Policy	Attendance Student
Date prepared	December 2020
Review date	September 2021
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Signed	

This policy has been written with regard to School Attendance 2019 and Children missing education 2016

Attendance Introduction

When pupils join Oracle School, they have often experienced a significant period of time out of school or significant difficulties within school that have led to greatly reduced attendance. This is due to their complex needs which may impact on their ability to manage the emotional, social and environmental aspects of school life. A number of pupils have co-morbid conditions which may also lead to reduced attendance. In cases such as this, agreement may be made with the Local Authority and the parents for part time attendance for fixed periods of time with the aim to attend full time as soon as possible. Our expectation is that all pupils achieve their full potential and therefore we aim for all of them to achieve a 100% attendance.

PRINCIPLES AND AIMS

To maintain and improve upon current attendance levels through a consistent approach to registration and the monitoring of attendance.

To ensure the completion and maintenance of attendance registers. We work in partnership with parents, carers, support agencies to encourage and support all children to achieve high levels of attendance and punctuality. Where attendance levels fall we will work with the Local Authority to make full use of statutory duties available to encourage and ensure excellent levels of attendance. On the rare occasions when these efforts fail to improve attendance, the school will actively seek, in liaison with the Education Welfare Service (EWS), the use of legal remedies.

Actions

- Celebrate success
- Monitor attendance rates and offer support to families where issues are arising.
- Keep and maintain accurate records.
- Liaise with partners, including Education Welfare Officer.

EXPECTATIONS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School Staff

The teacher in charge of a class must accurately take a register of attendance at the school at agreed times and in accordance with the agreed method.

A designated member of the staff (School Administrator) will on the first day of absence, if no reason for the absence is known, contact the home to ascertain the reason.

The Head Teacher, (or designated member of senior staff) will regularly monitor attendance and contact parents when concerns arise.

Parents/Carers

It is their legal responsibility to ensure that the child attends school. This includes being punctual. When a child is absent it is the parents' responsibility to inform the school at the earliest possible opportunity.

Governance

The Oracle Care and Education Head of Education Services has a responsibility to overview schools' attendance and to monitor this. The Head of Education Services acts as a 'critical friend' and determines targets and the impact of the attendance policies and approaches.

STANDARDS and MONITORING

The School Administrator and Head Teacher will initially monitor attendance.

Children's attendance will be classified in the following way:

97% to 100%	Excellent attendance
95% to 97%	Good attendance
92% to 94%	Requires improvement (potential impact on learning)
Below 90%	Attendance below this level may trigger action by the school

The Head Teacher (or designated member of senior staff) will check the attendance of all children on a half termly basis. At the end of each half term a summary of every child's attendance will be sent home.

Pupils who achieve an attendance level of above 95% at the end of a term will receive a certificate at Bronze, Silver or Gold level.

Parents/Carers will be informed by letter if their child's attendance falls below 90%. This communication will be supportive and will take into account individual circumstances. Persistent levels of attendance below 90% are of concern and will be investigated.

If a child's attendance levels approach 90%, they will be discussed with the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.

Attendance figures are monitored and reported in the Governance reports on a half-termly basis.

Registration

The school registration starts at 9:30am. If any child arrives into class after 9:30am they will be marked as late. Please see *Appendix 5.*

RECORD KEEPING

Registers and all related correspondence will be kept for a period of six years.

Any correspondence regarding concerns about a child's attendance will be kept in the child's individual file. This will be passed onto the next school at the point of transfer.

ABSENCE REPORTING

Guidance for parents/carers

Absence Due To Illness

DAY 1
Parent/carer to 'phone the school **(01525 860319)** by 9.30am on the day of absence to confirm the following:

- Child's name
- Reason for absence ("unwell" is not sufficient, more details are required)
- Time/date of Doctor's appointment (if made)

DAY 2 As DAY 1

DAY 3 As DAY 1

Note:
If your child does not return to school on DAY 3, then from DAY 4 onwards, the school reserves the right to ask parents/carers to provide supporting medical evidence, eg appointment card/letter; note from Doctor, Specialist's report, copy of prescription, before consideration will be given whether or not to authorise the absences (wholly or in part).

