

THE CHARTER SCHOOLS

EDUCATIONAL TRUST

The Charter School East Dulwich

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Reviewed by:	S Varcoe	Head of Governance	
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Approved by:	Nathaniel Wilson	Date:	September 2022
Next Review Date:		September 2024	

1. Introduction

Our mission at The Charter Schools Educational Trust (hereafter referred to as the 'Trust') is to inspire and nurture children and young people in South London to excel, through education that transforms lives. A key factor in delivering this is a child's attendance at school.

It is only by attending school regularly (**96%** or more of the time) and punctually, will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High achievement depends on good attendance. Children who miss out on lessons are at risk of falling behind and statistics show that children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Attendance	Description	Approx. days lost per year	Approx. weeks lost per year
99-100%	Excellent	0-4	Less than 1
96-98%	Good	5-9	1-2
95%	Satisfactory	10-13	2-3
90-94%	Unsatisfactory	14-18	3-4
Below 90%	Persistent Absence	More than 19 Equivalent to 38 sessions	More than 4

The whole school community, including pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and Trustees and local Governors, have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this. The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the school community are made aware of the policy and have access to it.

2. Legal framework

The Education Act 1996 states that:

- The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable
 - a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and
 - b) to any special educational needs, they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- A person begins to be of compulsory school age
 - a) when they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on a prescribed day, and
 - b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.
- A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year.
 - a) if they attain the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
 - b) if they attain that age on that day, or

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- c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following their attaining that age.

The Charter Schools Educational Trust and its schools are dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this attendance and punctuality policy accordingly.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following Trust/school policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Pupils with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The **Trust Board** is responsible for:

- Recognising the importance of school attendance and promoting it across the Trust's ethos and policies
- Ensuring that effective practice on attendance management and improvement across its schools.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

3.2. The **local governing board (LGB)** has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Working with the school leaders to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

3.3 The **headteacher** is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to take the strategic lead on attendance.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.

- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

3.4 All staff at The Charter School East Dulwich are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, take the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Providing an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day.

3.5 A designated member of the school's Senior Leadership Team will be identified as the school's strategic lead on attendance and will be responsible for:

- They will ensure that the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school
- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Reporting on attendance to the Senior Leadership Team and local governing body.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

3.6 The Attendance Officer will:

- be responsible for attendance on a day-to-day basis and will provide support to any pupils whose attendance drops below 96%.
- be responsible for liaising with the class teacher, form tutor(s), and year leader - in relation to pupil absence
- Contacting parents/carers to discuss the pupil's attendance where concerns arise.
- Collating attendance data and providing this along with information to the Senior Leader with strategic responsibility for attendance on a regular basis.
- maintaining the electronic registers
- signing in pupils who arrive late
- carrying out first-day calling and, ensuring letters are sent to parents and carers, as directed by the Senior Leader with strategic responsibility for attendance.

3.7 Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.
- Ensure their children attend school regularly (at least 96% or more) and on time
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- Parents are also be expected to:
 - notify the school on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day of absence, unless medical evidence is provided which defines the necessary length of absence.
 - Provide medical evidence when asked in order to authorise an absence due to illness.

3.8 Pupils are responsible for:

- Being aware of the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality.
- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school on time.
- Ensuring they attend the school regularly (**96% or more**) and on time.
- Speak to their Tutor and/or Year Leaders, a member of the pastoral team or the attendance officer if they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly or are causing them to arrive at school late.

4 Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupil's attendance and punctuality, and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents/carers and pupils.

4.1 Class Registers

Class registers are recorded using CLASS CHARTS. The system ensures that no children are missed and that pupil information can be shared quickly and securely. Registers are the only way of recording pupil attendance and must be completed accurately. This is the responsibility of whichever member of staff has been directed to take the register for that session. Registers are legal documents and can be used in a court of law, so they **MUST** be accurate.

4.2 Morning registration

- The Charter School East Dulwich will be open to all pupils from 8.15am. The school day starts at 8.30 am and pupils will be expected to be in their tutor room, ready to start the day by this time. **The register will be taken at 8.30 am**
- Pupils who arrive after this time will be marked as late at the gate until 8:50am or need to report to reception after 8:50am and sign in as late (L). It is the pupil's responsibility to sign in.
- The morning registers will close at **9.00am** across the school, and any pupil who arrives after this time will be marked as unauthorised absence (U).
- We will conform to the time on the clock in the school reception to meet the times listed above.

