

# Attendance Policy



CONFIDENCE • EQUITY • CURIOSITY

**KING RICHARD**  
SCHOOL

<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Richard Sproson Headteacher</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>April 2020</b>
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	<b>April 2024</b>	<b>Next Review:</b>	<b>April 2025</b>

## Aim

1. Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:
  - a. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence. DCS considers “good” attendance is at least 96% (excluding post operational leave POL<sup>1</sup>)
  - b. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
  - c. Acting early to address patterns of absence
2. We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## School Procedures

3. **Attendance register.** Adopting statutory requirements for school attendance (England), our school is required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.
4. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:
  - a. Present
  - b. Attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - c. Absent
  - d. Authorised Absent (due to medical/dental appointments, exceptional circumstances or POL)
5. Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
  - a. The original entry
  - b. The amended entry
  - c. The reason for the amendment
  - d. The date on which the amendment was made
  - e. The name and position of the person who made the amendment
6. Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
7. Pupils must arrive in school by 0750 on each school day.
8. The register for registration will be taken at 0800 and will be kept open until 0815. The register for the first lesson will be taken at 0820.

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<sup>1</sup> Post Operational Leave is detailed at paragraph 22 of the DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance.

## **Unplanned Absence**

9. Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 0815 or as soon as practically possible.
10. Please contact the school reception by telephone (+357)24748340 or email [KRS.Enquiries@modschools.org](mailto:KRS.Enquiries@modschools.org) to report of an unplanned absence.
11. Typical absence due to illness will be authorised unless the case is complex or the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
12. The school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
13. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this prior to recording.

## **Medical or Dental Appointments**

14. Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
15. However, parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
16. Please contact the school reception by telephone (+357)24748340 or email [KRS.Enquiries@modschools.org](mailto:KRS.Enquiries@modschools.org) in advance of a medical or dental appointment.

## **Other Term Time Absence**

17. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

## **Lateness and Punctuality**

18. A pupil who arrives late but before registration has been taken will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.
19. A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
20. A pupil who is regularly late to school or lessons will result in a phone call home to the parent/s. Further sanctions may be implemented (breaktime detentions/afterschool detentions to make up for the time lost, when necessary).

## **Following up Absence**

21. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary (liaising with the district Educational Welfare Officer, if appropriate), identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.
22. In the first instance the school will contact the child's parent by text inform the them that their child is not in school.

## Reporting to parents

23. Parents will receive 3 reports throughout the academic year. Each report will include the child's current attendance figure.

## Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

24. Head teachers (or designated deputy) may not grant leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Examples of 'exceptional circumstances' include:

- (1) bereavement or serious illness of relatives.
- (2) medical needs where treatment is required in the UK.
- (3) where delivery of the Defence Mission by service parents employed in specific roles impacts on the ability to observe standard leave patterns.

25. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances, current attendance figure, and relevant context behind the request. The head teacher may choose to discuss a request with their local Assistant Chief Education Officer (ACEO); however, a leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's (or designated deputy) discretion.

26. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- a. Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- b. Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- c. Post Operational Leave - Children may be granted a maximum of ten days term time absence in support of a parent's POL. Parents must have confirmation from their Command that they are entitled to apply for this absence and will need to use the Application Form at Annex C.

27. The entitlement to and granting of POL to Service personnel is contained in JSP 760 (Ch11). Whilst it is recognised that families face unique circumstances in a military community, given operational tours, it is important that parents understand the potential risks of non-attendance at school to a child's education. The granting of POL to a serving parent is distinct from the granting of term-time absence for a pupil and it is important to highlight that families can and do enjoy the POL of the serving parent without going away and without therefore requesting that their child is absent from school during term time.

28. MOD Schools acknowledges that, as directed in JSP 760 (Ch11, section 11.4) POL will be taken *'as soon as possible and at the latest within one month, after a Service person's return from qualifying Operations or Deployments'* and will therefore coincide with academic terms. When deciding whether to grant such requests, head teachers will take into account a range of issues, for example the individual pupils' previous attendance record as well as their age and stage within the academic cycle. Head teachers are ultimately responsible for agreeing authorised absences to support POL.

29. Attendance Monitoring

30. Attendance will be monitored by the DSL, who leads on attendance. If a student attendance is below 96% a letter is sent to the parents to inform. This occurs each term. The tutor is also responsible for mentoring attendance and record any concerns related to attendance on myconcern.

