

Policy Title:	Attendance and punctuality
Function:	Statutory
Status:	Governors, Principal, Teachers, Support Staff, Students, Parents and Carers.
Audience:	The Principal and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
Ownership / Implementation:	Approved
Implementation Date:	September 2013
Review period:	Annually
Last Reviewed:	March 2019

1. Rationale

As part of Compass School Southwark's commitment to developing life-long skills in all its learners, punctuality and attendance is monitored closely. We recognise that all students have the right to access full time education and that regular attendance is crucial if students are to achieve their potential. Any absence from school, other than planned educational activities, will affect a young person's academic achievement, which will in turn have a negative effect on life-chances. Research shows that students who are failing to achieve their potential and are falling behind often have poor attendance. Our aim for all students at Compass School is that they strive for 100% attendance.

We are committed to working in partnership with our parents/carers who are responsible for ensuring their children access education.

The aim of this policy is to enable parents, students and staff a set of guidelines that, when adhered to, support and promote both higher personal standards and higher achievement within the classroom.

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, governors, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of high attendance and excellent punctuality. It aims to:

- Ensure a clear system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality and its clear communication to all stakeholders
- Have an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality
- Offer pupils and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality

2. Roles and Responsibilities (please also see the diagram below)

For Parents and Carers:

- To be fully supportive of the School with regard to attendance and punctuality
- To support the Education Act of 1996 which states, 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full time education' either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, or risk prosecution if they fail to do so.
- To ensure their child attends school every day, on time and is prepared for the day
- To support the school and their child(ren) by not requesting authorised absence for holidays during term time and minimising where possible dental appointments and medical appointments during the school day and term time.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by:
 - Phoning the school (020 3542 6506) by 8.15am leaving a clear message with the following:
 - Name of child and learning family
 - Reason for absence
 - Action you will be taking due to this absence
 - Date when your child will return to school
 - Emailing the school (attendance@compass-schools.com) with the same details as above
- Ensuring that you send a signed note to the school on the day the child returns (there are slips on the back of every student diary for recording absence notes)

- To contact the school immediately if they have concerns or if there are issues preventing full time attendance

Learning Family Tutors:

- To be a good role model, being punctual and present at school
- To take the register at the beginning of every lesson, and tutor period, in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy
- To take responsibility for dealing with issues of attendance and punctuality in relation to their tutor group. This includes telephone calls for **students for whom attendance is a concern but is currently above 97%**, collection of absence letters and liaising with Head of House and Attendance Officer over attendance concerns, referring cases of student attendance that fall below 97% to their respective Head of Year via the absence monitoring sheet
- To encourage the pupils in their LFT to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality through monitoring and reinforcing the need for high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality
- To offer praise and rewards to individual students who have excellent or improved attendance or punctuality

Subject Teacher

- Take a register at the beginning of every lesson (and ensure that the students know that a register is being taken)
- Speak to students who miss through absence or truant their lessons to investigate reasons for their absence
- Ensure that work is set for students to catch up on through absence to your lesson in order that they can catch up on any work missed.
- Discuss the impact of absence to your lesson with the student with regards to work missed and the impact this could have on their overall progress and outcomes.

Subject Leaders

- Will plan a curriculum that ensure students have clarity over topics covered and the planned time in the curriculum for this to take place
- Will use regular and planned assessment points to track progress and ensure students have the opportunity to complete if missed due to absence
- Will organise targeted catch up where student absence has led to missed learning
- Will deploy strategies such as knowledge organisers, revision and retention activities alongside the use of online platforms to ensure the impact of absence on outcomes is minimal

Attendance Officer

- Contact parent by 9.20am on the first day of absence by phone call if no reason for absence has been provided
- Challenge absence from school communicating clearly with parents' attendance patterns, attendance statistics and sanctions for persistent absence from school
- Send daily unauthorised absence letters to parents where no communication has been received requesting reasons for absence

- Ensure that attendance and punctuality records are up to date and that the appropriate code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)
- Monitor completion of registers and refer any non-completion of registers to SLT line managers
- Share all absence and lateness information with all staff daily by 10am
- Ensure all absence notes are completed and all unauthorised absences accounted for. Work with learning family tutors to ensure that these are completed and returned
- Monitor attendance patterns ensuring that attendance patterns and trends are swiftly referred to Learning Family Tutors and Heads of House for intervention
- Administer and track attendance letters to ensure that the timeline for school action is accurately and swiftly implemented
- Administer and track medical absence letters to be sent weekly on a Friday
- To print attendance grids for all students with an attendance below 92% on a Friday for EWO review every Monday
- Ensure paper registers are available for all lessons (should they be needed in case of an emergency or failing of our information management system)
- Meet daily with the Leader of Pastoral and Weekly with the Vice Principal Pastoral to ensure early intervention leads to improvements in attendance
- Support families in enabling them to get their child/ren to school

Head of Year

- To raise the profile and champion excellent attendance and punctuality for all the students within their house
- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of students allocated to their year (leading on all students with an attendance between 94% and 96.9%)
- To monitor the performance of individual tutor groups, ensuring that they fulfil their duties regarding attendance and take appropriate action with individual tutors in instances where daily or patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed
- Regularly discuss attendance at year meetings
- Ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attenders and when attendance falls below 96.9%. Supporting the tutors in dealing with parents directly.
- Liaise with the attendance officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) on a weekly basis regarding poor attendance of pupils and issues related to poor punctuality
- Working with the EWO to reduce persistent absenteeism (students with an attendance below 90%)
- Liaise with the Leader of Pastoral to ensure a regular programme of home visits is in place for those children not attending school
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies, commendations, rewards etc.