4.3 Afternoon registration

- Registers must be submitted during period 4 which starts at **12.20pm**
- Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classrooms by **12.22 pm**
- The afternoon register will close at **12.50pm** and any pupil not present at this time will be marked as absent for the Afternoon session

5 Categorising absence

5.1 Any pupil who is not present during registration will be marked as absent, unless authorised leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher or other designated staff.

Parents/carers cannot authorise absences and should be aware that while calling the school or providing a note for an absence complies with safeguarding procedures, it does not automatically mean an absence will be authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 1 week, the absence will remain unauthorised.

5.2 Authorised Absence

Authorised Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher in the circumstances listed below.

- **Code C: Leave of absence granted by the school**
 - Only exceptional circumstances warrant granting a leave of absence, which must be applied for in advance by the parent who the pupil normally lives with and the headteacher believes the circumstances to be exceptional. The headteacher will consider each application for a leave of absence individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request. Where a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- **A pupil is subject to a temporary part-time timetable**
 - All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupils best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. A Part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part time timetable, school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day therefore must treat absence as authorised.
- **A pupil is pregnant**
 - Leave for maternity is treated like any other leave of absence. The headteacher will act reasonably and grant a sufficient period of leave from school, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each case.
 - An Application for leave of absence should not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted the headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- **Code H: Leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday granted by the school**
 - Parents should plan their holidays around school breaks and avoid seeking permission from schools to take their children out of school during term time unless it's absolutely unavoidable.
 - An Application for leave of absence should not be granted unless it is made in advance by a parent the pupil normally lives with and the school is satisfied there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstance of the case which justify the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted the headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**
 - If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are suspended from school or excluded from school, but their name is still entered in the admission registers
- **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)**

- Parents should notify school on the first day their child is unable to attend due to illness. This will be recorded as authorised where pupils cannot attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related).
- In the majority of cases where a parent has notified school that their child is ill this can be accepted without question or concern.
- Where there are genuine and reasonable doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school can request medical evidence to support the absence.
- Pupils with long term illness or other health needs may need additional support to continue education, such as alternative provision arranged by the local authority. Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for children of compulsory school age who, because of health reasons, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- The education provided by the local authority must be full-time or as close to full-time as the child's health allows. The DfE's statutory guidance on ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs sets out that local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- **Code M: Medical or dental appointment**
 - Parents are encouraged to make appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents should get the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.
 - If a pupil is present at registration but has a medical appointment during the session in question, no absence needs will be recorded for that session
- **Code R: Religious observance**
 - School will record absence as authorised when it falls on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the parents' religious body (not the parents)
 - We would interpret a day exclusively set apart for religious observance as a day when the pupils' parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their employment in order to mark the occasion.
- **Code S: Study leave**
 - Study leave will be granted at the headteacher's discretion and will not be granted by default once tuition of the exam syllabus is complete. It will be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. If study leave is granted, provision will be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.
 - Study leave is unsupervised and as such it will be recorded as absence
- **Code T: Traveller Absence**
 - A number of different groups are covered by the generic term traveller (Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen and circus people, Bargees and New travellers.
 - This code will not be used for general absences by those groups. It will only be used when the pupil's parent(s) is travelling for occupational purposes and the school has granted a leave of absence following a request from the parent. This code will not be used to record any other types of absence by these groups.
 - Pupils from these groups whose parent(s) do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to attend school as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other pupils in terms of the requirements to attend school regularly once registered at school.
 - Where a pupil

5.3 Absence related to COVID 19

If a pupil has a **confirmed** case of COVID (through the use of a test (LFT or PCR)), then they should stay at home for the duration of time set out by latest guidelines eg 3 days. This starts the day after they did the test. After the three days has finished, if they are well and do not have a temperature then they can return to school even if tests are still showing positive.

