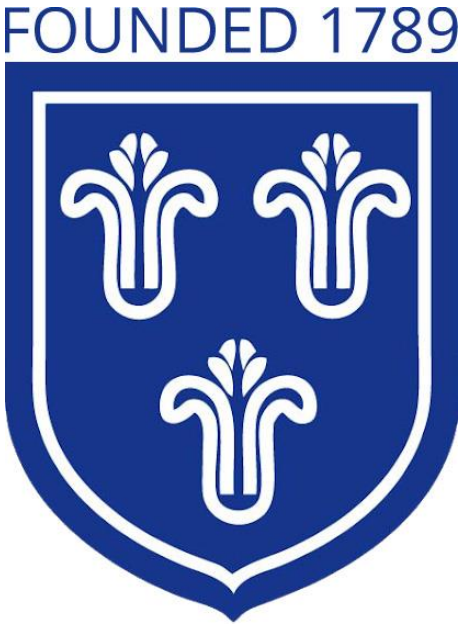


St Mary's CEP (VA) School, Dover

Attendance Policy

Date: September 2026

Reviewed and Ratified By: Governing body on 24th September 2026

Review Date: September 2028

Signed : _____ Rev'd Melissa Carter, Chair of Governors

Signed : _____ Matthew Lamprell, Headteacher

Equality
We recognise our duty and responsibility to establish quality for all pupils, staff, other members of the school community and service users regardless of their ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation; age or beliefs as defined within existing equalities legislation (please see 'Single Equality Scheme').

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance, through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

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 board

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 as reported within the Headteacher's report to governors (termly)
- 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 Revd. Melissa Carter. They meet three times per year with the Headteacher and Family Liaison Officer to monitor this policy in practice and to review impact.

3.2 The Headteacher - the designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- 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
- Requesting fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Matthew Lamprell, who can be contacted via the School Office: 01304 206887 or office@stmarysprimary.net

3.4 The Family Liaison Officer

The Family Liaison Officer (FLO), also known as the 'senior attendance champion', is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Completing follow-up calls to identify reason for absence
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance (Headteacher),
- Working with School Liaison Officer (SLO) to tackle persistent absence
- To liaise with the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher if a home visit is to be carried out
- Advising the Headteacher when to apply for fixed-penalty notices

The FLO is Lisa Graham, who can be contacted via the School Office: 01304 206887 or office@stmarysprimary.net

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office using SIMS.

Class Teachers complete the register by 9am in the morning and by 1pm for the afternoon. If a child is not in for registration, they will be marked as not present (Code 'N').

Registers will close at 9.30am and 1.30pm (thirty minutes after they are open).

3.6 School Office staff

School Office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the FLO/Headteacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Complete 'Signing In book' for lateness; weekly analysis of punctuality; daily communication reports (using SIMS)
- Make initial phone calls on the first day (and subsequent days) of absence to identify reasons

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open (unless there are exceptional circumstances – see 5.1)
- Make sure their child attends on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence **before 9am** on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child and ensure that the school have the most up-to-date contact details
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Miss Lisa Graham (FLO), who can be contacted via the School Office: 01304 206997 or office@stmarysprimary.net

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- **Attend school every day and on time – we actively promote 100% attendance.**

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 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- 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 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be completed by 9am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

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 (and every subsequent day) by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school office staff (01304 206887; office@stmarysprimary.net) (see also section 7).

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

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.

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

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 and is able to provide documentary proof (e.g. appointment letter).

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 child should attend school before or after the appointment (where applicable).

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. Go to 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 ('L' code).
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code ('U' code).

Lateness is unsatisfactory conduct and may, if not discouraged, lead to absenteeism. Pupils who arrive after 8.55am should go straight to the school office (via the Laureston Place gate) where reasons for their lateness will be recorded the Family Liaison Officer/School Office staff.

The school will write to the parent/carer of the pupil who is late on each occasion. On the third occasion, the parent/carer will receive a letter inviting them to attend a 'Punctuality Meeting' with the Family Liaison Officer. If lateness continues resulting in unauthorised absences (late after registration closes), the child will be

discussed with the Headteacher and School Liaison Officer and may then be formally referred to the Local Authority.

Children who have attended a dentist or medical appointment (in some instances medical evidence may be required) and subsequently come to school later than 9am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence ('M' code).

