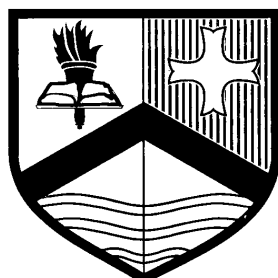


Scraptoft Valley Primary School



Attendance and Lateness Policy

Mission Statement

Working together to give every child an excellent education in a caring environment

Draft completed: March 2025
Ratified by Governing Body: 12th June 2025
Review

Introduction

Regular attendance at school and starting the day on time are essential if students are to achieve their full potential. Section 7 of the 1966 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. Under the Education Act 1966, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

Authorised and unauthorised absences

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present
- Absent
- Present at approved educational activity
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received. Parents/carers should advise the school by telephone or letter when a child is absent due to illness.

Absences will be categorised as follows: (Please see Appendix 3)

- **Illness (I)** In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent/carer informing the school that their child is ill will be sufficient but, in some circumstances, medical evidence will be required. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription label, etc. Illness must be reported by telephone or email on each day that a child is absent.
- **Medical/Dental appointments (M)** Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should inform the school by telephone or letter, and in some circumstances an appointment card or prescription will be required.
- **Other Authorised Circumstances** – Please see ‘Not counted in possible attendances’ in Appendix 3
- **Excluded (E)** (No alternative provision made)
- **Leave of absence during term time (G)** As of the 1st September 2013, Headteachers will no longer be able to grant any leave of absence for family holidays, unless there are ‘*exceptional circumstances*’ which support the request being made. Where a family chooses to take a holiday/leave of absence during term time without the Headteacher's written permission, the absences will be coded as unauthorised. In such circumstances, the Headteacher will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service who may either issue each parent/carer with a Penalty Notice, or could refer the case directly to the Magistrate's Court.
- **Religious Observance (R)** Scraftoft Valley acknowledges the multi-faith nature of our community and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends. This necessitates an authorised absence or special leave for a religious ceremony, so in line with Local Education Authority guidelines, one day will be granted. Any further absences will be unauthorised.
- **Educational visit or trip (V)**

- **Late Arrival (L)** Morning registration begins at 8.55am. Pupils arriving after the doors to the classrooms have been locked are required to enter the school by the main entrance and sign in via the computer screen. They will be marked as present but arriving late. If lateness is due to attendance at a medical appointment it will be authorised (M).
- **Late after the register has closed (U)** A pupil will be marked as '*Late after the register has closed*' if they arrive after 9.10am without justifiable cause, such as a medical appointment. They will be marked as present but with an unauthorised lateness and are closely monitored by the Education Welfare Officer and the school's Attendance Officer.
- **Unauthorised Absence (O)** Absences which have not been authorised by the school. These are closely monitored by the Education Welfare Officer and the school's Attendance Officer. The Education Welfare Officer will arrange Panel meetings with parents/carers whose children have poor or irregular attendance, which may result in further legal action should the attendance not improve.

Procedures for Lateness

Pupils frequently arriving late to school will:

- Have several letters sent to their parents/carers to request improvement.
- Be involved in an intervention programme organised by the Attendance Officer to encourage improvement.
- Be referred to the Education Welfare Officer if lateness persists.

(see Appendix 1 for details)

Promoting Good attendance

Pupils and parents/carers are made aware of what the Local Education Authority regards as being 'good attendance' through:

- School publicity – the weekly News Sheet and school notice boards.
- Parents' evenings.
- School web site.
- Letters when attendance is poor or irregular (see Appendix 2 for details).
- Interventions organised by the Attendance Officer when attendance does not improve.
- Involvement by the Education Welfare Officer for poor attendance or persistent lateness.
- First day absence call by the school by text and later by phone by the Attendance Officer if the parent/carer of the absent pupil has not contacted the school.

Pupils are made aware of what good attendance is through:

- School assemblies.
- The Class Attendance Cup.
- Class Certificate when a class has 100% attendance per day.
- Attendance Leader Board

Roles and Responsibilities

Improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider community.

The Governing Body and Leadership Team will:

- Ensure that the value and importance of regular attendance is promoted within the school community.
- Annually review and monitor the implementation of the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the necessary resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Monitor attendance figures on a termly basis.
- Work with outside agencies e.g. School Nurse, Early Support Team, Educational Welfare Team, Social Services and Police.

