

C.A.T. ATTENDANCE POLICY 2014-15	
Adopted by- Cambourne Village College	
Reviewed by:	FP&P
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Responsible Officer:	Corinne Davidson/Claire Coates
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1. Introduction

Cam Academy Trust understands that occasionally a pupil may be legitimately absent from school; individual Colleges will work with parents to mitigate the effects of unavoidable absence. Absence during term-time as a result of term-time holidays, however, interrupts continuity of teaching and learning, disrupts the educational progress of individual children and creates disruption in schools. Research shows that pupil attendance of less than 95% can impact on pupil attainment by as much as a whole GCSE grade or National Curriculum level.

Colleges within the Trust aim to:

- raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the school
- ensure that every pupil has access to the education to which they are entitled
- be proactive to address early patterns of absence

2. Legal and National Context

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Heads of School may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. All the Trust Colleges uphold these regulations, and applications for holiday or leave during term time will not be authorised. To avoid difficulty or disappointment, parents are asked to refrain from such requests.

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The amendments described below came into force on 1st September 2013

Penalty notices (fines) may be issued to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days; or £120 within 28 days. Attendance and attainment are linked. Schools should ensure they develop their strategic approaches to best manage overall attendance and achieve the government persistent absence target of a maximum of 10% (Sept 2015).

3. Implementation

The Colleges will:

- ensure that school advice with regard to term-time holidays is clearly stated on each College website and is regularly communicated to parents

- remind parents of the importance of ensuring their children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance and punctuality
- actively discourage parents from arranging holidays during term-time
- unequivocally remind parents that they do not have any right or entitlement to expect term-time leave to be granted and that all leave is granted at the discretion of the Executive Principal (or those authorised to exercise discretion on his behalf)
- advise parents that non-attendance or absence that is unauthorised that is **85%** or less could result in parenting contracts, or legal enforcement including Penalty Notices, School Attendance Orders, Education Supervision Orders or prosecution
- provide attendance data on the termly report
- report on attendance to Governors.
- Pass on attendance data to 16+ providers/centres as required
- advise parents that if leave is taken without authorisation it will be recorded in the school attendance register as unauthorised absence, and that the matter may be referred to the school's Education Welfare Officer. **PLEASE SEE Appendix C for guidance on authorised and unauthorised absence.**

4. Promoting Attendance

The Colleges use opportunities as they arise to remind parents and pupils of the importance of attendance, for instance through parent information evenings, the pupil diary, Parent Handbooks and SchoolPost communications. Attendance is also celebrated through assemblies, and awards.

In addition the following personnel have a key role in supporting good attendance.

4.1. Pastoral Teams

Pastoral teams:

- give attendance a high profile at assemblies and school events
- monitor attendance targets and record keeping
- implement system of rewards and sanctions
- meet with parents to discuss attendance problems as soon as they are identified
- review attendance weekly via the school attendance team, the Education Welfare Officer, and Locality personnel where appropriate
- work with the relevant Senior Leader, SENCO and Locality Team to create individual packages and reintegration plans, where appropriate
- ensure work is provided for excluded students and long-term absentees
- look for patterns of absences and consider impact of curriculum upon attendance alongside other possible causes
- lead on strategies to improve attendance of pupils who are identified as being a concern through meetings with pupils and parents
- implement the three letter warning system
- refer to the Education Welfare Service if absence is unauthorised of 85% or more over a six week period or is historical
- support Form Tutors on issues of non-attendance and with internal truancy, remedying causes and applying sanctions
- ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school due to short-term illness are provided with work to complete at home as appropriate

- work with appropriate internal senior staff and external agencies with regard to providing packages of support for students with medical needs in accordance with relevant LA medical needs guidance

4.2. Form Tutors

Form tutors will:

- keep accurate registers
- be a good role model for pupils
- give attendance a high profile
- praise pupils for arriving on time
- take prompt action where pupils are late or absent without explanation, recording lateness and referring to Heads of Year/Pastoral Leaders
- inform the Heads of Year/Pastoral Leaders when absence is causing concern
- make contact with parents regarding attendance as appropriate

4.3. Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer's duties include to:

- oversee administration of the Register system;
- streamline and make adjustments to systems and procedures;
- keep parents informed of any unexplained absences before they become unauthorised
- support the work of the Senior Leadership Group, Heads of Year/ Pastoral Leaders and Form tutors, by:
 - providing regular attendance information
 - contacting parents on first day of absence
 - monitoring attendance and punctuality
 - alerting Form Tutors and Heads of Year/Pastoral Leaders when concerns arise
 - liaising with Heads of Year/Pastoral Leaders to monitor accuracy of record keeping
 - keeping the Head of School informed of attendance issues
 - keeping the Head of School informed of inaccurate marking of staff registers as part of an alert system for staff who may not be maintaining accurate recording of registers
 - monitoring applications for leave (as a guide please see Appendix C)

4.4. Class Teachers

Teachers will:

- maintain an accurate class register through the Management Information System, following internal procedures if a pupil is missing
- praise pupils for their punctuality to lessons
- alert the Attendance officer if there are concerns over pupil absence.

4.5. Parents

Parents will:

- ensure that children leave for school on time every day
- provide a written explanation for children's absences from school (this includes medical evidence if requested)
- endeavour not to take children out of school in term time

- notify the school as soon as problems arise with child's attendance, and
- if no letter has been sent in advance, telephone the school on the first morning the child is absent

4.6. Pupils

Pupils will:

- arrive punctually for registration every morning and every afternoon
- be punctual for lessons
- make sure a note is sent from parents to explain absences
- sign the Late Book if they are late arriving for school
- sign the Signing Out Book if they leaving school at any point before the end of the day
- tell their Form Tutor or Head of Year/Pastoral Leader if they are having any problems attending school

4.7 Senior Leaders (Inclusion)

Senior Leaders will:

- maintain oversight of whole school attendance including data relating to persistent absenteeism
- maintain oversight of key cohorts of students who are likely to have attendance difficulties e.g. GRT students, disabled students, students with complex medical needs
- ensure that pupils who are unable to attend school for prolonged periods, are provided to with work to complete at home as appropriate

5. The Education Welfare Officer

Each College employs an Education Welfare Officer. The school and EWO always try to work with pupils and parents at an early stage to resolve problems. This is nearly always successful. However, the EWO also has a legal role and if other ways of resolving attendance have failed, these officers can use legal sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates court.

6. Support for Pupils and Parents

Each College provides support for parents and pupils if pupils are struggling to attend School. Measures include following:

- Attendance Reports
- Attendance interviews and regular reviews with Heads of Year/Pastoral teams
- Meetings with Heads of Year/Pastoral teams, EWO and other external agencies to provide support for children and their parents (TACs, TAFs etc)
- Re-integration programme arranged between pupils, parents, Heads of Year/Pastoral teams, SLG Inclusion and SENCO if appropriate after long-term absence
- Individualised curriculum where appropriate
- EWO involvement through the locality service agreement (referral through Common Assessment Framework CAF or Statutory Intervention Form SIF)

7. Sanctions for Poor Attendance and Punctuality

Each College reserves the right to sanction students who fail to meet school attendance requirements, with any of the following:

- Detention for truancy or consistent poor punctuality
- Subject Department detention for truancy or lack of punctuality
- Appropriate Report for attendance/punctuality
- Other, more serious sanctions, for repeated defiance of school attendance rules

As a parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.

Poor attendance or punctuality leading to EWO involvement and referral may lead to:

- Parent meetings
- Parent Contracts
- PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence) meetings

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent the opportunity to enter into a parenting contract following a pupil's truancy or non-attendance under section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered pupil fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school instigating a Penalty Notice under section 23 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 (instigated by the Principal and Deputy and Assistant Principals authorised by them, or so authorised by the Local Authority).

Amendments have also been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The amendments described below came into force on 1st September 2013

Penalty notices (fines) may be issued to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days; or £120 within 28 days.

Parenting orders, Education Supervision Orders or Penalty Notices can also be issued.

Prosecution by the Education Welfare Service on behalf of the LA.

Since September 2015, the level at which absence is regarded as persistent has been set at 10%.

