



St George's C of E School

St George's C of E Primary School Attendance Policy

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and expects all staff, parents/carers and volunteers to share this commitment.

This policy has due regard to the following ethos:

At St George's C of E Primary School we will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunities to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, faith, sexuality or disability. The school will provide an inclusive curriculum, which will meet the needs of all its pupils including those with disabilities, special educational needs, from all cultural backgrounds and faiths and pupils with English as an additional language.

Policy aims

This policy aims to safeguard children by ensuring that they attend school regularly and when they do not attend, school is aware of the reason for absence. By law, parents are required to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and attend regularly. Absence should only occur when a child is unfit to learn or has a day of religious observance.

This policy has due regard to the London Borough of Lewisham's Attendance Guidance and Procedures for Schools and the **DfE Departmental Advice on School Attendance – November 2013 (DFE-00257-2013)** which summarises legal powers and duties that govern school attendance.

These requirements are contained in:

- ☐ **The Education Act 1996 – sections 434 (1) (3) (4) and (6) and 458 (4) and (5)**
- ☐ **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**
- ☐ **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010**
- ☐ **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011**
- ☐ **The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**

School Aims

- To raise pupil achievement.
- To improve pupils' attendance
- To reduce unauthorised absence.
- To reduce lateness.
- To clarify procedures and expectations for staff, parents and pupils regarding Attendance and dealing with absence from school.
- To encourage a genuine 'partnership' with parents/carers.

Expectations

Children:-

- At St George's School we expect that pupils will attend regularly.
- That they will arrive on time.
- That they will let staff know if there is any problem that might prevent them from attending school.

Parents:-

- Will ensure that their child attends school regularly.
- Will ensure that their child arrives on time for school.
- Will contact the school on the first day of absence if their child is unable to attend providing a note or telephone call to explain the absence if they wish the absence to be considered for authorisation.
- Will support the school in its aim to raise the achievement of their child through full attendance at school.

The School will ensure:-

- Efficient and accurate registration of pupils.
- Immediate contact with parents/carers if a child fails to attend without a satisfactory explanation.
- They have in place clear procedures and guidelines to support staff with attendance procedure.
- Regular reviews of registration and attendance procedure to raise awareness of all staff of their roles and responsibilities regarding registration and attendance.
- Parents/carers are made aware of the schools attendance policy and their roles and responsibilities relating to attendance.
- Promote and celebrate good attendance. and punctuality (including significant improvement) with certificates, letters home, etc.
- To ensure that correspondence with the parents regarding attendance issues will be clear and recognise equal opportunities issues regarding access and ESL issues.

Registration Procedures

Every entry in the register will be clearly marked, so the correct information may be entered by the office.

Arrival and registration

All children should be in the playground ready to come into school at 8.55 am each day although children are entitled to enter the playground from 8.45 am to make a calm start to the day. The law requires all schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where pupils are boarders, an attendance register. The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as two attendances.

Morning registration ends at 9.10 am. If a child arrived after registration period he/she will be marked as **late**. The afternoon register for all classes is taken at 1.30. No children currently go home for lunch so afternoon lateness will not be a problem except for those who may have missed the morning session due to a medical appointment. The afternoon register will close at 1.40pm.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/guardian outside the normal hours are signed in at the office. The class registers will be amended to reflect a child's attendance and it is vital it is kept up to date in case of fire.

Registers are checked regularly by the Headteacher and Parent Adviser to ensure they are kept accurately by office staff and to assess the reasons and incidence of any absences.

Illness and medical appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning for the duration of the absence. If parents have not contacted school, they will receive a telephone call asking them why the child is not at school.

Unexplained absences will also be followed up by letter.

Parents will be reminded of the importance of good attendance and punctuality in newsletters, or more frequently if their child's attendance is causing concern.

Attendance levels

The Headteacher regularly informs parents in Newsletters which classes have the best attendance.

To encourage good attendance and punctuality, statistics for each class are read out in the Friday assembly, and the class with the best attendance is awarded the Cup for the week.

At the end of each year Gold and Silver attendance medals are awarded to children with 98 - 100%

Parents are provided with an attendance report with their child's bi-annual reports.

Holidays in term time

Holidays in term time are not an entitlement and are strongly discouraged by the Government, Local Education Authority and School.

