



**At Thakeham we CARE**

# **Attendance Policy**

## **Thakeham Primary School**

<b>Date approved by the Full Governing Body:</b>	<b>July 2023</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>July 2024</b>
<b>Headteacher:</b>	<b>Will McDonald</b>
<b>Chair of the Full Governing Body:</b>	<b>Tom Gray</b>
<b>Policy written in house by the Headteacher and Attendance Officer.</b>	

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflects the vision and aim of Thakeham Primary School by:

- ★ Providing for procedures to ensure the school can support all children and parents to attend school.
- ★ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

### ATTENDANCE PRINCIPLES

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum and that all of their physical, emotional and academic needs are met. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open; unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent/carer.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives them the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the information about the cause of each absence is always required, in writing or by telephone.

***Authorised absences are morning and afternoons away from school for a reason such as a genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.***

***Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which “no leave” has been given. This includes:***

- ***Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;***
- ***Truancy before or during the school day;***
- ***Absences which have never been properly explained;***
- ***Children who arrive at school after the morning register is closed;***
- ***Absences due to an appointment for a parent or sibling***
- ***Absences for a parent or sibling who is unwell and holidays during term time***

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## **PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may seek involvement from the West Sussex Behaviour Attendance Service. They will work with the school and parent to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed then this service can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or three months imprisonment.

### **PROCEDURES**

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

#### **The Role of Parents and Carers**

- To contact the school at an early stage and work with the staff in resolving any problems together;
- To ensure that the aim is for their children to achieve 100% school attendance;
- To ensure that pupils are on the premises from **8:40am** and in class for the morning register by **8:45am**. Gates close at **8:50am** and the register closes at 8:55am.
- The school front gate opens at 8:40am and parents must ensure pupils head inside to lessons.
- To take children who are late (**8:50am** onwards) to the main entrance to sign in;
- To collect children at the end of the school day, which finishes at **3:15pm**. After this time, children are the responsibility of their parents or carers;
- To collect children promptly from after school clubs;
- To ensure that the school has current parent/carers and emergency contact telephone numbers and addresses.

#### **Absences for Medical Reasons**

It is the responsibility of parents or carers:

- To notify the school by telephone on the first and subsequent days of absence, as early as possible and not later than 9:00am.
- To agree a later registration time with the Headteacher if the child needs regular medical attention before coming to school. The child must always be signed in at the office on arrival.
- If a child has a medical appointment then parents must inform the office in writing and provide medical evidence ahead of the appointment. If this cannot be provided, we cannot authorise this absence. We will accept appointment letters/email/texts. If the child needs to attend a medical appointment in school time, please try to make all appointments out of school hours.
- If you are unsure as to whether a child is ill or not, please send them in and we will liaise

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with you if we deem them too unwell to stay. This does not apply to contagious infections.

- To liaise with the school about specific family problems, which might cause absence. If a child is absent due to parent/sibling medical reasons, the parent must provide a Medical Appointment card, but also note this will be an unauthorised absence. **Every opportunity must be sought for the children to attend school in the first instance.**

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### Withdrawal from Learning Requests

Responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parent and pupil. It is made clear to parents that any absence from school will disrupt their child's learning.

Absence during term time is not authorised, unless the Headteacher deems it to be an exceptional circumstance. **Only** the **Headteacher** can authorise absence.

Parents must seek permission from the Headteacher by making an application in advance through completion of the 'Withdrawal from Learning Request Form.' Forms may be obtained from the school office.

The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

If the absence requested is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, the absence (if taken) is recorded as unauthorised.

If the absence during term time is 10 half days or more then West Sussex Council is notified and a Penalty Notice issued. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent/carer for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increases to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid this will result in further legal intervention.

### Role of The School

- To register the children promptly and accurately;
- To record absence appropriately, including signing in and out during school hours;
- To record as late, pupils who arrive after **8:55am**.
- To record as unauthorised absences, pupils who arrive after the registers close at **9:30am** unless the Headteacher agrees otherwise.
- To check registers daily for first day absence;
- To telephone those parents who have not contacted the school by the required time (9:00am) on the first day of absence, priority being given to:
  1. Children on the Protection Register or involved with Social Services such as LAC or those with Child Protection Plans;
  2. Children in families where there is a particular concern;
  3. Children, whose parents or carers are normally fastidious in making contact.