Please see Appendices 3 and 4: Lateness Flow Chart

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness – Penalty Notices are issues in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct, effective from January 2016, as revised in August 2024.

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed within ten school weeks may result in a Penalty Notice Warning Letter (Notice to Improve) being issued.

- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 20 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded

- If the unauthorised absence is recorded during the 20-day period, Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent, per child)

- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of the issue, the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

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 all pupil's listed emergency contacts at least twice, text message and email on the first day (in the morning and afternoon). Telephone calls, text messages and emails will continue to be sent for a further two days on unexplained absence. If there are concerns around vulnerability within the family, SLT may call on other agencies (e.g. social services/police/School Liaison Officer) on the first/second/third day depending on the known vulnerabilities within the family. A home visit may be carried out, if necessary. This is to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary.

Once the child has returned to school, we will continue to seek a reason for the absence, if necessary.

- 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

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels; the school will send home registration certificates at the end of every half term (Terms 1-6) to all pupils.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define **'exceptional circumstances'** as:

'The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short. And by 'unavoidable' it implies that an event could not be reasonably scheduled at another time'.

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

A written request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- 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
- Examinations within an approved body (e.g. dance or music).

In accordance with Government regulations, the school <u>will not</u> authorise holiday requests during term time.

5.2 Legal sanctions

As stated in Kent County Council (Local Education Authority) Education Penalty Notices - Code of Conduct January 2016, as revised in August 2024:

The school may request and the Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Leave in term-time (unauthorised absence):

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child who is absent without the agreement of the Headteacher. Penalty Notices carry a fine of £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days; this increases to £160 per parent per child if paid between 22-28 days.

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

Non-attendance (unauthorised absence):

Kent County Council states on receipt of the warning – parents/carers are given 20 days to ensure 100% attendance, otherwise a Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued.

The first penalty notice issued to the parent for a child will be charged at £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between days 22 and 28.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice.

Payment after the deadline may be accepted in exceptional circumstances. In this situation, the higher amount of £160 is usually payable and must be paid immediately and in full.

When paying a penalty notice fine, parents are essentially agreeing to an out of court settlement in respect of the unauthorised absences to which the notice refers. Payment in full against the penalty notice discharges

the parent's legal responsibility for the period of unauthorised absence outlined in the Notice and the parent cannot be subsequently prosecuted for that period.

When a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. **A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team** who will consider the case for prosecution.

10 sessions out of 10 school weeks will result to a referral to the School Liaison Officer where a penalty may be issued. ½ day = 1 unauthorised session; 1 day = 2 unauthorised sessions; 5 school days = 10 unauthorised sessions.

Penalty notices can be requested by the Headteacher (in consultation with external agencies), 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 during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

'Notices to improve'

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a 'notice to improve letter' to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

'Notices to improve' will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of 4 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The School believes that the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Securing good attendance will not be seen in isolation and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with the school's effort on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral support and mental health and wellbeing and effective use of resources.

The school uses a range of strategies (see below) to promote good attendance, as well as supporting pupils who are absent due to complex barriers and/or mental or physical ill health or SEND. Strategies include: personalised timetables and curriculum provision; pastoral and well-being support; keep in touch meetings with relevant staff/SLT; support from outside agencies (e.g. School Health; IASK; Early Help etc.); request support from the School Liaison's Officer. Where necessary, and in agreement with parents/carers, a phased

return/reduced timetable may be implemented for pupils who are returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence.

7. Attendance monitoring

See ‘Attendance Flow Chart’ in Appendix 2.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly across the school and at an individual pupil level; for some pupils causing concern absence will be monitored daily. The school will continue to monitor attendance termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children or individual 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, 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 that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to the Family Liaison Officer 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
- Weekly meetings are conducted by SLT and Family Liaison Officer to discuss data and monitor progress
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil’s absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

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
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education

- 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
- Communicate further (targeted meetings; letters) with families causing concern and will monitor attendance daily – see Attendance Flow Chart in Appendix 2.
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

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 Matthew Lamprell (Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- Absence and Ill-Health policy

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

Appendix 2: Attendance Flow Chart

Appendix 3: Lateness Flow Chart (Before Registers Close)

Appendix 4: Lateness Flow Chart (After Registers Close)

