



Roman Road Primary School

Attendance Policy

To be reviewed January 2016

Roman Road is committed to providing each pupil with a full and effective education. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children in the school. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the designated members of staff authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.40am. The registers will remain open for 45 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as late after registers closed. This will be recorded in a late book with time of arrival and reason for the lateness. In cases, for instance, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. The afternoon registration will be at 1pm and the registers will close at 1.30pm. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes as present but will be coded as late before registers close.

The late book will be examined every two weeks, if a child is late more than 5 times in a month a letter will be sent to the parent and will be monitored over the following two weeks. If the child continues to be persistently late the Attendance Officer will interview the child and arrange a meeting with the parent/carer to attempt to resolve the problem.

First Day Absence

- *The school will telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if we have not previously been contacted;*
- *The school will invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer if absences persist;*
- *Consider when and the process for referring cases to the Head/DH/AH if attendance overall falls below 95%.*

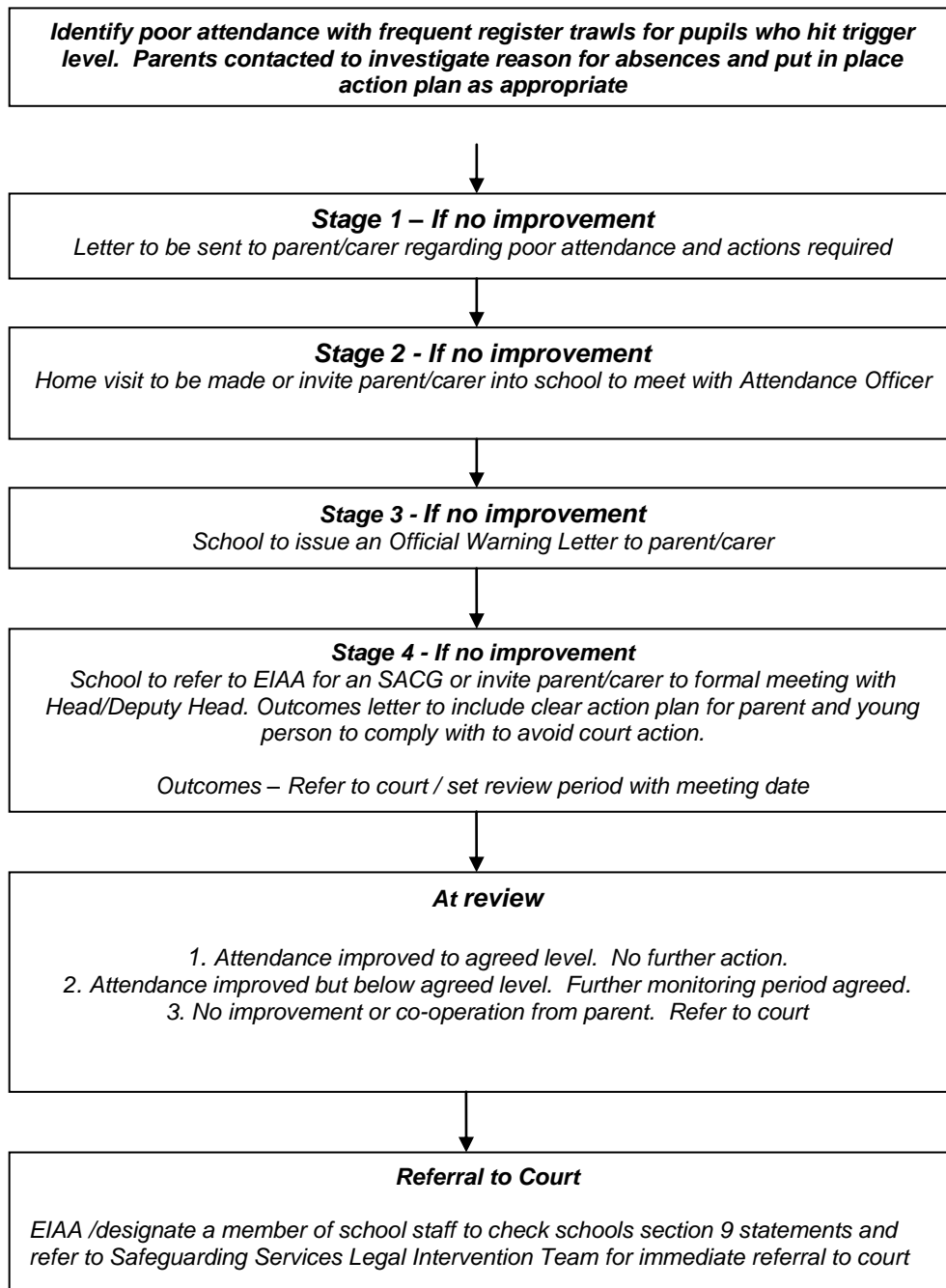
Continuing Absence

The Attendance Officer will write to the parent asking them to contact the school as soon as they can to acquire a reason as to the child's absence. If there has been no contact from the parent and the child has not returned to school the following week, the Education Welfare Officer will make a home visit. Once the home visit has been made and no contact has been made by the parent, the Form A will be sent to the Borough.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the school's locality EIAA or CME Officer – See Borough's Attendance Guidance for further information [*This is a legal requirement*]. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Example of Process Map for Early identification of Poor Attendance



Frequent/Persistent Absence

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer the pupil to the School Nurse if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's EIAA, etc.