Leader of Pastoral

- To lead on the implementation and delivery of attendance policies and processes throughout the school, championing high attendance
- Ensuring all stakeholders are aware of their role with regards attendance monitoring and tracking use of the systems and processes to ensure that they lead to increased whole school attendance
- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of students with an attendance between 92% and 93.9%
- Meet weekly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor attendance of all students and the referral and case load of the EWO

- Meet daily with the attendance officer to ensure key actions and processes are being administered and challenge any failings in process informing the Vice Principal Pastoral where this has been the case.
- Monitor completion of registers and follow up with all staff when there are inaccuracies in register completion keeping a record of this.
- Oversee the 'late gate' process and tracking student lateness to school, implementing sanctions and support as necessary.
- Carry out a regular programme of home visits, in conjunction with the heads of year, for students missing school

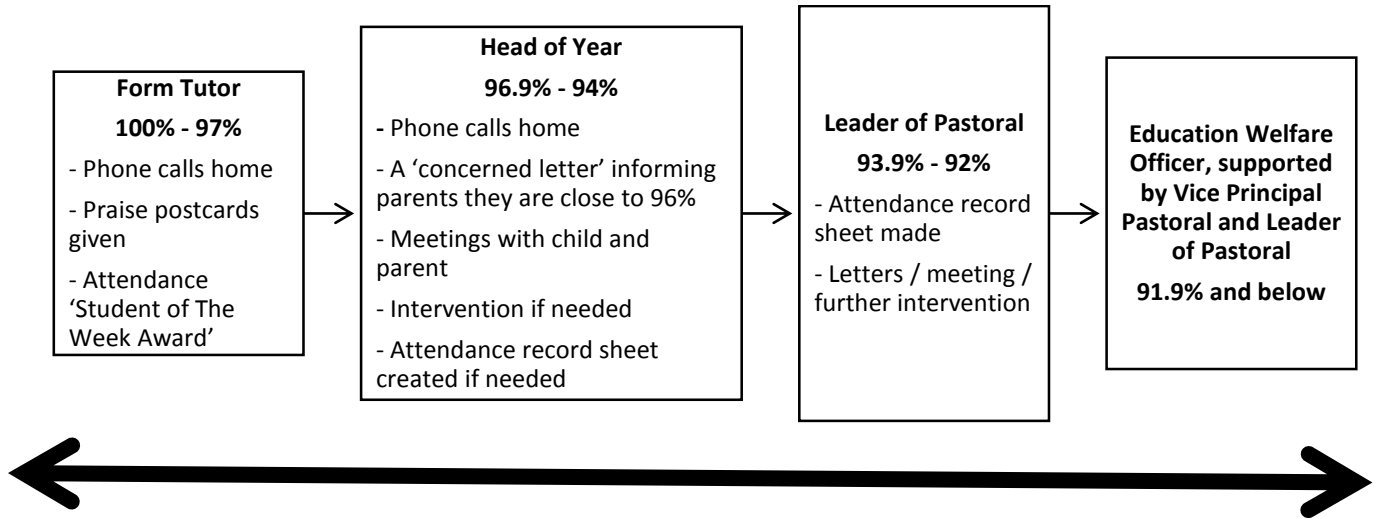
Senior Leadership Team

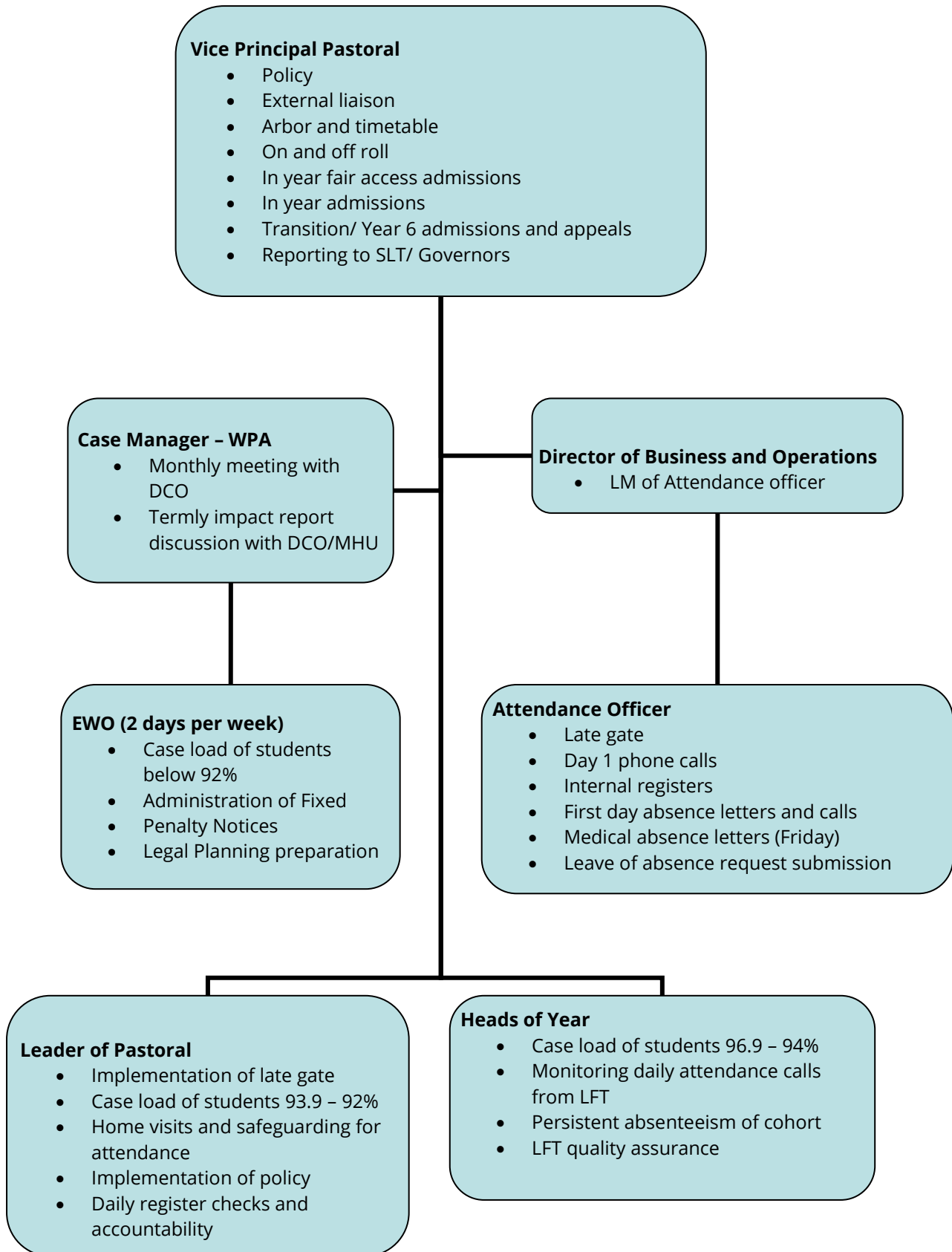
- The Vice Principal pastoral is responsible for the delivery and implementation of the attendance and punctuality policy
- To raise the profile and importance of attendance and punctuality around the school, with particular focus on the Year they are linked to and through assemblies and other whole school responsibilities
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to data on attendance and punctuality, holding to account the Head of Years with regard actions above
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to pupils, creates the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality
- To ensure that the school expectations in regards to this policy are communicated to all stakeholders

Governors