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- To send a letter/email home that day to parents/carers who cannot be contacted, to ask why their child is absent. (See appendix)
- To keep records of all telephone calls and keep all letters concerning absence;(See pupil folder in attendance drive)
- To monitor regularly absence and lateness, to look for patterns and take appropriate action;
- To involve appropriate external agency if there are any concerns regarding absence or punctuality;
- To obtain details of telephone contacts for all pupils and to ensure that records are updated regularly by writing to parents to remind them of their responsibilities, whilst requesting current contact information. An emergency telephone number must be recorded for every pupil.
- To send reminders regarding absence and punctuality on the school's regular newsletters;
- To raise concerns regarding absence at parent consultation meetings, or sooner if necessary.
- To discourage the practice of taking children out of school for odd days and holidays;
- To report attendance data including all authorised and unauthorised absence on the child's annual report;
- To publish whole school attendance data to parents.
- To set attendance targets for the whole school as well as individual pupils annually and monitor.

### Frequent Absence / Poor Attendance

**The school's clear expectation is that pupils attend on EVERY DAY that we are open.**

The school aims to always work with parents/carers and support them in ensuring their child has a good attendance record. Where attendance drops, parents/carers will be notified as follows:

#### Lateness, Appendix 1:

- **Daily:** If late (after the register closes at 8:55am), parents/carers will be asked for the reason upon arrival. You will need to complete a **pink Late Form** so that we have a record of the late arrival. If the lateness continues, a late letter will be sent home and our Attendance Officer will meet with your child to discuss the barriers to attending punctually offering helpful tips and ideas to support punctuality.
- **3 lates within one big term (Autumn, Spring or Summer):** Letter 1 sent home, which reminds parents/carers about the importance of being in school on time; pupil's

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Attendance Certificate is sent home and concerns are recorded on the school's Lateness Tracker.

- **6 lates within one big term (Autumn, Spring or Summer):** Letter 2 sent home which explains that all future lates will be marked as unauthorised and that 4 further lates will result in a Penalty Notice; pupil's Attendance Certificate is sent home and concerns are recorded on the school's Lateness Tracker.
- **10 unauthorised lates within one big term (Autumn, Spring or Summer)** Letter 3 sent home which explains that a Penalty Notice will be issued; pupil's Attendance Certificate is sent home and concerns are recorded on the school's Lateness Tracker. A referral for local authority intervention and a penalty notice (West Sussex) is recorded.

For pupils who have regular lates in line with the above, incentives are provided e.g. Attendance Passport system.

### Frequent Absence / Poor Attendance, Appendix 2

The Schools Attendance Target is **97%**.

In the academic year there are 190 school days.

To achieve 97% in an academic year a child must attend 190 days in the year.

The school recognises that absence can occur for a range of reasons and can be spread across the academic year. To ensure attendance issues can be dealt with promptly children's attendance is reviewed regularly on a cumulative basis using the following tables:

#### Stage 1 - Intervention

A child whose attendance is 95% for the academic year is absent for 10 days (two full school weeks). The table below details the trigger point for Stage 1 Intervention.

At this stage **Letter 1** is sent home which highlights the importance of good attendance; the pupil's Attendance Certificate is also enclosed.

Term	Cumulative days absence at 97%	Letter 1 trigger point days absence	Stage 1 threshold attendance % *
Term 1	1	4	88%

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<b>Term 2</b>	2	5	93%
<b>Term 3</b>	3	6	94%
<b>Term 4</b>	4	7	95%
<b>Term 5</b>	5	8	95%
<b>Term 6</b>	6	9	95%

\*Rounded up to next whole number

### **Stage 2 - Intervention**

A child whose attendance is 93% for the academic year is absent for 13 days (two & half school weeks). The table below details the trigger point for Stage 2 Intervention.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Cumulative days absence at 97%</b>	<b>Letter 2 trigger point days absence</b>	<b>Stage 2 threshold attendance % *</b>
<b>Term 1</b>	1	7	79%
<b>Term 2</b>	2	8	89%
<b>Term 3</b>	3	9	91%
<b>Term 4</b>	4	10	93%

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Term 5	5	11	93%
Term 6	6	12	94%

\*Rounded up to the next whole number.

