

VAUGHAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Date of Policy: Spring 2018
Date of Review: Spring 2019
Next Review: To be reviewed annually

Policy Review Dates

Review Date	Changes made	Shared with staff
June 2016	Reviewed and updated	June 2016
Spring 2018	Reviewed and updated to reflect Local Authority guidance	Spring 2018

INTRODUCTION

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT

Learning: Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and also that of other pupils. This is because teachers need to help those children who have been absent catch up with work they have missed, which reduces the time available to give to the remaining children in the class. There is also clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement. Of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and Maths. However, 73% of pupils who attend 95% of school achieve this level. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

The Government expects schools and Local Authorities to:

- Reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education, to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age to be punctual and to attend school regularly.

Why attendance matters:

- Less than 5 days absence = 98%+ attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 93.5% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 90% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 88% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 40 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help everyone to focus on this, we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our newsletters
- Report to you twice yearly on how your child is performing in school
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions and certificates
- Award children termly certificates for outstanding 100% attendance.
- At the end of the year, children are presented with gold badges for 100% attendance.
- The school will monitor all attendance below 90% regularly. Families with low attendance will be informed by a reminder letter (see Appendix 2). A reminder letter will be sent if the attendance is below 90% or if the school has serious concerns regarding a child's attendance.
- If attendance does not improve sufficiently, families will be invited into school by letter (see Appendix 3) to discuss strategies to improve attendance. A CAF referral may be required and the Early Support team may also be involved.
- If there is no improvement in attendance despite support, the school may have to escalate their response to parents (see Appendices 4, 5 & 6)
- Persistent absentees may be given an Attendance Contract. All absences will only be authorised with medical verification (see Appendix 1). We will maintain an electronic log where we will record all absence and all interventions taking place to support the family including any Attendance Contract. This log will be used as evidence to ensure parents are complying with the school and local government policies.
- Attendance is reported in the child's report for the end of year. (100% to 98% is judged as Excellent, 98% to 96% is judged as Good, 96% to 95% is Satisfactory and below 95% is judged as 'Needs Attention'.)

The Headteacher will report to the Governing Body, including the Governor with responsibility for attendance, on the attendance of all children and vulnerable groups to ensure that the Policy is being followed and is being used effectively.

As part of promoting good attendance and punctuality, Harrow Local Authority will use its legal powers to enforce school attendance where it becomes problematic, including powers to prosecute parents who fail to comply, to ensure their child's regular attendance at school.

THE LAW RELATING TO ATTENDANCE

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- To age, ability and aptitude and
- To any special educational needs he / she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

THE LAW RELATING TO SAFEGUARDING

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Proof of appointments is required for all absence, i.e. appointment letter/card or prescription. If these are not available, please use the GP Sick Slip (Appendix 1) which is available to print off the website or from the school office. If proof is not provided within a 2-week period, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Leave should be limited to the time necessary to attend the appointment and should not ordinarily result in a full day of absence.

If your child is absent due to illness for 5 consecutive days or more medical proof is required.

If your child is unwell for 3 or more consecutive days immediately before or after a school holiday medical proof will be required.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This type of absence can lead to Harrow Council using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Parent/carers or sibling appointments/illness. In exceptional circumstances, this may be agreed but only if a request has been made in writing and evidence provided.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

We recognise that some children with either Special Educational Needs and/or a diagnosed medical need may need to attend medical appointments during school time or be unwell more often. Each individual case is considered carefully. Medical proof is still required for any absence.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents may be subject to an Attendance Contract and the Contract may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, use of circle time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. PA cases may also be referred to the Court Attendance Officer or Children's Services.

EXCLUSIONS

If a child is behaving in a way that is likely to lead to exclusion and affect their attendance, the school will seek the support and guidance of the School Attendance Liaison & EHE Officer in an attempt to avoid exclusion. If a child is to be excluded, the School Attendance Liaison & EHE Officer will be informed.

ABSENCE PROCEDURE

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us **before 9.30am** on the first day of absence and every day of absence thereafter. Please call 0208 427 7222 option 1 and leave a clear and detailed message
- Or, you can come into school and explain to the staff in the office why your child is absent
- Or, you can email the office at office@vaughan.harrow.sch.uk.

If your child is absent we will telephone, text or email you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; the message received is inaudible; or is lacking information.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. To help us to help you and your child, please make sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LIAISON OFFICER (SALO)

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the SALO. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices (see Appendices) or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from Court Attendance Officer and Welfare at Harrow Civic Centre.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the SALO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school or by contacting Harrow Civic Centre.

LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starts at **8.50am** for all children, we expect your child to be in class at that time. Children can arrive from **8.40am** when the Infant classroom doors and the Junior external doors open for Soft Start. Registers are marked by **9.00am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time. At **9.20am** the registers will be closed. If your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE DURING TERM TIME

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking leave during term time. Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school. **No requests for holidays will be authorised during term time.** Headteachers may NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In cases of exceptional circumstances the Headteacher can authorise up to 5 days absence from school. Any leave requested for holiday at the start or end of the school term will automatically be classed as unauthorised and will not be granted.

Therefore, in accordance with this Policy

- The Headteacher **will not** grant **any** Request for Leave during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application. Exceptional circumstances being defined as being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave
- Headteachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted
- Requests for Leave must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised
- The school can only consider Requests for Leave which are made by the legal guardian of the child
- Requests for Leave which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

All such cases should be applied for via the schools 'Request for Leave' form (see Appendix 7) and addressed to the Headteacher. A decision will be made solely at the discretion of the Headteacher and leave may or may not be granted depending on the circumstances. Parents will be informed of this decision in writing (see Appendix 8 for an example of a letter for which leave has not been authorised and which could lead to a Penalty Notice or Court Prosecution).

In considering whether or not to authorise leave, the School will reflect on each case individually, taking into account a child's overall attendance and the reason for the leave. Parents should request leave of absence in advance, and all requests should be submitted at least two weeks before the first day of intended absence using the school proforma.

Vaughan Primary School understands that holidays are generally less expensive during term time but this does NOT count as an exceptional circumstance. Leave which is taken for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- Availability of cheaper holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holidays
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Booked the wrong dates by mistake
- Booked by another family member
- Attending a wedding that is not immediate family
- Family birthdays

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis at the discretion of the Headteacher.

LEGAL ENFORCEMENT BY HARROW LOCAL AUTHORITY

As part of promoting good attendance and punctuality, Harrow Local Authority will use its legal powers to enforce school attendance where this becomes problematic, including powers to prosecute parents who fail to comply or fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school.

The Harrow Attendance Guidance and Resources provides a clear outline of the process for escalating cases for legal action, which is called the Attendance Intervention Model (AIM). This was updated in Autumn 2017 and is available on the school website and on the Harrow Council Website.

THE EDUCATION (PENALTY NOTICES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2007

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a Penalty Notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. In cases where there is more than one poorly-attending pupil in a family, a penalty notice may be issued to each parent in respect of each child. Up to three penalty notices may be issued per child during each academic school year if appropriate.

Harrow Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices will be made available for schools, parents, carers and other interested parties. The Local Authority will impose Penalty Notices as an alternative to prosecuting the parents for unauthorised absence and may also be issued where parents allow their children to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification.

The issuing of Penalty Notices may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- Absence from school.
 - At least 20 sessions (10 school days) lost to unauthorised absence within a period of no more than 12 weeks (term time).
 - A leave of absence of at least 10 consecutive sessions (5 school days) not approved by Headteacher as exceptional.
- Lateness.
 - In cases where a child persistently arrives at school after the register has closed and has received at least 8 unauthorised late marks within a period of 10 weeks (term time).
- Following a Truancy Patrol.
 - Penalty Notices will not be issued during a truancy patrol but enquiries will be undertaken with the school of any pupil stopped. In cases where the school has recorded an unauthorised absence and where the pupil has been stopped on a previous truancy patrol within the past twelve months, a Penalty Notice may be issued.
- Where the Harrow Council's Education Services believes that a Penalty Notice is the most appropriate way to deal with irregular school attendance as the child has attendance below 90% and at least 5% absences are unauthorised.
- Excluded children
 - Where a child has been excluded from school and is found in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification within the first five days of the exclusion period. Reasonable justification will be assessed on the individual circumstances of each case but may include the medical emergency of the parent or child or a pre-arranged medical appointment.

SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible, and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Vaughan Primary School believes that Safeguarding Young People is everyone's responsibility and should be reflected in every aspect of our work with children and young people. It is the duty of every member of staff, volunteer and student to safeguard children and young people.