Appendices: Cambourne Village College

Useful Contacts

Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Cambourne Village College Education Welfare Officer is Mrs Jenny Mandley. She can be contacted directly for help and advice.

Contact details for Mrs Mandley are:

Locality office 01954 210186

Via College Reception: 01954 284000

The attendance team at Cambourne Village College includes:

Attendance Officer - Mrs Olivia Crosby: 01954 284000

Sean Sumner – Deputy Principal

Jenny Mandley - EWO

Thabang Thacker – Locality Manager

Heads of Year

Appendix A: Procedure for reporting absence from school

1. If a child is absent from school, the following procedures should be followed to ensure the school is fully informed.

1.1. On the first day of absence parents or carers should provide the pupil's name, form group and reason for absence, by either:

- Telephoning College Reception on 01954 284000
- Emailing a message to TheCollege@Cambournevc.org
- Completing the Online Absence Notification form on the College website
- On return to school, the parent should provide a note with an explanation for absence, unless the reason has already been provided via school email. This can be written in the pupil diary.

1.2. Third day absence

- If the pupil is absent for three days, further contact with Reception is required from the parent to provide details about the pupil's expected date of return

1.3. Continued absence

- In the case of longer term absence, the Head of Year is informed so that appropriate work or support can be provided

1.4. Ten days' absence

If a pupil is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days, this will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. This is a legal requirement.

2. If a child needs to be absent during the school day the following procedures are required:

- College Reception is informed.
- The pupil must sign out before leaving the school premises and sign in on return.

3. School action in the case of pupil absence

- On the first day of absence, the Attendance Officer will contact the parent or carer if contact has not already been made.
- An appropriate member of staff, accompanied by the Education Welfare Officer or a Senior Colleague is likely to make a home visit in cases that are deemed 'at risk' of poor attendance
- In the case of pupil attendance that is deemed 'at risk', the parent will be invited to school to discuss absence and actions for improving attendance.
- in the case of a pupil absence moving towards the less than 90% attendance 'Persistent Absence' (PA) level, the College will inform parents they will not authorise further absence without medical evidence
- In the case of a pupil absence moving towards the Persistent Absence (PA) level with attendance of 90% or less, the pupil will be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Appendix B: Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable at Cambourne Village College. If a student misses the start of the day, they can miss vital work and information. Lateness is also disruptive to lessons.

1. The school day

The school starts with a form registration at **8.40 am**. Pupils are expected to be in their form room by **8.35 am**. Any pupil who arrives after 8.40am is registered as late and the number of minutes late will be recorded.

Form registers are closed at **8.50am**. A pupil who is late after this time should sign in at Reception and a 'Late' mark will usually be given. A pupil who arrives after 8.50am will be marked as unauthorised absent for the morning session unless they have a genuine reason for lateness i.e. medical.

Afternoon registration is completed in lessons between 1.20 and 1.50pm.

If a child arrives late to school due to a medical appointment, a note must accompany the child on his/her return which should be handed to Reception upon signing in. In this case, the absence will be recorded as authorised. Please avoid making GP or Dentists appointments during the school day.

2. Lesson monitoring

Every lesson is registered through the school internal system. Teachers are expected to ensure that the register is taken as promptly as possible. This is essential to track punctuality and in-school truancy. It is essential that registers are recorded accurately, using the internal system. In the rare occasion that the register is not accessible on the system, a paper copy of the register should be used. In this case the teacher is expected to complete



the register, and inform Reception of any absences. If a pupil is late in arriving to a lesson, the teacher will record lateness on the system to show the number of minutes late. In this case, the code N should be changed to L. The Head of Year has oversight of punctuality and will follow up lateness with individual pupils, who will be expected to make up the time lost. In cases of persistent lateness, Heads of Year will place pupils on monitoring report.

Appendix C: Application for Leave of Absence and Guidance Note

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, either as authorised or unauthorised absence.