At this stage, **Letter 2** is sent home which invites parents/carers to attend an Attendance Clinic/Informal attendance meeting at the school or a Telephone Appointment to support the family. After the date of the Clinic/meeting, a Follow Up letter is sent out which either confirms their attendance at the Clinic/meeting, what discussion took place and any support offered or if they did not attend, what will happen if their child's attendance drops to the third stage. At this stage, all future absences, without medical evidence are marked as 'unauthorised'.

### **Stage 3 Intervention**

A child whose attendance is 90% for the academic year is absent for 19 days (four school weeks). The table below details the trigger point for Stage 3 Intervention.

Term	Cumulative days absence at 97%	Letter 2 trigger point days absence	Stage 3 threshold attendance % *
Term 1	1	15	55%
Term 2	2	16	77%
Term 3	3	17	83%
Term 4	4	18	86%
Term 5	5	19	88%
Term 6	6	20	90%

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\*Rounded up to the next whole number.

At this stage, **Letter 3** is sent home which encourages parents/carers to attend a meeting with the Attendance Senior Lead at a given time to discuss their child's attendance and to complete the Attendance Improvement Agreement. The letter explains that if their child's attendance remains irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action which could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution. The child's Attendance Certificate is enclosed, along with a copy of 'Frequently Asked Questions' regarding Penalty Notices. Follow up letters are sent after the date of the meeting; confirming whether the parents/carers attended or not and detailing the outcome of the meeting; including any support agreed. A '10 in 10' commences from this point if appropriate (10 absences in 10 weeks) and if no further improvement is seen in these 10 weeks a Fixed Penalty Notice will be submitted.

### **Stage 4 Intervention**

A child whose attendance is 85% for the academic year is absent for 28 days (five & half school weeks). The table below details the trigger point for Stage 4 Intervention.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Cumulative days absence at 97%</b>	<b>Letter 2 trigger point days absence</b>	<b>Stage 3 threshold attendance % *</b>
<b>Term 1</b>	1	23	31%
<b>Term 2</b>	2	24	65%
<b>Term 3</b>	3	25	75%
<b>Term 4</b>	4	26	80%
<b>Term 5</b>	5	27	83%
<b>Term 6</b>	6	28	86%

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At this stage, **Letter 4** is sent home which explains that despite the school's intervention and support and attempting to engage with parents/carers several times in order to support with improvements in attendance, that there still does not seem to be any significant improvement with their child's attendance. The letter explains that it has now become necessary for the school to refer their concerns to West Sussex Council. Pupil's Attendance Certificate is enclosed and details are recorded onto the Attendance Tracker.

A weekly meeting between the Senior Attendance Officer (Headteacher) and Attendance Officer (School Secretary) takes place to review attendance of all pupils who have reached each of the threshold intervention levels. The personal circumstances of each child is discussed, along with improvements made, to determine whether the intervention is needed.

The Senior Attendance Lead is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), which ensures triangulation of safeguarding / pastoral information. All attendance concerns are recorded onto the school's electronic safeguarding system to ensure DSL analysis and actions.

### **Holiday Absence, Appendix 3**

- Responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parent/carer and pupil. It is made clear to parents/carers that any absence from school will disrupt their child's learning.
- Parents/carers must complete a 'Withdrawal From Learning Request Form'.
- **This form must be given to the Headteacher. The Headteacher cannot authorise term time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances.**
- Once this is completed, the reply slip is given back to the parents/carers. A copy of this is filed.
- Once the holiday is taken, and if 5 days or more, the form is sent to WSCC for a holiday penalty fine.
- If the holiday is taken without Withdrawal From Learning Form completed, a letter is sent home to parents/carers explaining that the school is aware they went on holiday and asking them to complete the Withdrawal From Learning Form retrospectively.

