



**Stogursey C of E Primary
and Pre-School**



With West Somerset Education Partnership

Attendance Policy 2023/24

Approved by: G Tucker

Date: 1.12.21

Last reviewed on: 16.10.23

Next review due by: 1.12.24

Attendance Policy

Revised September 2023

The following policy has been agreed by all schools in West Somerset in order to support and sustain high attendance to meet the minimum school target of 96%, with an expectation that all pupils will strive to achieve attendance between 97-100%. The policy will also ensure that there is consistent approach in all West Somerset schools.

Rationale:

All children and young people attending West Somerset schools have the right to receive an education that will give them every opportunity to achieve, and exceed, expectations. Regular attendance is essential to ensure that pupils' learning is not seriously interrupted and their level of attainment affected. Poor or irregular attendance places children at risk of underachievement and, in some cases, can result in them being drawn into patterns of anti-social behaviour. The West Somerset Education Partnership (WSEP) is committed to working with parents[1], and others with parental responsibility, to support them in their legal obligation to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time.

Aims and Objectives:

- The WSEP aims to improve, establish and maintain the attendance of all pupils. This will support continuity of learning and, therefore, the opportunity for pupils to fulfil their potential.
- The WSEP ensures that all absences are followed up swiftly and consistently, in accordance with guidelines.
- It is the responsibility of each of the schools in the WSEP to encourage full attendance and take seriously any problems that may lead to non-attendance, supporting any pupils with difficulties in order that they can sustain their attendance.
- The WSEP adheres to government guidelines around school attendance and sets annual targets to reflect its commitment to regular attendance of all pupils.
- **The agreed Whole-WSEP Attendance Target for the 2023-2024 Academic Year is greater than 96%, with all pupils encouraged and supported to achieve 97-100% attendance.**

The Department for Education has issued updated expectations relating to the responsibilities of parents/carers, schools, governing bodies / trustees – further details can be found here:

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/912222/summary-table-of-responsibilities-for-school-attendance.pdf)

Responsibilities of Staff:

- It is the Headteacher's role to ensure excellent attendance within their own school, promoting high expectations and a culture of all staff having a role to play in achieving this.
- Staff will work with parents and carers to ensure regular and punctual attendance by dealing with any attendance issues in a supportive way.
- There will be a named member of the leadership team responsible for attendance policy and procedure, with oversight of the production of attendance returns. They will ensure that school Governors / Trustees are made aware of information and issues relevant to attendance via the Headteacher's Report to Governing Bodies/Trustees.
 - o The named senior leader with responsibility for attendance at Stogursey C of E Primary School is Gary Tucker
- The headteacher is responsible for maintaining a high level of attendance in their school and, alongside the wider Senior Leadership Team, for ensuring that systems and processes within the school support this.
- Senior members of staff will be involved with monitoring attendance data and following up attendance concerns. This will include communication with children / young people, parents / carers, regular meetings with teachers and, where appropriate, liaison with external agencies to support improved attendance.
- Teachers are responsible for day-to-day administration including the accurate registration of morning / afternoon / lesson attendance and will contribute to whole school promotion of high expectations.
- Each school within the WSEP will have staff that support the headteacher in ensuring attendance is monitored effectively. This could include reception staff, attendance officers, pastoral outreach workers and other members of the administration team responsible for tasks such as updating tracking and monitoring systems and issuing letters. Schools will challenge any absences that may require follow-up.
- Key members of staff with responsibility for this work at Stogursey C of E Primary School are:
 - Carlie Nicholls, Office Manager
 - Louise Day, Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Lisa Dunwood, SENCO and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Karen Payne, ELSA Pastoral Support Worker

Parental Responsibilities:

- It is the legal responsibility of the parent of a child registered at a school to ensure that the child attends school regularly.
- Parents should ensure that children arrive at school on time and are ready for the school day, Parents should work in partnership with their school to help their child/children understand the importance of attending school regularly.