All Persistent Absence pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: support from the Learning Mentor, and/or participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the School Attendance Officer/Deputy Head Teacher.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance.

- Termly Certificates for attendance over 95%.
- Bronze/Silver/Gold Certificates for 100% attendances each term.
- Weekly Assembly announcing the class with highest attendance. The winners receive 10 minutes extra playtime.
- Class with highest attendance for the week receives the Attendance Cup.
- At the end of the academic year the children with 100% attendance go into a raffle. The winner receives a bike. The rest of the children will be taken on an outing to a theme park or similar.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a senior school manager will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our schools targets are:

2012/2013 = 95%

The Borough Aspirational Targets are:

Primary

Secondary

2011/2012 = 95%

2011/2012 = 95%

APPENDIX 1 - SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY EXAMPLE OF INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS:

INTRODUCTION

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school on time every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this:

Learning - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses; attendance, behaviour management, health and safety, access to the curriculum and anti-bullying. Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

- Give you details on attendance in our regular Newsletter.
- Report to you at least termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and outings/events
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

The Law relating to attendance:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to safeguarding:

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18. Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing:

Authorised absence are mornings/afternoons away from school for a reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the LA using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of support through the Learning Mentor, participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the School Attendance Officer/Deputy Head Teacher.

SCHOOL ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence.
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for The Attendance Officer to speak with you.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if the attendance moves below 90%.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your up to date contact numbers at all times. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

School Attendance Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the School Attendance Officer. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the officers will refer you to the local authority to consider the use of sanctions or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or Newham Council website.

The person responsible for attendance within the school is:

Mrs Leisa Adams,
Telephone Number.....020 7476 1602
Email Address.....ladams@romanroad.newham.sch.uk

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage overall absence. **We manage lateness as follows:**

The school day starts at **8:40 am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by **8:50am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays in term-time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave will be refused.

Full details of our policy and procedures are available from the school, but it is important that you understand the circumstances why leave in term time is not granted.

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible
- Immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS)
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below (95%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Fines

From 25th February 2013 Parents can now be fined £60.00 by Newham Council for taking term-time holidays, for poor school attendance or for a range of other school non-attendance reasons. If the fine remains unpaid after 28 days the cost will rise to £120 and, if it is not paid at all, you could face court action. (please see leaflet SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS)

Any period of leave taken will be classed as an unauthorised holiday and a warning letter and fine will be received.

School Attendance Targets/Projects etc:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and you should take time to study them.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 95% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our weekly Newsletters and we ask for your full support.

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

APPENDIX 2 – THE LAW:

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping. The legal requirements are found in: The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

The registration system

The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
I	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence

T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes.

(Phoenix report AO2). Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three year.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers must be safely stored. The Class Teacher will collect the registers form outside the Main Office at the start of morning/afternoon registration. The registers will be called and then sent back to the office straight away.

Schools' system for register checks/Audit

The School Attendance Officer checks the registers every Monday and if there are any absences without a reason a letter will be sent out.

The Education Welfare Assistant will also do a monthly register trawl and contact parents if they have not given a reason for their child's absence.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. **Unauthorised absence** -This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.
2. **Authorised absence** -This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. **Approved Educational Activity** - This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. **This**

would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

APPENDIX 3 – HOME VISITS CHECKLIST:

Some important considerations:

Risk assessment

- Is the family known to be aggressive or violent, dangerous animals on site etc? Do they have a history of anti social behaviour?
- Check cautionary contacts database/ask police team to check PNC.
- Ask parents to come into the school for a meeting if they are known to be aggressive/concerns suggest high risks.

Keeping Safe

- Always wear an ID badge.
- Be aware of the health and safety implications.
- Attend an LBN lone worker course.
- Always inform another member of staff / your manager of the location and expected duration of a home visit. Make arrangements to check in with the person after the visit is completed.
- Take a mobile phone and leave it turned on. Consider establishing a “safe” word to be used with a colleague if you feel you are in danger.
- Consider the exit points/immediate environment before entering a property. Don't enter if you don't feel safe.
- Consider your risk assessment and take another member of staff or the schools police officer if you are concerned for your safety.
- Keep clear records of dates and times of visits and also what was discussed.
- Be assertive but avoid confrontation and be aware of body language, yours and theirs.
- Avoid taking unnecessary clutter such as files and papers.

Insurance

- Does the school (or borough depending on status of provision) have adequate insurance for any incident carried out during a home visit should it be required?

Animals

- Ask the owner to lock any animals away before entering a property.

Home alone

- Should a child (age and vulnerability dependent, if unsure contact Safeguarding Assessments Duty Team) be found in the home alone the police must be called. Notify a member of staff and stay outside the property until the police arrive. Ensure the child is safe and ask them to stay in a place where they can be seen.