### **Rewarding Good Attendance**

The vast majority of pupils at Thakeham Primary School have a good attendance record. Pupils are given incentives to attend regularly and punctually:

- ✓ Good class attendance is recognised in fortnightly school newsletters;

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- ✓ Weekly Attendance Award – one class is given a trophy award during the school's celebration assembly for best attendance.
- ✓ Certificates / rewards given for pupils with outstanding termly attendance (100%).
- ✓ Improvement postcards sent home for improved attendance and / or punctuality.
- ✓ Pupil passport awards given for improved attendance.
- ✓ One pupil is chosen at the end of each term to receive a prize for 100% attendance.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mr McDonald – Headteacher (Senior Attendance Officer and DSL)

If Mr McDonald absent – Mrs Hopkins (DDSL)

Mrs Campbell – Attendance Officer

**Summary** The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

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# Appendices

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

## Appendix 1 – Lateness

### Lateness reminder letter

Dear Parent

#### Re: Punctuality to School

At Thakeham, we understand that good attendance and punctuality underpin good education. If children are not at school or miss parts of lessons, research highlights that they cannot successfully access the curriculum and fall progressively behind with their learning. Late and absent children are also far less likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs later in their schooling.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school, and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. We expect all pupils to be in school promptly for registration before the school registers are closed.

When pupils are late, school staff need to leave the classroom and children they are supporting in order to collect pupils waiting to be signed in. This withdraws learning opportunities for those pupils who are on time and has an adverse effect on their education as well as your child's.

We would like to work with you to ensure that your child is on time for school every day. If you feel you would like to discuss your child's lateness/attendance with our attendance team, please call [01903 740176](tel:01903740176) or email our attendance team on [office@thakehamps.co.uk](mailto:office@thakehamps.co.uk)

Best wishes,

The Attendance Team

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### Punctuality letter - meeting with Attendance Officer

Dear Parent

#### Re: Punctuality to School

At Thakeham, we understand that good attendance and punctuality underpin good education. If children are not at school or miss parts of lessons, research highlights that they cannot successfully access the curriculum and fall progressively behind with their learning. Late and absent children are also far less likely to achieve 5 or more GCSEs later in their schooling.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school, and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. We expect all pupils to be in school promptly for registration before the school registers are closed. While we understand that very occasionally there can be unforeseen circumstances that lead to lateness, unfortunately, name of child/children has/have now triggered a [persistently late concern](#).

When pupils are late, school staff need to leave the classroom and children they are supporting in order to collect pupils waiting to be signed in. This withdraws learning opportunities for those pupils who are on time and has an adverse effect on their education as well as name of child/children.

We would like to work with you to ensure that name of child/children is/are on time for school every day and have therefore arranged a meeting to be held with name of adult/s on date of meeting at time of meeting. We hope that you will find this meeting supportive in ensuring all children receive the high quality education they are entitled to.

Best wishes,

Mr McDonald (Headteacher)

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

## Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor their attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any students whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions. We are therefore writing to you due to XXXXs current number of late sessions is 3.

Being late to school and registration can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year  
10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year  
15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year  
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year  
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

Students are expected to arrive at school by 8:45am each day to ensure they are in class for morning registration by 8.50am. At 8.55am the gates and registers close and your child will receive a late mark 'L'. We understand that the school mornings can be hectic, but when your child is late for school they are missing out on vital parts of their education. Pupils arriving after 9:30am will be marked as a "U" which is an unauthorised absence.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss attendance with anyone please do not hesitate to contact the school attendance team on 01903 740176. Alternatively, we offer an informal 'Attendance meeting' with you, please contact the office to arrange this.

Yours sincerely,

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

## Letter 2

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor their attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any students whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions.

Further to my previous letter dated \_\_\_\_\_, we are writing to you as your child has now been late 6 times. This is concerning.

We are closely monitoring your child's attendance and lateness. Any child arriving after 8:55am is given a late mark (L) in the register. Due to.....consistently arriving late, any arrival after 9:30am will now be recorded as an unauthorised absence (U), from the date of this letter. If a child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absences during the period of 10 school weeks due to lateness, we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

Being late to school and registration can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 Minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 Minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact me on 01903 740176. Alternatively, we offer an informal 'Attendance meeting' please contact our school office to arrange an appointment.

Yours Sincerely,

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

## Letter 3

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our students, we monitor their attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any students whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions.

Further to my previous letters dated..... &....., we are writing to you as your child has continued to arrive late. This is very concerning.