Appendix 5: Attendance – Reason for Absence Letter (Code N)

Appendix 6: Attendance – Cause for Concern (LETTER ONE)

Appendix 7: Attendance – Attendance Meeting with FLO Required (LETTER TWO)

Appendix 8: Attendance – Outcome Letter from Attendance Meeting (LETTER THREE)

Appendix 9: Attendance – Further Attendance Meeting with Headteacher and FLO (LETTER FOUR)

Appendix 10: Punctuality (Lateness) Letter (LETTER ONE)

Appendix 11: Punctuality (Lateness) – Punctuality Meeting with FLO required (LETTER TWO)

Appendix 12: Punctuality (Lateness) – Outcome Letter from Punctuality Meeting (LETTER THREE)

Appendix 13: Attendance (Request for leave during term time - informed) Letter

Appendix 14: Attendance (Request for leave during term time – not informed) Letter

Appendix 15: Attendance (Unauthorised leave taken during term time) Letter

Appendix 16: Attendance – Notice to Improve Letter

Appendix 17: Attendance/Punctuality Reminder (after monitoring cycle has been completed) – Letter A

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

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
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority
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

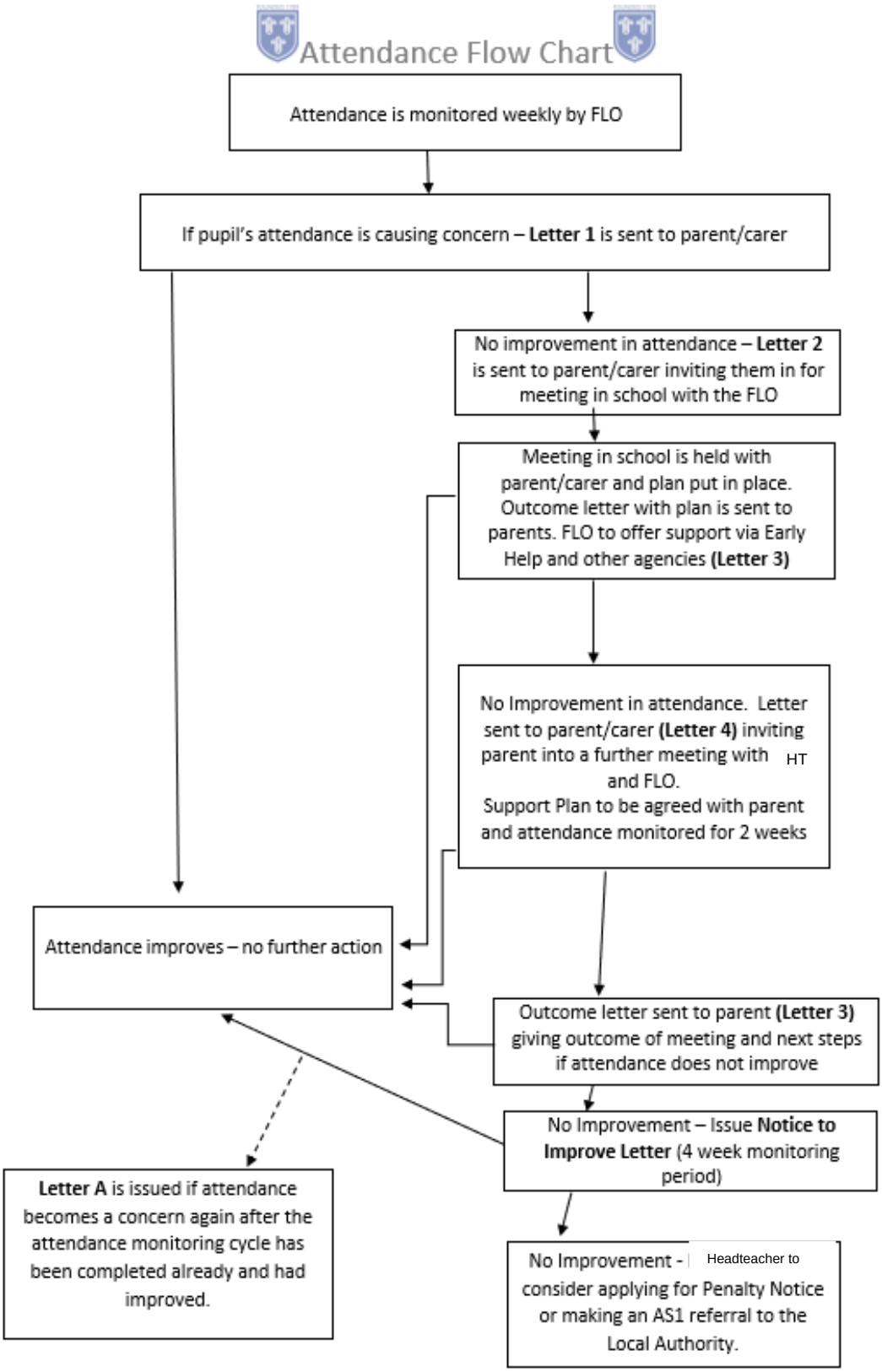
Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking

		regulated employment abroad.
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
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	Traveller absence	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
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

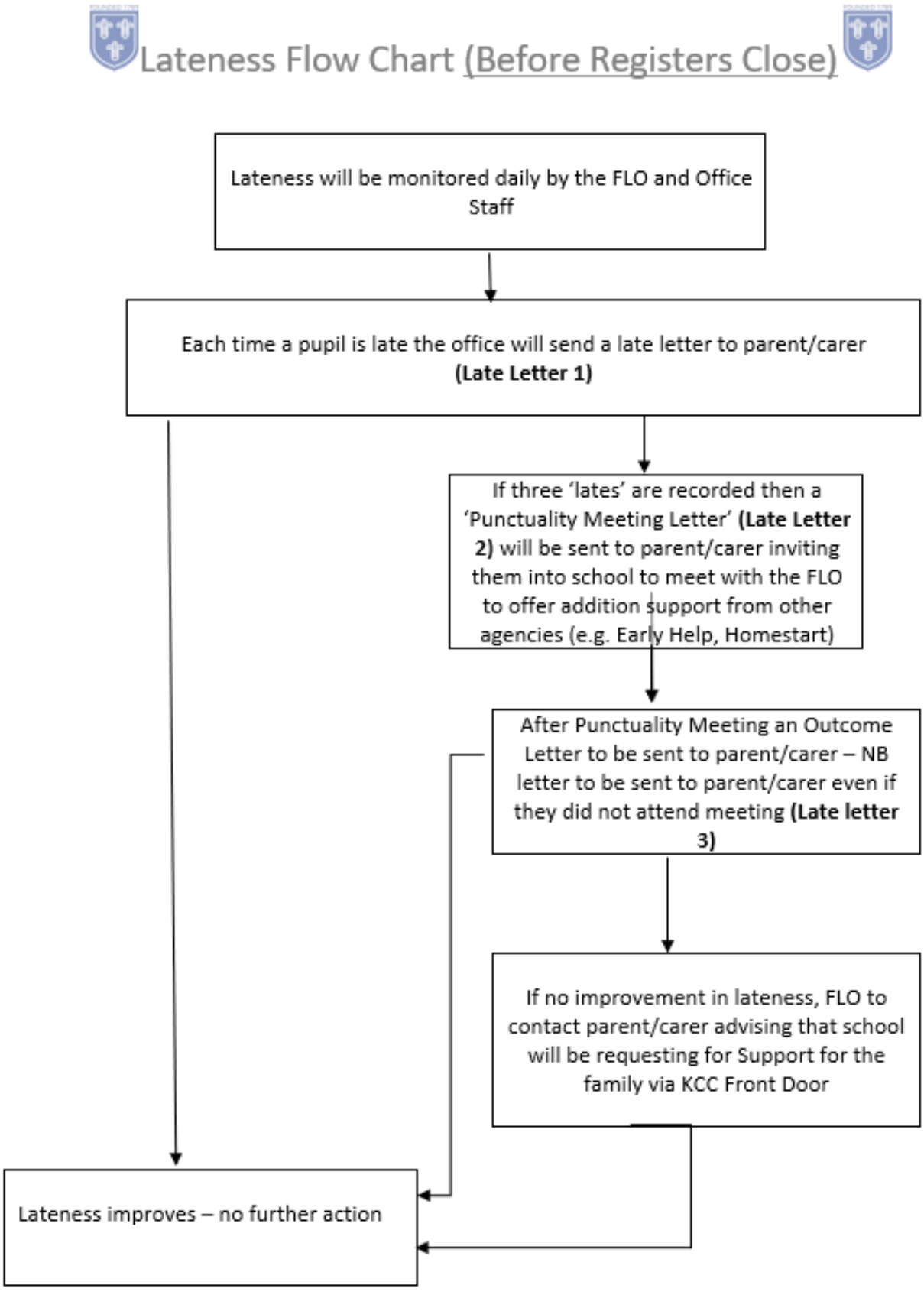
Code	Definition	Scenario
Q	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y1	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Not a possible attendance	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
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