- To annually review and agree the Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- To annually agree attendance targets
- To take a lead role, through the appointment of a link governor, on supporting the school in the implementation and approach to attendance through representation on termly attendance panel meetings and in response to parents when supporting unauthorised absence

Flow diagram of staff roles





3. Expectations and Timeline of Action

Attendance at school is a vital part of a student's education and the expectation at Compass School is that students attend school every day, unless in the case of exceptional circumstances and with the Principal's permission.

The Compass School overall attendance target is 97%. This reflects the value that we place on attendance and punctuality at school.

Daily Absence

Day of Absence	Responsibility of Parent/Carer	Responsibility of School
Day 1 - 4	Contact the school before 8.15am and explain absence	Attendance Officer to log reason for absence/ chase reason for absence Depending of level of absence (see roles and responsibilities above), member of compass staff to contact family to discuss absence
Day 5 - 9	Contact the school to explain the prolonged absence. Any absences of five days or more, must be accompanied by medical evidence (doctor's certificate, GP/medical appointment card, copy of prescription, hospital letter or note from the GP is required)*	Attendance officer to log reason and strategies offered to enable a return to school. Referral to Leader of Pastoral and Vice Principal Pastoral
Day 10	We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. The Local Authority will be notified that the child is 'at risk of missing' his/her education.	

* if a note is not received, this absence will be marked as unauthorised until confirmation of the absence is received. Following 5 days of absence with no communication from the parent and all contact attempted, the school will inform the Education Welfare Officer and will carry out a home visit.

