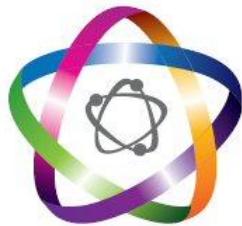


POLICY DOCUMENT No P04



DEBENHAM HIGH SCHOOL

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy



ATTENDANCE POLICY & GUIDANCE

This policy is reviewed every two years in spring

History of Document

Issue No	Author/Owner	Date Written	Approved by Governors on	Comments
Issue 1	P. Crowley	Nov 05	10 Oct 2006	For consultation
Issue 2	P. Crowley	Jan 07	6 Feb 2007	Revised following consultation
Issue 3	A. Bloom/ L. Ramsay	July 09	17 Nov 2009	Updated – for consultation
Issue 3b	L. Ramsay	Mar 12		Minor updating
Issue 4	L. Ramsay	Jan 13	Feb 13	Minor Updating
Issue 5	L. Ramsay	April 2014	13 May 2014	Minor updating
Issue 6	L. Ramsay	April 2016	3 May 2016	Updated with regard to PNs
Issue 7	L. Ramsay	April 2017	9 May 2017	Minor Updating following court case
Issue 8	L. Ramsay	May 2019	14 May 2019	Minor update and review
Issue 9	L. Ramsay	April 2021	May 2021	Minor update and review
Issue 10	L. Ramsay	June 2022	5 July 2022	To reflect new national guidance.

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1. Aim

The aim of Debenham High School's Attendance Policy is to:

- Encourage an ethos where all our students want to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Encourage an ethos where students see the importance of good attendance for academic success and their future life in the workplace.
- Provide a clear definition of authorised and unauthorised absences that are easily understood by students, staff, governors and parents/carers.
- Aid and support all staff in the management of attendance.
- Ensure that our very high standards of attendance and punctuality are maintained.
- Outline the support available to encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Outline the support available in times of long term absence.

The whole school community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance and punctuality: parents/carers, students, all school staff and governors.

The Home/School Agreement is signed by parents/carers and students when they join the school.

The school confirms that:

It will provide a safe, well-ordered and stimulating environment for learning regardless of differences of race, disability, sexuality, sex, culture or religion

Parents confirm that:

They will ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time, properly equipped and in the correct uniform

Students confirm that:

They will attend school and lessons regularly, on time and properly dressed in school uniform

2. Parent/Carer's Responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. (Regular attendance would be deemed to be attendance of at least 95%). Section 444 of the Act states: -

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence".

It is therefore the parent/carer's responsibility to ensure students attend school every day.

- If a student is prevented from attending school because of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the School of the student's absence by telephone on the first

day of absence. It is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not. In some cases, the school may request proof of medical or sickness absence.

- Wherever possible, parents/carers should avoid making medical or dental appointments for their children during school hours.
- Parents/carers should plan family holidays and trips outside of term time. They do not have the right to take children out of school whether for a holiday or any other purpose during term-time. If, however, parents/carers apply to the School in advance, the School may, in very exceptional circumstances and at the Headteacher's discretion, grant some authorised leave. Students with Performance or Sport's licences will have authorised absence in accordance with the number of days stated on the licence.

See Appendix 1, a Guide for Parents/Carers, which sets out the criteria which the Headteacher is likely to take into account in determining whether to grant an application for term-time absence. It is recommended that parents/carers read this Guide before submitting an application for leave of absence.

3. Students' Responsibilities

- All students should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties which might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their Form Tutor or Head of Year.
- Students should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn.
- Students are responsible for following School procedures if they arrive late.
- Students are responsible for checking exam dates and deadlines and for catching up any work missed.

See Appendix 2, A Guide for Students.

4. School's Responsibilities

a. To encourage high levels of attendance and punctuality

All the staff at Debenham High School place a high value on students' regular attendance and good punctuality, both in arriving at school and in attending lessons. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

All school staff are responsible for ensuring that students have good attendance and punctuality by:

- ensuring that attendance Registers are kept accurately and that any persistent lateness is noted and reported to the Assistant Head responsible for Pastoral Care.
- responding to absenteeism and lateness firmly, consistently and with care;

- contacting the parent/carer when they are concerned about a student's absences or lateness, and recording the contact;
- monitoring student attendance in lessons and following up any absences in order to deal with school refusal, which might occur after morning or afternoon registration.