As you know, we are now recording any arrival after 9:30am as an unauthorised absence. Your child .....has accrued ..... unauthorised absences in the last ..... weeks. A further..... Unauthorised Absences will result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

**If a child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absences during the period of 10 school weeks due to lateness, we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.**

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's lateness with anyone please do not hesitate to contact me on 01903 740176. Alternatively, we offer an informal 'Attendance meeting' please contact our office to arrange an appointment.

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Yours Sincerely,

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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**Letter 4**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

Further to my previous letters, we are writing to you again about your child's persistent lateness. This is concerning.

As a parent, you are responsible for ensuring your child receives an education. The law says that if you do not make sure your children go to school you are guilty of an offence. You can be fined by being issued with a penalty notice, or prosecuted.

It was explained in the previous letter sent that if a pupil arrives at school after the register has closed, it is recorded as an unauthorised absence. Ten unauthorised lates will result in a Penalty Issue.

I regret to inform you that since the last letter sent (dated X), your child has accrued ten further unauthorised absences as a result of being late. A Penalty Notice is therefore being issued.

Yours Sincerely,

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**Appendix 2 – Absence**

**Re: UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE:**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

I am writing to express my concern regarding your child's recent unexplained absence from school.

Our school acknowledges that each family's circumstances are different and works in partnership with parents to provide the best education for every child.

Pupils' welfare is of paramount importance to us and we believe that regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

If your child is absent from school, it is school policy that you contact the school office each day before 9:00am. I therefore request that you contact the school as a matter of urgency to discuss the reasons for your child's absence on the following dates:

Please note that if your child has not been in school for three days, without an explanation, then the police will be informed.

Please note that if your child has not been in school for ten days, without an explanation, then your child will be reported as 'missing in education.'

Yours sincerely,

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

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### Letter 1

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

#### Re Absence:

We are very keen to ensure that all children attend school regularly as it is important for your child's friendships and academic progress. In addition, it is proven that good attendance is linked with academic success.

Our expectation is that every child attends every day. Your child's attendance is now below at\_\_%.

We understand that your child's absence may be for a range of reasons including illness but as their target is below school target, we feel it is important to share it with you.

The school actively encourages regular attendance. Children need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and may lead to educational disadvantage.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school. It is the schools responsibility to support attendance and to take seriously problems which may lead to non-attendance. Parental responsibility extends beyond securing regular school attendance so it is also important that parents ensure that their children arrive at school on time.

Please find enclosed your child's attendance certificate.

Please can you speak to your child about the importance of attendance. If you are having difficulty getting your child to school, please do not hesitate to contact the office and make an appointment to see me.

Your child's attendance will now be closely monitored and should further absences occur, then you will be invited in to discuss this further.

***In the meanwhile, I would like to remind you that you have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and that if you fail to do so you may commit an offence – S 444 Education Act 1996.***

Yours Sincerely,

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### Letter 2 - Invite

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

#### Re Absence: Name of Pupil. Class

As you are aware, West Sussex Schools are having a real focus on attendance as this has such a huge impact on children's learning. As a school, we are following all the West Sussex guidelines but we are also trying to be proactive in supporting families with any attendance issues before an Education Welfare Officer becomes involved.

X's attendance from the start of the Academic year is now at \_\_\_\_%.

Please find enclosed your child's Registration Certificate. If any absences are due to medical reasons, please ensure you bring relevant doctor's notes and appointment details.

At **93%**, your child is now at risk of becoming considered a 'persistent absentee' by the Department for Education. We are seriously concerned.

Therefore, I would ask that you attend our informal meeting which will take place on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_. This is a supportive meeting which reviews our Attendance Policy and will enable you to honestly discuss any issues or barriers to your child attending school.

Working in partnership with you, the school seeks to understand the difficulties that may be presented and the Attendance Clinic provides the opportunity to determine if the school can do anything further to support.

If you are unable to attend the Attendance meeting but wish to discuss your concerns and how the school might be able to help, please call me on **01903 740176**. I am sure you are aware that it is important that your child maintains regular attendance, as any absence may interrupt their academic progress and may have an effect on friendships. You should also be aware that regular attendance is a legal requirement.

We look forward to talking with you and working in partnership to see an improvement.