OUR STATEMENT OF INTENT TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The safety, health and welfare of every child at Vaughan Primary School remains our priority at all times regardless of age, culture, religion, gender, sexuality or disability. They will be treated with dignity and respect. They will also be supported to challenge behaviour characterised by discriminatory practice, bullying, intimidation and all forms of abuse.

We will respect the confidentiality of children within clearly defined boundaries which will be explained at the point of referral. Children will be supported to exchange personal information responsibly and in the knowledge that some information will of necessity have to be shared – e.g., if someone may be at risk of harm in any way, shape or form, or in the event that criminal activity or intention to commit crime is suspected.

We recognise the need to work in partnership with other agencies (including appropriate information sharing) and the existence of the Common Assessment Framework may need to be completed or contributed to.

SUPPORTING PARENTS AND FAMILIES

The school will work in partnership with families providing advice and support for all families where there may be concerns regarding attendance or punctuality. Where there are real issues and pressures on families, we will help families by signposting to support services at Harrow Council.

The attendance target for the academic year 2017 to 2018 is 96.5%

Appendix 2

Reminder letter

**Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
ATTENDANCE REMINDER LETTER**

I am writing to you because I am aware [CHILD NAME]'s attendance has become a concern. It now stands at ____% which is below what is expected.

If children do not attend school regularly, they may not be able to keep up with their school work and tend to perform less well at examinations. Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help your child later on.

By law, all children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or through other arrangements. If a child is registered at school, parents have a primary legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

Please inform the school of the reasons for any absences not yet provided. It is vital that you contact the school on the first day of absence and keep us updated if any absence is to continue for more than one day.

If [CHILD NAME]'s attendance does not improve it may be necessary to take further action.

If you would like any support or to discuss this further, please contact the Attendance Officer.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

Appendix 3

First warning letter

**Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
FIRST ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER**

I notice that despite my letter dated [DATE OF FIRST LETTER], [CHILD NAME]’s attendance continues to be of concern.

[CHILD NAME]’s attendance is currently ____%.

Non-attendance at school for any reason is an important issue and something we take very seriously. I would like to invite you into school to discuss the current situation on [DATE/TIME OF MEETING].

Regular school attendance is the responsibility of parents/carers. There is a risk that if [CHILD NAME]’s attendance remains at the current level a referral may be made by the school to Harrow’s Education Services who may need to start legal proceedings.

I hope that we see [CHILD NAME]’s attendance improve dramatically. Please return the slip below to confirm you will be attending the meeting. If you are unable to attend but would like to re-arrange for an alternative date/time, please contact Mrs Scott in the school office.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

✂ -----
Slip to be returned to Mrs Scott – school office by [return date]

VAUGHAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
FIRST ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER**

Name of child: Class:

I/We **will** be attending the meeting regarding my child’s attendance on [date and time for meeting].

I/We **will not** be attending the meeting regarding my child’s attendance on [date and time for meeting].

Signature of Parent/Guardian:..... Date:

Appendix 4

Second warning letter

**Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
SECOND ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER**

I am writing to now formally express concern over the irregular attendance of your child, [CHILD NAME].

A record of his/her attendance accompanies this letter.

Under the Education Act 1996 parents have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually. It is my duty to give you warning that if further unauthorised absences are recorded, Harrow Local Authority may initiate prosecution proceedings against you.

Conviction of an offence in a magistrates court under section 444 (1) may result in a fine of up to £1,000 and under section 444(1A) may result in a fine of up to £2,500 or imprisonment.

I trust that this notification will ensure that any attendance and punctuality issues are rectified without delay.

Please contact me with any queries regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

Appendix 5

Third warning letter

**Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
THIRD ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER**

Despite my previous formal warning dated [DATE OF LAST LETTER], your child, [CHILD NAME], is still not attending regularly and further unauthorised absences have been recorded.

A record of his/her attendance accompanies this letter.

I must warn you that Harrow Local Authority will initiate legal proceedings against you if there is no improvement in your child's attendance and punctuality. This will involve a Pre Court Panel Meeting held at the Civic Centre where you will be formally cautioned. If the case progresses to magistrates court, conviction of an offence under section 444 (1) may result in a fine of up to £1,000 and under section 444 (1A) may result in a fine of up to £2,500 or imprisonment.

There will be no further notification should school need to escalate this matter for the Local Authority's attention.

I trust that this notification will ensure that any attendance and punctuality issues are rectified without delay.