Ongoing Attendance Concerns:

Attendance Percentage	Action
97% - 100%	Attendance monitored by attendance officer and Learning Family Tutor. If the attendance falls below 97% this will trigger a referral to the Head of Year
94% - 96.9%	Attendance monitored by Head of Year. A letter will be sent informing you that attendance has dropped below 97% (these will be issued after half term one) (appendix 1.9) Any patterns or trends to be investigated and discussed with Head of Year. Parent to be contacted for first and second day absence.

	Excellent attendance to be rewarded through weekly, termly and annual celebrations and awarding of House Points.
92% - 93.9%	Attendance monitored by Leader of Pastoral A letter will be sent informing you that attendance has dropped below 94% (appendix 1.10) You will be asked to meet with your child/ren's Head of House for a pre referral meeting
Below 92%	Attendance referred to Senior Staff and Education Welfare Officer You will be requested to attend a meeting with the schools Education Welfare Officer and will be placed on a 4 to 6 week Attendance Improvement Pan
Below 90%	A letter will be sent informing you that attendance has dropped below 90%. (appendix 1.11) There will be continued involvement by the schools Education Welfare Officer which could lead to the parent/carer being liable to prosecution of a fixed penalty notice being issued.

4. Exceptional Leave of Absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and reinforced from September 2015: (Pupil Registration) (England) regulations state that:

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances... The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to complete the 'Exceptional Leave of Absence Form' and return to the Principal **before making any travel arrangements** (See appendix 1.5). The Principal will consider the request taking into account:

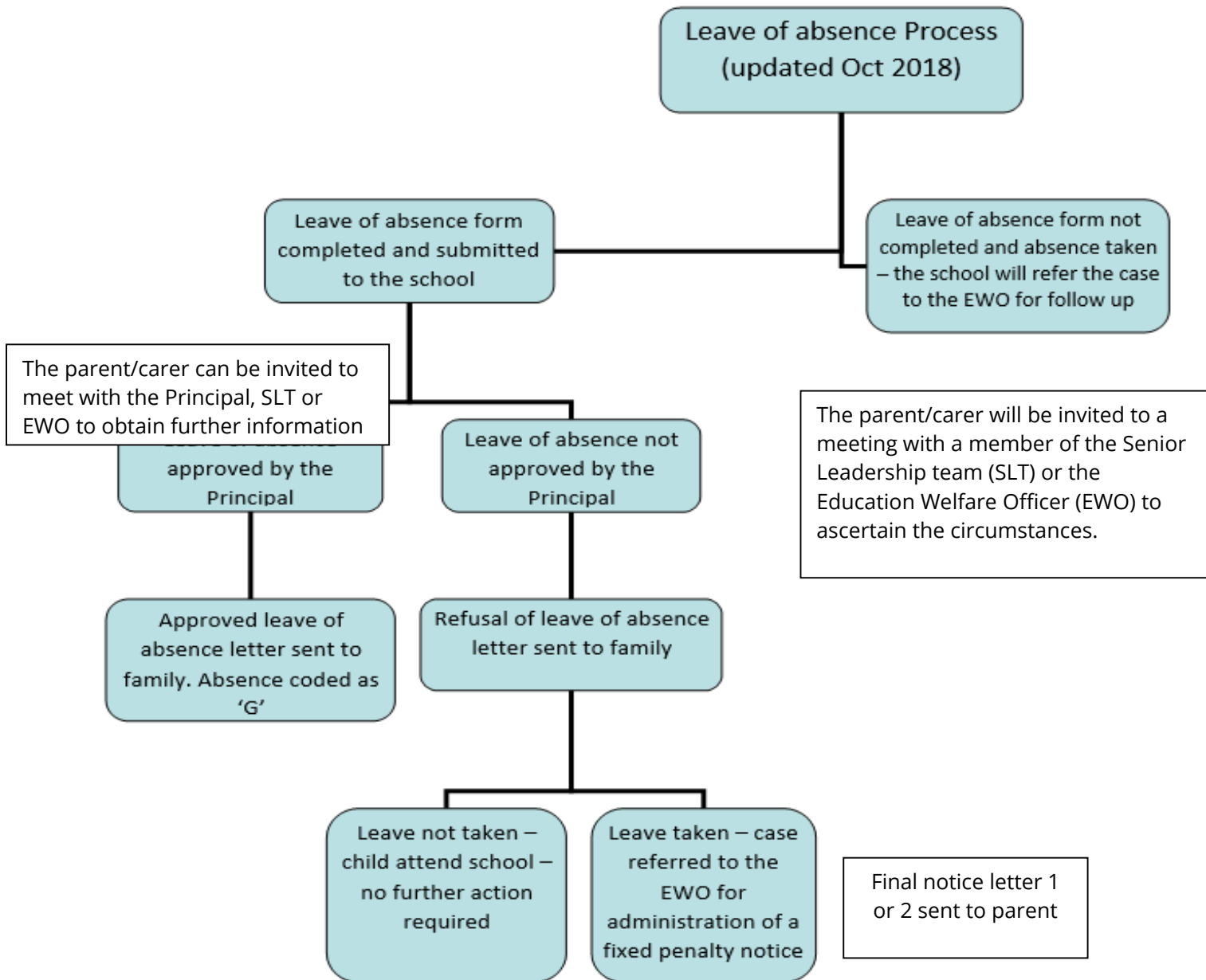
- The pupil's previous attendance history
- The time of the year regards any public or internal exams
- Attendance and punctuality in the current and previous academic year
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made

A letter of approval or refusing the request will then be sent to the parent/carer. In some cases, it may be appropriate for parents to meet with the Principal, member of the Senior Leadership team (SLT) or Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to explain the requirement for leave and in those cases, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to discuss the exact nature of the circumstances.

