



# Attendance Policy

This policy was approved and ratified by  
Wadebridge School in September 2023

This policy and its contents are made available to all Wadebridge School Staff and observed by all Trustees

Author	Version	Authorisation	Approval Date	Effective Date	Next Review	Published to Website
Steve Simmonds	V3	Wadebridge School Senior Leadership Team	December 2023	December 2023	September 2024	Yes
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### **Principles**

We strive to provide a welcome, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels valued and safe.

### **Policy statement**

We are committed to providing excellent education for every child, every day, and aim to strengthen and work with our community to continue to improve attendance in our school.

### **Scope and purpose**

This policy applies to all school leaders, staff, parents and pupils.

The purpose of the policy is to outline the specific roles, responsibilities and actions required by everyone in order to continue to improve the attendance of all pupils in all of our school.

### **Legal framework**

This Policy will be published on the school's website and as a statutory policy will be regularly reviewed by SLT and Trustees at Wadebridge School.

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- a. The Education Act (1996)
- b. The Education Act (2002)
- c. The Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- d. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (2006)
- e. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2010)
- f. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2011)
- g. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- h. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2016)
- i. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations (Amendment 2013)
- j. This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.



## **Introduction**

The Attendance Policy operates within the context of the school's culture. It is the aim of leaders to support every pupil to attend school each day in order to fulfil their academic and social potential.

To realise this aim, the school will work in partnership with parents / carers, the local authority, and outside agencies to offer pupils support in maintaining excellent attendance. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Improving attendance is everyone's business: effective communication and joined up working are paramount.

Excellent attendance is a pre-requisite of academic success. The school will ensure that parents are kept well-informed about the link between attendance and attainment and that when academic progress is jeopardised, this message is clearly reiterated, and support is offered to remove any existing or emerging barriers to attendance.

School leaders will ensure there is a calm, safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment where pupils want to be present and are eager and ready to learn.

The policy should be implemented alongside the Department for Education guidance document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working\\_together\\_to\\_improve\\_school\\_attendance\\_-\\_August\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf300da44f1c4c23e5bd1b/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf)

## **Aims**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Promote a welcoming atmosphere that makes students feel safe and valued.
- Establish, develop and maintain good relationships between the school and parents/carers.
- To provide clear guidelines about how the school promotes and attains high levels of pupil attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and absence followed up quickly.
- To ensure all stakeholders understand the school's expectations of themselves, and each other, in order to strive to attain them.

## **Who is responsible for this policy?**

The Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership Team have a specific responsibility to ensure the fair application of this policy and all members of staff are responsible for fulfilling their roles and supporting to ensure its success.

## **Responsibilities**

All children aged 5 - 16 years must receive suitable education. (Section 7, *Education Act (1996)*). A pupil of compulsory school age who is registered at a school must, by law, attend regularly.



By law, parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that pupils of compulsory school age attend regularly. (Section 576, Education Act (1996)).

The Local Authority (LA) must offer educational provision for all children of school age.

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed or has been notified that the pupil will attend the school.

By law, all schools must keep an admissions' register, the contents of which includes all pupils, their personal details, (including parent/carer and emergency contact telephone numbers for different safe adults, to ensure that we can always contact someone in the event of an emergency), the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and details of the school last attended.

Pupils will be removed from roll only when they complete their education stage, transfer to another school, move out of the area or emigrate or following a parental request for elective home education. We follow statutory guidance for removing pupils from roll and notifying the local authority.

There is a clear link between attainment and attendance. Under **section 444 (1)** of the **Education Act 1996** (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered. We therefore enforce the use of statutory action to encourage and promote attendance, this is done to ensure that all pupils can benefit from their legal right to receive an education.

The school will communicate attendance concerns to the pupil's social worker, if they have one or The Virtual School Head, if the pupil is a looked after child. This will be done as soon as there is an attendance concern and immediately upon becoming a persistent absentee. Unexplained absences will also be communicated to the social worker and Virtual School Head, where relevant.

## **Definitions**

A pupil is classed as absent if they arrive after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.