CAMBOURNE VILLAGE COLLEGE

APPLICATION BY CARENT/CARER FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Surname of Child		First Name of Child	
Date of Birth		Tutor Group and Year	
Full Name of Parent/Carer		Does the above child reside with you full time?	Yes/ No
Email address of Parent/Carer		Home Address of Child	
Home Telephone No.		Does your child have any siblings for whom you are requesting absence in term time from any other schools?	Yes/No <i>If yes, please give child's name and name of his/her school</i>
Information about the request for your child's leave of absence:	Length of absence (total school days)	From (date) To (date)	
	Would he/she miss any tests/exams?	Yes / No	
	Has he/she already been absent for more than a three day period in the last three school years?	Yes/No	
	Please set an attendance target for the remainder of the academic school year. If this is not reached the school reserves the right to unauthorise any previous periods of agreed absence.		
	I confirm that I will ensure that my son/daughter completes any school work set for the above period of absence.		
I confirm that I have read and understood the Guidance Note for Parents			



	accompanying this form. Parent/Carer Signature:..... Date: PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE ATTENANCE OFFICER
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GUIDANCE NOTE FOR PARENTS

Please read these notes carefully before completing the application form requesting permission for your child to take a leave of absence from school during term time.

The law states that you do not have the right to take your child out of school during school for holidays during term time. By law you must ask permission from the Headteacher for your child to miss school. If you fail to gain the school's permission and you still take your child out of school you risk receiving a £60 Penalty Notice per parent per child and in some cases possible prosecution.

Government Legislation which came into effect in September 2013 states that it is now illegal for any Headteacher to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. Therefore Cambourne Village College will not consider authorising an absence in relation to any holiday during term time unless exceptional circumstances are detailed on the Application Form for Leave of Absence During Term Time which should be handed into the Attendance Officer Mrs O Crosby **at least two weeks** before the period of absence requested.

Cambourne Village College will consider each request for absence on an individual basis taking into account the following factors **after** the test of exceptional circumstances has been satisfied:

1. The time of year of the proposed trip and whether it is close to any exam dates
2. Whether any holidays have previously been taken in the current and/or in any previous school year
3. The student's overall attendance record
4. The ability of the student to catch up the work that he/she will miss
5. The age of the student and his/her stage of education.

While an authorised absence may very occasionally be authorised for exceptional circumstances, this decision is entirely a matter for the school and is not a parental right. If your application is refused and you proceed to withdraw your child from school, then the period of absence will be recorded as unauthorised on your child's school record. ***Unauthorised school absences may lead to a Penalty Notice or a Court Summons being issued against you for irregular attendance.***

Having read these notes if you still wish to apply then please complete the Application for Leave of Absence form. All sections must be completed; incomplete forms will not be considered. Please return the **signed** form to the Attendance Officer Mrs O Crosby as far in advance of the proposed absence as possible but by not less than 2 weeks before the proposed period of absence.



1. Authorised absences

Authorised absences are approved by the Principal.

'Exceptional circumstances' for which the College may grant a leave of absence include:	Circumstances under which absence will not normally be authorised include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate family bereavement, crisis or serious illness • Funeral of immediate family member • Religious observance • One day's absence for the wedding of an immediate family member, where the invitation has been provided as evidence • One-off sporting events/performing arts competitions, if the student is participating and is at County standard or above, and a letter has been provided from the performing arts/sports regional governing body as evidence • One-off educational events by special invitation • One day's absence for an immediate family member's graduation ceremony or equivalent • Medical appointments (please arrange non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours when possible.) If the medical appointment is during the school day, evidence must be provided. The College will not usually authorise a whole day's absence for a morning medical appointment – the child would be expected to return to school in the afternoon, and vice versa. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family holidays • Weddings abroad – regardless of whether it is for immediate family members • Family anniversaries • Caring for other family members • Birthdays • Interpreting for other family members • Lack of school uniform/equipment /shoes • Bullying • Friendship problems • Head lice • Learning difficulties • Death of a pet • Travel problems (Unless the fault of the LA) • School refusal, except where corroborated by appropriate health professional

2. Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which permission has not been given.

This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings

3. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level causes considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. If a pupil is deemed to be 'at risk' of PA, the parent will be informed of this by the Attendance Officer. PA pupils are tracked through the pastoral system, combined with academic monitoring. All PA cases are made known to the Educational Welfare Officer.

Pupils at risk of becoming PA may also be referred to the Attendance and Family Support Worker, who works with families to provide support and strategies to encourage attendance.