The school requests that parents:

- Help their children to understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Aim to avoid all unnecessary absences.
- Arrange family holidays to coincide with school holidays.
- Inform the school if their child has specific difficulties, such as a change in family circumstances or the long term illness of a parent, which are making attendance or punctuality difficult, in order that the school can find support strategies for the pupil and their family.
-

Any absence during term time is **highly likely** to receive a fixed penalty notice. The penalty notice will be issued at the cost of **£160 per parent per child** (discounted to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days for the **first offence**) or your case will be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.

The **second time** a penalty notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be **£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days with no discount**.

The **third time** an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a penalty notice **will not be issued**. The case will proceed to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2,500, per parent per child.

*If your child has an absence of **20 days or more**, the Local Authority has advised that a Penalty Notice is **unlikely** to be issued and the matter is likely to proceed to the Magistrates' Court for prosecution instead. The Local Authority has advised that where a parent is found guilty, or where the case is proven against the parent, that it is likely to result in a fine (up to £2,500 per parent per child) and the parent receiving a criminal record. This is because parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school where they are on roll regularly.*

Penalty notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days and for fewer days where this has happened before.

Whilst we do not wish for any parent to be taken to court, we must ensure that our pupils attend school regularly so to gain the best quality education possible.

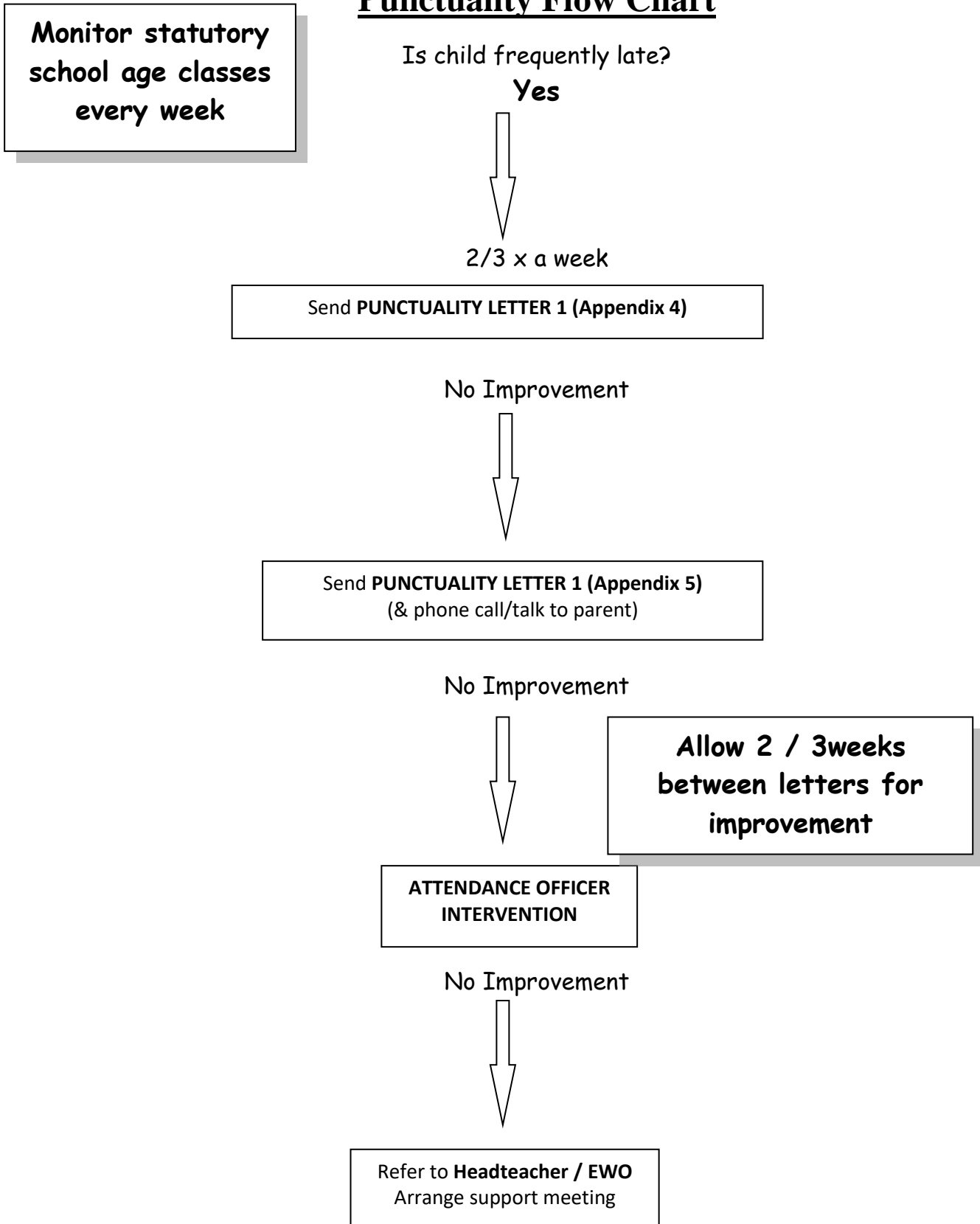
Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or revised in the light of any new legislation.
Date of next review – March 2028.