DAY 4+

Parent/carer to 'phone the school by 9.30am on each subsequent day of absence until either:

- Child returns to school, or
- As otherwise agreed with a senior member of school staff.

Any child accumulating 15 school days (30 sessions) of authorised absence due to illness within an academic year (consecutively or non-consecutively and not for a known and significant on-going health condition) will result in a meeting being arranged with parents/carers to plan a way forward. This is to ensure that the school is appropriately meeting the individual child's educational needs.

The coding of any absence from school, for whatever reason(s) given, is ultimately at the sole discretion of the Head Teacher; therefore, the school may request sight of relevant evidence to support an absence of any length of time.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to obtain the relevant evidence to support any absence from school.

Unauthorised absences of 5 days (10 sessions) or more in any 12 weeks period may result in your child's case being referred to the Education Welfare Service for support and advice.

Term-time Leave Requests, including holidays

Parents/carers have no entitlement to take their child out of school during term-time. Any requests for term-time leave, up to a maximum of 10 school days in an academic year, must satisfy the following conditions before they will be considered by the Head Teacher:

- Exceptional circumstances apply, eg forces personnel; significant year round seasonal employment restrictions (a letter from the employer stating to this effect must be provided); unforeseen family circumstances etc. Financial reasons are NOT an exceptional circumstance.
- Requested in advance of the proposed dates (at the earliest possible opportunity and at least four weeks' notice.)
- A definite return date provided – **any child not returned to school on the expected date will be considered a 'Child Missing from Education' and will be referred to the Education Attendance Service as a safeguarding concern. This may trigger a home visit and involvement from the local police.**

Child Missing Education

Schools have a key role to play in ensuring that children do not become CME. Schools are responsible for maintaining attendance registers and monitoring pupil attendance in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations (England) 2006 and the Education (Pupil Registration) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2016

In order to comply with these regulations school must notify when they are about to remove a pupil from a school roll and should only delete a pupil from the roll when:

1. The headteacher has received confirmation from the child's parent/carer that he/she has been registered at another school, and there is no School Attendance Order in place;
2. The child has ceased to attend the school and is no longer ordinarily resident at a place which is a reasonable distance from the school and the school has received confirmation from another school that the child is now on its roll;
3. The headteacher has received written confirmation from the child's parent that the child is to be electively home educated - in such circumstances the school should notify the Access and Inclusion Service using the prescribed procedure and referral form;
4. The child has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than 4 weeks and both the headteacher and the local authority have failed after reasonable enquiry, to locate him/her;
5. The child has not returned to school within 10 days following the expiry of an agreed extended leave of absence (more than 10 days) and the head teacher has established that the child's absence is not the result of sickness or any unavoidable cause and the headteacher and the local authority have both failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate him/her;
6. The child, having been admitted to the school to receive nursery education, has not been offered a place in reception class;
7. A school medical officer has certified that the child is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age;
8. The child has died;
9. The child will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and he/she
10. intends to leave;
11. The child has been permanently excluded from the school and the deadline for lodging an appeal has elapsed, or the parents have notified the school in writing that they do not intend to appeal;
12. The local authority has named another school in a School Attendance Order or where a School Attendance Order has been revoked because alternative arrangements for the child's education have been made;

13. The child is detained in pursuance of a final court order or order of recall and will be continuously absent from the school for a period of not less than 4 months and the headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child will return to that school at the end of that period he/she is detained following a court order or order of recall.

When Oracle school removes a pupil from its roll (other than as part of the normal transfer process or following a permanent exclusion) the school will inform the placing authority by completing a Notification of Removal from School Roll E-form. If this removal from roll form does not include a named destination for the child the case may be treated as a CME.