31. If a pupil's absence goes above 5 continual school days, the school will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

32. If a pupil's attendance is below the threshold of 96% at the end of each term a letter will be sent to

parents to inform them. Support will also be offered if required through the school or Our Education Welfare Office if and when required.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### 72. Headteacher / (School Attendance Lead):

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some or all of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision
- Where there is ambiguity regarding an absence, make the decision whether to authorise an absence or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process

### 73. Class teachers and Learning Support staff

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupils' concerns
- To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- To see pupils' attendance as the responsibility of all school staff
- Complete a register for the class within 10 minutes of the lesson beginning

### 74. Receptionist

- First day response: Contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and log this information accordingly
- Input and update the attendance registers
- Regularly identify and monitor pupil, class and whole school attendance and punctuality levels.
- Inform the School Attendance Lead of any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality levels

### 75. Governors

- Ensure compliance with DCS Directive 3.2.6 School Attendance
- Adopt the whole-school policy and review regularly
- Monitor the consistent implementation of the attendance policy
- Set aspirational targets for improving the school's attendance figures
- Work with the head teacher in establishing criteria against which leave requests will be considered. This is important to ensure the process is equitable and consistent.



Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term time absence from school on the grounds of 'exceptional circumstances' for the following reasons and understand that family holidays are not a valid reason and that any absence may be detrimental to my child's education.

*Explanation of exceptional circumstances*

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in an absence of \_\_\_\_\_ school days.

I understand that I may be required to provide evidence of the above if required and that this may require this information to be discussed with the relevant Unit Welfare Office.

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Head teacher (designated deputy) use only**

Thank you for your application for 'exceptional leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: \_\_\_\_\_% attendance

a) I confirm that this exceptional absence has been agreed:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Annex C Application for Term-Time Absence for Post Operational Leave**

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to request permission for my child to be granted term-time absence from school during term time due to my own post operational leave. I understand that any term time leave for children is discouraged and may be detrimental to my child's education.

*Explanation for exceptional leave:*

I understand that DCS MOD Schools expects that a maximum of ten days is applied for and that the Serving person must have returned from a minimum of a 3 months tour of duty.

I understand that permission for this exceptional term time leave from school can only be granted by my child's head teacher.

**Unit Declaration confirming entitlement to apply for term-time absence in support of POL:**

<u>UNIT DECLARATION</u>	
Name of Unit	_____
Rank/Name of Unit representative	_____
This is to certify that _____ is entitled to apply for term time absence from school for their child in support of post operational leave.	
Signature of Unit representative	_____ Unit Stamp

I am requesting term time absence for my child from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_ resulting in a total absence of \_\_\_\_\_ school days.

Signature of parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Head teacher (designated deputy) use only:**

Thank you for your application for 'post-operational leave' for your child.

Your child's attendance record for the last term/academic year is: \_\_\_\_\_% attendance





and the number of sessions missed last term/year was \_\_\_\_\_

a) I confirm that this exceptional leave has been agreed:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