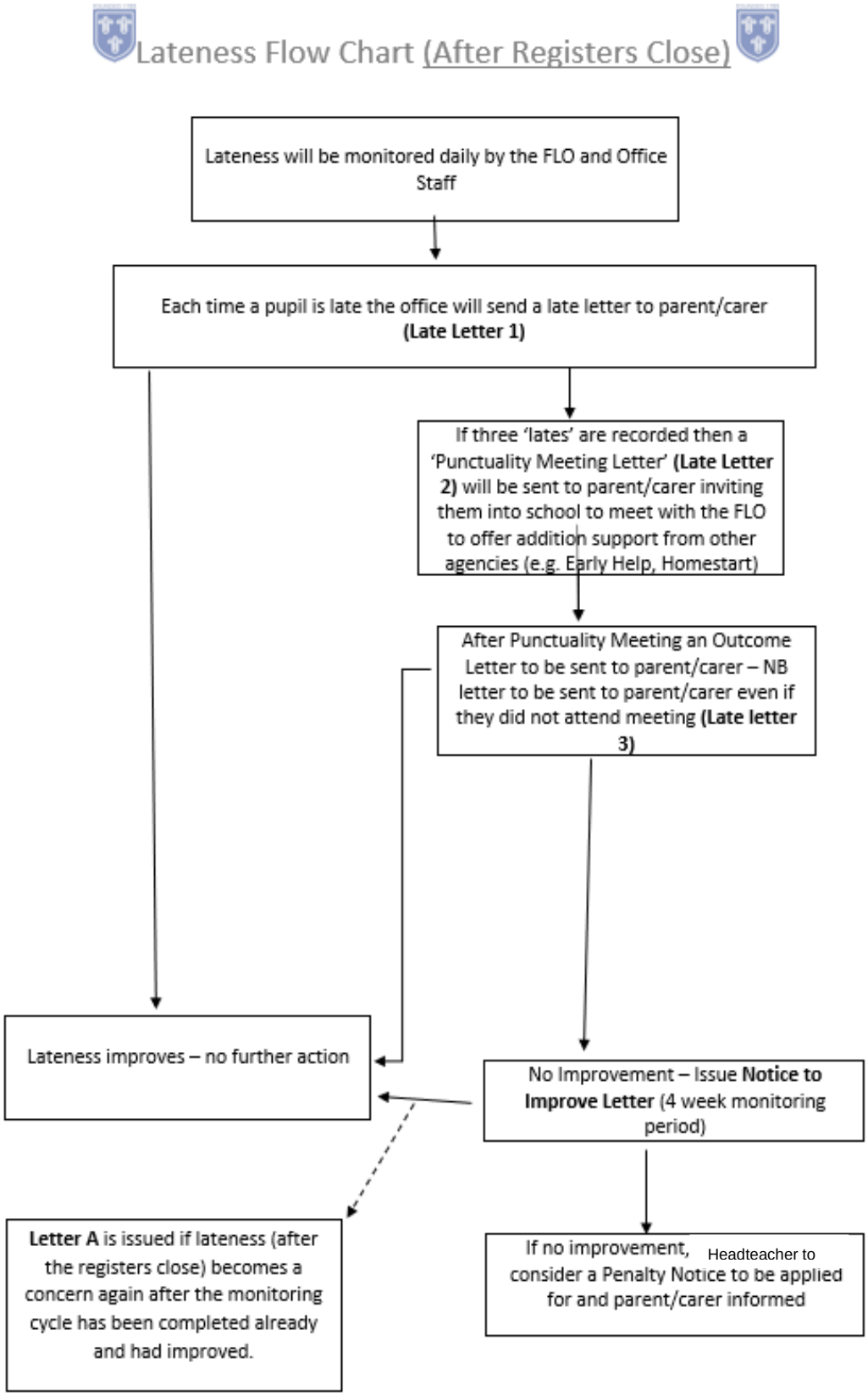
Appendix 2: Attendance Flow Chart



Appendix 3: Lateness Flow Chart (Before Registers Close)



