

Attendance Strategy

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8.1.1 Key Staff.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

1 Introduction

This strategy applies to all pupils of compulsory school age at The Cavendish School.

The Cavendish School endeavours to provide a safe learning environment in which pupils can enjoy and achieve. We acknowledge the proven correlation between high level attendance and pupil outcomes. The Cavendish School's attendance strategy emphasises positive strategies and a range of interventions to ensure the highest levels of attendance. However, when normal school procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures, including legal action, must be considered.

The Cavendish School aims to

- ∞ emphasise the importance, to all pupils, of maximum attendance at school as an essential pre-requisite for making full use of all educational opportunities and to maximise individual achievement.
- ∞ make explicit to all relevant parties (teachers, parents/carers and pupils) the school's expectations on attendance levels.
- ∞ promote a consistent approach across the School towards all matters relating to attendance.
- ∞ clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties with respect to attendance.
- ∞ communicate to all relevant parties the legal position with respect to attendance and the categories of absence which are deemed "authorised".
- ∞ Through the building of strong relationships with families, stress the need for home and school to work in close partnership to achieve high attendance.
- ∞ Act early to address patterns of absence and reducing absence including persistent and severely persistent absence.
- ∞ Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled.

1.1 Key Principles

- ∞ Pupils at The Cavendish School have the right to the best possible education.
- ∞ For pupils to access the best possible education, a high level of attendance is essential.
- ∞ Pupils' ability to stay and feel safe, enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution may be jeopardised by poor attendance.
- ∞ Attendance and the high-quality safeguarding of pupils are directed related.

2 Requirements/ Legal Responsibilities

It is a legal requirement that pupils of compulsory school age receive a full-time education and this, except for those educated at home or elsewhere, means regular attendance at school. Irregular attendance leads to pupils missing important lessons and therefore not fulfilling their true potential; it also places children at risk and may result in their being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour. We take the attendance very seriously and do what we can to obtain very high attendance from all our pupils.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing body

The governing board is responsible for:

- ∞ Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- ∞ Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- ∞ Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- ∞ Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- ∞ Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- ∞ Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

Our link governor for attendance is Julie Bailey

3.2 The head of school

The head of school is responsible for:

- ∞ Implementation of this policy at the school
- ∞ Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- ∞ Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- ∞ Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- ∞ Notifying the local authority for the issuing of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- ∞ Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- ∞ Implement (through self or delegation) attending meetings and calls to discuss attendance issues.

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- ∞ Leading attendance across the school
- ∞ Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7) Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- ∞ Having an oversight of data analysis
- ∞ Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- ∞ Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- ∞ Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- ∞ Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- ∞ Advising the head of school) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The designated senior leader who has the role of attendance officer is Lisa Lincoln and can be contacted via Hello@tcs.tela.org.uk

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information promptly to the school office via the SIMS registration system within the registration close deadline.

Registration timings are the same every day and are listed in the below timetable:

	Morning Registration	Afternoon Registration
Registers open	8.30 am	12.00pm

Late arrival before the register is closed	8.45am	12.15pm
Registers close	9.00am	12.30pm

Class teachers under the direction of SLT will also be involved in delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

3.5 [School administrators](#)

School administration staff will

Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.

Transfer calls from parents to the senior leadership in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.6 [Parents/carers](#)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- ∞ Make sure their child attends every day on time
- ∞ Call the school to report their child's absence before 8:30 am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence. Unless otherwise asked to provide advice on when they are expected to return
- ∞ Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- ∞ Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.7 [Pupils](#)

Pupils are expected to:

Attend school every day on time

- ∞ Attend every timetabled session on time

4 [Recording attendance](#)

4.1 [Attendance register](#)

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- ∞ Present
- ∞ Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- ∞ Absent
- ∞ Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- ∞ The original entry
- ∞ The amended entry
- ∞ The reason for the amendment
- ∞ The date on which the amendment was made
- ∞ The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 3 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- ∞ For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not

- ∞ The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- ∞ The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:30 and will be kept open until 9am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12noon and will be kept open until 12:30pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school reception (see also section 7).

Absence reporting procedure is by emailing as you are aware of an absence to hello@tcs.tela.org.uk (you may receive a call back to discuss an absence further) or via telephone on 01223 200421

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

- 4.2.1 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- 4.2.2 If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence for medical appointments

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

A request for leave for an appointment should be made via reception on 01223 200421 or via email hello@tcs.tela.org.uk. Evidence of an appointment should be provided.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Please see section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- ∞ Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- ∞ After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption. If you experience any difficulties regarding your child's education, we would welcome the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss this.

