involve the Education Welfare Service (EWS) from the local authority.

**To find out more about the guidance please follow this link:**

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Attendance %	Comments / actions
98 - 100%	Excellent attendance! Pupils should make the best progress they can which leads to better prospects in the future.
96 - 97%	Good attendance. Very few learning opportunities missed. Pupils likely to make good progress.
94-95%	Risk of underachievement. Pupils are missing around 10 days of school per year.
92 – 93%	High risk of underachievement. Pupils are missing around 15 days of school per year. School will develop an attendance plan with parents / carers.
90 – 92%	Severe risk of underachievement. Pupils are missing around 19 days of school per year.  Attendance concerns will now be escalated for discussion at a Targeted Support Panel, held jointly with an Officer from the Education Welfare Service.
Below 89% or below.	Extreme risk of underachievement. Pupils are missing around 19 days of school per year.  Children will miss 22 or more days of learning over a school year – at this point a request for service will be made to the Education Welfare Service who will consider any legal intervention.  Failing to ensure regular attendance at school may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution. Penalty Notices are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Any legal proceedings would relate to section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Best wishes,

Mr Perkins

Head Teacher

ON HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 5**

Full name of parent

Full address

Date

Dear

**Re: CHILD NAME AND ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE**

At **{your school}** each child is expected to attend every session available however, from time to time, we appreciate this may not be possible.

According to our records, **{name of child}** has been absent from school on the following dates:

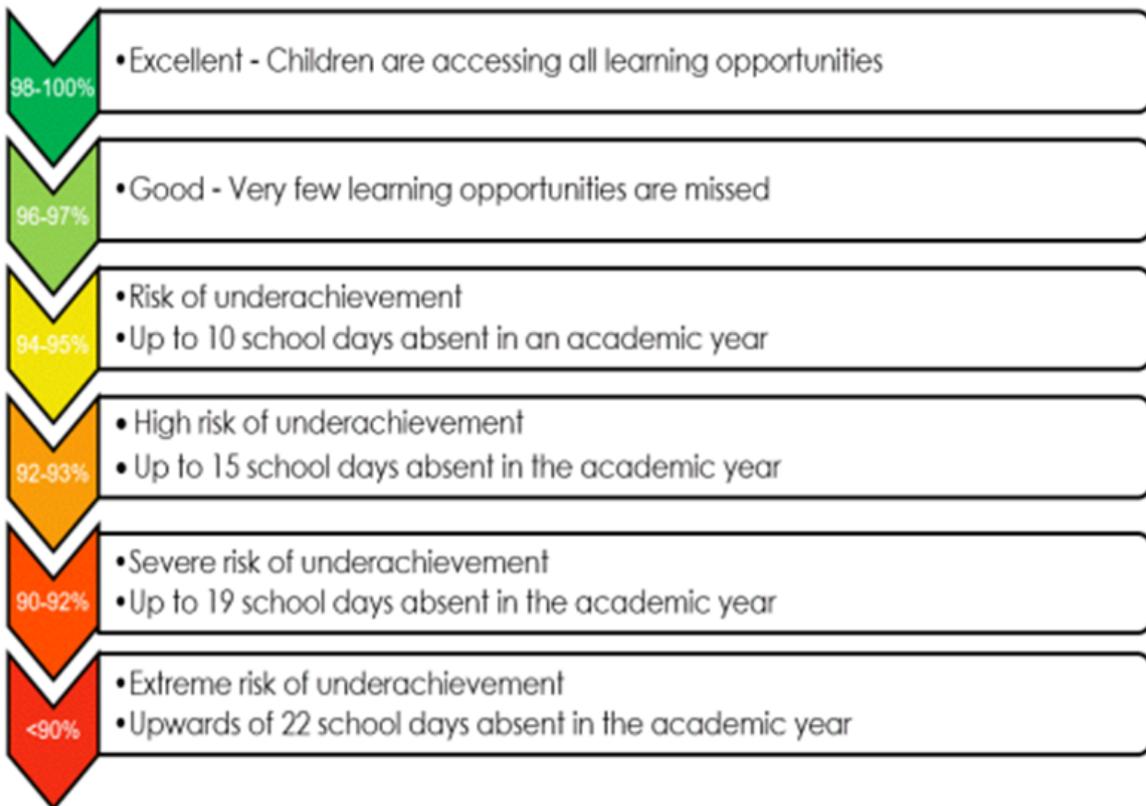
As you are aware all parents are expected to notify the school on the first day of any (pupil's) absence to provide the reason for all absence along with an expected date of return to school. To date we have not received any contact from you. Please contact school as soon as possible to explain the reason for these absences.