There is no requirement for any person to self-isolate because they have COVID or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID

5.4a Unauthorised absence

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of unauthorised absence would be:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- The pupil is staying at home to mind the house
- Staying at home to care for a sick or disabled parent/carer / family member.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Truancy before or during the school day
- The parent/carer has medical appointment
- General anxiety about COVID-19 resulting in refusal to come to school
- Siblings are unwell so the child is not coming in
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

The unauthorised codes used for these circumstances are:

- Code G: Holiday not granted by the school or in excess of the period determined by the school.
 - Where leave of absence for the purpose of holiday is not granted by the headteacher , but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away longer than the agreed period of leave granted.
 - Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively, therefore if the parent does not apply in advance then leave of absence should not be granted.
- Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided
 - School will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort will be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for absence has been established the relevant code will be recorded on the pupils record.
 - Where absence is recorded as unexplained in the register the correct code will be inputted as soon as the reason is established, but no more than 5 working days after the session. Code N will therefore not be left on the pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if a reason for absence cannot be established after 5 working days, school will amend the pupils record to Code O
- Code O: Absent without authorisation
 - Where no reason for absence has been established or school is not satisfied with the reason given is an authorised absence.
- Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed
 - Where a student arrives late after the register has closed (after tutor time), and the school is not satisfied that the reason for lateness is an authorised absence.
 - School will actively discourage students from being late by educating students on the importance of punctuality and the impact this has on lost learning. School will monitor

patterns of late arrival and seek explanations from parents. The length of time the register will be open is from 0830-0900 the length of tutor time for the AM registration session.

5.4b Attending an Approved educational activity

There are occasions where students are absent from school as they are taking part in an educational activity approved by the school. These must be approved by the school in advance. These are:

- Code D: Dual Registered at another school
- Code B: Off-site educational activity
- Code: J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Code V: Educational visit or trip
- Code W: Work experience

5.4c Administrative Codes

- Code X: Non-Compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school
- Code Y: unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (school approved only)
- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register
- Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

5.5 Persistent absence/severe absence

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more school sessions across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level has been proven to do considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Severe absence is when a pupil is missing 50% or more school sessions across the school year. Where this is unauthorised absence (i.e. not due to medical conditions which the school is aware of) this is breaking the law and is extremely serious.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the persistent absence mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

6 Collection and analysis of data

The school uses Bromcom to keep an electronic record of attendance.

The Senior Leader with strategic attendance responsibility will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, to parents and the Local governing body as appropriate. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

Attendance is monitored by individual child, year group, class/Tutor group and by reasons of absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance. This data is used to identify where intervention and support is required to improve attendance.

Accurate attendance returns are made to the Department of Education (DfE) within the stipulated time frame.

7 Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

7.1 Rewards

We know that to give our students the opportunity to excel they need to be in school, every day and on time. High achievement and life choices depends on good attendance . We therefore take a proactive reward focussed approach to encourage students to attend and engage. Rewards include:

Encouraging Attendance and Punctuality			
What	Who	When	Monitoring/QA
Merits for students who attend all lessons on time	Data Officer	Weekly (Automatic)	Attendance Officer spot checks
Head teachers award for highest punctuality and attendance tutor groups	Head Teacher	Weekly (Via Class Charts)	DHT and HT meeting
Prize draw per year group for those with 100% attendance	Year Leader	Half Termly in Assembly	Attendance Officer provides names
Year Leader praise letter for those with 100% attendance and 100% Punctuality.	Year Leader	Termly	Attendance Officer provides template and names

7.2 School Strategies to tackle absence

The Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteachers for Key Stages 3 and 4, Year Leaders, and the attendance officer, are responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that The Charter School East Dulwich intervene in non-attendance at an early stage. The Attendance Officer meets with the Senior Leader with strategic attendance responsibility on a fortnightly weekly basis to review any pupils where attendance concerns exist and to monitor the impacts of any actions taken.

Where there is an emerging pattern for a pupil's absence or if staff are particularly concerned, the school will contact the parents (read also carers) to discuss reasons for the absences with them. Plans should be put in place with the family and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences may be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them. If the pattern persists a Penalty Notice referral may be issued where no improvement is seen.

Our approach to tackling unacceptable levels of absence is bespoke and takes into account the individual circumstances of the family. We recognise that absence may be a symptom of other challenges, and we aim to help address those challenges.

The tables below summarise the steps and who is responsible for support plans and communication with families. The detail of each support plan is always bespoke to the individual needs and aims to positively support families and students in re-engaging in school.