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- If there is an unavoidable reason for a child's absence then parents are required to inform the school through the agreed method of communication before the start of lesson one on the first, and then any subsequent, day of illness absence. If there is a planned medical absence, parents can also communicate this in advance so that the reason for non-attendance can be noted in the registers. If a parent cannot, or does not, supply a note or specific explanation for any illness absence, the school will classify it as unauthorised.
- The agreed methods of communication at Stogursey C of E Primary School are:
 - Phone call message through to the absence line or direct to the school office in school hours on 01278 732389
- Medical appointments are expected to be attended out of school hours or during school holidays; if the appointment has to be on a school day, a child should attend for part of the day, wherever possible.
- Genuine reasons for absence due to illness and medical appointments that cannot be taken out of school hours will be taken into account. Schools may request that you provide medical evidence. A GP letter is **not necessary** to support illness absences, medical verification could include an appointment card, prescription, hospital letter or even a pharmacy note.
- Parents should keep their school fully informed with regards to medical issues that prevent good attendance. Where serious and/or long-term medical issues are present, if appropriate, and agreed between parent, a senior school staff member and any relevant medical professional, a short-term, flexible timetable may be drawn up in the best interests of the child. This would be reviewed regularly, with the aim of the child returning to full time education as soon as possible.
- Parents should work in partnership with their school and outside agencies to resolve issues relating to non-attendance. Schools will follow the Attendance Concerns Pathway (Appendix 1) when concerns continue after initial contact has been made. It is always the intention of schools to work supportively with parents to secure improved attendance.
- Where attempts to work supportively with parents have not secured improved attendance, schools will make use of Penalty Notices and Prosecutions, in line with section 444 of the Education Act, 1996, which states that "if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parents are guilty of an offence." In these circumstances, a Warning Penalty Notice will be issued in the first instance.
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (Statutory Instrument No 757) explains a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid on 22nd day but within 28 days.

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- Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2,500 and / or 3 months imprisonment (see DfE statutory guidance 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance>).
- The Children's Commissioner has worked with the Department for Education to produce guidance for parents on school attendance – this can be found here: [DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance/)

Governor / Trustee Responsibilities:

- The Governing Body / Board of Trustees of each school has a responsibility to have an overview of their school / Trust's attendance and to monitor this via the Headteacher's Report each term. Data will be scrutinized in detail to discuss trends and to work with Headteachers to ensure that improvement efforts are being focused appropriately.
- Governors / Trustees are expected to recognise the value of good attendance and to ensure that this is promoted through school policies and ethos.
- In conjunction with the headteacher, Governors / Trustees will determine targets and the impact of the attendance policies and approaches regularly.

Attendance Register Procedure

Attendance registers are legal documents which may be required as evidence in court under the regulations governing pupil registration. Teachers are required to take an attendance register prior to morning and afternoon sessions, using the appropriate attendance codes (Appendix 2) that indicate whether each pupil is 'present', 'present at an approved educational activity', or 'absent'.

Teachers and office staff are responsible for collecting absence information provided by parents via the agreed school procedures. If a pupil is absent for one day, without explanation from a parent or carer, a member of the administration team is expected to contact home. If a member of staff has concerns about a pupil's absence, the teacher and headteacher should be informed. If a child with a Social Worker is absent without reason, the school Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Social Worker. Appropriate action should be taken by the teacher and/or headteacher where any concerns arise.

Unauthorised absence is any absence that has not been agreed by the school or has not had a satisfactory explanation from parents or carers (the code O should be used in these cases). Any unauthorised absence will result in contact with home and where a pupil has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in a 12-week period, a Warning Penalty Notice will be issued. If the Warning Penalty Notice period is failed, the school will seek a Penalty Notice in consultation with the Somerset Council Education Engagement Service.

Lateness: Lateness to school and to lessons is recorded by teaching staff and is monitored as part of each school's pastoral support system. Any pupil arriving late must report to reception to sign in. A late mark (L) will be recorded for any pupil who arrives 10 minutes after the register has closed. Any pupil

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that arrives after this time will be coded as 'Late after the registers have closed' (U); this impacts on a pupil's attendance and, repeated U coded lateness will be followed up in the same manner as unauthorised absences.

Specific processes for dealing with lateness for Stogursey C of E Primary School are outlined below:

- Registers close at 9.00am- if a child arrives between 9.00am-9.10am then this is recorded as 'late' with a L code
- Late period finishes- 9.10am arrivals result in a U code.

Pupils who need to leave the school site during the day must be collected by a parent or carer and sign out with the administration staff. Notification from parents is required in order for this to occur.

Any **unexplained absence from lessons** should be followed up by the relevant member of staff at the school. Members of the leadership and pastoral teams may be called upon to locate a pupil. Parents or carers will be contacted, should a pupil go off the school site without permission and the police will be informed to ensure that safeguarding duties are fulfilled.

Absence Reporting (Guidance for parents)

Absence Due to Illness

DAY 1

Parent to phone the school or notify via the agreed communication method by the beginning of lesson 1 on the first day of absence to confirm the following:

- Child's name
- Reason for absence ("unwell" is not sufficient – specific reason to be recorded on register)
- Time / date of GP 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 may request supporting medical evidence – e.g. appointment card/letter; copy of prescription / medication label etc. – before consideration will be given whether or not to authorise the absences (wholly or in part).