The Assistant Headteacher responsible for Pastoral Care is responsible for :

- promoting regular school attendance (for example, by contacting the parent/carer on the first day of absence if the parent/carer has not contacted the School);
- acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual students, classes or tutor groups
 - differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or message from a parent/carer does not in itself authorise an absence; only the School can decide whether the parent/carer's explanation justifies authorising the absence. Proof of medical or sickness absence may be required.
 - consulting with the Education Welfare Service or other external agencies, including the School Nurse, if a student's attendance continues to give cause for concern
 - Ensuring good attendance (i.e. 90% and above) where there is not a long term illness diagnosed or authorised reasons for absence, including unauthorised holiday. The Education Welfare Officer comes into school weekly to enable a proactive approach to good attendance and quick response where attendance is affected. The overriding focus of this work is around care, support and working with parents/carers to remove barriers to attendance. In the first instance, through the use of pastoral support eg a Suffolk Pastoral Support Framework; a Common Assessment Framework assessment or specific support for the family and student in accordance with the individual needs of the family. However should support not lead to improvement and/or parents/carers fail to engage in working with the school to improve student attendance, the school may issue Penalty Notices. Failure to improve attendance based on these will lead to the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer and the FASTRACK procedure. (See Appendix 9)

b. To support in times of Long Term Absence

There may be occasions in which support is needed for students who are unable to attend school regularly. This may be for:

- Significant ill-health
- to contribute to the multi-agency support for students out of school
- to re-integrate a student to full time education.

On these occasions support for education will be provided outside the classroom. In the first instance this will be work sent home or to the Hospital School from school. Returned work will be marked and feedback given to the student. On the rare occasion that this does not meet the academic needs of the student, additional tuition will be sought, either through a Private Tutor provided by the school or through a referral to the County service, ATS (Alternative Tuition Service).

The purpose of tuition is to provide a short term solution to the problems faced. The aim will usually be re-integration to mainstream, full time education. The decision on when a student is ready to return to full time education will be based on evidence from a medical professional – ideally a consultant or clinical psychologist.

Criteria for support:

- Year 10 or 11 student has been off school for at least 2 weeks (or Year 7, 8 or 9 student who has been off for 4 weeks) and is **physically** unable to return to school for at least 4 weeks. This has been confirmed by a medical professional – a consultant or clinical psychologist. If ATS/tuition is provided this will be for a maximum of 5 hours a week (based on 2-3 hour visits) focusing on core GCSE subjects, followed by other GCSE subjects. Provision would continue until the student is able to return to school although the commitment will be reviewed every 4 weeks in view of the responses and outcomes for the student, their commitment and the implications for the school. The school is under no obligation to provide this service. The Headteacher would make the final decision on whether to continue the provision.

Year 10 or 11 student has been off school for at least 2 weeks (or Year 7, 8 or 9 student who has been off for 4 weeks) and is **emotionally** unable to return to school for at least 4 weeks. This has been confirmed by a medical professional – a consultant or clinical psychologist. If ATS/tuition is provided this will be for a maximum of 5 hours a week (based on 2-3 hour visits) focusing on core GCSE subjects, followed by other GCSE subjects. Provision would continue until the student is able to return to school although the commitment will be reviewed every 4 weeks in view of the responses and outcomes for the student, their commitment and the implications for the school. The school is under no obligation to provide this service. The Headteacher would make the final decision on whether to continue the provision.

5. Key Personnel

Assistant Headteacher i/c Pastoral Care	Louise Ramsay	
Contact Details	Email	lramsay@debenhamhigh.co.uk
	Telephone	01728 862913
Headteacher		Simon Martin
Contact Details	Email	smartin@debenhamhigh.co.uk
	Telephone	01728 860213
Attendance Administrator		Mel Rose
Contact Details	Email	mrose@debenhamhigh.co.uk
	Telephone	01728 860213
Student Support Co-Ordinator		Lorraine Keeble
Contact Details	Email	lkeeble@debenhamhigh.co.uk

	Telephone	01728 860213
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Appendix 1

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS/CARERS

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning Register will be called promptly at 9.05 am and the afternoon Register promptly at 1.50 pm.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration Periods are from 9.05 to 9.25 in the morning and at the beginning of Session 5 in the afternoon at 2.00pm.

Except in special circumstances (see Appendix 6 section 10):

Your child will be marked **LATE** if s/he arrives after the Form Tutor has finished calling all the names in the Register but before 9.45 in the morning or 2.15 in the afternoon.