LINKS
Telephone: 0300 300 6291
Email: **access.inclusion@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk**

Access and Inclusion Service Watling
House
High Street North
Dunstable
Bedfordshire
LU6 1LF

Cross Border Arrangements

Oracls school has a signed SLA with the Central Bedfordshire Attendance Team. However many of our pupils, whilst at school in Central Bedfordshire live in neighbouring authorities. CBC and its neighbouring LAs have agreed protocols with regard to children who attend school in one LA but reside in another. According to the terms of these protocols if a child who attends a school in Central Bedfordshire becomes CME the CBC CME officer will notify and liaise with the CME officer of the LA in which the child resides.

APPENDICES:
Appendix 1 Advice to parents/carers
Appendix 2 Request for Term Time Leave Form
Appendix 3 Approval Letter
Appendix 4 Letter of Refusal
Appendix 5 Registration/Late registration flowchart
Appendix 6 Coronavirus amendments / additional responsibilities

TERM TIME LEAVE

ADVICE TO PARENTS/CARERS

Amendments to the 2006 regulations were made by the [Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#) and came into force on 1ˢᵗ September 2013.

The amendments made it clear that Head Teachers may only grant leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave must be made in writing to the Head Teacher in advance.

There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education (DfE). However, from discussion with the DfE and professional associations, it is suggested that exceptional leave would be:

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short
  (National Association of Head Teachers, 2014)

Taking a child on holiday in term time interrupts learning and teachers have to spend time helping children catch up when they return. Parents/Carers should arrange holidays during the school holiday periods. The School is open 185 days per year which leaves 185 days of the year for holidays.

Government website link

https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/overview

APPENDIX 2

REQUEST FOR TERM-TIME LEAVE

To the Head Teacher, Oracle School

Class

I wish to apply for term time leave for

Name

from [   ] to [   ] inclusive

The Exceptional Reasons for this request are:

Signature
(Parent/Carer)   Date

Please make your request prior to making any bookings and at least four weeks before the anticipated leave date.

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APPENDIX 3

APPROVAL LETTER

Dear

Name of Child:

Re: Request for Term Time Leave

Thank you for your request for term time leave.

I am in agreement this is for exceptional reasons and have authorised this leave.

The leave is from [   ] to [   ]

Should the leave be extended for any reason, the extension may be regarded as unauthorised absence which may be used in any legal action for poor school attendance.

Signature
(Head Teacher)   Date

_____   _____

APPENDIX 4

LETTER OF REFUSAL

Dear

Name of Child:

Re: Request for Term Time Leave

You have requested   School days leave.