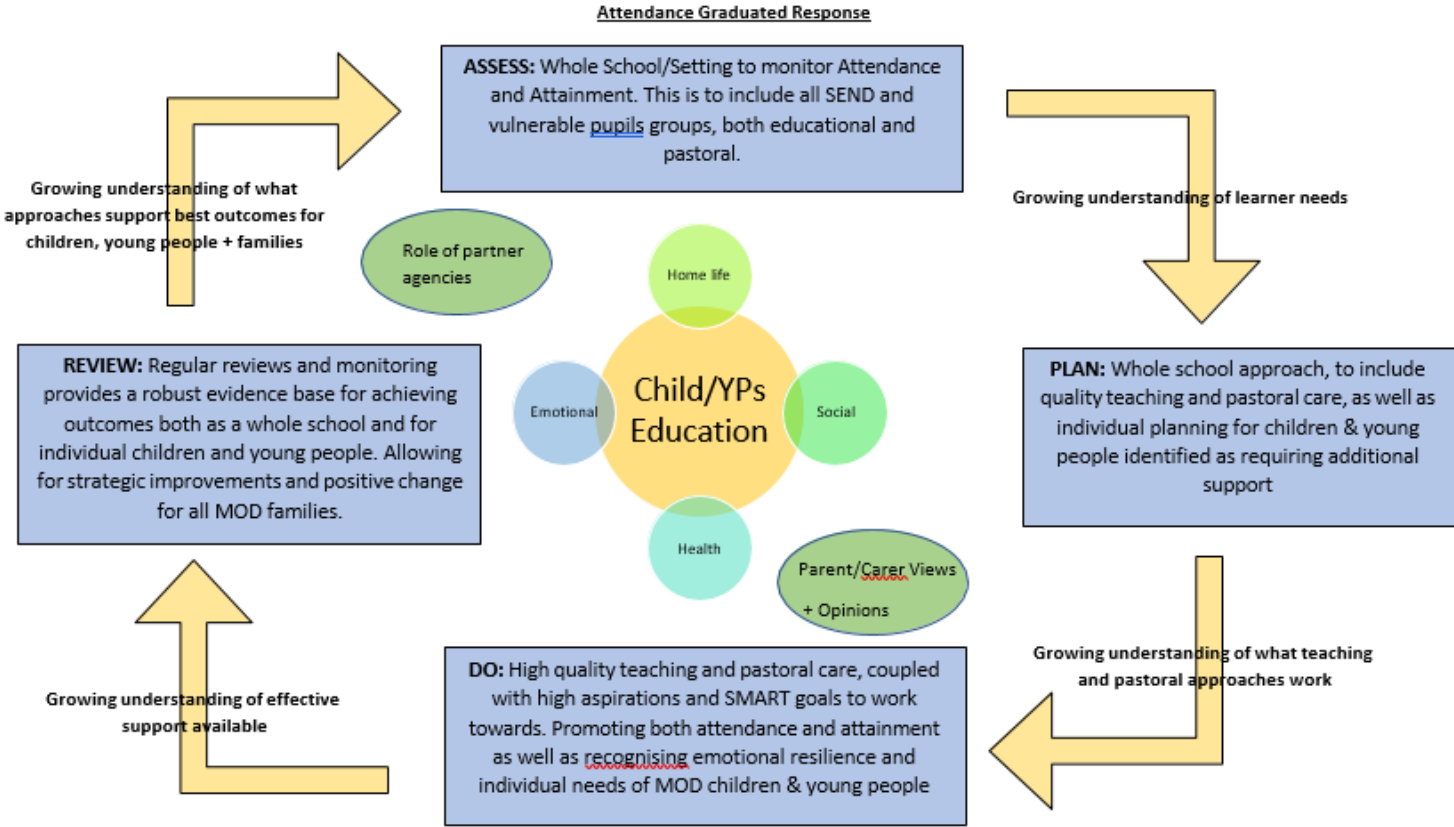
Date

b) Your request for exceptional leave has not been agreed for the following reason:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