Repeated Absence/Punctuality Interventions			
What	Who	When	Monitoring/QA
2 Days absence/late phone call + Class Chart Log	Tutor	Weekly	AO+ YL meetings
Average of 1 absence/late per week or more over a half term – Tutor meeting	Tutor	Half Termly	YL tracking AO+ YL meetings
Stage 1 support plan (95%-97% attendance) – Tutor led support plan, including 4 week monitoring report + family call and written log.	Tutor	Weekly	YL tracking AO+ YL meetings
5 Days absence/late phone call + Year leader Letter	Year Leader	Weekly	AO/YL tracking AO+DHT meetings
Average of 2 absences/lates per week or more over a half term – Year Leader meeting	Year Leader	Half Termly	AO/YL tracking AO+DHT meetings
Stage 2 support plan (90%-95% attendance) – Year Leader led support plan, including 6 week monitoring report + family call and written letter	Year Leader	Weekly	AO/YL tracking AO+DHT meetings
Stage 3 support plan (Less than 90% attendance) – Assistant Headteacher led support plan, including 6 week monitoring report + family meeting and written letter	Assistant Head (YG)	As needed	Deputy Headteacher Line management
Educational Welfare Office Panel Meeting (Less than 80%)	EWO	As needed	AO+DHT meetings HT/DHT LM meetings
Stage 4 support plan (Less than 70%) –Deputy Headteacher and EWO led support plan including 6 week monitoring report + family meeting and written letter	DHT	As needed	HT/DHT LM meetings
21 Day Letter (Deputy Head)	DHT	As needed	HT/DHT LM meetings
Penalty warning letter (Deputy Headteacher)	DHT	As needed	HT/DHT LM meetings
Fixed penalty Letter (Headteacher)	DHT	As needed	HT/DHT LM meetings

7.3 First-day communication

If a child is absent from school and the school has not received a phone call or other message from the parent/carer, a first-day absence communication will be made to establish the whereabouts of the child and that they are safe. This will be in the form of a text message. If no response to the text message is received, a phone call will be made. School staff will make every effort to establish contact with the parent and speak to them to confirm where the child is.

If we are unable to establish contact with the parents, we will contact the emergency numbers provided.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will routinely share a list of vulnerable children with the school administration team, and the admin team will notify the DSL or allocated person, immediately if a child on that list is not in school, on the first day of absence, and each subsequent day.

7.4 Lateness and punctuality

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Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 8.30 am, every day. For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building.

Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the School reception on arrival to sign in and provide an explanation for the late arrival. It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.

Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked as absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late.

For the same reason, it is important that pupils who need to leave the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or return to school later in the day after a legitimate reason, sign in and out at the school reception and provide a reason for leaving early. On his/her subsequent return to school, they must sign in again to say that they have returned.

7.5 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the pupil will not be receiving full-time education, it also potentially renders them vulnerable to harm. The Charter School East Dulwich takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. If, however, a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will try to contact their parents immediately; failing this the police will be contacted and informed. Any child who leaves the school without authorisation will be dealt with according to the school's behaviour policy and the Child Protection Policy.

8. Tackling excessive sickness absence (Code I and code M)

In aiming to maintain an average attendance of at least 96% across an academic year, a child cannot miss more than 8 days in total. We use this benchmark to consider carefully how we define excessive sickness absence.

We recognise that some of our pupils have medical conditions or disabilities that necessitate them having more days than this. Where a pupil has no known diagnosis and misses many days due to sickness absence over a period of time, the parents/carers will be warned that in order to authorise any further absence due to illness, medical evidence will be required, even if it is for half a day.

We would always give plenty of warning, opportunities for discussion and implement support from other agencies where we can for families, before that decision is taken. This requirement will never be a surprise or brought in too quickly.

We view medical evidence as something that does not place additional pressures on health professionals, something that is easily obtainable:

- Appointment slip
- Prescription issued
- Email /text message confirming appointment
- Mobile phone record to show the number you called and the duration of the call.

9. Term-time absence due to exceptional circumstances (code C)

9.1 The Headteacher will consider each application individually. An application must be made in writing on the prescribed form (**Appendix 1**), with appropriate evidence, in advance of the intended circumstance

wherever possible. The Charter School East Dulwich will only consider authorising leave of absence for the following: -

- Serious and sudden illness of a close relative and you must leave in an emergency (see 9.2)
- A one off never to be repeated occasion that can only happen at that time e.g. wedding or funeral
- Any religious observance (one day only under code R)
- A significant educational opportunity afforded **to the child** by a national organisation e.g. ballet, exams, filming for a TV commercial, taking part in a West End production
- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any **leave** in the near future that coincides with **school** holidays.

9.2 What do we mean by serious and sudden?

- Serious means an accident, injury, illness, disease, or physical or mental condition that: poses an imminent danger of death; requires inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical facility.
- Examples of this are: road traffic accident, diagnosis of a life-limiting illness, and deterioration of a life-limiting illness.
- Sudden means it has happened and it wasn't expected.
- For time away from education it has to be the type of situation for where you receive communication that requires you to leave immediately to travel.
- We will require evidence of the seriousness of the situation, which you can bring back with you.