If a pupil is regularly late for school and arrives after registers are closed, this will mean that the absence will be unauthorised.

Where this is caused by local authority transport school will contact the START and transport teams to address this alongside the parents.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- ∞ Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may conduct a home visit or make contact with the police or social care.
- ∞ Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- ∞ Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- ∞ Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- ∞ If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

4.6 [Reporting to parents/carers](#)

The Cavendish school reports to parents on their child's attendance record termly alongside the learner portrait and within the end of year learning journey.

5 [Authorised and unauthorised absence](#)

5.1 [Approval for term-time absence](#)

The Head of School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. The Department for Education (DFE) has issued guidelines to all schools detailing valid reasons for authorised or justified absences: A leave of absence is granted at the head of school's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

- ∞ a child is ill or receiving medical attention.
- ∞ days of religious observance, notified in advance.
- ∞ absence due to family circumstances (e.g. bereavement, serious illness).
- ∞ Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

There are other absences, such as approved sporting activities that can be authorised and there will be events affecting families, some unforeseen, which will necessitate absence from school; professional discretion will need to be used in these cases as to whether the absence can be authorised. The Head of school cannot authorise any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If exceptional circumstances are being applied for an Absence request form (see appendix 1) is to be completed and submitted to the School office online at Hello@tcs.tela.org.uk for approval **at least two weeks prior** to the absence.

Forms are available on the TCS website or from Hello@tcs.tela.org.uk.

We expect absences to be kept to a minimum; **routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged out of school hours.**

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

5.2 [What is an acceptable attendance rate?](#)

Attendance is a national priority; national data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement and examination performance. In addition, all schools must submit data electronically every term. It is a key indicator of an effective school and, as such, will be scrutinised by OFSTED.

The Cavendish School expects attendance at school to be 100%, unless there are exceptional or unavoidable reasons for absence.

The simple facts: Pupils attend school for **190** days each year

- ∞ At 96% attendance 73% of pupils achieve 5 9-5 grades at GCSEs including English and Maths but even at 96% a pupil would have missed 38 lessons during their time at TCS

- ∞ 17 days off school every year means that a pupil will probably obtain a whole grade lower in each exam than they are capable of
- ∞ 19 days off per school year means that a pupil has approximately 90% attendance. At 90% attendance, you will have missed 95 lessons in one year. 90% attendance throughout a pupil's time at The Cavendish School equates to a year absent. **Pupils with attendance below 90% are considered persistent Absentees**
- ∞ At 80%, attendance a pupil will have missed 38 days of school that academic year. This means that a pupil will probably be underachieving by two whole grades in each subject, only 35% of those with attendance between 80-90% will achieve 5 9-5 grades at GCSE including English and Maths.
- ∞ **Pupils with attendance of less than 50% are considered as severely persistently absent from school.**

Sickness comes usually in a block of time over a continuous period; what we look for are unbroken weeks (i.e. those where the pupil is marked present on all ten sessions) pupils should not have more than one or two broken weeks in the course of an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern.

5.3 Unauthorised Absences

These are absences where:

- ∞ no email/telephone call or acceptable explanation is provided by parents/carers;
- ∞ the reason for the absence does not fall into one of the categories of authorised absence above.

DFE guidelines state that the following activities will be classified as unauthorised;

- ∞ minding the house;
- ∞ caring for relatives;
- ∞ awaiting repair people;
- ∞ shopping;
- ∞ birthday or family celebration.

There are clearly some grey areas. The DFE guidelines look at the area of 'Special Occasions' and make clear that only truly exceptional occasions should be classified as authorised; for example, absence resulting from a pupil attending the wedding of a parent could be counted as authorised; a birthday treat to a theme park would not.

5.4 Persistent Lateness to School

If a pupil is regularly late for school and arrives after registers are closed, this will mean that the absence will be unauthorised. Where this is caused by local authority transport school will contact the START and transport teams to address this alongside the parents.

5.5 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- ∞ The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- ∞ One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- ∞ Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Home/TCS Partnership

Securing a high level of attendance requires the school and home to work closely together. To this end, we ask parents to:

- ∞ do all they can to ensure their child arrives on time for morning and afternoon college sessions; morning registration begins at 8:30am and afternoon registration is at the start at period 4 at 12:00pm.
- ∞ We will monitor persistent late comers and action will be taken; parents can be prosecuted if their child persistently arrives late;
- ∞ if your child is ill, notify the school on the each day of absence by 8:30am.
- ∞ get in touch at an early stage about any concerns you have about your child's mind-set towards school.