Parents should be aware that term time holidays are not an automatic right. The Headteacher can now only authorise absences for exceptional circumstances and no absence will be authorised for a child with less than 90% attendance.

Holidays will never be authorised during September or during SATs week for Y6 pupils.

Fixed penalty notices can be issued if a pupil has more than 21 sessions of unauthorised absences a term.

Process for requesting holiday absence

By law applications must be made by a parent normally residing with the child.

Parents should seek permission for authorised holiday absence before making firm bookings/arrangements/payments for your holiday.

Applications should be made in writing using the Request For Leave Authorisation Form at least 1 month before the absence is due to begin and sent to the school office. Absence will not be granted retrospectively.

After consideration of the above criteria you will be notified in writing as to whether your application for leave has been approved and the expectations required for ensuring that your child returns to school on the agreed date as well as the action that the school is required to take if they do not return on the agreed date.

Work will not be set for completion during the holiday, but children should be encouraged to read and keep a diary of their experiences.

Parents who decide to take a holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on a child's record and are monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Officer, and could result in court action and a fine.

If a pupil does not return to school within ten days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time, then the school will consider removing the child from the school roll

by referring the pupil to the Local Authority Children Missing from Education Team. The school has the right to do this under government legislation.

Parents needing exceptional circumstances to be considered for absences longer than ten days within one academic year, should make an appointment to discuss this with the headteacher well in advance.

Arrangements for absence in other circumstances

Family bereavement and exceptional circumstances: Sudden, serious circumstances when it is impossible for a family to bring a child to school occur rarely. It is essential that the school is informed by the parent of the circumstances so that the appropriate code can be written in the register.

In respect of special circumstances where it is necessary to request leave for your child but 1 months' notice cannot be given then the Request For Leave Authorisation Form must be completed and returned to the school office as soon as possible and before taking your child out of school.

St George's School follows the 'Lewisham Attendance Guidance and Procedure for Schools' Please see attached appendices for attendance flowchart and example letters.