Appendix D: Understanding registration codes

Absence and Attendance Codes

The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way which complies with the regulations. They are also used for collecting statistics through the School Census System. The data helps schools, local authorities and the Government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reasons for, absence. The following codes are used:

Codes: / \ L U indicate Present at School

Code / (am) and \ (pm)	Present in school during registration:
Code L	Late arrival before the register has closed:
Code U	Arrival after register is closed at 8.50am.

Pupils must not be marked present if they are not in school during registration. If a pupil leaves the school premises after registration, they are still to be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Codes B D J P V W indicate Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity

Code B: Supervised educational activity such as a field trip, educational visit, work experience or alternative provision.

Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment Consortia Schools

Pupils attending consortia schools as part of their course only need to be placed on the register of their 'main' school rather than on all of the schools they attend. They should be treated as guest pupils at the other consortia schools. The consortia schools however, must ensure they have suitable systems in place for monitoring and reporting the attendance and absence of the pupils involved, which must be shared with the 'main' school. This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, but only when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment

This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity

This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

Code V: Educational visit or trip

This code should be used for attendance of an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance of a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

Code W: Work experience

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code.

Authorised Absence from School

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Codes C E H I M R S T indicate pupil authorised absent from School:

Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave

advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school

Heads of School should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)

Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the legitimacy of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

Code M: Medical or dental appointments Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller: Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at school.

Unauthorised Absence from School: Codes G N O U

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher.

If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided

Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation

If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed

Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school.

This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity).

This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register

This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

APPENDIX F: PENALTY NOTICES

PENALTY NOTICES NON-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL AUTHORITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

1. Under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 local education authority officers, Headteachers and the police have the discretionary power to issue Penalty Notices to the parents of children who truant
2. The new power provides an alternative to prosecution of parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days
3. Should the Penalty Notice remain unpaid or have been paid only in part at the end of the 28 day period, Cambridgeshire County Council must prosecute the parents for the offence to which the notice relates, or, in specified circumstances (see section 29 below), withdraw the notice
4. Penalty Notices may only be issued in Cambridgeshire in accordance with the terms of this Code of Conduct. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure that the power is applied fairly and consistently across the County Council and that suitable arrangements are in place for the effective and efficient administration of the scheme
5. In implementing this Code of Conduct the County Council will liaise when appropriate with neighbouring education and police authorities
6. This Code of Conduct has been drafted in accordance with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004: Statutory Instrument 2004 No 181 and guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills
7. In preparing this Code of Conduct the County Council has consulted with Cambridgeshire Headteachers and the Chief Officer of Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Circumstances in which Penalty Notices may be issued

8. A Penalty Notice may be issued in cases of non-school attendance. Such a notice is intended to offer a rapid intervention, which may be used to address non-school attendance before it becomes entrenched

9. Penalty Notices may only be issued in relation to absence from school, which is unauthorised. The County Council's recommended criteria for authorising/not authorising absence can be found in the Local Authority School Attendance Policy. (All Cambridgeshire schools are encouraged to adhere to the criteria detailed within this policy.)
10. Penalty Notices may only be issued in relation to a child whose attendance at school has been below 85% over the previous 4-week period
11. The key consideration in deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice should be whether it is considered likely to be effective in helping the child to whom it relates to return to regular attendance
12. Before issuing a Penalty Notice due consideration should be given to other strategies which may help return the child concerned to regular school attendance. Such strategies might include:
 - a) writing to the child's parents to remind them of their legal responsibilities;
 - b) meeting with the child's parents;
 - c) ensuring a first-day response to any absence;
 - d) setting targets for improvement;
 - e) referral to the Education Welfare Officer;
 - f) involvement of other services/agencies.
13. The usual response to a first offence would be to warn the parent rather than to issue a Penalty Notice. Authorised officers do, however, have the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to issue a Penalty Notice for a first offence. Such exceptional circumstances could be where the unauthorised absence had been for an extended period of time and condoned by the parent
14. Headteachers and police officers should only issue a Penalty Notice following consultation, discussion, reflection and joint decision with a County Council Education Welfare Officer
15. The Education Welfare Officer will not agree to sanction the issuing of a Penalty Notice unless he/she considers that with regard to the offence to which it relates there is sufficient evidence to secure a conviction under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Evidence could be letters sent to parent, minutes of meetings and record of telephone conversations
16. A maximum of three Penalty Notices may be served on any one parent over a 12-month period
17. There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice. A parent should therefore, if possible, be given warning of the possibility of a notice being issued in order to allow him/her to make representations should he/she wish to do so