In return The Cavendish School will:

- ∞ contact home on day 1 of absence if no message has been received from home;
- ∞ follow up promptly any concerns parents pass on to us that may be affecting your child's mind-set to, or feeling of wellbeing in school;
- ∞ involve the Assistant Headteachers, Attendance officer or Head of school to support pupils to re-integrate into school after illness or other individual circumstances;
- ∞ regularly and consistently remind pupils of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- ∞ acknowledge excellent or improving attendance and action any concerns promptly.

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's attendance or any letters you may have received please email the Attendance officer on hello@tcs.tela.org.uk and the attendance officer or member of the senior leadership team will endeavour to get back to you within 2 working days during term time. This process ensures that all enquiries are answered in the order received for fairness to all parents/carers.

6 Strategies for promoting attendance

6.1 Culture for good attendance

Good attendance and the strive to achieve good patterns of attendance from the start of a pupils journey is integral to our schools ethos and values. To emphasise its importance The Cavendish School offers the following:

- ∞ Reward points towards a scale of rewards that are person centred and take into account a pupils individual medical needs
- ∞ Celebrations in Tutor Time and Assemblies
- ∞ Letters from the Headteacher for long term exceptional attendance and overcoming long term non-attendance will become part of the pupil's records and make a meaningful contribution to their reference for further education or the world of work.
- ∞ Links and learning to understand and generalise this skill in the wider world.
- ∞ School visuals and displays supporting the messaging of positive attendance patterns with achievement and strong mental wellbeing.
- ∞ Management of bullying and incidents are timely and with restorative work so that pupils are building positive culture of coming together in the school building.
- ∞ Understand that attendance in school is a continuous process and that we regular review attendance alongside pupil and parental voice to instil a sense of achievement and belonging within school.

6.2 Working together

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.



MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.



LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.



FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.



FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.



ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

6.3 [Attendance process and supports](#)

As a special school for pupils with Autism and co-occurring conditions such as anxiety we understand that in order to ensure that all pupils are given the opportunity to have positive attendance, we need to have a clear process for support and management in line with a pupil's needs and both parent and pupil dignity.

The need for support to achieve good attendance can be a complex matter for our families, who may have had traumatic educational journeys before reaching us. TCS are sensitive to our families' needs and understand how this may feel to both pupils and parents. Any approaches are individualized considering a pupils specific needs and are made without judgement or stigma.

Appendix 2 sets out the process for managing attendance at TCS.

6.4 [Part-timetables \(including integration\)](#)

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education.

In very exceptional circumstances, **and only** where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of an initial integration or re-integration package. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil's behaviour.

Therefore the following will apply to any part-time timetable requests for pupils attending TCS

- ∞ A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution.
- ∞ A part-time timetable (including management of schedule) can only be granted by the **Head of School** following a collaborative meeting with stakeholders.
- ∞ Any issue of a part-time timetable will include a pastoral support programme and interventions to move towards full time attendance (these may include referrals to other professionals and external partners).

- ∞ Any agreement will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend fulltime, either at school or alternative provision.
- ∞ There will be formal arrangements in place for regularly review with the pupil and their parents.
- ∞ In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

6.5 [Local Authority Attendance Officer](#)

The LA Attendance is a statutory service and a legal requirement. Their involvement is triggered by an unacceptable level of:

- ∞ Unauthorised absence
- ∞ Persistent absence
- ∞ Lateness

At The Cavendish School the Attendance Officer and senior leadership team monitors attendance at a whole school level and specifically targets the pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. The Head of School is responsible for ensuring that TCS's strategy and practice is compliant with the local authority's legal duties and processes. This includes ensuring that only the Head of School or Deputy CEO authorises legal action.

6.6 [Legal Action](#)

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends The Cavendish School on a regular and punctual basis. Should any pupil's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be subject to a Local Authority investigation. Where necessary the Attendance Team will recommend legal action. The Cavendish School and Cambridgeshire Local Authority work together in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

1. Penalty Notice: A Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. The penalty is a £60 fine, if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within the 28 day period, a prosecution will be sought.
2. Prosecution for unauthorised absence: It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at The Cavendish School. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

7 [Attendance monitoring](#)

Attendance and punctuality at the Cavendish school is monitored on a weekly basis by the attendance team. Any pupils who demonstrate positive role models for good attendance or for whom there is concerns regarding attendance trends or levels, will be discussed at the fortnightly SLT meeting. Where attendance is severe (below 50%) pupil will also be included within the agenda of weekly safeguarding meetings.