Appendix 1

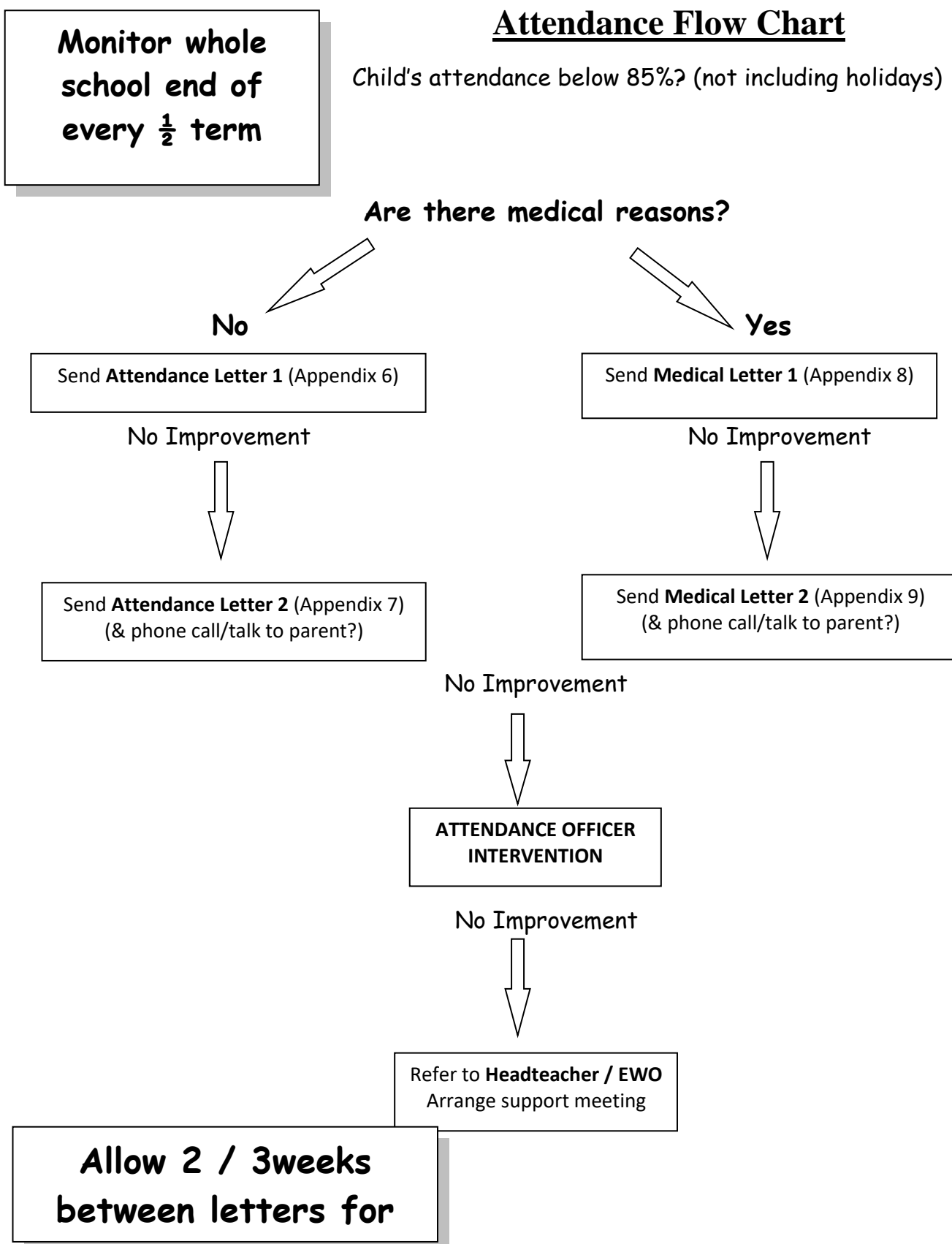
Flow chart showing how we encourage parents/carers to bring their children to school on time.