***In the meanwhile, I would like to remind you that you have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and that if you fail to do so you may commit an offence – S 444 Education Act 1996.***

Yours Sincerely,

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**Letter 2 – Follow Up: Attended**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of your child reaching 93% attendance, you were invited to attend an Informal Attendance meeting. Thank you for attending and / or telephoning me. This is really important as we value our home / school partnership and want to work with you to improve your child's attendance.

The importance of attendance was explained along with what the law says ('education is not an option – it's compulsory'). The need to avoid taking family holidays during term time was discussed and strategies for how parents can help raise their child's attendance were explored.

Thank you for bringing to my attention....

I have now spoken with the Attendance Team and we have agreed the school will be able to support in the following ways:

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before your child's attendance figure is above 96%.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to X's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me.

It was good to speak with you today, thank you once again for attending / calling.

Yours Sincerely,

## THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

### **Letter 2 – Follow Up: Did not attend**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

As a result of your child reaching 93% attendance, you were invited to attend an Attendance meeting, it was a shame you chose not to attend.

You were also given the option to telephone to see if there was anything the school could do to support, however you clearly did not feel this was necessary.

Please find enclosed a leaflet about the importance of attendance and what the law says.

It is important that you are aware of what could possibly happen in the future, should your child's attendance continue to fall:

- should your child's attendance slip to 91%, intervention will be necessary by meeting with the school's Attendance Lead, X. She will determine whether or not targets need to be set and if not met, a notice to prosecute will be issued.
- If your child's attendance falls below 90%, your child is considered a 'persistent absentee' by the Department for Education and this will remain on your child's school records. The Local Authority will intervene and if necessary, a court appearance and finemay follow.

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before her attendance figure is above 96%.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to X's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me. We are here to support.

Yours Sincerely,

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**Letter 3 - Invite**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

**Re Absence: Name of Pupil, Class**

I am writing to inform you that X's attendance is still causing concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting X's progress and I would like to meet with you.

Should X's attendance remain irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates Court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under Section 444 Education Act 1996, and a fine of up to £2500 and/or 3 months in prison.

It is requested with urgency, that you attend a meeting to discuss X's attendance.

I would like to meet with you at School on:

DATE and TIME
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Please ring the school to confirm that you will be attending on 01903 740176.

Please sign in at the front office.

During the meeting we will discuss any concerns you may have, so we can continue to support your child in making good progress. We may also set targets in order to avoid further prosecution. I do hope that you will work with us to improve your child's attendance.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT AGREEMENT**

Meeting held at: \_\_\_\_\_ (School)

On: \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Present at Meeting:

<b>Pupil's Name:</b>	
<b>Date of Birth:</b> <b>Year:</b>	
<u><b>Parent/Carers (1)</b></u>  <b>Name</b>  <b>Date of Birth</b>  <b>Address</b>  <u><b>Parent/Carers (2)</b></u>  <b>Name</b>  <b>Date of Birth</b>  <b>Address (if different)</b>	
<u><b>Absent Parent/Carer</b></u>  <b>Name</b>  <b>Date of Birth</b>	

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
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<b>Address</b>	
<b>Sibling Details:</b>	
<b>% Attendance and unauthorised sessions on invite</b>	
<b>Other Agencies involved with family</b>	

**Reasons and factors affecting attendance provided by parent/carer and pupil:**

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**AGREEMENTS MADE FOLLOWING DISCUSSION:**

The SCHOOL will:

- (a) Not authorise illness without medical evidence.
  
- (b) Set an attendance % punctuality target of 100% to be reviewed on a weekly basis by the school.

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

The pupil's attendance will therefore initially be reviewed on:

Date.....

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The PARENT/S will:

(a)

(b)

(c)

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The PUPIL will:

(a)

(b)

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**WARNING:**

I/We understand that should ( name ) accrue a further 10 unauthorised absences over the next 10 school week period then the Education Support Behaviour & Attendance Service will be requested to issue a Penalty Notice. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent; this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days, but will increase to £120 if paid after this period. If this is not paid within 28 days it will result in legal action.

**Signed .....** Parent/Carer

**Signed .....** Parent/Carer

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**Signed .....** School (1)

**Signed .....** School (2)

**Dated:**

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**Letter 3 – Follow Up: Attended**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for attending a meeting with me today with regards to X's attendance. As I explained at the meeting, your child's attendance has now unfortunately reached 91%, which is why you were invited to meet with me today.