7.1 [Monitoring attendance](#)

The school will:

- ∞ Monitor attendance, punctuality and absence data weekly, fortnightly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- ∞ Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average for both mainstream and special schools, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 [Analysing attendance](#)

The school will:

- ∞ Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts (this is included but not limited to disadvantaged, EAL or other identified identifiers) that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these (groups of) pupils and their families
- ∞ Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- ∞ Look at behavioural communication patterns and safeguarding concerns in conjunction with absence patterns to understand the whole child and use this to develop strategies to address these patterns.

7.3 [Using data to improve attendance](#)

The school will:

- ∞ Provide regular attendance reports where appropriate (such as declining attendance) to class teachers/tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- ∞ Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 [Reducing persistent and severe absence](#)

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- ∞ Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- ∞ Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- ∞ Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- ∞ Provide multi-disciplinary support where appropriate.

Appendix 2 sets out the process for managing attendance at TCS.

8 [Monitoring arrangements](#)

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum bi-annually by Stephanie Smith – Head of School.

8.1 [Key Staff](#)

Stephanie Smith – Head of School (Senior Leadership Team (SLT))

Rebecca Armour – Deputy Head of School (Senior Leadership Team (SLT))

Lisa Lincoln – Pupil and Admissions Lead (Senior Leadership Team (SLT))

Francesca Sandall – Attendance officer

Jake Allcock, Gemma Dexter and Rachel Dunn – Assistant Headteachers (Senior Leadership Team (SLT))

8.2 [A Final Word](#)

We feel attendance levels are an indicator of how effective and caring a school is. Failure to attend can be an indication that all is not well with the students' wellbeing. Equally, consistent attendance is an essential pre-requisite for effective learning. TCS takes attendance seriously and put a lot of time and energy into getting our procedures as efficient and effective as possible. We urge you to give this matter the priority it deserves.

Appendix 1:

ABSENCE REQUEST FORM (exceptional circumstances only)

To: *The Head of School, The Cavendish School*

I wish to apply to have an 'unavoidable' absence authorised, for:

Child's name Year Class

Date from date to (inclusive)

Name of Parent(s)/Carer(s):

Address:

Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances that you would like the school to consider. This section must be completed. Please continue on a separate sheet if needed.

Signature of Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Office use only			<input type="checkbox"/> Absence authorised Code _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Absence unauthorised
Date form received	No of school days absence requested	% Attendance	
			Signed _____ Head of School

✂-----

This portion to be returned to parents/carers

Please note that even if this absence request is authorised you may still receive letters of concern from either the school or Local Authority if your child's attendance drops below a level that the school deems acceptable,

Student(s) name(s).....

Form/Year.....

☐ Absence authorised fromto (Inclusive)

☐ Absence unauthorised current attendance % as of/...../20.....

Signed(Head of School)

Date.....

NOTES TO PARENTS/CARERS

appendix 1

The law does not grant parents/carers an automatic right to take their children out of school during term time. If the request is for an absence in term time you must have Parental Responsibility and be the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives. Permission **must** be sought in **advance**. Headteachers are no longer able to grant authorised absence during term for holidays. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the school, the authorising of the absences will be conditional on the child(ren) attending satisfactory up to the date covered by this request.

Warning: If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. A significant amount of unauthorised absence may make you liable to a Penalty Notice for each child, payable by each parent/carer, or the subject of court proceedings which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM-TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

WARNING: If you allow your child to miss school in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the school, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice* per parent per child, or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996.

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>School aged pupils in maintained schools are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, suspensions, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.</p>	<p>The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides</p>
<p>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and you may receive a £60* fine per parent for each child.</p>	<p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away from school for a total of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.</p> <p>In the case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.</p>

appendix 1

<p>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Genuine illness▪ Unavoidable medical / dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)▪ Days of religious observance▪ Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces▪ External examinations▪ When Traveller children go on the road with their parents▪ To allow for respite needs associated with a disability	<p>Other examples of absence from school that <u>will not</u> be authorised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Any type of shopping▪ Looking after siblings or unwell parents▪ Minding the house▪ Birthdays▪ Resting after a late night▪ Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
<p>Please contact your child's head of school if you wish to discuss this issue.</p> <p>The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.</p> <p>We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.</p>	

*Penalty Notice £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days

Further information on taking holidays with children with Special educational needs

<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/special-educational-needs/help-and-advice/holiday-resorts-for-children-with-special-needs>

Appendix 2 – The Cavendish School Attendance Procedures for parents/carers

Improving attendance is a whole school initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

The diagram below highlights the whole school approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. These are led by the Attendance team and Admissions Officer, who works with the tutors/class teachers to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole school level.