Parents/carers are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed or taken after the leave has been refused, a penalty notice could be issues to each parent for each child absent without authority.

If term time leave is taken without the parent/carer making an application requesting leave in 'Exceptional Circumstances', they will be asked to attend a meeting with the Principal, SLT or EWO.

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5. Medical/Hospital Appointments and Medical Absence

Parents and carers must try and ensure where possible that any medical appointments are made after school or during the school holiday period. Should a child have a medical appointment during an am or pm session, the expectation is they will be returned to school following the appointment and not be taken

out of school for the whole day. They will be marked as unauthorised for the session if they do not return to school and no explanation is given. An appointment card will need to be shown to the Attendance Officer in order for the absence to be authorised in the first instance.

Where pupils are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness, then teachers/tutors should liaise with parents and make arrangements for work to be sent home.

The Attendance Officer, along with Heads of Year, has the major responsibility for identifying persistent poor attendance and punctuality. The Attendance Officer will also analyse attendance data and look for patterns of absence and poor punctuality.

Where there is a significant pattern of medical absence or absence through illness, the school will:

- Contact the parent/carer to discuss reasons why and may invite them to the school for a meeting. This will always be the case after three consecutive days of absence.
- If no contact is made a letter will be sent to the parents advising them that any future absences will require them to produce medical evidence and failure to do so will result in the absences been unauthorised (appendix 1.12)
- If attendance has previously been a concern, or continues to be a concern a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer who will offer support and guidance, but may also refer to the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice or consideration of legal proceedings

6. Punctuality - Promotion and Consequences

In order to promote good punctuality, the School is open from 7.45am daily, and a breakfast club operates **from 7.45am to 8.25am daily**; all students are both welcome to attend and encouraged to begin their day in this way, with no charge levied for breakfast.

Poor punctuality affects the chances of individual learners in making progress. It also interrupts the flow of the lesson being taught and as such has a negative impact on all learners present. This is unacceptable.

All lateness to school and lessons is recorded electronically. Where punctuality is a serious concern, Learning Family Tutors and parents/carers are informed via telephone, email or post.

The formal start to the school day at Compass School **is 8.30am** and pupils must be on site by 8.25am. Any pupil arriving after this time is considered to be late.

If a student arrives after **8.25am**, they should sign in at the School Reception before continuing to lessons. All lateness to school will be recorded on the electronic registration system and will be hand recorded in the student's planner.

We run a late gate daily staffed by both Compass staff supported by the Education Welfare Officer.

- If a pupil is late to school, they will serve a 30-minute detention that day
- If a pupil is late to school twice in a week, they will serve a 30-minute detention for each day missed along with a 60-minute detention on the Friday of the following week.
- If a pupil is late to school on six occasions, a warning letter will be sent from the Head of Year
- If a pupil reaches ten late arrivals, the Head of Year will issue a final warning letter
- If there is limited improvement, ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as an **unauthorised absence** and pupils who are continually late after the close of register will wither be referred to

the Education Welfare Officer and 'or parents could be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine of £60 rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days)

7. Monitoring and Rewarding Attendance

Individual student attendance is updated weekly and displayed on the schools' attendance notice board. Students are expected to know their attendance and how they can improve this.

Weekly Learning Family Tutor (LFT) group attendance is shared with students through the Celebration PowerPoint during LFT on Friday and through date sheets shared with LFTs weekly. Students with excellent attendance will be eligible for a range of attendance rewards.

Students who have 100% attendance each half term are invited to a reward event in school. There are cumulative rewards for students who maintain this 100% record over more than one half term. There are also awards for students and groups where there have been significant improvements in attendance.

Unauthorised absences are followed up weekly with Learning Family Tutors responsible for following up where absence has been unauthorised.

Whole school attendance trends (including group comparisons) are shared through line management meetings with those responsible for whole school attendance.

The school runs reward activities and events for good punctuality and attendance both as a whole school and for students with Inclusion needs. These include termly certificates, reward activities, recognition in whole school leadership roles and reward trips.

8. Deletions from the register/ removal from the school role

Parents must ensure they inform the School of any change of address, contact details or family circumstances. Should a parent advise they are moving and will be removing their child/ren from the school role, the school/school must attempt to obtain the parent's new address and if possible the name of new school the child will be attending. If this information has not been supplied the School must inform their EWO if the child leaves without obtaining any forwarding information.