_____

Your request for term time leave has been carefully considered but unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:
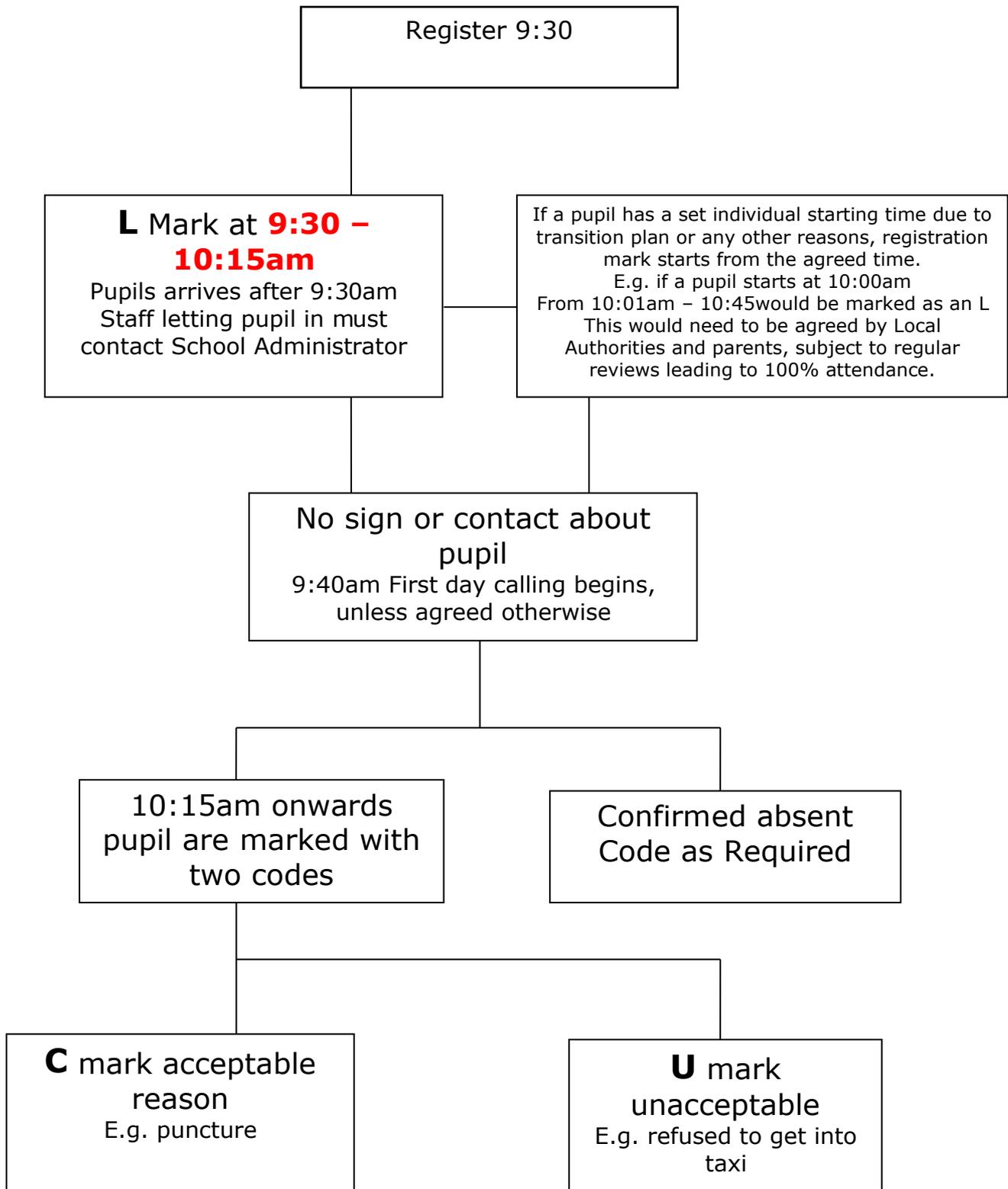
The reasons are not considered exceptional

The leave has not been requested in advance

Other

Please be aware that if you decide to proceed with the unauthorised term time leave the school will inform the Local Authority who make take further action.

Signature
(Headteacher)   Date

APPENDIX 5

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                    │    Register 9:30     │
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| **L** Mark at **9:30 – 10:15am**
Pupils arrives after 9:30am Staff letting pupil in must contact School Administrator | If a pupil has a set individual starting time due to transition plan or any other reasons, registration mark starts from the agreed time.
E.g. if a pupil starts at 10:00am
From 10:01am – 10:45would be marked as an L
This would need to be agreed by Local Authorities and parents, subject to regular reviews leading to 100% attendance. |

No sign or contact about pupil
9:40am First day calling begins, unless agreed otherwise

| 10:15am onwards pupil are marked with two codes | Confirmed absent Code as Required |

| **C** mark acceptable reason
E.g. puncture | **U** mark unacceptable
E.g. refused to get into taxi |

Appendix 6

From the 22nd March 2020 the DfE have required all school's to complete a daily return on the status of school (open or closed), and the level of attendance. This is to ensure that the Government and DfE can monitor the impact of coronavirus (COVID 19) on settings across the country and ensure focussed support, to keep children safe.