Your child will be marked **ABSENT** if s/he arrives after 9.45 in the morning or 2.15 in the afternoon.

Students who arrive after the end of the Registration Period MUST report to the School Office to be signed in. If a student is late on two or more occasions in any two-week period without good reason, a member of staff (either the Form Tutor or Head of Year) may contact you to discuss reasons for lateness. A School Detention will be given.

3. What should I do if my child is absent from School?

We expect a parent/carer to telephone the School on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you.

4. What reasons for absence will the School accept?

- Illness, although the school may request proof of medical/sickness absence if absences are regular and exceed 10% of possible sessions expected. It is the school's decision whether the attendance can be authorised;
- Emergency dental/medical appointment.
Please try to make routine appointments after school or during the school holidays.
- Family holiday, in exceptional circumstances and only when prior approval has been given – see section 6 below;
- Exceptional and/or special circumstances– see section 7 below;
- Extended family visits abroad when prior approval has been given – see section 9 below.

Except in the case of illness, you MUST ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details (see sections 6 and 7 below). This needs to be made six weeks prior to the date of the visit. Otherwise your request may be refused.

In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical evidence.

See section 8 for a list of unacceptable reasons for absence.

5. Will the School contact me if my child is absent?

The School operates a first-day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as his or her regular school attendance.

If we cannot contact you we will send you an email or a letter. If we do not receive a reply to our first email or letter we will write to you again, asking for confirmation of absence and an explanation for it. A deadline will be set for your reply and the email or letter will inform you of this. If you fail to reply by this date or if the explanation you give is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you by phone and/or email to discuss the best way forward.

6. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

The School strongly discourages parents/carers from taking their children out of school, especially during Years 10 and 11. GCSE Non-Examination Assessment is undertaken throughout these years. Students take GCSE examinations during Years 10 and 11.

If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to accompany you on an annual family holiday during term-time, you should complete a Leave of Absence application form (see Appendix 4) at least 6 weeks in advance and before the holiday is booked. The form must be accompanied by a letter clearly stating the reason why the holiday can only be taken in school term-time. Should this be on the basis of employment constraints, the school may ask for a letter from the employer to state the holiday cannot be taken outside of term time

- a. The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission and will not consider an application unless all the following conditions are met:
 - The holiday is a single annual family holiday which can only be taken in school term-time
AND
 - the number of school days missed will not exceed 5 days (10 sessions) or result in more than 5 days (10 sessions) absence in total being taken during the school year
AND
 - the attendance of the student has exceeded 95% in the previous 12 months
AND
 - the student will not miss major assessments, be absent during the important final preparation time for exams or miss the preparation or submission of Non-Examination Assessment.
- b. If a student misses school work as a result of a holiday taken during term-time, responsibility for catching up on the missed work lies with the student and the parent/carer, and NOT with teachers.

- c. It is the student's responsibility to check dates for preparation and submission of Non-Examination Assessment with each subject teacher. No responsibility can be taken by the School for any failure of the student in respect of that Non-Examination Assessment as a result of the holiday.
- d. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain and check examination dates, particularly if the holiday is requested before the exam timetable has been finalised.

7. What special and/or exceptional circumstances may warrant permission being given for absence?

- a. Absence **may** be authorised at the discretion of the Headteacher in exceptional and/or special circumstances. The following are examples of what may be considered as falling under this heading:

- Day of Religious observance.
- Family wedding or special birthday eg. 90th birthday of close relative.
- Participation in an approved public performance for which a licence application has been made and the application approved by the local authority.
- Participation in regional or national competitions in recognised sporting or other activities eg. Horseriding, basketball, chess etc.
- The student's parents/carers are Travellers and the student is engaged in the parents'/carers' work.
- Participation in a recognised youth group event of limited duration eg. Scouts, Air Cadets.

Parents/carers should complete a Leave of Absence form (Appendix 4) at least 6 weeks in advance, to enable the application to be considered and a decision taken before the proposed absence. Applications received after this time are unlikely to be authorised. Whilst the decision is at their discretion, in deciding whether to authorise a request the Headteacher is likely to take into account at least the following matters:

- The number of school days to be missed, together with the number of school days missed during the previous 12 months and the reasons for those absences. Absence(s) following an application for leave of absence should not exceed 5 days (10 sessions) in total.
 - Whether the student will miss any public examinations eg. GCSEs, or be absent during the important final preparation time for the examination, or whether any preparation or submission of Non-Examination Assessment will be affected. Please see the student's responsibility in respect of this as set out in section 6.3 to 6.5 above.
- b. Permission may also be given, at the Headteacher's discretion, for the following absences. Parents/carers should complete a Leave of Absence form (Appendix 4) as far in advance as possible.
- Family bereavement and/or funeral
 - To enable attendance at an interview for a job, college, university etc
 - To enable attendance at a Pupil Referral Unit or PRU.