Punctuality Flow Chart



Appendix 2

Flow chart showing how we encourage parents/carers to bring their children to school every day.



Appendix 3

Attendance Session Codes from 19/08/2024

Present	
/ \	Present (AM,PM)
L	Late arrival before the register has closed
Approved Education Activity	
B	Attending any other approved educational activity (changed definition from 19/08/2024)
K	Attending education provision arranged by local authority (new from 19/08/2024)
P	Participating in a sporting activity
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
W	Attending work experience
Authorised absence	
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance (changed definition from 19/08/2024)
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (new from 19/08/2024)
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable (new from 19/08/2024)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution (new from 19/08/2024)
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Not counted in possible attendances	
D	Dual registered at another school (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements (new from 19/08/2024)
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available (new from 19/08/2024)
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel (new from 19/08/2024)
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed (new from 19/08/2024)
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed (new from 19/08/2024)
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention (new from 19/08/2024)
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law (new from 19/08/2024)
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause (new from 19/08/2024)
Z	Pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure (changed definition from 19/08/2024)

NOTES: 1) New codes (from 19/08/24) appear in **RED**.
 2) Codes with changed definitions (from 19/08/24) appear in **BLUE**.
 3) Codes H (Holiday authorised by the school), J (interview) and Y (Unable to attend – exceptional circumstances) **not used** from 19/08/24.

Appendix 4

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Punctuality Letter One Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Dear «salutation»

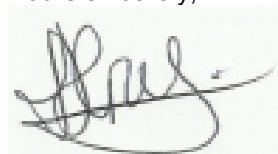
It has been brought to our attention that «chosen_forename» was late for school three times last week. As you are probably aware, punctuality at school is closely monitored as late arrival has a significant impact on your children’s progress. If a child arrives late they miss the important introduction to the lesson and disrupt the class, thus interrupting other children’s learning.

Our school times are 8.55am to 3.10pm. Teachers are on duty in the playground from 8.45am and your child should arrive before the official starting time of 8.55am.

If you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child in to school or would like to discuss the situation further please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Roberts in the school office. Please find enclosed a print out of your child’s attendance for this year.

Your child’s punctuality will continue to be monitored and, if it does not show a sustained improvement I will contact you again.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

Punctuality - Letter One

Child’s Name Class

I confirm I have received this letter and that I will ensure that my child arrives at school on time in future.

Signed(Parent/ Carer)

Date

Appendix 5

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Punctuality Letter Two Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Dear «salutation»

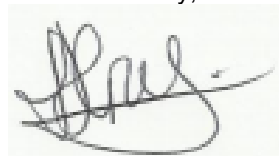
We are still concerned with respect to the punctuality for «chosen_forename» who was still showing late marks for school three times last week. As you are probably aware, punctuality at school is closely monitored as late arrival has a significant impact on your children’s progress. If a child arrives late they miss the important introduction to the lesson and disrupt the class, thus interrupting other children’s learning.

Our school times are 8.55am to 3.10pm. Teachers are on duty in the playground from 8.45am and your child should arrive before the official starting time of 8.55am.

If you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child in to school or would like to discuss the situation further please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Roberts in the school office. Please find enclosed a print out of your child’s attendance for this year.

Your child’s punctuality will continue to be monitored and, if it does not show a sustained improvement I will contact you again.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

Punctuality - Letter Two

Child’s Name Class

I confirm I have received this letter and that I will ensure that my child arrives at school on time in future.

Signed(Parent/ Carer) Date

Appendix 6

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Letter One Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Your child’s attendance at Scraftoft Valley School is a concern as it is currently below 95%. The school’s target for every child is 96%. As your child’s attendance is significantly below this they are falling behind with their school work. I am sure, like us, you want your child to do well at school which means that they must come to school every day.

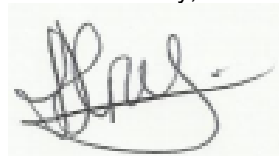
This is a cause for concern because children who miss school:

- Find it hard to keep friendships
- Won’t feel part of the class
- Forget what they have learnt
- Have difficulty keeping up with work
- Progress at a slower rate

We will continue to monitor your child’s attendance and hope that with your support there will be an improvement. The reasons children may be absent from school are illness or medical/dental appointments that cannot be made after school hours or during the school holidays.