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, children will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Transfer between schools
- Children withdrawn to be educated outside the school system (Educated otherwise)
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the child
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the child
- Left the school but not known where he or she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the child

The School will report a child is Missing from Education to the local authority, following 10 consecutive days of absence, when all checks have been exhausted. This will include: Telephone calls to all known numbers on the school system, including relatives, discussion with class teacher and known friends of

pupil, home visit by School/ Education Welfare Officer. The school will contact the local authority completing a 'Child Missing Education' form with the relevant information and await confirmation to remove.

9. Review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. Attendance at the school will be benchmarked against national and local averages to determine impact and effectiveness of the policy.

Appendix:

- 1.1 How I can help my child improve attendance
- 1.2 Contact details for attendance at Compass School
- 1.3 Graph Showing impact of attendance on academic achievement
- 1.4 The Law related to Fixed Penalty Notices
- 1.5 Application for exceptional leave of absence
- 1.6 Exemplar Letter – Unexplained absence from school
- 1.7 Exemplar Letter – leave of absence granted
- 1.8 Exemplar Letter – leave of absence not granted (written request)
- 1.9 Exemplar Letter – leave of absence not granted (phone, reception or direct to staff request)
- 1.10 Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 97%
- 1.11 Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 94%
- 1.12 Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 92%
- 1.13 Exemplar Letter – Medical Absence

Appendix 1.1

Supporting my child/ren with attendance

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

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a 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 may make things worse.**

Contact your child's Learning Family Tutor immediately (please see e-mail contact details Appendix 1.2) and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons, such as difficulties with school work, friendship problems and 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. In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

At Compass School, the relevant staff are:

1. Learning Family Tutor
2. Attendance Officer
3. Head of Year
4. Leader of Pastoral/ SENCO
5. Vice Principal Pastoral
6. Educational Welfare Officer

2. 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 he/she 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 student diary. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it weekly. Be interested in what your child is doing in school, talk to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have made and even what they had for lunch.

Share your child's attendance with them and refer to the graph (appendix 1.3) that clearly shows the impact of attendance on academic achievement. Discuss aspirations for the future and encourage your son/daughter to understand the impact that poor attendance has on future prospects.

Celebrate with them when they have perfect attendance for a given period of time or they work hard to improve their attendance. Communicate this with the school in order that we can also reward via our reward policies.

Appendix 1.2

Contact details for attendance at Compass School

Please see below the contact details for key colleagues with regards attendance and reporting absence at Compass School.

You should report your child's absence via attendance@compass-schools.com

Year 7		
Head of Year	Ms C Hayward	chayward@compass-schools.com
North	Mr P Haverty	phaverty@compass-schools.com
East	Mr M Holness	mholness@compass-schools.com
South	Mr B May	bmay@compass-schools.com
West	Ms S Helme	shelme@compass-schools.com
Year 8		
Head of Year	Ms A Di Stazio	adistazio@compass-schools.com
8C1	Ms N Sharif	nsharif@compass-schools.com
8C2	Ms R Beard	rbeard@compass-schools.com
8C3	Ms T Walton	twalton@compass-schools.com
Year 9		
Head of Year	Ms S Collison	scollison@compass-schools.com
9C1	Ms A Bennett	abennett@compass-schools.com
9C2	Ms F Mohamed	fmohamed@compass-schools.com
9C3	Mr O Omotayo	Oomotayo@compass-schools.com
Year 10		
Head of Year	Mr P Egbuchiem	pegbuchiem@compass-schools.com
10C1	Ms V Cunninghame	vcunninghame@compass-schools.com
10C2	Mr G Ahiko	gahiko@compass-schools.com
10C3	Ms E Green	egreen@compass-schools.com
Year 11		
Head of Year	Mr M Flowers	mflowers@compass-schools.com

North	Mr D Thompson	dthompson@compass-schools.com
East	Ms E Walkey Williams	ewalkeywilliams@compass-schools.com
South	Mr J Guilherme	jguilherme@compass-schools.com
West	Mr U Gohar	ugohar@compass-schools.com

Appendix 1.3

Graph Showing impact of attendance on academic achievement

Days off school add up to lost learning					
175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR					
175 days to spend on family visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments					
190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR 190 days for your child's education	10 days absence 180 days of Education	19 days absence 171 days of Education	29 days absence 161 days of Education	38 days absence 152 days of Education	47 days absence 143 days of Education
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
Excellent Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start	Good Great chance of success. Gets your child off to a good start	Worrying Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress		Serious Concern Not fair on your child Court action!	