DAY 4+

Parent to contact the school before the beginning of lesson 1 on each subsequent day of absence until either:

- Child returns to school, or

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- As otherwise agreed with a senior member of school staff.

Contact should be made on a daily basis to update the school on absence. No more than 5 consecutive school days of absence will be authorised by the Headteacher without sight of relevant medical evidence to support the absence. Furthermore, parents and carers will be asked to complete a medical consent form if a pupil is absent for over 5 days and no medical evidence has been provided, or if the school decides to query a medical absence. No evidence provided for extended illness is deemed as a safeguarding concern.

Any child accumulating 14 sessions (7 Days) of authorised absence due to illness in an academic year (consecutively or non-consecutively), may be required to provide sight of relevant medical or supportive evidence to explain every absence due to illness from Day 8 onwards. This is to ensure that the school is appropriately meeting the individual child's educational needs. Where a child is unable to attend school due to health/medical reasons, WSEP schools will work with parents, medical professionals and Somerset Council to ensure that the child receives their entitlement to education, as outlined in Somerset Council guidance: [SCC - Public - Somerset Local Authority policy for the education of children and young people unable to attend school because of health needs.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

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

Persistent absence is set by the government at below 90%. Pupils with this level of attendance are at high risk of underachieving so schools will work directly with families and external services to seek to improve attendance. This could include attendance at meetings with senior staff / the Headteacher, a formal agreement / contract to improve attendance and a referral to Somerset Council Education Engagement Service for Attendance Casework. In the event that these supportive actions do not result in the required improvements, a referral will be made for legal processes to be implemented (see Appendix 1).

Severe absence is set by the government at below 50%. Pupils with this level of attendance are at severe risk of underachieving and are likely to find it more difficult to be in, or return to, school. Schools will work directly with families and external services to seek to improve attendance (as above) but, where severe absence due to unauthorised reasons continues, consideration will be given as to whether this constitutes neglect, under the terms outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023.

[Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

When a pupil returns from a long-term absence, they are treated sensitively and given an individual plan allowing them to access the curriculum once again. The school will put into place a variety of strategies to help in this reintegration process. These may include:

- § A reduced, or flexible timetable (short term, working towards a return to full time education)
- § Alternative Curriculum Provision
- § Pastoral mentoring support
- § Peer support
- § Emotional support
- § Counselling

Children Missing from Education (CME)

A child is defined as being missing from education if they are of compulsory school age and who are neither on a school roll, or being educated otherwise (e.g. elective home education, or in alternative educational provision). This will include children who have moved into the area and are not on a school roll (including refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers). A child is also missing from education if they are on the roll of a school (or other education provision) but have been absent for ten school days without any contact received from the parent/carer to explain the absence.

In accordance with the Local Authority's CME Policy, prior to submitting a CME referral, the Local Authority would expect a school to make preliminary investigations into the child's absence, which would include

- § first day calling of all known contact numbers, including emergency contacts
- § speaking to other family members within the school
- § speaking to school staff at sibling's schools
- § carrying out home visits, if necessary at different times of the day, to ascertain whether the family are still living in the home address

If, following these checks, it is felt that the child is not residing within the home or area and following discussions with the Education Safeguarding Service, a CME referral may be required.

There is a requirement for these checks to be completed swiftly and the Local Authority does not expect a school to wait for 10 continuous school days of absence before starting to make enquiries. If all checks have been completed, the Local Authority may accept the CME referral prior to 10 days of continuous unexplained absence. Further information regarding Children Missing Education can be found here: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/school-attendance-and-children-missing-education/>

Term-time Leave Requests

The WSEP actively discourages term time leave and requests will not be authorised other than in the case of exceptional circumstances. Government guidance states that **"As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday."** Request for term time leave should be made using the request for term time leave form (Appendix 3) which should be completed in full, with supporting evidence where exceptional circumstances may apply. Guidance around the process is available (Appendix 3a).

For any term time leave request to be considered on an individual basis, the following must apply:

- Requested in advance of leaving (at the earliest possible opportunity and at least four weeks' notice for planned absence).
- A definite return date provided. Any child that fails to return from an authorised period of term time leave on the expected date will be marked as having an O coded unauthorised absence. If this unauthorised absence is 10 consecutive sessions, the headteacher will

request involvement from the Education Safeguarding Service and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

The coding of any absence from school, for whatever reason(s) given, is ultimately at the sole discretion of the headteacher. Therefore the school may request sight of relevant evidence to support an absence of any length of time. **Headteachers will liaise over decisions when there are siblings in other WSEP schools.** If the request meets the conditions for exceptional circumstances, headteachers will then consider the child's previous attendance record, the timing of the requested leave and the potential impact on the child's learning and, finally, whether the child has had any term time leave within the current and previous academic year.