An authorised absence is when approval has been given in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be absent for a specific (legal) purpose, or we have accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence from a parent or carer. This may include:

- a. an absence for illness for which we have granted leave,
- b. medical or dental appointments may be granted leave where every attempt has been made to arrange outside of school hours, has been unsuccessful and so cannot be avoided, or where the appointment is a genuine emergency,
- c. religious or cultural observances for which we have granted leave. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents or pupil belong. Where necessary, we will seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

An unauthorised absence is defined as one where we are not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Reasons may include:

- a. parents keeping children from attending unnecessarily or without reason,



- b. missing sessions during the school day,
- c. arrival after the register has closed,
- d. day trips and holidays in term time and,
- e. leaving school without authorisation during the school day.

Persistent absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised. 10% absence equates to **19 school days lost** over the school year.

Severe absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised. 50% absence equates to **95 school days lost** over the school year.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing Attendance**

We recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality, daily and weekly throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of pupils may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.

We set challenging attendance targets for the whole school.

Pupil-level absence data is collected regularly and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. We regularly compare our attendance data to the National, Southwest and Local Authority averages.

Specific measures are taken to monitor attendance. These processes are embedded and regularly checked to ensure the effective safeguarding of all pupils. Fortnightly meetings are held to monitor attendance. These meetings are embedded to ensure effective safeguarding of all pupils. The following trends are identified and acted upon:

- a. Patterns of absence
- b. Patterns of lateness
- c. Patterns of medical appointments
- d. Correct and consistent use of absence codes
- e. Trends in reasons for absence, for example, use of the C code, leave of absence and exclusions
- f. Trends in particular groups of children for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Attendance data informs action planning and supports the identification of key priorities in the SIP & SEF documents and future revisions of this policy.

The attendance data is shared regularly with trustees, SLT and all other relevant staff, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.

Data will also be used by the school to monitor the impact of any interventions put in place to improve attendance and to modify them and inform future strategies.



### **Why regular attendance is important**

Any absence impacts on the progress of a child and disrupts learning, relationships with peers and academic, personal and social development. Repeated absence is therefore most likely to be detrimental to children and to seriously impede their learning.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the responsibility of the parent/carers and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### **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 about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

A 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, we will adhere to the latest safeguarding policies and practices. A child missing from education may be at risk of abuse or neglect or become a victim of harm, exploitation or radicalisation. Failing to attend school on a regular basis is therefore a safeguarding concern.

Wadebridge School monitor patterns of absence for all pupils as a part of standard procedures. However, it is recognised that sudden or gradual changes in a pupil's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), Local Procedures and the School's Safeguarding Policy, staff will monitor and report any safeguarding concerns within the school to the DSL on to the relevant authorities as appropriate. As part of the school's safeguarding duty and standard procedures, staff will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any pupil who is absent from school when they cannot establish their whereabouts and there is concern for the pupil's welfare.

If a pupil is not attending school regularly as required, staff may make home visits to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers as part of the school's safeguarding and attendance processes. If staff are unable to see and speak to the pupil and parents/carers, they may contact the pupil's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family, who they reasonably expect may be able to provide the school with relevant information.

### **Why Do Student's benefit from 'High' attendance?**

Achieving high school attendance is a national priority. Our school data clearly shows a correlation between high attendance rates and high achievement.

Illness usually appears as a block of time off school. We review attendance patterns each week and look for unbroken and broken weeks as a key indicator. We would not usually expect that students would have more than one or two broken weeks in the course of an academic year. Regular broken weeks are a cause for concern and we will offer support to families where there are more frequent broken weeks, in line with our attendance procedures.



## **Understanding Absence**

By law, schools must register students for two sessions each day (morning and afternoon registration). Every half-day of absence must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the nature of any absence is always required from parents.

'Authorised absence' means that the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. The following information outlines the main circumstances where absence may be authorised by a school:

### **Illness**

- In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by parents/carers in line with the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised.
- If the school has a genuine and reasonable concern about the authenticity of the illness, the school will request medical information and/or evidence to support the absence - such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of information/evidence.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Where a pupil has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require suitable information and/or evidence in order to authorise any future absence where illness has been given as the reason. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/carer/s aware of this expectation in advance.
- The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent/carer. Absences due to illness which have **not** been reported to the school by the parent/carer on the first and any subsequent days of absence may not be authorised.

### **Pupils taken ill during the school day**

If a pupil needs to be sent home from school due to illness, this will be agreed by an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected by a parent/carer or adult authorised to collect the child by the parent/carer and identified to the school.