Failure to notify school of any absence that has not been explained within two weeks will be recorded as unauthorised absence. This is when the reason provided does not comply with Government guidelines or no reason has been provided. The decision to authorise absence is a school decision.

We are committed to working with you to improve your child's attendance. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me on 0115 9152951.

Yours sincerely,

L Butler



ON HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 6**

Full name of parent

Full address

Dear

**Re: CHILD NAME AND ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE**

Following my previous letter dated **{date of letter 1}**, **{name of pupil}**'s attendance has failed to improve and now stands at **{attendance percentage}**. Your child is now at risk of becoming a persistent absentee.

Studies confirm that poor attendance at school directly impacts on a pupil's achievement. It is essential that **{name of pupil}** improves **(his/her)** attendance in order to increase the chances of academic success.

In order to discuss this matter further I am inviting you to attend a meeting at school with me on:

**{Day}**

**{Date}**

**{Time}**

At this meeting an attendance improvement plan will be developed in order to address any barriers your child may be experiencing and to look at strategies to support their attendance.

School will continue to monitor your child's attendance. Should this fail to improve (pupil name) may be discussed at a Targeted Support Panel with the Local Authority.

We are committed to working with you to improve your child's attendance. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me on 0115 9152951.

Yours sincerely,

L Butler

ON HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 7**

Full name of parent

Full address

Date

Dear

**Re: CHILD NAME AND ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE**

I am concerned that despite previous interventions you have failed to provide a satisfactory explanation for **(pupil's name)** absences. I enclose your child's registration certificate for information.

***EITHER (Delete whichever paragraph that does not apply)***

You were recently invited to a meeting to discuss the attendance concerns but you failed to attend. The matter will now be escalated for discussion at a Targeted Support Panel, held jointly with an Officer from the Education Welfare Service. A decision will be made as to whether a referral to the service is appropriate at this stage.

**OR** You recently attended a meeting to discuss the continued absences. At that meeting we developed and agreed an attendance improvement plan together. A copy of this plan along with the meeting minutes are enclosed. Your child's attendance has failed to improve and will now be discussed at a Targeted Support Panel, this will include an Officer from the Education Welfare Service.

Failing to ensure regular attendance at school may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution. Penalty Notices are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Any legal proceedings would relate to section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

We are committed to working with you to improve your child's attendance. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me on 0115 9152951.

Yours sincerely

L Butler

Enc. (select appropriate)

Attendance certificate

Attendance Improvement Plan

Meeting minutes

ON HEADED PAPER

**Appendix 8**

Full name of parent  
Full address

Date

Dear

**Re: CHILD NAME AND ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE  
PERSISTENT ABSENTEE**

Unfortunately, despite the interventions outlined below, (child name) attendance has failed to improve, and they are now classed as a persistent absentee.

***(insert attendance interventions/ offers of support)***

A request for service has now be made to the Education Welfare Service who will consider any legal intervention.

Failing to ensure regular attendance at school may result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution. Penalty Notices are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Any legal proceedings would relate to section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

As a school we have a responsibility to continually monitor and review your child's attendance. We are committed to working with you to improve your child's attendance. If you wish to discuss this matter further, please contact me on 0115 9152951.

Yours sincerely,

L Butler