Authority to Issue a Penalty Notice

18. An Education Welfare Officer may issue a Penalty Notice to the parent of a child who is a registered pupil at a school in Cambridgeshire or who is a registered pupil at a school in an authority, which has an agreement to that effect with Cambridgeshire County Council.
19. A headteacher or an authorised deputy or assistant Headteacher may issue a Penalty Notice to the parent of a child who is registered at his/her school, in consultation with a CCC Legal Panel.
20. A police officer, including a community support officer or other accredited person, may issue a Penalty Notice.

21. Headteachers and police officers should comply with the terms of this Code of Conduct when issuing a Penalty Notice and should provide a copy of any notice issued to the relevant Education Welfare Officer.

Form and Content of Penalty Notices

22. A Penalty Notice should give the following particulars alleged to constitute the offence to which the notice relates and should contain:
- a) the name and address of the person to whom the notice is issued;
 - b) the name and address of the child who is failing to attend school regularly and the name of the school at which he/she is a registered pupil;
 - c) the name, title and official details of the authorised person issuing the notice;
 - d) the date of the offence and of the issue of the notice;
 - e) the amount of the penalty which is to be paid and details of the timescales and any variation involved;
 - f) the address of the County Council office at which the penalty is to be paid and to which any correspondence relating to the notice may be sent;
 - g) the method/methods by which payment may be made;
 - h) the specified period within which the penalty should be paid;
 - i) a statement that full payment within the specified period will discharge any liability for the offence;
 - j) an explanation of the consequences should the penalty not be paid in full before the expiry of the specified period;
 - k) an explanation of the grounds on which the notice may be withdrawn.
23. Should there be more than one person liable for the offence a separate notice should be issued to each person
24. Should the offence involve more than one child a separate notice should be issued for each child

Service of Penalty Notices

25. A Penalty Notice may be served by:
- a) giving it to the recipient; or
 - b) leaving it at the recipient's usual or last-known address; or c) sending it to the recipient at that address by first-class post.
26. Service by post is deemed to have been effected, unless the contrary is proved, on the second working day after posting the notice by first-class post

Failure to Pay a Penalty Notice

27. Should the recipient of a Penalty Notice fail to pay the full amount before the expiry of the period for paying it the County Council will either begin proceedings against the parent under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice in accordance with specified conditions (see section 29 below)
28. A certificate signed by the Attendance & Behaviour Manager to the effect that the recipient of a Penalty Notice has or has not paid the amount due on or before the date specified should be retained and presented as evidence in any subsequent Section 444 Education Act 1996 proceedings

Withdrawal of a Penalty Notice

29. A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn by the County Council, regardless of whom within the authority issued it, if it is deemed that:
- a) the notice ought not to have been issued (i.e. where it has issued outside of the terms of this Code of Conduct or where no offence has been committed);
- or

- b) the notice ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient.
30. Should a Penalty Notice be withdrawn:
- a) notice of the withdrawal should be given to the recipient;
 - b) any amount already paid by the recipient should be reimbursed;
 - c) any proceedings under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 instituted against the recipient should be discontinued.

Retention of Receipts and Revenue Collection

- 31. The County Council will retain all revenue from the issuing of Penalty Notices in order to cover the costs of issuing and enforcing notices and the cost of prosecuting those recipients of the notices who fail to pay
- 32. The County Council will produce an annual audit statement as part of its usual audit procedures in order to show that income received from Penalty Notices does not exceed enforcement costs as defined above. Any surplus acquired will be surrendered to a consolidated fund.

Appendix G

Indicative national data showing relationship between school attendance and GCSE Performance

Attendance %	% 5 A* - C
93.5 and above	74.3
92.5 - 93.49	60.4
88 and below	26.7