Next review date: January 2019

APPENDICES

ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART – APPENDIX 1

SCHOOL LETTER 1 – APPENDIX 2

SCHOOL LETTER 2 – APPENDIX 3

SCHOOL LETTER 3 – APPENDIX 4

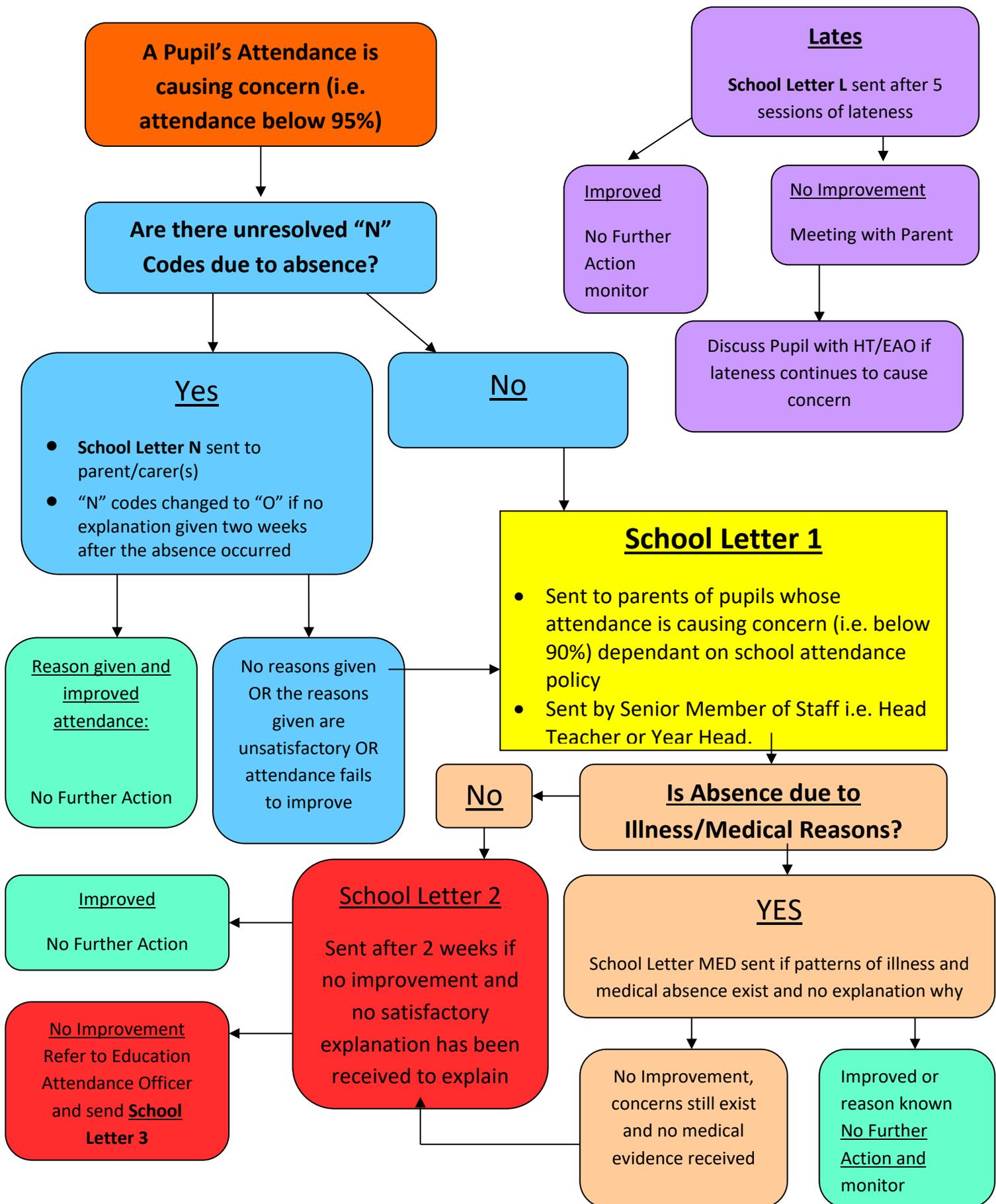
SCHOOL LETTER N – APPENDIX 5

SCHOOL LETTER L – APPENDIX 6

LEAVE REQUEST AUTHORISED IN WHOLE or PART PARENT LETTER – APPENDIX 7

LEAVE REQUEST NOT AUTHORISED PARENT LETTER – APPENDIX 8

ATTENDANCE FLOWCHART – APPENDIX 1





Headteacher: Mrs G Constable

Deputy Headteachers: Miss L Bacon
Miss K MacAlpine
Mrs L Franklin-Smith

SCHOOL LETTER 1 – APPENDIX 2

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first Letter to register our concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to <Name of pupil>'s current level of attendance:

Attendance	<current attendance> %
Authorised Absence	<current AA> %
Unauthorised Absence	<current UA> %

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.

Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.
95%: 10 days absence a year These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.
90%: 19 days absence a year Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. Young People in this group (from September 2015) are classed as "Persistent Absentees".
85%: 29 days absence a year Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.

The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to the Attendance Welfare and Inclusion Service.

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance please do not hesitate to contact Lee Franklin, Parent Support Adviser on 020 8699 5127.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Constable
Headteacher



St George's C of E School
Perry Vale, Forest Hill, London SE23 2NE
Telephone: 020 8699 5127

admin@stgeorges.lewisham.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs G Constable

**Deputy Headteachers: Miss L Bacon
Miss K MacAlpine
Mrs L Franklin-Smith**

SCHOOL LETTER 2 – APPENDIX 3

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

Since we wrote to you on <date of 1st letter>, <name of pupil>'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now <attendance percentage>%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year – your child will spend more time at home than at school this academic year!

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming with <name of pupil>. Poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older.

We wish to help <name of pupil> to improve <his/her> attendance. If you would like to discuss <name of pupil>'s attendance please contact Lee Franklin, Parent Support Adviser on 020 8699 5127 and she will be happy to talk with you and if required arrange a meeting.

We would appreciate your support to make sure <name of child>'s attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to the Attendance Welfare and Inclusion Service.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Constable
Headteacher



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Mrs L Franklin-Smith**

SCHOOL LETTER 3 – APPENDIX 4

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

As you will be aware from our previous two letters, we have concerns with regard to <name of pupil>'s attendance of <attendance percentage>%. Unfortunately we have not received a satisfactory reason for <name of pupil>'s absence and their attendance has failed to improve significantly.

I enclose your child's most recent registration certificate for your information.