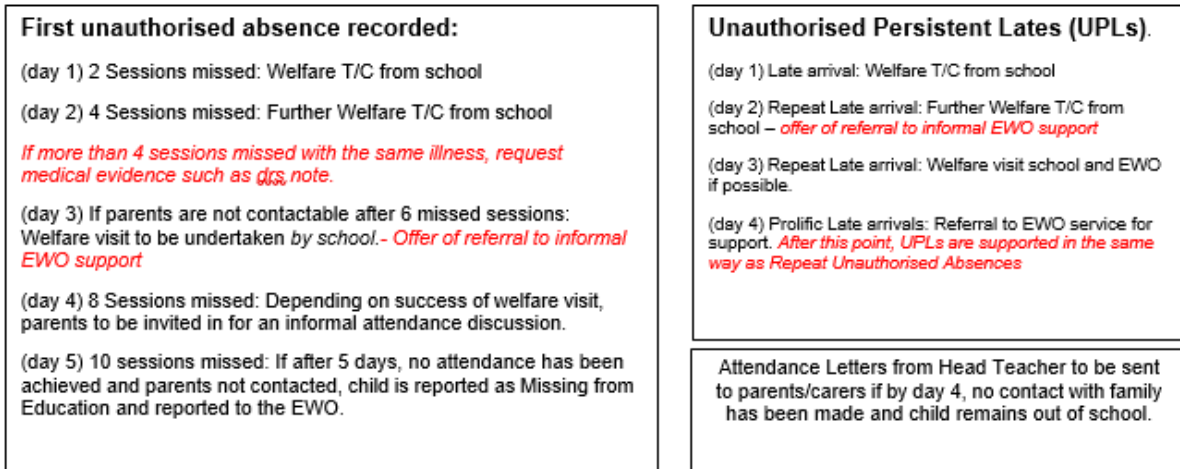
Annex D Attendance Graduated Response



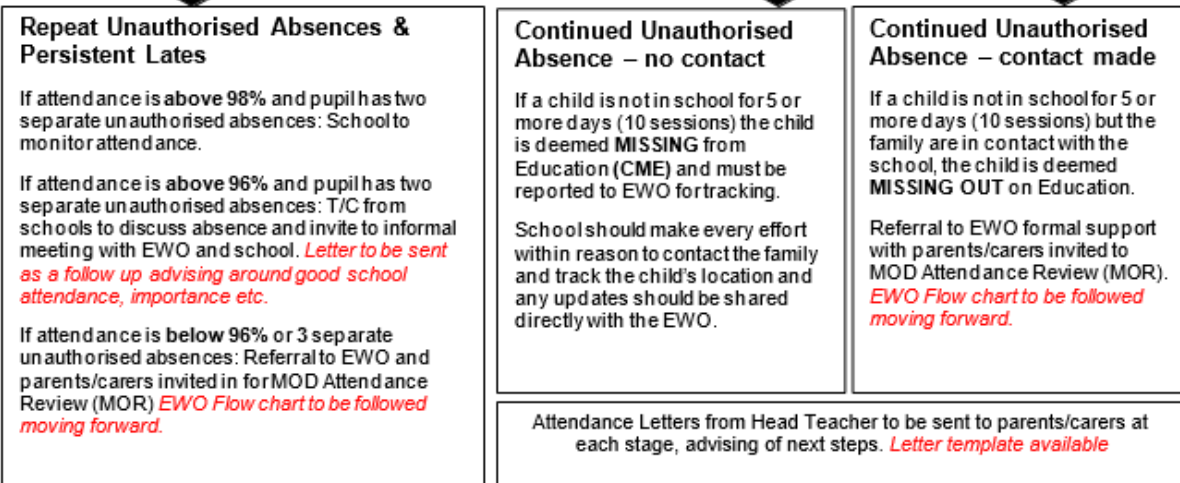


Annex E Unauthorised Attendance Flow Chart

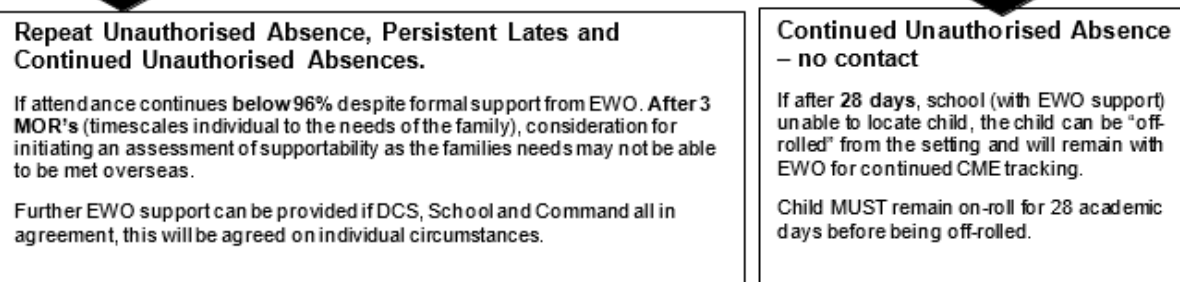
Stage 1



Stage 2



Stage 3



*\*red is optional at your discretion and DCS available to discuss and support as needed*



**Annex F Template Letter Persistence Absence**

Dear **PARENT/CARER**

Persistent Absence Letter **1/2/3**

I am writing to you to inform you that your child's current school attendance is **%** with **%** of this being unauthorised.

Currently your child's attendance is at Stage **1/2/3**.

I have attached a copy of our attendance flow chart for your reference.

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**Please delete depending on stage**

Stage 1: Your child has missed **X** sessions since **X date**. Our Education Welfare Office is able to provide informal support if you wish to access this please let us know. If your child's attendance does not improve by **X date**, we will move to stage 2 of our attendance process.

Stage 2: Your child has now missed further sessions despite support at stage 1. They have now missed **X** sessions. We would like to invite you in for a MOD Attendance Review (MOR) on **X date/time/location**. Our Education Welfare Officer will be available to attend this review to support you and your child moving forward.

Stage 3: Despite support at stage 1 and 2, your child's attendance has not improved. At this point we are requesting a review of your family's supportability overseas and further details will be provided to you. You were informed of this decision at your last MOR on **X date**.

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At X School, we strive to achieve the best outcomes for our children and young people and positive school attendance and attainment is at the forefront of our focus. Supported by Defence Children's Services our school is available to support you and your family at every stage of your child's education.

If you have any questions about the attendance process, please speak to us at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely, [can be handwritten or typed]

Add signature or [Signed on original]

Name  
Rank (if appropriate)  
Job title, if not included in address

Copied to: List of copy addressees