Appendix 4: Lateness Flow Chart (After Registers Close)



Appendix 5: Attendance – Reason for Absence Letter (Code N)

<Address> ***<Date>***

Dear ***<name of parent/carer>***

According to our records, ***<name of pupil>*** has recently been absent from school. You will be aware that it is the parent/carer's responsibility to notify the school on the first day of a pupil's absence to explain the reasons why ***<he/she>*** is unable to attend school and every day after that until they return to school.

Unfortunately, we have not received any contact from you.

I am therefore writing to you to give you an opportunity to explain the recent absence **(s)**. Please complete the slip below and return it to the school within three school days. Any absence that hasn't been explained within two weeks will be categorised as "***Unauthorised***" absence.

If you wish to discuss this letter further, please contact the school office (01304 206887)

Yours sincerely,

Miss Mills

(Administration Assistant)

Please complete this slip and return to the school office as soon as possible.

<name of pupil>

Dates of unexplained absence (s):

<Dates of N Codes>

Explanation for the above dates of unexplained absence:

Parent/Carer's Signature…… Date……..

Appendix 6: Attendance – Cause for Concern (LETTER ONE)

<Address>

<Date>

Dear **<Parent/Carer>**

I am writing regarding **<name of child>**'s attendance, which is causing concern. Please see the attached attendance certificate.

<name of child> has now missed **<number of sessions>** sessions. The number of sessions they have missed means it is more difficult for them to achieve in their learning and more likely that they will have significant gaps in their knowledge.

We will be closely monitoring your child's attendance and expect to see improvements.

By law it is your responsibility to ensure the regular attendance and punctuality of your child. Failure to do so may lead to legal action (1996 Education Act).

I thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. If you would like support, please contact Miss Graham, the school's Family Liaison Officer (01304 206887).

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 7: Attendance – Attendance Meeting with FLO Required (LETTER TWO)

<Address>

<Date>

Dear **<Parent/Carer>**

Due to ongoing concerns regarding your child's current attendance (see attached attendance certificate), you are invited to attend a 'School Attendance Meeting' on:

<date of meeting> at **<time of meeting>**

The meeting will be held in school and with Miss Graham, (Family Liaison Officer).

It is very important that you attend this meeting, as it is your opportunity to discuss anything that you feel is affecting your ability to maintain your child's regular attendance at school.

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

You should be aware that the meeting will go ahead even if you do not attend and that a plan of action will be made in your absence.

After the meeting, you will receive a letter outlining the main points raised and any actions decided.
If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact me (01304 206887) so that an alternative time can be arranged.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 8: Attendance – Outcome Letter from Attendance Meeting (LETTER THREE)

<Address>
<Date>

Dear **<Parent/Carer>**

Information for parent/carer following 'Attendance Meeting'

Name of Pupil:	Date of Birth:	% attendance at date of meeting:	Number of sessions missed:

Thank you for attending the meeting at school today to discuss the attendance of your child. *You did not attend the pre-arranged meeting today, however the meeting went ahead in your absence. (delete as necessary)*.

Outlined below are the main points discussed and agreed at the meeting:

e.g. illnesses will need medical evidence

We will be monitoring your child's attendance very closely and it is expected that this will improve. Any further absences may lead to the Local Authority taking legal action under section 444 of the Education Act (1996).

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

We look forward to seeing an improvement in your child's attendance

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell & Miss Graham
(Headteacher) & (Family Liaison Officer)

Appendix 9: Attendance – Further Attendance Meeting with Headteacher and FLO (LETTER FOUR)

<Address>
<Date>

Dear **<Parent/Carer>**

Despite previous warnings, I note with concern that your child's attendance at school has made no significant improvement. **<child's name>**'s attendance at school is currently **<percentage_attendance>%** which means **<he/she>** has missed **<total_authorised_absences>** half day sessions for authorised absence and **<total_unauthorised_absences>** half day sessions for unauthorised absence. This will have an impact on your child's education which cannot be ignored.