10 Issuing fixed penalty notices and initiating court proceedings

As a school within The Charter Schools Educational Trust we will make full use of the law and issue fixed penalty notices and court proceedings where the conditions for this have been fulfilled. Fixed penalty notices are issued where there are many unauthorised absences on a child's attendance certificate, in accordance with the Southwark code of conduct (detailed below).

Currently in Southwark a fine can be issued under the following circumstances (p25 of the Southwark code of conduct):

- **Unauthorised term-time leave: (G)** Child misses 10+ am and pm sessions during any 50 school days. The leave does not have to be consecutive. The Headteacher should consider evidence of previous unauthorised term time leave (last 3 years) and evidence of parents having been warned about a penalty notice
- **Lateness:** 20+ (U) codes in a half term
- **Non-Engagement:** In cases where all attempts have been made to engage the family and they have failed all meetings offered and attendance remains a concern

11 Referral to the Child Missing Education (CME) Service

If, after repeated attempts, we are unable to contact any family to establish for sure where the children are, we are obliged to make a referral to the local authority to say this is a child 'missing education' This is an important safeguarding duty and it ensures that circumstances, where children are missing from education, are swiftly and appropriately responded to. This will be in accordance with our Children Missing from Education Policy and the local authority procedures.

Appendix 1

Form to request leave from school in exceptional circumstances

*To be completed and returned to the school prior to the leave, along with a letter detailing the "exceptional circumstance for which the leave of absence is required.

Parent/Guardian Name and Address	Guidance
	<p>Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school. As from 1st September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amended Regulation 7 to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school from granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an advance application has been made by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. <u>If your child is absent from school 'on holiday' without authorisation you are risking a fixed penalty notice of £60 being issued.</u></p> <p>Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress. There is <u>no</u> entitlement to parents to take their child out of school during term time, however, you may apply to the school for leave of absence if you believe there are exceptional circumstances.</p>
How to use this form	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use for all absences other than sickness. Return form to school in <u>advance</u> of requested absence otherwise the absence will automatically be unauthorised. Use a separate form for each child and each absence. 	
Name of child:	Class:
Is this the first request for absence this academic year? YES / NO	
Dates of absence requested: The 1 st day of absence from school is..... I will return to school on..... At 9:00am	No. of school days requested:

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<p>Which exceptional reason does your request fulfil? (please tick)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious AND sudden illness of a close relative and you must leave in an emergency • A one-off, never to be repeated occasion that can only happen at that time, e.g. wedding/funeral. • Any religious observance • A significant educational opportunity afforded to the child by a national organisation e.g. ballet exams, filming for a TV commercial, taking part in a West End production • If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays 	<p>Please explain in more detail.</p>
<p>Contact details whilst abroad/absent from school</p> <p>If your child is being taken out of school during term time and the details of their location is not provided, this could turn into a serious safeguarding issue. When a child is absent or missing from school, they could be at risk of harm. The school has a duty to keep children safe and this includes knowing where they are. If the</p>	

Parent/Carer fails to provide the required information, then the school may make a referral to the police or the Local Authority.	
Address whilst away:	
Telephone number whilst away:	
Email address whilst away:	
Please attach proof of where you will be whilst away	
I make application for my child to have authorised absence from school. I understand that if this is not agreed then any subsequent absence will be treated as unauthorised and this could lead to a penalty notice or a summons to court for irregular school attendance.	
I have read and understood the guidance above.	
Parent 1*: Title: _____ Full Name: _____ Tel: _____ Relationship to child: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____ Parent 2*: Title: _____ Full Name: _____ Tel: _____ Relationship to child: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____ *This is defined as any adult with legal parental responsibility for a child.	
School to complete	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child's current attendance 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">● How many days' holiday already taken this academic year?● Is the Education Welfare Officer working with the family?● Is Children's Services supporting the family?● Is the request for leave during the exam period?● Has the school received proof of where the child is stay during absence?● Does the request fit the exceptional criteria?● Has a written response been sent to all parents/carers?● Penalty notice to be issued?	
This request for term time leave is:	Authorised / Unauthorised.
Reason for decision:	
Signed: _____ Headteacher Date: _____	

Please attach the letter that you sent to the parents along with any other information from the parent regarding the original request.