The school's Administration and Attendance officer is responsible for completing this form daily and submitting it BEFORE 2pm.

Further information about the form can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-complete-the-educational-setting-status-form

Recording of absence related to Coronavirus.

School attendance is mandatory from the start of the autumn term 2020 however, there are some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

To make sure school records this accurately and consistently, the DfE have made changes to the regulations[2] governing school attendance registers to add a new category of non-attendance – 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)'.

This category must only be used to record sessions that take place in the 2020 to 2021 academic year where a pupil does not attend because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from Public Health England (PHE) and/or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)[3]
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with the Secretary of State's expectation that no parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend a given session, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

COVID Attendance codes

From the beginning of 2020-21 academic year, school use the attendance and absence codes in use before the outbreak, in addition to the new category of 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)':

- pupils not attending a session who meet the criteria for 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' should be recorded using code X[4]
- schools should continue to use code X for non-compulsory school aged pupils who are not expected to attend a session, as they did before the outbreak

Examples in which 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' could apply

In line with current legislation, and current guidance from PHE and DHSC, examples are as follows.

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

- Pupils who have symptoms should self-isolate and get a test.

If a pupil tests **negative** and if they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus (COVID-19), they can stop self-isolating and return to school. If the pupil remains unwell following the test (such as with a different illness), then they should be recorded as code **I** – illness, as would usually be the case. Code **X** should only be used up until the time of the negative test result. Schools should not retrospectively change the attendance register due to a negative test result.

If a pupil tests **positive**, they should continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of their symptoms. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone. Code **X** should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code **I** (illness) until they are able to return to school.

If someone in the pupil's household has symptoms, the household should self-isolate and the member of their household should get a test.

If the member of the household tests negative, the pupil can stop self-isolating and can return to school. Code **X** should only be used up until the time of the negative test result when the pupil can return to school.

If the household member tests positive, the pupil should continue self-isolating for the full 14 days from when the member of their household first had symptoms. Code **X** should be used during this period.

In all cases of self-isolation, school will ask parents/carers to inform them immediately about the outcome of a test. School will not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation.

Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19)

Pupils may not have symptoms themselves but may be required to self-isolate if they are a close contact of someone with coronavirus (COVID-19).

The NHS test and trace guidance states that a person should self-isolate for 14 days if they have had recent close contact with a person who has tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). In the event of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case in the school community, the local health protection team will provide advice on who this applies to, advising them to self-isolate for 14 days since they

were last in close contact with the person that has tested positive when they were infectious. Code X should be used for these pupils during this period.

Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

As usual, parents should plan holidays within school breaks and avoid seeking permission to take their children out of school during term time. Families should also consider that their child may need to self-isolate following trips overseas that require a period of quarantine[5]. If a pupil is required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK, **code X** will be used in the register.

Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only

Government advice relating to shielding for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. This means that the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can return to school.

If in future, rates of the disease rise in local areas, children still on the shielding list (or family members still on the shielding list) from that area, and that area only, may be contacted by the government and advised to stay at home and shield during the period where rates remain high. Families will receive a letter if they are required to shield again that parents will be able to share with the school. Non-attendance in accordance with guidance from PHE or the DHSC should be recorded as code X.

School will contact parents/carers of pupils who are shielding when measures in the local area are lifted and shielding is paused again, to set out the expectation that they can return to school. Code X should not be used for sessions after the pupil has been advised to return to school.

Local lockdown

As rates of the disease rise locally, school may need to prevent some pupils from attending. School will follow PHE or DHSC guidance on what measures are necessary in the event of local lockdown. Where attendance is to be limited to certain groups, 'not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)' - code X - should be used for pupils who are asked not to attend.

Remote education

If a pupil is not attending school due to circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19), school will immediately offer them access to remote education. School will keep a record of, and monitor engagement with this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register. Code X will still be recorded for the absence.