**So what?
I am only
5 mins late
to lesson!**

7 WEEKS

3 days and 2 hours of lessons will have been missed in your school life by missing only 5 minutes of learning

Appendix 1.4

The Law related to Fixed Penalty Notices

Appendix 1 The Law the Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

[a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he/she may have

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. For educational purposes, the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping

The legal requirements are found in: The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Guidance documents on attendance

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording:

- Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)
- Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations).
- These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

Appendix 1.5

Application for exceptional leave of absence

School Name:					
Student/Pupil Details					
Name:		Date of birth:		Class/Form:	
Address:					
Contact Numbers:					
Sibling Details of Compulsory School Age (or other children living in the household)					
Name:		Date of birth:		School:	
Name:		Date of birth:		School:	
I request permission for my child to be absent from school between: -					
Date of First Day School Absence:		Date of Return to School:		Total of Absent School Days:	
Please detail below the reason for your request for absence from school in term time and include any supporting information. The Principal <u>will not</u> be able to consider your request without your <u>supporting documents</u> . <i>Please read carefully the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents attached.</i>					

1Parent's Declaration:

I have read the Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Information for Parents and understand I/we may receive a penalty notice if my/our child receives unauthorised school absence as a result of this request.

Please note the school day is divided into 2 registration periods, for example if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence equals 10 sessions.

Signed:
(Parent/Carer)

Date:

Full Name:

Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Request Information for Parents:

Please note:

- We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Principals cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance.
- Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting this request to your child's school.

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Principals to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances **only**. This is **not an entitlement**. There is no longer a provision in law for Principals to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday.

The Principal will only authorise absence in line with the Whole School Attendance Policy. The Principals will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education.

Please note that supporting documents to aid decision making must be submitted at the time of your request for absence.

If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court. Where parents do not follow school procedures of submitting a request and simply remove their child without seeking prior approval, a warning may not be given. Parents must complete a request for exceptional leave form and submit this to the school, allowing for sufficient time to enable the school to consider the request and inform the parent of the decision.

If your request is declined and you still take your child out of school, each parent within your household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days, it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid, you may be

¹ Parent: In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

(a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or (b) who has care of him. (*Education Act 1996 sec.576*)

summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, please contact the school to discuss this.

For School Use Only

The school has considered your request for leave of absence and your child's absences will be recorded as follows: -					
Number of Authorised Sessions:		Number of Unauthorised Sessions:		Number of Unauthorised sessions to date:	

Signed:	
Position:	Date:

Original signed and completed forms to be retained with pupil's records.

Copy should be returned to the parent/carer of the pupil to confirm authorised or unauthorised absence prior to the intended absence period.

Appendix 1.6

Exemplar Letter – Unexplained absence from school

Date >

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

<Address>

Dear <name of parent / carer>

According to our records, <name of pupil> has recently been absent from the 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 – an explanation of this term and the possible consequences are attached.

If you wish to discuss this letter further, please contact me on 020 3542 6506.

Yours sincerely

Ms V Brown
Attendance Officer
Compass School Southwark

Please complete this slip and return to <school> as soon as possible.

Dates of unexplained absence: _____

Explanation for the above dates of unexplained absence:

Failure to return this will result in absences coded as unauthorised and a possible referral to our Education Welfare Officer

Parent/Carer Signature..... Date.....

Appendix 1.7

Exemplar Letter – leave of absence granted

{Parent name}

{Address}

{Date}

Dear {Parent Name}

RE: Childs Name and DOB - Request for Exceptional Leave - Current attendance percentage (%)

Thank you for your application requesting permission to take (child's name) out of school for the purposes of (insert reason) from (insert date) to (insert date) – a total of (insert number) days absent from school.

Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success—both in school and in life. When you make school attendance a priority, you are helping your child socially and academically. However, given the exceptional circumstances you have provided for the absence I have considered your application for leave for (insert number of days) and I have agreed that this absence will be authorised for the following reasons:

- Your child's/children's attendance is above 97% this academic year.
- The circumstances are exceptional
- The absence will not result in (child's name) missing any exams

Whilst I have authorised this leave for a period of (inset number of days) please note that any absence beyond the (insert number of days) will be considered unauthorised and I may decide to request that the Local Authority issues a Penalty Notice which may result in a fine of £60.00 per parent.

We look forward to seeing (insert child's name) back in school on (insert return date).

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Huntley
Principal
Compass School Southwark

Cc: school file

Appendix 1.8

Exemplar Letter – leave of absence not granted (Written request)

{Parent name}

{Address}

{Date}

Dear {Parent Name}

RE: Child's name and DOB - Request for Exceptional Leave - Current attendance percentage (%)

Thank you for your application requesting permission to take (child's name) out of school for the purposes of (insert reason) from (insert date) to (insert date) – a total of (insert number) days absent from school.

The school have a robust attendance policy – please look at our Whole School Attendance Policy available on our website: (add website). Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success—both in school and in life. Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life.

I have made my decision in line the policy and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted for the following reasons:

Your child's/children's attendance is below 95% this academic year.

The circumstances are not exceptional***** (suggested reason for refusal)

(Childs Name) will miss planned exams/tests

(Childs Name) has already taken 10 days leave this academic year.