All support for our pupils includes reference to a pupils SEND and medical needs. The provision within a pupil's EHCP is there to ensure that barriers to learning are removed, thus all provision **MUST** be in place. Additional reasonable adjustments and provision will always be provided in order to ensure good attendance for all.

Level 1

Attendance **97% to 100%**

- ∞ Reward points towards a scale of rewards that are person centred and take into account a pupils individual medical needs
- ∞ Celebrations in class time and Assemblies

Attendance Officer to ensure correct codes are used for student absence. (appendix 3)

Level 2

Attendance **94% to 96.9%**

Some concerns for progress/attainment

- ∞ Interventions include a call home to inform parents/carers of level of Attendance when clarifying attendance
- ∞ Class teacher/Tutor to discuss attendance with pupil to ascertain any known barriers to attendance and agree strategies to improve it. These could be (but are not limited to, uniform, transport, anxiety, lunch time arrangements)
- ∞ Absence patterns are analysed by a member of SLT.
- ∞ Attendance will also be discussed at parent's evenings.

Level 3

Attendance **90% to 93.9%**

Risk of under achievement

- ∞ Interventions include letter sent home to inform parents/carers of level of attendance.
- ∞ A phone call will be scheduled with the parents/carers and a member of SLT to discuss support available to parents/carers and pupil.
- ∞ Behaviour patterns alongside absence patterns analysed by a member of SLT
- ∞ Pupil will be included within SLT attendance panel to monitor progression from interventions.
- ∞ Further absence may not authorised without medical evidence from - GP/Hospital/Dentist (parents are informed of this in the letter)
- ∞ More intensive support provides by CCC will be offered Information is found at [Parenting & family support - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Level 4

Attendance below **90%**

Persistent Absence Severe risk of under achievement

- ∞ Interventions include Letter sent home to inform parents/carers of level of attendance
- ∞ An initial support meeting is held with a member of SLT to discuss the impact of strategies and interventions so far, guidance and further strategies/support as appropriate.
- ∞ Potential referral into internal therapy teams is considered as part of graduated response of support.

- ∞ Support is available from CCC, further information is found at [Parenting & family support - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)
- ∞ If attendance continues to drop to below 90% Penalty notices may be issued, further information at [Non-attendance and the law - Education: your rights and responsibilities - CCC](#)

Level 5

Attendance below 50%

Severe absence rates

- ∞ Interventions include a formal stage letter sent home to inform parents/carers of level of attendance.
- ∞ Local Authority case worker is notified and an emergency annual review maybe called.
- ∞ Referral to any external agencies within health and the local authority (such as Younited) for additional support where appropriate.
- ∞ A Multi-disciplinary meeting is held with all stakeholders to produce a comprehensive plan to re-engage and integrate the pupil to school.
- ∞ Support is available from CCC, further information is found at [Parenting & family support - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)
- ∞ If attendance continues to drop to below 90% Penalty notices may be issued, further information at [Non-attendance and the law - Education: your rights and responsibilities - CCC](#)

Level 6

Continued Attendance at **level 4 or 5 without improvement** and/or engagement.

Persistent Absence Extreme concern

- ∞ Interventions may include penalty notices and legal action, further information can be found at [Non-attendance and the law - Education: your rights and responsibilities - CCC](#)
- ∞ Parents/carers will be called to a Parent Contract Meeting with the Attendance Lead and Head of School to agree targets to improve the Pupil's attendance. If attendance continues to fall the case will be referred to the Local Authority for Penalty Notices to be issued or to a Local Authority Officer for a PACE interview to be arranged, this is held under caution and will not be held at TCS. The Cavendish School will ensure that it continues to work with and support the pupil and their parents/carers to ensure that the pupil's attendance rises to the expected level
- ∞ Locality support will be offered if appropriate, information can be found at [Parenting & family support - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

If you would like to discuss any issues around your child's attendance please contact the class teacher/tutor in the first instance so that we can support you in achieving good attendance and punctuality.

Appendix 3: DfE Attendance codes

code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day