Children not in Education

- Other children may be discovered on home visits that do not appear to be in education. This must be reported to the local authority, EIAA, to investigate.

Leave a calling card notifying the family of your visit to include the date you made a visit with contact details, if you cannot gain access.

APPENDIX 4 – SAMPLE LETTERS:

A. Letter of concern for poor attendance:

Dear **(NAME)**

It has come to our attention that **(FULL NAME)** attendance has dropped to _____ which is a cause of concern.

Missing school will have a negative effect on your child education. Good attendance is linked with a child's progress and achievement.

I must advise you that parents/carers have a legal duty under the 1996 Education Act to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal proceedings being instigated against you in the Magistrates Court.

I will be monitoring your child's attendance and punctuality closely. With your support I hope to see an immediate improvement.

Roman Road Primary is committed to raising standards in achievement and attendance. Please contact the school's attendance officer – Mrs. Leisa Adams - if you wish to discuss how we can work together to ensure that your child attendance of school meets the school's target of ___%.

Yours sincerely
Leisa Adams
Attendance Officer

B. Official Warning Letter

OFFICIAL WARNING LETTER EDUCATION ACT 1996 CHILDREN ACT 1989

Dear **(NAME)**

The very irregular attendance and punctuality of your child **(FULL NAME)** a registered pupil at Roman Road Primary has been reported to the Headteacher. A parent or carer's duty is to ensure that their children attend school regularly is outlined in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that "*the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable to his age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise*".

Your child's absence has been confirmed as being contrary to the provisions of this act. I must therefore warn you that unless there is an immediate and sustained improvement in **(CHILD'S FULL NAME)** attendance and punctuality, legal proceedings may be instigated against you, as the person(s) with parental responsibility.

Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 any person guilty of an offence shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine of up to £2,500 (two thousand, five hundred pounds) and/or a possibility of imprisonment for up to 3 months.

Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, I must therefore inform you that:

"You do not have to say anything. But it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence".

Application may also be made for **(CHILD'S FIRST NAME)** to be directed to the Family Court, which may result in your child being made the subject of an Education Supervision Order under the (Children's Act 1989).

These actions can be avoided if you act now to improve your child's attendance. You should contact me to arrange a meeting at the school to agree an action plan to improve your child/ren attendance of school. An improvement must be achieved within 14 days of this notice or you will be referred for a School Attendance Consultative Group and or to court.

Yours sincerely
Leisa Adams
Attendance Officer

C. Medical Consent Form

Dear Sir/Madam

This is to confirm that I have no objection to Roman Road Primary School writing to my GP to obtain medical information regarding the poor attendance of my child/ren at school.

<i>CHILD'S NAME</i>	<i>DOB</i>	<i>SCHOOL</i>

Name of GP:
Address:
Tel No:

Signed by Parent/Carer

D. Accompanying GP Letter

Dear Dr

Re:

The above named child has a record of irregular school attendance. School are investigating the cause of the absences, which is said to be due to ill health.

According to the Education (Pupil's Attendance Records) Regulations 1995, Headteachers may only give an 'authorised' absence mark when appropriate medical evidence is supplied.

Attached, is a consent form which has been signed by the parent/carer giving me permission to write to you and a copy of the student's attendance record(s).

I regret that school has no provision to pay for medical certificates or medical information. Schools and the Local Authority only request medical reports where the students are missing excessive amounts of their education. It is not necessary for me to have a full detailed report but it would be very helpful to have your observations on the school attendance details provided.

I would mention that in cases where parents/carers are unable to provide medical evidence the matter would be referred to the School Attendance Consultative Group. This decision-making panel may refer the case to Newham Magistrates Court.

Yours sincerely
Leisa Adams
Attendance Officer

Form A – Request to Remove a Pupil from Attendance Register

Date of Request: _____
 Reason for request: _____

(NB. Attach copies of relevant information with request i.e. elective home education notifications, notification of changes of school etc).

School: _____
 Pupil's name: _____ DOB: _____ Gender: M/F
 Name of person(s) with parental responsibility: _____
 Known address: _____

SEN: Y/N CP Plan: Y/N (If Y attach copy)
 SAO in place or pending: Y/N
 Details of other agencies working with family: _____

Siblings if known:

Names	Schools

Checklist: All points MUST be considered. Please use separate page if needed

Action taken		By whom and date	Outcome and date
1	Check internal school records, class/form teacher, SENCO, health, learning mentor etc.		
2	Check with friends, siblings and relatives of the child		
3	Telephone calls made/letters sent		
4	Visit to home address and check with neighbours		
5	Check Children's Hub/Other data systems your school has access to for any relevant information		
6	Is Children's Social Care or Child and Family Consultation Service is involved and have they been notified?		
7	Is a Request for Support appropriate?		

8	Is a multi-agency meeting needed?		
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Pupil's record updated on SIMS on: _____ [date]

I confirm that checks have been carried out and investigated thoroughly.

Headteacher's signature: _____

Upload completed form to <https://support.lqfl.org.uk>, selecting user name, SSDCME, or the relevant user name for your area Early Intervention Team