8. What absences are unlikely to be authorised?

- If no permission has been sought in advance i.e. six weeks
- For annual holidays which could be taken in school holiday time
- For looking after siblings

- For shopping trips
- For day trips (including birthday “treats”)
- For visiting relatives
- For unexceptional special occasions eg. the student’s birthday, or that of a friend, or ordinary birthdays of relatives
- For family holidays longer than the duration originally authorised, including where flights are delayed
- Where permission is sought for students to accompany parents/carers to enable parents/carers to work
- Because flights to the proposed destination necessitate more than one day to be taken in addition to a school holiday. Please book early, change the tour operator or choose a different destination!
- If the student has not achieved at least 95% attendance during the preceding 12 months
- Because of financial considerations.

9. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that s/he leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a School Log Book each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it each week for tutorial time.

10. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child’s Form Tutor or Year Head immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – eg difficulties with schoolwork, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child’s reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. We may involve other agencies to help and support you and your child.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child’s difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The School may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Welfare Officer for the Central area for Suffolk is based at

“The Mix”,
127, Ipswich Street,
Stowmarket,
Suffolk
IP14 1BB
Telephone : 01449 745130

Appendix 2

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

ATTENDING REGULARLY AND ON TIME

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities here at Debenham High School. It will help you to:

- keep up with your school work and get the best results you can;
- get a job; employers like people who are reliable.

Remember; your attendance at school is shown on your school report.

You should be in school in good time for registration. The morning Register will be called promptly at 9.05am and the afternoon at 2.00pm. Registration Periods end at 9.25 in the morning and 2.00 in the afternoon.

ABSENCES

1. Acceptable reasons for absences include:

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointments (but please try to make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Attending an interview for a job, school, college, university etc.

2. Looking after brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping and helping at home are NOT reasons to be absent from school. You can read the Guide for Parents/Carers to see exactly how the School operates its Attendance policy.

3. Your parent/carer must explain ALL absences from school and lateness, and provide written confirmation in your Log Book. If you do not bring a note, or the explanation in the note is unsatisfactory, the absence will count as unauthorised and will be shown on your end of year report. Parent/carers may also be contacted.

IF YOU MISS REGISTRATION

1. You will be marked **late** if you arrive after your Form Tutor has called everyone's names.
2. If you arrive after the end of the Registration Period you **MUST** be signed in at the School Office.
3. You will be marked **absent** if you arrive after 9.45 in the morning or 2.15 in the afternoon and you

MUST be signed in at the School Office.

4. If you have a music lesson during morning or afternoon registration, you must notify the School Office the day before your lesson. On the day of your lesson, you must sign in at the Office **before** you go to your lesson.
5. If you attend a music lesson or school club and it doesn't finish in time for registration, the teacher will give you a late pass. You must take the late pass to the Office immediately so that you are not marked late in the Register.

EXAMS AND NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT

1. If you miss school work as a result of a holiday taken during term-time, responsibility for catching up on the missed work lies with you and your parent/carer, NOT with teachers.
2. It is up to you to check dates for preparation and submission of Non-Examination Assessment with each subject teacher. No responsibility can be taken by the School if you fail your Non Examined Assessment as a result of a holiday taken in term-time.
3. It is your responsibility to check examination dates.

NEED HELP?

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at school? Are things difficult at home?

You may feel that missing school is the answer. It is not; it may even make things worse.

TALK TO SOMEONE!

Your Form Tutor, your Head of Year, the School Nurse, another member of staff, your parent/carer. The address for these members of staff is in your Log Book and we will do everything we can to help you get over the problem. If it is appropriate, and you would prefer to speak to an older student, we can arrange to match you with a Peer Mentor.

Appendix 3

A GUIDE FOR STAFF

1. Form Registers

Form Tutors are responsible for Attendance Registers on SIMS.

The official list of DCSF Register Codes (2009) is in Register boxes (see Appendix 5).