(Delete as appropriate)

Please contact the school's attendance officer (name) if you wish to discuss further. His/Her contact details are: (add number)

If you decide to take your child/children out of school for this period, the absence will be marked unauthorised and I may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice which can result in a £60.00 fine per parent.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Huntley
Principal

CC: School file
Encl: Registration Certificate

Appendix 1.9

Exemplar Letter – leave of absence not granted (phone, reception or direct to staff request)

{Parent name}

{Address}

{Date}

RE: Childs Name and DOB - Request for Exceptional Leave -Current attendance percentage (%)

Dear xxx,

Thank you for your telephone call/ conversation at school on (date) requesting permission to take (child's name) out of school for the purposes of (insert reason) from (insert date) to (insert date) – a total of (insert number) days absent from school.

The school have a robust attendance policy – please look at our Whole School Attendance Policy available on our website: (add website). Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways you can prepare your child for success—both in school and in life. Regular attendance at school is vital to help children achieve and get the best possible start in life.

As discussed in our telephone conversation I have made my decision in line the policy and regret to inform you that your application for leave has not been granted for the following reasons:

Your child's/children's attendance is below 95% this academic year.

The circumstances are not exceptional (Suggested reason)

(Childs Name) will miss planned exams/tests

(child's Name) has already taken 10 days leave this academic year.

Delete as appropriate

Please contact the school's attendance officer (name) if you wish to discuss further. His/Her contact details are: (add number)

If you decide to take your child/children out of school for this period, the absence will be marked unauthorised and I may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice which can result in a £60.00 fine per parent.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Huntley
Principal
Compass School Southwark.

CC: School file
Encl: Registration Certificate

Appendix 1.10

Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 97%

Dear Parent/carer of

School Attendance and Head of Year support required

I am writing to you because attendance has dropped below 97% this school year. I enclose his/her attendance certificate and our school leaflet on absence.

Good attendance at school is linked to better GCSE grades. Please speak with your child about the importance of attending school every day.

Your child's Head of Year will now be keeping a close eye on his/her attendance. I will also offer support as highlighted in our attendance policy, found on the school's website. We appreciate that 97% may appear to be a good level of attendance but we strive for 100% where possible. We are therefore keen to explore how we can help you to improve your child's attendance.

We are grateful for your support.

Yours sincerely
Mr E Snoxell
Leader of Pastoral

Appendix 1.11

Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 94%

Drop to 94% and Leader of Pastoral support required

Dear Parent/carer of

School attendance issues

I am writing to you because <name's> attendance has dropped below 93% this school year. I enclose his/her Registration certificate and our school leaflet on absence. Please speak with your child about the importance of attending school every day.

We would also like to speak with you to talk through any issues and barriers to your child attending school. Please could you call the school to speak with me. We will set targets for improvement across the rest of the year.

Attendance at 94% is the same as missing a whole term's work across the five years. Evidence shows that this impacts on GCSE grades. We are grateful for your support regarding your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

<Name>

Head of Year

Appendix 1.12

Exemplar Letter – Attendance below 92%

Drop to 92% and EWO intervention required

Dear Parent/carer of

Attendance meeting

Your child's attendance has reached below 92%. Please find enclosed his/her Registration certificate. We have reviewed <names> attendance since our previous meeting and it has not improved. Please could you attend a meeting at school on <date> at <time> to discuss how we can improve the situation. An attendance of less than 92% means that is categorised as a persistent absentee.

Falling into this attendance category has profound effects on his/her future; he/she will miss the equivalent of half a year off school across five years if this pattern continues. Please speak with your child about the importance of attendance.

We enclose the following additional information on attendance that you may find useful:

- Parent leaflet on Penalty Notices
- Our school leaflet on absence
- DFE guidance on attendance effects on attainment.

Please note the following legal changes that have come into force in September 2015. Parents may receive a Penalty Notice if their son/daughter is marked as being:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days), which is unauthorised, during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive
- persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed.
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance.

Thank you for your support regarding your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mr E Snoxell
Leader of Pastoral

Appendix 1.13

Exemplar Letter – Medical Absence

10th October 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

Name of Child:

Attendance Percentage:

<Name>'s attendance this academic year is currently <current>%. This is considerably below what the DFE and the school consider being an acceptable level of attendance, and well below the school's target for each child to have an attendance of above 97%.

It is the Head teacher's decision as to whether to accept any parental explanation for absence, and as there have been previous days missed from school due to illness, I need to make you aware that future **absences due to illness will no longer be authorised without medical evidence. Some examples of medical evidence include: a letter from your doctor, a copy of your child's prescription or a medical appointment card.**

I will be monitoring your child's attendance and should there be any further unauthorised absences, I will refer you to our Education Welfare Officer, who will invite you to attend a meeting in school to discuss your child's attendance.

Every day in school counts towards <name>'s future, and I thank you in advance for supporting our School in ensuring excellent school attendance.

If you would like to talk to me more about your child's attendance, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr E Snoxell
Leader of Pastoral
Compass School Southwark