As there has been no improvement in **<child's name>**'s attendance, I must advise you that further absences from school as a result of illness, will continue to require medical evidence (e.g. copy of a prescription, Doctors/Dentist appointment card). If medical evidence is not provided when required, further absences will be marked as unauthorised.

I am inviting you to attend a further 'School Attendance Meeting'. The time and date have been set for **<date of meeting>** at **<time of meeting>**.
It is important that you attend this meeting for us to explore the issues around poor attendance.
The meeting will be at school and with myself and Miss Graham (Family Liaison Officer).

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

If this appointment is inconvenient, I would be grateful if you could contact the school office (01304 206887) so that an alternative time can be arranged.
If you do not attend this meeting and **<child's name>**'s absence continues to deteriorate, a referral may be made to the Local Authority's School Liaison Officer for further action and possible prosecution.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 10: Punctuality (Lateness) Letter (LETTER ONE)

<Date>

Dear «Parental_addressee»

«Forename» «Surname» - «Year»

«Forename» arrived late *today/yesterday - DEPENDS WHEN BEING SENT. REFER TO WHETHER ONE OFF OR PATTERN.*

Late arrival causes disruption to the school office staff, the whole school as Collective Worship is disrupted and to your child who has missed out on registration, saying hello to their friends and hearing about what is on the schedule for the day.

Children in Classes R, 1 and 2 need to arrive at the Laureston Place gate between 8:40 and 8:55am.

Children in Classes 3, 4, 5 and 6 need to arrive at the Maison Dieu gate between 8:40am and 8:55am.

If your child is late – and this should only be for an exceptional one-off reason - you need to come to the Laureston Place gate. You will need to bring your child to the school office, wait with them while they are signed in and explain why they are late. If you have arrived by car you will need to park your car legally and responsibly.

If your child's arrival time continues to be of concern, you will be asked to come to a meeting in the school to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 11: Punctuality (Lateness) – Punctuality Meeting with FLO required (LETTER TWO)

<Address>

<Date>

Dear **<name of Parent/Carer>**

School Punctuality Meeting – <child's name>

I am writing to invite you to attend a Punctuality Meeting in school, with myself, on **<date and time of meeting>**, so that we can discuss your child's punctuality to school.

Our records show that your child has arrived late to school on at least **<number>** occasions so far this term (**<number>** occasions have been after the registers have closed).

I would like to offer you an opportunity to discuss the reasons behind **<child's name>**'s late arrivals and to see how school can best support you and your child to improve school punctuality.

I would like to remind you that the school gate opens at 8.40am and closes at 8.55am, children arriving after 9.30am will be marked with a 'U code' which is an unauthorised absence.

Arriving punctually will have a positive impact on **<child's name>** and will ensure that **<he/she>** is not missing out on important learning.

If the time of the meeting is not convenient, please do contact me to rearrange (01304 206887).

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Graham

(Family Liaison Officer)

Appendix 12: Punctuality (Lateness) – Outcome Letter from Punctuality Meeting (LETTER THREE)

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

Information for parent/carer following 'Punctuality Meeting'

Name of Pupil:	**Date of Birth:**	**Number of lates this term (Code L):**	**Number of lates this term after registers close (Code U):**

Thank you for attending the meeting at school today to discuss **<name of child>**'s punctuality. *You did not attend the pre-arranged meeting today, however the meeting went ahead in your absence. (delete as necessary)*

Outlined below are the main points discussed and agreed at the meeting:

e.g. **<child's name>** will attend breakfast club every morning. Referral to Early Help for support will be made.

We will be monitoring your child's punctuality very closely and it is expected that your child will arrive on time to school. Should it not improve, we may need to seek advice from the Local Authority's School Liaison Officer. *(to include when referring to concerns with number of 'L Codes').*

We will be monitoring your child's punctuality very closely and it is expected that this will improve. Should it not improve and your child continues to arrive in school after the registers have closed, we will seek advice from the Local Authority and this could result in them issuing a Penalty Notice. *(to include when referring to concerns with number of 'U Codes').*

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

We look forward to seeing an improvement in your child's punctuality. Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Lamprell & Miss Graham
(Headteacher) & (Family Liaison Officer)

Appendix 13: Attendance (Request for leave during term time - informed) Letter

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

Request for leave during Term-Time
For the attention of the parent of <Name of Child>.