Registers are called promptly at 9.05 and 1.2.00pm by the classroom teacher

The morning Registration Period ends at 9.25am and the afternoon Registration Period ends at 2.15pm
Registers close at 9.45 and 2.15.

Students are not given a mark if they are not physically in the form room when the names are called.

Students arriving in the form room after the Register has been called but before the end of the Registration Period are marked **late** with an **L**. The reason for lateness is noted in the Register for the attention of the Assistant Head.

The Form Tutor makes a note of the reason on SIMS. The Attendance Assistant contacts the parent/carer if the reason for absence is unknown. The Attendance Assistant marks the correct code for absence on SIMS, under the guidance of the Assistant Head responsible for Pastoral Care.

Students who arrive after the end of the Registration Period **MUST** be signed in at the Office. If students arrive after the Register closes (after 9.45am or 2.15pm) they are marked absent, and coded appropriately by the Attendance Assistant under the guidance of the Assistant Head responsible for Pastoral Care.

2. When lateness is not counted

Lateness due to official school transport, very bad weather, music lessons or school clubs does not count as late in statistical analyses.

3. Class Registers

- a. Subject teachers are responsible for monitoring attendance at the beginning of their lessons.
- b. Any unexplained absences should be notified **immediately** to the School Office.
- c. Subject teachers are responsible for monitoring lateness to and absence from a lesson. They should keep a record of any persistent lateness and report it to the Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care.

4. Monitoring Procedures

- a. Attendance Registers are monitored regularly.

- b. The Attendance Assistant enters appropriate codes on SIMS under the guidance of the Assistant Head responsible for Pastoral Care.
- c. Students who attain 100% attendance throughout a half term are recognised with a Commendation.
- d. Students whose attendance falls below the 90% target will be investigated. If absences are unexplained or unauthorised the parent/carer will be informed of the School's concerns by phone call or letter.
- e. The attendance of students is monitored by Year Group, Sex, Ethnicity, Free School Meals, Special Educational Needs; Children in Care, children adopted from care and those open to a social worker, using the SIMS attendance module. Any concerns are raised at Pastoral and SLT meetings. Parents/carers are informed.
- f. Attendance will be discussed at both Pastoral Team meetings and SLT meetings.
- g. Attendance will be an item in the Headteacher's Report to Governors each term.

5. Weekly Totals

Weekly totals are computed on SIMS.

6. Authorised/Unauthorised

Providing an explanation is received, an absence can be authorised for:

- illness
- dental/medical appointments
- day of religious observance
- family bereavement
- attending an interview for a job, college, university etc
- exceptional special occasions, eg family wedding (see Appendix 1 section 7)
- family holiday, where prior approval has been obtained from the Headteacher (see Appendix 1 Section 6)
- the student is not within walking distance and no suitable travel arrangements have been made by the LEA
- approved work experience
- attendance at a Pupil Referral Unit
- participation in an approved public performance for which a licence application has been made and the application approved by the Local Authority.
- approved study leave
- the student's parents/carers are Travellers and the student is engaged in his/her parents'/carers' work.

It will remain unauthorised:

- if no explanation is received from the parent/carer
- if no medical evidence is provided to explain persistent absenteeism i.e. below 90%
- for looking after siblings
- for shopping trips
- for unexceptional special occasions, eg birthdays
- for family holidays longer than the duration originally authorised by the Headteacher
- for family holidays where prior permission was not sought or was refused.

The Assistant Headteacher for Pastoral Care decides which absences are authorised and the Attendance Assistant or Pastoral Assistant enters the appropriate code on SIMS.

7. Following up absences

- Rapid responses are essential if there is no contact from the parent/carer.
- In cases where there is doubt about an explanation received, contact should be made with the parent/carer by the Form Tutor or Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care.

8. Strategies employed to support students and parents/carers

- a. On a daily basis the Attendance Assistant goes through the Registers between 9.25 and 10.30 and any absences are noted. If no reason is available, a phone call to the home will be made. If there is no response, a letter will be sent. Copies of all calls and letters must be kept on file. (See Appendix 7 First Day Absence Check: school procedure and Appendix 8 First Day Absence Check: letter to Parent/Carer.)
- b. If a pattern of concern about attendance is developing, the Form Tutor should speak to the student about his or her absences and advise the Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care of their concerns. A letter may be sent to the parent/carer requesting an explanation for any absences currently unauthorised.
- c. If there is no significant improvement, or if the attendance falls below 90% in the previous two-week period, the Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care will contact the parent/carer by letter to inform them of the School's concerns about attendance.
- d. If there is still no improvement, the Head of Year or Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care will contact the parent/carer and invite them to attend a meeting.
- e. If attendance does not improve following a meeting with the parent/carer, a Suffolk Pastoral Support Framework will be set up and the student will be discussed at a meeting with the EWO. Records of all the strategies used so far will be made available to the EWO prior to a possible referral.
- f. The Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care or the Student Support Co-ordinator meets with the EWO weekly. Any referrals made are processed following the LA Fast-track procedure. A flowchart detailing the procedure is attached (Appendix 10).