If the request is unauthorised and the child is still taken out of school for 10 sessions (5 days) or more, this will result in the issue of a Penalty Notice. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to obtain the relevant evidence to support any absence from school.

Strategies for Improving and Maintaining Good Attendance

All schools in the West Somerset Education Partnership commit to the assertion that good school attendance is everyone's business and, therefore, staff, Headteachers, Governors and Trustees place this at the heart of strategies for improving and maintaining this. All schools will ensure that attendance is given a high profile and that strategies will be consistently applied. It is always the intention of all schools to work in partnership with parents in securing good attendance.

- Specific strategies and rewards/incentives for improving and maintaining good attendance at Stogursey C of E Primary school are listed below:
 - Whole school target-setting and rewards
 - Targeted ELSA support for specific PA children
 - Free places at Breakfast Club for specific children
 - Pupil leadership roles and responsibilities
 - Evidence-based pedagogy and a high-quality curriculum that motivates and inspires
 - Broad and balanced curriculum with a good range of subjects
 - Sports Premium Strategy that enables easy access to a range of sports
 - Trips and experiences

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance is rigorously monitored and patterns / trends in absence are identified.

In many contexts, a percentage of 90% or above is considered to be good but when it comes to school attendance, **research suggests that pupil achievement can be affected at all key stages of learning when attendance falls below 96%.** The table below explains this. In addition to the risk of underachievement, the social development of children with prolonged periods, or erratic patterns, of absence can be affected. Schools will make every effort to support any child who is experiencing difficulties to overcome these and increase their attendance, working in partnership with parents / carers and other agencies, as appropriate.

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Attendance	Level	Days missed in a year	Lessons missed in a year	Intervention	Link to DfE Guidance
97 – 100%	Excellent attendance – all pupils should aim to be in this group	Up to 5 days	Up to 25	Termly, annual recognition through school systems and processes.	Expect
96 – 96.9%	Expected attendance	Up to 7 days	Up to 35	Improved attendance also recognised.	Monitor
94 - 95.9%	Falling below expected attendance	Up to 11.5 days	Up to 57	School will work with parents to support improved attendance, through the WSEP Attendance Concerns Pathway.	Listen and Understand
90.1 – 93.9%	Below expected attendance – risk of underachievement increases as attendance falls	Up to 18 days	Up to 90	School will work with parents to support improved attendance, through the WSEP Attendance Concerns Pathway and may seek to involve external agencies.	Facilitate Support
51% - 90%	Attendance below this level is classed as Persistent Absence and will seriously increase the risk of underachievement	19 days or more	95 or more	School will seek to involve external agencies including the Education Engagement Service. Where efforts to improve attendance have not been successful, legal intervention including Penalty Notices and Prosecution will be considered.	Formalise Support

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50% or below	Attendance below this level is classed as Severe Absence and will substantially increase the risk of underachievement. Pupils at this level are more likely to find it difficult to be in, or return to, school.	95 days or more	475 or more	School will work closely with external agencies including the Education Engagement Service and, where appropriate, Children's Social Care, where ongoing severe unauthorised absence is likely to constitute neglect. Legal intervention including Penalty Notices and Prosecutions will be considered.	Enforce
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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 school attendance file. Information related to attendance concerns will be shared with the next school at the point of transfer.

Training

Staff training takes place annually in line with each school's CPD programme.

Parents and carers are informed of the Attendance Policy, expectations and school procedures through the schools' websites, regular school newsletters, and the schools' prospectuses. Changes to procedures and the law regarding attendance are outlined in letters sent home to parents. Pupils are regularly reminded of the importance of regular attendance by teachers and subject staff. In addition, attendance-related issues are presented during assemblies, as and when appropriate.

This policy has been agreed by all headteachers in the West Somerset Education Partnership and will be reviewed annually.

[1] Education law defines parents as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child. In this policy the term 'parent' includes parents and carers.