I have received your request to take <Name of Child> out of school for a family holiday between …. and …., a total of …. school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:
- agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
- each case will be judged on its merits
- my decision is final
- leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I have considered your request but I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. If you decide to take <forename> out of school I may be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 14: Attendance (Request for leave during term time – not informed) Letter

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

Request for leave during Term-Time
For the attention of the parent of <Name of Child>.

You failed to inform us in advance that <Name of Child> would be absent from school for a family holiday between ….. and ….., a total of …. school sessions.

From September 2013 the Department for Education has amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removing the Head Teacher's ability to authorise leave of absence for a family holiday or absences of this nature. Requests for holidays in term-time will not be authorised as the Regulations only allow me to authorise absence (leave) in "exceptional circumstances".

The School's Attendance Policy confirms that:
• agreement to each request is at my discretion, acting on behalf of the Governing Body
• each case will be judged on its merits
• my decision is final
• leave cannot be authorised retrospectively

I am writing to confirm that on this occasion the leave will not be authorised. As you have taken <Name of Child>.out of school I will be making a request for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 15: Attendance (Unauthorised leave taken during term time) Letter

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

For the attention of the parent of <Name of Child>.

With reference to our letter dated ……, the leave of absence taken between ….. and …..has now been recorded as Unauthorised Absence and as a result a Penalty Notice has been requested.

A separate Penalty Notice can be issued to each parent and for each child.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 16: Attendance – Notice to Improve Letter

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

School Attendance – Notice to Improve

For the attention of the parent of <Name of Child>.

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, well-being, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly the child's parent may be guilty of an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve **<Name of Child>'s** attendance, including:

1. **Telephone calls.** The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer their support with any issues your child may be having.
2. **An Attendance Concern Letter**. The school wrote to you on **<Insert date of communication>** letting you know about **<Child Name>'s** attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
3. **An Attendance Support Meeting**. The school invited you to a meeting **<Insert date of meetings>** to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and you did not effectively engage with the support offered.
4. ***Other support*** *– school to complete i.e. referrals, sign posting (to input/remove accordingly)*

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern. Between **«WARNING_START_DATE»** and **«WARNING_END_DATE»** the pupil failed to attend regularly at **«School_Name»**, which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.

You now have twenty school days (4 weeks) **from** _____ **(date) to** _____ **(date**) in which to improve your child's attendance. During this time your child must not have any unauthorised absences from school during this period.

Should we do not see sufficient improvement and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, we will refer the matter to the Local Authority who may issue you with a Penalty Notice.

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued as soon as an unauthorised absence is recorded.

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, please contact us as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Lamprell
(Headteacher)

Appendix 17: Attendance/Punctuality Concern (after monitoring cycle has been completed) – Letter A

<Address>

<Date>

Dear <Name of Parent/Carer>

For the attention of the parent of <Name of Child>.

I write with reference to our continuing concerns regarding <Name of Child>'s school attendance. <Name of Child>'s attendance is currently % meaning that your child is missing huge amounts of learning and this is having a detrimental effect on <his/her> education.

You will recall that we have previously written to you about our concerns on <input dates> and, in addition, you have been invited into school on <input dates> to attend meetings with Miss Graham (Family Liaison Officer) and myself. I enclose copies of all letters that have been sent to you relating to your child's attendance.

We will be monitoring your child's attendance closely and it is expected to improve. As you will be aware, any further unauthorised absences may lead to the Local Authority taking legal action and issuing a Penalty Notice.

As always, if you need any assistance/support in improving your child's attendance please do contact Miss Graham (Family Liaison Officer) – School Office (01304 206887); office@stmarysprimary.net

Please be reminded that, under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly, and failure to do so could ultimately result in a Fixed Penalty Notice and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court.

If a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks (10 sessions is equivalent to 5 days), the following Penalty Notice could apply: £80, if paid within 21 days; £160, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Local Authority may decide to pursue further legal action. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child.

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first offence, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

If a third or subsequent period of unauthorised absence occurs during a 3 rolling year period and the school wish legal action to be considered, Kent County Council will not issue a penalty notice. A referral will be made to Kent PRU and Attendance Service Courts Team who will consider the case for prosecution.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Lamprell
(Headteacher)