Please contact me with any queries regarding this letter.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

Intention to issue Penalty Notice letter – poor attendance/punctuality

Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REQUEST ISSUING OF A PENALTY NOTICE

I am writing to advise you that [CHILD NAME]'s attendance remains unsatisfactory.

Currently [CHILD NAME]'s attendance stands at __%, out of a possible __ sessions (__%), which includes __ unauthorised sessions. There are also __ occasions when he/she arrived late after registration.

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 states, "...if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence". Section 444A of the Education Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to each parent of the child where it has reason to believe that an offence under section 444(1) has been committed.

The fine is £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. Payment of the notice will discharge your liability for the non-attendance of your child(ren) for this period. Non-payment will lead to a court hearing for the original unauthorised absences.

This letter is a FORMAL WARNING that you are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice because of your child's unauthorised absence at school. Please note that a separate Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent of the child.

Further unauthorised absence within the following 15 day monitoring period will result in Harrow Local Authority issuing you with a Penalty Notice.

A leaflet accompanies this letter providing further information. Please contact me with any queries.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

Enc



VAUGHAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Gardens
West Harrow, HA1 4EL
Telephone: 020 8427 7222
e-mail: office@vaughan.harrow.sch.uk
www.vaughan.harrow.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mr Andrew Griffin
Chair of Governors: Ms Lisa Young



REQUEST FOR LEAVE FROM SCHOOL

From September 2013 amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removes reference to family holidays and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. We understand that there may be **exceptional** circumstances which may necessitate a longer absence for an agreed period, but this is also discretionary.

If you wish to take your child away during term time, please make your request to the Headteacher by completing the form overleaf **in advance** so that this can be considered and an appointment will be arranged by the school office.

Leave taken without permission will be recorded as unauthorised.

In order to ensure we meet our legal responsibilities, we must make every effort to make it clear to parents and carers that children must attend school on a regular basis. Any time away from school can have a significant impact on educational attainment. Any activity, holiday or event should be arranged during the 13 weeks of school closure (the school holidays). If leave of absence without permission is taken during term-time parent/carers could receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking a child out of school without the school's permission. From 1st September 2013 Penalty Notices cost £60 per child per parent, if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 per child per parent, if paid between 22 and 28 days.

The Headteacher will require documentation to support any request for leave. This will include:

- Contact details of someone remaining in the UK
- Contact details when abroad or away
- Flight details including booking date
- Proof of event eg wedding
- Proof of reason eg illness – medical certificate
- Other documentation

In making his decision Mr Griffin will take into consideration government guidelines and the following points:

1. The child's previous attendance history.
2. The age of the child.
3. The child's stage of education.
4. Whether other leave has been requested
5. The time of year - The Headteacher will not authorise leave during Year 2 and Year 6 SATS, and optional SATS for other year groups
6. The nature of the trip (exceptional circumstances).

Where the school and the parents fail to reach an agreement and the child is then absent from school, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Where the parents keep a child away for longer than agreed, the extra time will also be marked as unauthorised and the Local Authority will be contacted.

Our school will therefore no longer be able to authorise absence from learning (Leave Requests) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Permission for leave from school must be requested using the Leave Form available from the office (as shown on the reverse of this letter).

Appendix 8

Intention to issue Penalty Notice letter – leave request

Re: [CHILD NAME] – [CLASS]
NOTICE OF INTENTION TO REQUEST ISSUING OF A PENALTY NOTICE

Please provide a copy of your reservation details/travel documents for our records and evidence of travel dates.

I am writing to advise that I am unfortunately unable to grant this leave of absence for [LEAVE OF ABSENCE DATES]. Following guidance from the Department of Education, I am only able to authorise leave in exceptional circumstances.

Should the absence go ahead/as the absence has gone ahead [DELETE AS APPLICABLE], it is categorised as unauthorised which is likely to result in Harrow Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice.

Section 444A of the Education Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to each parent of the child where it has reason to believe that an offence under section 444(1) has been committed.

The fine is £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. Payment of the notice will discharge your liability for the non-attendance of your child(ren) for this period. Non-payment will lead to a court hearing for the unauthorised absences.

I expect to see [CHILD NAME] back in school on [RETURN DATE]. Failure to return to school on this expected date will result in further communication which may lead to [CHILD NAME] being taken off school roll.

A leaflet accompanies this letter providing further information on Penalty Notices. Please contact me with any queries.

Yours sincerely

MR ANDREW GRIFFIN
Headteacher

Enc