WSEP Attendance Concerns Pathway

Attendance drops	Any drop in your child's attendance will be picked up through each school's monitoring systems and may result in a conversation with you. This is a supportive gesture and can be shared with your child to reiterate the importance of excellent attendance. Repeated drops in attendance and any early concerns within the first half term of the academic year will be followed up to identify any potential issues.
Level 1	You will receive a letter if there are concerns and your child's attendance falls below 96% <i>after the first half term of the academic year</i> . This is intended as a further supportive gesture providing you with information that can be shared with your child to improve attendance in school.
Level 2	If your child's attendance continues to cause concern, you will receive a second letter . Over the next two weeks we will expect to see full attendance in school and, thereafter, they will be continually monitored until it is above 96%. Work at this level is designed to facilitate support in order to improve. If specific concerns exist or there is a history of poor attendance, this step will be missed and you will be asked to attend a meeting with a senior member of staff.
Level 3	Your child's attendance is now becoming a serious cause for concern. You will be invited to an attendance meeting with a senior member of staff via a third letter , to discuss how your child's attendance can be improved. Work at this level is designed to formalise support and will include an Attendance Contract with specific targets. An attendance review date will be set in order to avoid escalation to Level 4. If your child has periods of unauthorised absence, the school may issue a Warning Penalty Notice (WPN) . If there are no absences during the fifteen school days no Penalty Notice will be requested, however the school will continue to monitor your child's attendance for the following three months and will be in contact should further concerns arise.
Level 4	The school may make a referral to the Education Safeguarding Service via the 'Team around the School' due to one or both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Failure to engage in attendance meeting/s or relevant contact with a senior member of staff. ● Attendance review period failed There are a number of statutory options for Education Safeguarding Service involvement. In all cases the parent(s) /carer(s) will be kept informed, usually by a letter from the school outlining the proposed option. These could include: Penalty Notice (PN) - The parent(s)/carer(s) responsible for the child's regular school attendance will have 21 days to pay this £60 per parent, per child fine, after which it goes up to £120 per parent, per child. Failure to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice within 28 days may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrate's Court of up to £1000. Prosecution - could lead to fines up to £2,500 and / or 3 months imprisonment (see DfE statutory guidance 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' for more information: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance) At any point, if there are safeguarding concerns linked to ongoing unauthorised absence, the school will follow the process for referral to wider agencies, including Children's Social Care, to intensify support, where appropriate.

Appendix 2**Attendance Codes**

Code	School Meaning
/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (not Dual Registration.)
C	Other authorised circumstances
D	Dual registration (attending other establishment.)
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family Holiday (not agreed or days in excess)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)
J	Interview
L	Late (before register is closed)
M	Medical/Dental Appointments
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised circumstances
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after registers closed)
V	Educational visit
W	Work Experience
Y	Enforced closure
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Pupil not on roll
-	All should attend/No mark recorded
#	School closed to pupils and staff

Appendix 3

Term Time Leave Request Form		
Name of child:	Class / Tutor:	
Inclusive Dates of Request for Term Time Leave	From:	To:
Exceptional Circumstances (please see the guidance document on the back of this form and ensure that supporting evidence is provided).		
Term time leave has also been requested for the following child(ren):		
Name:	School:	
Name:	School:	
Signed (Parent / Carer):		Date:
Term time leave will only be authorised when an application meets the Exceptional Circumstances criteria, outlined in the Attendance Policy and the Guidance Flowchart. Updated Government guidance states that "As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence		

will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.” Further information will be taken into account if the headteacher agrees that an application meets the Exceptional Circumstances criteria.

This will include:

- The date of the request and the amount of notice provided
- The overall attendance of the child (ren) and whether this is at or above expected level
- The time / duration of the request and whether it is within the first term of the academic year or of any new school placement, or it affects exams or the period leading up to exams
- Whether the child has had any term time leave within the current or previous academic year

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS / CARERS:

- Parents / carers whose children are on a school register have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and if they fail to do so they may be guilty of an offence under the Education Act, 1993.
- If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken for poor attendance.

For school use only:

Current attendance:	97% - 100%	Excellent Attendance	
	96% - 96.9%	Expected Attendance	
	94% - 95.9%	Falling Below Expected	
	90.1% – 93.9%	Below Expected	
	90% or below	Persistent Absence	
	50% or below	Severe Absence	
Attendance history:	Year:	Year:	Year:

Authorised ☐

Unauthorised ☐

We will continue to monitor attendance and may require evidence following any term time absence.

Signed (Headteacher):

Date:

Appendix 3a



Term Time Leave – Guidance for Parents / Schools

West Somerset Schools are working together to ensure that our children and young people have every opportunity to succeed at school and in later life. Children need to be in school, every day, unless they are too unwell to attend and, in line with Government Policy, term time leave will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. **Government guidance states that “As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.”** Please follow the guidance below if you are considering requesting term time leave. All schools in West Somerset will use this process when term time leave requests are received, to ensure consistency across the area. Supporting evidence must be provided for exceptional circumstances and, for planned absence, forms should be submitted no later than 4 weeks before the requested leave date. Headteachers may authorise exceptional leave of up to 5 days (10 sessions).