### **Medical/Dental Appointments**

- Parents/carers must, wherever possible, arrange for medical and dental appointments to take place outside of school hours. Where appointments during the school day are unavoidable, the pupil should only be absent for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a pupil to miss a whole day for an appointment, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is. The school recognises that pupils with a health condition may have a higher number of medical appointments than other pupils and it is therefore possible that at least some of these appointments may be during the school day.



- If a pupil must attend a medical appointment during the school day, they must be collected from the school office by the parent/carer or another authorised adult and signed out in the 'signing out' book. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school site without parent/carer confirmation.
- The school reserves the right to request evidence of appointments from parents/ carers. Suitable evidence may include appointment letters or cards, copies of emails from a verifiable address (e.g. NHS) confirming the date and time of the appointment.

### **Exceptional Circumstances Leave of Absence (including term-time holiday requests)**

By law, Headteachers are not allowed to authorise absence during term time unless the circumstances are exceptional.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

All requests from parents for term time leave of absence must be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's form. All requests must be made at least 15 school days prior to the requested leave of absence. Parents will receive written notification to confirm whether their request has been authorised or refused (insert refusal letter).

Each application from parents for an 'exceptional circumstance' leave of absence during term time will be considered on its own merit.





### **Persistent Absence**

In line with DfE Guidance, a pupil is considered as 'persistently absent' when they miss 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is highly likely to significantly harm a child's educational progress.

Children who are persistently or severely absent are supported by school attendance teams, the school's Education Welfare Officer. In addition, Wadebridge School will liaise with the Local Authority EWO service to ensure all support is in place to bring about a positive change in attendance.

### **Home/School Partnership**

Wadebridge School work in close partnership with parents and families to achieve high attendance for every pupil.

#### **Parents must:**

- Contact the School on the first day of a child's absence by 8:40am at the latest.
- Ensure their child arrives at school on time – the school day starts at 8.40am. Late arrival after registers close may be classed as an absence.
- Arrival after the register closes at 10:10am or at 12:30pm without satisfactory explanation will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded on the register.

#### **The School will:**

- Contact parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given. Wherever possible the school will phone the parent to discuss their child's absence;
- Meet with parents to discuss and agree support to improve attendance in line with our attendance procedures.
- Escalate concerns about attendance to the school's EWO when appropriate and in line with our attendance procedures to ensure children receive support to attendance school regularly.
- Where necessary to ensure regular attendance, the school may apply for sanctions such as Penalty Notice fines or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. In all cases we believe it is in the child's best interests to attend school regularly and our decision making is always led by our commitment to protecting the entitlement of children to full time education.
- Follow up promptly any concerns parents pass on to us that may be affecting a child's attendance;
- Provide support and involve the school's attendance team and other support agencies to help students re-integrate into school after illness or other individual circumstances;
- Regularly remind students of the importance of high attendance and punctuality for example, through assemblies and tutor time;
- Acknowledge and celebrate improving attendance.



### **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when the School needs to contact parents about educational matters, including attendance, punctuality and absence. The school may also need to contact parents in the event of an emergency. Therefore it is vital that Wadebridge School have the correct parental contact phone numbers at all times. Parents must ensure the school always has an up to date contact number. **Parents have a duty to notify the school as soon as possible of any changes to their contact details.**

### **Supporting High Attendance and Reporting**

To promote the importance of high attendance and punctuality, the School will recognise improvement in attendance.

Attendances, punctuality and absence are reported to parents in all written reports and attendance records are available to parents on request.

### **The School's Education Welfare Officer**

The School's Education Welfare Officer holds a vital role within the pastoral structure to help support positive attendance. The School works closely with the EWO to support students whose attendance is a cause for concern. The EWO may visit homes, meet with students and parents in school (or at their home) and is a vital component in our efforts to secure high attendance.

The EWO works in partnership with the Local Authority EWO and may initiate legal proceedings against parents who have not fulfilled their responsibility for ensuring regular attendance. Before a case goes to court, Parenting Contracts may be drawn up, setting targets for improving attendance. The primary aim of all school action is to ensure every child attends school on a regular basis and is therefore able to achieve their full potential.

### **Students with Special Educational Needs (SEND)**

Our School supports the attendance of students with SEND and understands that their specific needs present additional school challenges. Good attendance for all students, especially those with SEND is crucial in ensuring academic and social progress. Further information relating to the support available to students with SEND is available from the school's SENDCO.