9. Acknowledging good attendance

- a. Attendance targets and attendance statistics for each Year Group and the names of students with 100% attendance are published on the Attendance Notice Board.
- b. Students whose attendance has improved are praised and the Head of Year informs parents/carers by letter or via the Log Book.

10. Support for students who have difficulties attending school

- a. Where students are absent with good reason (for example because of exclusion or long-term illness) a member of staff (usually the Head of Year) will arrange for meaningful work to be sent home and ensure that

it is marked on a regular basis. On the rare occasion where this is not sufficient, additional tuition will be sought.

- b. Where students are refusing to attend school, the School will liaise with outside agencies to offer support to the family. Such agencies include the Education Welfare Service, the School Nurse, GP, Educational Psychologist, Children and Young People's Services, the Virtual School and the Alternative Tuition Service (ATS)
- c. When students return after absence, for whatever reason and whether authorised or unauthorised, they are welcomed back to school and a reintegration programme is agreed.
- d. Where necessary, reduced or varied timetables may be negotiated for students with ongoing health problems. These need to be reviewed regularly and re-agreed by the Assistant Headteacher for Pastoral Care and the parents/carers.

Appendix 4

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR A STUDENT

Important information for parents/carers applying for holiday leave:

- There is no automatic right to absence for a family holiday. Authorisation will depend on current attendance record being greater than 95% and other criteria set out in the school's 'Attendance Policy'.
- Request for leave should be submitted to the school **no less than 6 weeks** prior to the start of the holiday.
- Authorisation during GCSEs (including mock exams) and in the first term of any new school placement is **not likely** to be granted.
- Any requests for extended leave, i.e. more than 5 school days (10 sessions) in any academic year, will only be authorised in **exceptional circumstances**.

For the school to consider granting authorisation for absence, one or more of the criteria listed below must be met.

Please tick the criteria that applies:

- A single annual holiday which can only be taken in term-time for reasons other than financial
- A day of religious observance
- Family wedding or special birthday (close relative)
- Participation in an approved public performance for which a licence has been approved by the LA
- Participation in regional or national competitions of recognised sporting or other activities
- Participation in a recognised youth group of limited duration

If none of the above apply it is unlikely that the absence will be authorised. Please see the attendance policy on the school website for further detail.

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school to be granted to:

Name of Child _____ Form Group _____

Affected dates to schooling: _____ To _____
(last day in school) (date of return to school)

Siblings that this absence also affects (who attend Debenham High School or any of the Pyramid Primary Schools: Bedfield, Creeting St Mary, Earl Soham, Helmingham, SRH Debenham, Stonham Aspal and Wetheringsett Primary School): _____

A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE HEADTEACHER MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM, GIVING REASONS WHY THE ABSENCE CANNOT BE ARRANGED DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAY.

Total number of school days requested in this application: _____ Total school days taken this academic year: _____

Signature of Parent/Carer _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLYTimetable & School Diary checked? Form Tutor consulted? Y/N Current Attendance: _____ %Previous holiday checked? Interview offered to Parent/Carer? Y/N Date _____

Authorised/Unauthorised Signature _____ Date _____

Reasons (if any) for not authorising:

Appendix 5

2022 DfE ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS & MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student 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	Holiday (authorised by the school)	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	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience (not Work-based Training)	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetted sessions for non-compulsory school-age students Students not required to be in school	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix 6