I was delighted to hear...

I appreciate you sharing with me...

The following actions were agreed:

--

I am sure that X's attendance will continue to improve and that it will not be long before your child's attendance figure is above 92% and even getting closer to 97%, in line with our school and the Government's targets.

Please remember, that if you have any concerns with regards to your child's attendance, you are more than welcome to come and discuss them with me.

It was good to meet with you today, thank you once again for attending,

Yours Sincerely,

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**Letter 3 – Follow Up: Did Not Attend**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

**WARNING OF POSSIBLE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICE**

You were invited by letter dated [ date ] to attend a meeting on [ date ]. This was to give you an opportunity to discuss any difficulties you may be experiencing in fulfilling your legal responsibility with regard to school attendance and to discuss how we could support you in this. You did not attend the meeting and no response was received to our invitation.

If you wish for a meeting to be rescheduled then please contact me on the above number to rearrange at a mutually convenient date and time.

I confirm that I shall monitor [ Student's Name ] attendance and review this periodically.

**This letter is a warning that should [ student's name ] accrue 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during the next 10 school week period we will be requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.**

If you have any queries, please contact me on the number above.

Yours Sincerely,

**THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

**Letter 4**

Dear Parent/Carer of \_\_\_\_\_

**Re Absence: Name of Pupil, Class**

I note that there has been no significant improvement in your child's attendance since our last meeting.

X's attendance for this academic year has fallen to %. This is a significant concern despite intervention from a range of staff at X School.

Furthermore, I have not received any satisfactory explanation for absences.

Children whose attendance is below 90% are noted by the Department for Education as being "persistent absentees," which means that they are recognised as missing school on a regular basis.

Please find your child's Registration Certificate enclosed.

The school has attempted to engage with you several times in order to support with improvements in attendance. It has now become necessary to refer the concerns around your child's attendance to the Education Welfare Service.

An Education Welfare Officer will contact you in due course. Should you have anything you wish to discuss concerning this matter, I will continue to be available.

Please contact me on the above number should you require an appointment.

Yours Sincerely,

# THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY



### Thakeham Primary School Withdrawal from Learning Request Form

Pupils are **only** in school for 190 days each year.  
**There are 175 other days for holidays and other activities.**  
 80% attendance represents **1 day off a week.**  
 90% attendance represents **1 day off per fortnight.**

All schools are expected to make it clear that pupils should attend school for each of the 190 days.

#### **Guidance:**

- There is **no** entitlement to any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional and compelling circumstances.
- The application should be made following a meeting with the Headteacher in advance and at least five days before the first day of absence if possible.
  - Please use a separate form for each child and each absence.

#### **Parent/Guardian to complete this section:**

Name of child:	Class:
Is this the first request for absence this academic year?	Yes / No
Do you have a child at another STARS school? Yes/No	School:
First Day of Absence:	Number of <b>school</b> days requested:
Final day of Absence:	
Reason: <b>Please give information about your request for absence.</b>	

Signed:	Date:
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#### **School Office to complete this section:**

#### **A REMINDER THAT WE EXPECT PUPILS TO ATTEND SCHOOL EVERY DAY OF TERM**

Last Academic Year Attendance:	%	Green Amber Red	Green	More than 95%	Satisfactory
Current Attendance:	%	Green Amber Red	Amber	85% to 95%	Needs improvement
			Red	Less than 85%	Unsatisfactory

#### **Head Teacher to complete this section:**

Your request is <b>approved</b> and the absence as set out above is authorised.	
Your request is <b>not approved</b> . If the pupil is absent as proposed above, it will be recorded as <b>unauthorised</b> for the following reason:	

Signed:	Dated:
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## THAKEHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

**Regular attendance at school is important for your child's education and is a legal requirement. Responsibility for this rests with the parents. Only the school, not the parents, can authorise absence.**

Government guidelines state that children may only be absent for the following reasons:

- Illness and treatments (e.g. dentist, opticians)
- An organised educational course
- An organised sports competition or approved public performance
- Family bereavement or exceptional family circumstances
- Days of religious observance

There is **no** entitlement to any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional and compelling circumstances.

To discuss a leave of absence, a meeting must be arranged with the Headteacher in advance.