Please find enclosed a print out of your child’s attendance for this year. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please make an appointment with Mrs Roberts via the school office.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

School Attendance - Letter One

Child’s Name Class

I confirm that I have received this letter and will improve my child’s attendance.

Signed(Parent/ Carer) Date

Appendix 7

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Letter Two Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

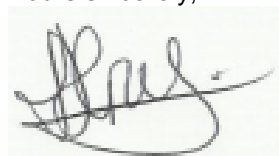
Your child’s attendance is continuing to cause concern and has been discussed with the Educational Welfare Officer. The school’s target for attendance 96% and your child’s attendance is currently below 95%.

Even though we have tried to encourage you to bring your child to school more regularly their attendance has shown little improvement. The Education Welfare Officer will now need to take further action if there is no immediate improvement in your child’s attendance (a copy of the attendance record is attached). We want your child to do as well as they possibly can at school and to do this a regular daily attendance is vital.

If your child has an absence of 20 days or more, the Local Authority has advised that a Penalty Notice is unlikely to be issued and the matter is likely to proceed to the Magistrates’ Court for prosecution action instead. The Local Authority has advised that where a parent is found guilty, or where the case is proven against the parent, that this is likely to result in a fine (up to £2500 per parent, per child) and the parent receiving a criminal record. This is because parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school where they are on roll regularly.

Please ensure that your child attends school every day. Enclosed is a print out of your child’s attendance for this year. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please make an appointment with Mrs Roberts via the school office.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

School Attendance - Letter Two

Child’s Name Class

I confirm that I have received this letter and will improve my child’s attendance.

Signed(Parent/ Carer) Date

Appendix 8

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Medical Evidence Letter One Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

Your child’s attendance so far this academic year is currently below 95%. The school’s target for every child is 96%. As your child’s attendance is significantly below this they are falling behind with their school work. I am sure, like us, you want your child to do well at school which means that they must come to school every day. An absence of 10% is the same as missing 1 day every 2 weeks.

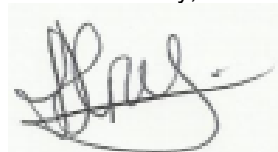
We will continue to monitor your child’s attendance and hope that with your support there will be an improvement. Any absences due to illness/appointments must be supported by medical evidence (such as a doctor’s certificate, a copy of their appointment/current prescription, or an electronic scan/photo of the medicine prescribed with name and date visible)

If there are any other reasons causing absences from school it is important that you speak to a member of staff about this. If we do not receive a justifiable reason the absence will be unauthorised.

Further unauthorised absences will lead to the matter being referred to the school’s Education Welfare Officer.

Please find enclosed a print out of your child’s attendance for this year. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please make an appointment with Mrs Roberts via the school office.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

Attendance Medical Evidence - Letter One

Child’s Name Class

I confirm that I have received this letter and will improve my child’s attendance.

Signed(Parent/ Carer) Date

Appendix 9

«date_of_printing»

«addressee»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Attendance Medical Evidence Letter Two Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

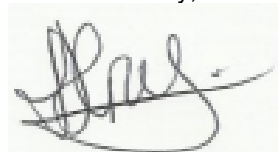
Following my last letter regarding your child’s attendance I am disappointed to note that the situation has not improved. Can I remind you that an absence of 10% is the same as missing 1 day every 2 weeks.

As a result I am writing to state that any absences due to illness/appointments must be supported by medical evidence (such as a doctor’s certificate, a copy of their appointment/current prescription, or an electronic scan/photo of the medicine prescribed with name and date visible). Medical evidence may enable us to obtain appropriate support so that your child’s education is not affected more than necessary. Should we not receive this evidence your child’s absence will be unauthorised.

If there are any other reasons causing absences from school it is important that you speak to a member of staff about this.

Further unauthorised absences will lead to the matter being referred to the school’s Education Welfare Officer. Please find enclosed a print out of your child’s attendance for this year. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please make an appointment with Mrs Roberts via the school office.

Yours sincerely,



Miss L Craig
Headteacher

Attendance Medical Evidence - Letter Two

Child’s Name Class

I confirm that I have received this letter and will improve my child’s attendance.

Signed(Parent/ Carer) Date