On-going low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming with <name of pupil>.

In order to help you ensure that <name of pupil> improves their attendance; I would like to meet with you to discuss the situation further. The meeting has been arranged for:

<Date and Time of Meeting>

If you have any difficulties in attending this meeting please get in contact with me.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Constable
Headteacher



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Miss K MacAlpine
Mrs L Franklin-Smith**

SCHOOL LETTER N – APPENDIX 5

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

According to our records, <name of pupil> has recently been absent from school. You will be aware that it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school on the first day of a pupil's absence to explain the reasons why the <s/he> is unable to attend school and an expected date when <s/he> should return. Unfortunately we have not received any contact from you.

I am therefore writing to you to give you an opportunity to explain the recent absences. Please complete the tear off slip below and return it to the school as soon as possible. Any absence that hasn't been explained within two weeks will be categorised as "**Unauthorised**" Absence.

If you wish to discuss this letter further, please contact me on 020 8699 5127.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Constable
Headteacher

Please complete this slip and return to the school office as soon as possible.

Dates of unexplained absence:

<Dates of N Codes>

Explanation for the above dates of unexplained absence:

Parent/Carer Signature.....

Date.....



Headteacher: Mrs G Constable

Deputy Headteachers: Miss L Bacon
Miss K MacAlpine
Mrs L Franklin-Smith

SCHOOL LETTER L – APPENDIX 6

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date >

Dear <Name of Parent>

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern, including those who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions.

Attendance	<current attendance> %
Number of late sessions	<current AA> %
Number of unauthorised late Sessions	<current UA> %

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below show you how much time can be missed over a year by being late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

School mornings can be very busy but when your child is late for school they are missing out on vital parts of their education and in particular the start of the school day. If you child arrives 30 minutes after the register has been taken they will have an unauthorised absence for the whole session.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss your child's attendance please do not hesitate to contact name of school person on school telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Geraldine Constable
Headteacher



Headteacher: Mrs G Constable

**Deputy Headteachers: Miss L Bacon
Miss K MacAlpine
Mrs L Franklin-Smith**

LEAVE REQUEST AUTHORISED IN WHOLE or PART PARENT LETTER – APPENDIX 7

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date >

Suggested letter to parents when granting permission (in full or partially) for a holiday or for leave of absence for other purposes **DELETE BEFORE SENDING**

Dear <Name of Parent>

Request for leave for [insert name of child] during the period [date] to [date].

Thank you for your request for leave of absence.

Either

I have considered your request and can advise that I am willing to grant leave for [name of child] to be absent between the above dates.

Or

I have considered your request and can confirm that I am not willing to grant leave for [name of child] to be absent for the whole of the period requested. Permission is granted for [name of child] to be absent from [date] until [date] only.

[Name of child] will therefore be expected to return to school on [date].

Please be aware that should your child fail to return to school on that date, any further absence from school will be unauthorised. This could result in:

- Education Penalty Notice fines of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority.
- In some cases your child's name being removed from the school roll, resulting in your child losing his/her school place, the school has a right to do this under government legislation.

In the event of unforeseen problems arising which prevent your child's return on the above date, please contact school immediately to discuss the position.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Constable
Headteacher



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LEAVE REQUEST NOT AUTHORISED PARENT LETTER – APPENDIX 8

<Address>
<Address>
<Address>
<Address>

<Date >

Suggested letter to parents when refusing to grant leave of absence

Dear <Name of Parent>

Request for leave for [insert name of child] during the period [date] to [date].

Thank you for your request for leave for the purpose of [give details].

I have considered your request and regret to inform you that the school is not willing to grant leave of absence on this occasion.

[in the case of term time holidays] Regulations passed by the Government in 2013 abolished the right of headteachers to authorise up to 10 days of absence a year specifically for holidays in special circumstances.

Under current legislation, schools are now only allowed to authorise leave of absence for any reason if satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the harm caused to a pupil's education by missing school.

Having considered your application I am not willing to give permission for the proposed leave of absence.

[Name of child]'s attendance at school during the above period is therefore required, and I must advise you if [he/she] does not attend school during this period, this could result in

- Education Penalty Notice fines of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority
- In some cases your child's name being removed from the school roll, resulting in your child losing his/her school place, the school has a right to do this under government legislation.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Constable
Headteacher