GUIDANCE ON THE COMPLETION OF REGISTERS

1. A mark must be made on SIMS beside every student's name **during the Registration Periods - 9.05am to 9.25am and 1.50pm to 2.05pm.**
2. A **black /** (forward slash) means present in the morning; a **black ** (backward slash) means present in the afternoon. Absences should be left blank; the Attendance Assistant will enter the correct code under the guidance of the Assistant Head responsible for Pastoral Care.
3. A student may be marked present only if s/he is physically present in the room before all the names in the register have been called.
4. If a student arrives in the form room after the Register has been called but before the end of the Registration Period, the Form Tutor may enter a code **L**. If the lateness is due to official school transport, very bad weather, music lessons or school club activities overrunning, such explanation should be noted in the Register so that the lateness is not counted towards the student's record or included in the statistics.
5. Absences can only be authorised by SLT. The Assistant Headteacher for Pastoral Care makes these decisions and the Attendance Assistant or Pastoral Assistant enters the appropriate code on SIMS.
6. If a student arrives in school after the Registration Period s/he **must** be signed in at the Office.
7. If a student arrives before the Registers close (9.45am or 2.15pm) a member of the Office staff will add code **L** on SIMS. If there is no valid reason for the lateness (see Appendix 3 - A Guide for Staff, section 6) it will count as late for reports and statistics.
8. If a student arrives after the Registers have closed (9.45am or 2.15pm) without a valid reason it counts as an unauthorised absence for reports and statistics.
9. **Approved Educational Activities Off-Site.** The absence of students taking part in supervised educational activities outside the School is recorded as detailed below:

CODE B Educated off site includes

1. Individual work placements as part of an alternative curriculum
2. Students receiving education at home, either by home tuition or by notschool.net.
NB The school remains responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of students educated off-site

CODE J Interview includes

1. For new school.
2. Post 16 education school or college.

3. Post 16 employment NOT Saturday jobs etc.

CODE P Approved Sporting Activity includes

1. School matches
2. County fixtures
3. County and National Championships. (for out of school sports permission must be sought from the Assistant Head with responsibility for Pastoral Care prior to event)
4. Students on licence for sport, drama, music

CODE V Educational visit or trip organised by the School**CODE W Work experience undertaken in Year 10 for 2 weeks, organised by the School**

These codes are equivalent to 'present' for performance table purposes.

10. To avoid confusion in an emergency

- Form Tutors should not record students who are off-site as present.
- Remember that the Office holds lists of all students out of school on school trips/visits.
- Remember that students who arrive late or leave early are recorded in the Office signing-in book.

Appendix 7

First Day Absence Check: School procedure

The Attendance Assistant makes phone contact with the parent/carer of absent students every day after monitoring answerphone messages and Registers.

If no contact is made, this is followed up in consultation with a member of SLT.

Answers received or letters sent are recorded on SIMS.

Parents/carers are contacted every day of absence even if on first contact the parent/carer states that it is unlikely that the student will return the following day.

The only exception to this rule is when a student has been hospitalised. In these cases a date for next contact of the School by the parent/carer or vice versa is agreed.

- All new students and their parents/carers are informed about the First Day Absence Check by letter prior to enrolment or on the first day at school.

See **New Student Information Pack**

- All staff are informed of the system via the Attendance Policy

See – **Policies and Procedure bundle to be read and understood each year**

- All students and their parents/carers are informed and reminded of how the system works.

See **New Student Information Pack**

Home School Agreement

Student Log Book

Headteacher's letters to parents/carers

Appendix 8

First Day Absence Check: letter to Parent/Carer

STUDENT: _____ FORM: _____ DATE: _____

Dear Parent / Carer,

At the absence check taken today, it was noted that your child was not present in school. As we seem to have received no prior notification of this absence, we tried to speak to you using the emergency contact numbers supplied by you. Unfortunately we failed to make contact with you.

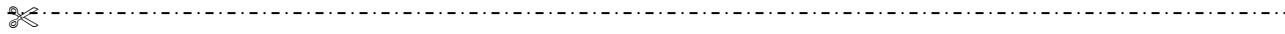
We will be grateful if you would complete the reply slip below, giving reasons for your child's non-attendance and indicating a likely date for his or her return to school, and return the slip to the School Office as soon as possible.

If you have already notified us of this absence and the information has been mislaid, please accept our apologies. However, could we still ask you to return the reply slip so that we can update the Register.

As stated in our previous letter, we are aiming to ensure that all students who leave home for school arrive safe and well, and we are confident that you will wish to assist us in this endeavour.

Yours sincerely

Assistant Headteacher



Please complete this tear-off slip and return to the Assistant Headteacher via the School mailbox:

STUDENT ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Name of Student: _____ Form: _____

I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated _____

Reasons for Absence:

Signature of Parent/Carer: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 9

Fast Track Flowchart