### **Appendix 1 – Whole school unauthorised letter**

NAME

ADDRESS Line 1

ADDRESS Line 2

ADDRESS Line 3

Dear Parent/Carer

Here at Wadebridge School we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely too ill to attend school.

However, the Government does not support parents taking children out of school unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances'. Any request for leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's 'Leave of Absence Exceptional Circumstances' request form.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Wadebridge School is committed to enabling every child to reach their full potential and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

Yours sincerely

Mat Winzor (Headteacher)



**APPENDIX 2 – LEAVE OF ABSENCE/EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE / EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE REQUEST FORM**

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education no longer allows Headteachers to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

*If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.*

*If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days. Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.*

*Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.*

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All requests must be completed on this form; letters will not be accepted. This form should be returned to the Attendance Office at least 15 school days before the start of the absence.

I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at Wadebridge School.



### **APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER**

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the Attendance Office at least 15 school days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tutor Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Post Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Carer completing this form:** \_\_\_\_\_

**First day of absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of return to school:** \_\_\_\_\_

**If leaving your home address before the first day of absence, please provide the date on which you will leave** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total number of days missed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **days**

**Reason for absence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# WADEBRIDGE SCHOOL

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I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to **each** liable parent/carer of **each** child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days (or £160 with no option to pay the lower amount if it is the 2<sup>nd</sup> penalty notice within a rolling 3-year period). I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me. **I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.**

Signed .....

Dated .....

*(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)*

**Below to be completed by the school: FAO – Headteacher**

% Current	% Last Year	Comments

Student Name: ..... Tutor: ..... Year: .....

☐ **AUTHORISED:**

☐ **UNAUTHORISED:**

Request has been authorised for the following dates **only**:

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Signed ..... **Headteacher**

Date \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Letter sent / Phone Call / other	Signed: _____	Date: _____
Action: PN Request	Signed: _____	Date: _____



### **APPENDIX 3 – FINAL WARNING LETTER**

Address 1 line  
Address 2 line  
Address 3 line  
Address 4 line

**NOTICE TO IMPROVE – STUDENT FORENAME SURNAME YEAR (Attendance %)**  
(Attendance figure taken from register including DATE)

Dear PARENT NAME,

School attendance is hugely important. For your child to gain the full benefit from their education, for their learning, wellbeing, and wider development, they need to attend on time, every day possible.

**Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty upon parents of a child of compulsory school age to cause that child to receive efficient full-time education.** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7>

**If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the child's parent(s) may be guilty of an offence under s.444 of the Education Act 1996.**

You, PARENT NAME are a parent/carer of **STUDENT NAME**, who is a registered pupil at **Wadebridge School**.

The school have offered support to you and your family to try and help improve Student's attendance, including:

1. **Telephone calls.** The school contacted you every day your child was absent to understand why your child was absent and to offer support with any issues your child may be having.
2. **An Attendance Overview Letter.** The school wrote to you, letting you know about Student's attendance, the impact of their continued absence, and inviting you to contact the school to discuss the situation further.
3. **An Attendance Support Meeting.** The school have held meeting(s) with you to discuss your child's unauthorised absences and to offer support to ensure that their attendance improved. You were notified of the consequences should your child continue to have unauthorised absence and **STUDENT NAME** has not engaged with the support offered.

Unfortunately, despite the support that was offered to your family, attendance remains a cause for concern.

Between **START DATE** and **END DATE**, **STUDENT NAME** failed to attend regularly at **Wadebridge School**, which resulted in 10 sessions (half days) or more of unauthorised absences being recorded. Please see the attached registration certificate for details.



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You now have thirty school days (6 weeks) in which to improve your child's attendance. During this time your child must show significant improvements in attendance and engage in the support offered at Wadebridge School. This support includes support agreed by school and bespoke to this individual.

Should we not see sufficient improvement, and further unauthorised absences take place during this period, a Penalty Notice may be issued.

A penalty notice is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days or £80 if paid within 21 days for a 1<sup>st</sup> offence, and £160 if paid within 28 days for a 2<sup>nd</sup> offence within a 3-year rolling period.

**NB – A Penalty Notice may be issued before the end of the 6-week validity period if it is evident that the terms of 'sufficient improvement' have not been met**

If you wish to discuss this notice, or discuss what further support is available, including previously provided support that was not engaged with, please contact the school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Wadebridge School

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

*If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.*

*If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.*

*Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.*

*Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may also result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.*

*Absence not authorised by the school may also result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Again, Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal costs.*

*Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.*