Attendance Policy

Signed	
Position	Head of School
Date Agreed	26th January 2026
Next Review	26th January 2027

Equality Statement

Centre Academy London is committed to a policy of equality and aims to ensure that no employee, job applicant, pupil or other member of the school community is treated less favourably on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation, disability or religious belief. We provide a safe, supportive and welcoming environment.

Centre Academy London is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Contents

1. Aims

Centre Academy London is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils / students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually, will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. We take a zero-tolerance approach to absenteeism.

All staff are familiar with the document ALL ABOARD, which details the way the school views and tackles 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. The foundation of securing good attendance is that our school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Our school supports students whose attendance has been affected by their ongoing SMEH needs and accompanying high anxiety. Many of our pupils have a history of Emotion Based School Avoidance (EBSA), particularly since COVID-19.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, careers development and work experience and effective use of resources. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organization, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners. Working together to improve school attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk) September 2022 and Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) February 2023 particularly p. 15. Relating to additional considerations for children with an EHC plan.

We are meeting our obligation about school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:
- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and prolonged absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. Staff report nonattendance to lessons promptly to office and Senior Leaderships Team (SLT) staff.

2. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)](#)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) including changes to child missing and child absent in education Annex B
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governance board

The governance board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data (on a monthly basis)
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school (on a weekly basis)
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head of School

The Head of School is responsible for:
- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils • Monitoring the issue of transition plans and fixing start and end dates
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Reasonable adjustments

3.3 Our named Attendance Champion is Miss Rockie [see below] who will work with the head of school, and the SENDCO in -

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Making reasonable adjustments to timetables.
- Designing gradual re-entry to education through transition plans
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Recognition and rewards for good attendance
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Head of School and governing body
- Assisting the Head of School and Proprietor regarding any issue of fixed-penalty notices.

The Attendance Champion is Rocheline Mabika and can be contacted via the school office 020 7738 2344 or RMabika@centreacademy.co.uk.

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording class attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information onto ISAMs accurately.

3.5 All staff

All staff should be aware that children being absent from school or college , particularly repeatedly and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, so called 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. It is important that staff are aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence procedures and children missing education procedures. Annex B KCSIE Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

All staff are expected to build trusting relationships with the students, in order to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing. Staff are expected to create a positive environment, stress the importance of regular attendance for the students' wellbeing and feelings of selfworth, provide opportunities to work and socialise with their peers; create a positive growth mindset. In addition, regular attendance will support them with their chosen education

and career development paths. Staff to signpost students to the Mental Health Leads and the School Counsellor for support.

3.6 Pastoral Mentors

Teachers who have mentor responsibilities are expected to contact parents every fortnight, to discuss their child's progress and address any concern or issues.   liaise with parents and facilitate work for students with persistent absence. Mentors will liaise with the SEND Co-ordinator, Maria Palmartsuk and the Attendance Lead, Miss Rockie, and keep them updated with any information obtained about their students.

3.7 Administration staff

Administration staff will:
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system.
- Inform the Attendance Lead and Head of School on a daily basis of any absences, using the Daily Bulletin report for non-attendance
- Transfer calls from parents to the Head of School/SLT Attendance Lead, if required, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Relay any information about students to the SLT

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:
- Make sure their child attends every day and are on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.00am on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Liaise with the school if their child suffers from any mental health issues that affects attendance. These responsibilities are outlined in Summary of Responsibilities in Appendix (based on p.16 of [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk)](publishing.service.gov.uk))

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:
- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session in school

- Inform trusted staff, such as their mentor or the school counsellor, if there are any issues which affects their mental health and may be a barrier to attending school

4. Recording attendance

CAL recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. CAL promotes the importance of regular attendance and investigates all unauthorised absence, clearly sending a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is not acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If the absence of a child is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell physically or mentally, staff at CAL will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Attendance has a very high profile at CAL and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in mentor groups. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session.

We will mark whether every pupil is:
- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment.

Please refer to appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:
- Whether the absence is authorised or not

- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any students who are on a transition plan to reintegrate them back into school

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.15 am on each school day. The mentor records their attendance before lessons start at 8.35 am. The office records any lates until 9am when the register closes. The student is marked "late after registration" and the time is noted and relayed to parents.

The register for the second session will be taken at 1.05pm and will be kept open until 1.15 pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.00am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling or emailing the school office. (See also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

We will contact parents within an hour of a student's unexplained absence to establish the reason. Parents are requested to make the school aware, before 9.00am, of their child's absence and the reasoning.

CAL has in place, as stated above, a system of first day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a pupil / student is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to contact parents on the first day of absence, the school will email parents and if they have not heard from them by the end of the day, will send a letter to them by first class post.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Please contact the school office for a 'Request Leave of Absence Form' please see appendix 3. Information is given in section 5 regarding which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absent unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Head of School.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class. If they are late, they will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other student with an emerging pattern of absence. With regular lateness for classes or regular absences, parents will be asked to meet with the mentor/SENDCo/Admissions Lead or Head of School.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building, pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office and sign in. It is important that all pupils / students arriving late follow this procedure.

For the same reason it is important that pupils / students leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day report to the school office.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:
- no explanation has been given by the parent
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation
- the pupil / student is staying at home to mind the house
- the pupil / student is shopping during school hours
- the pupil / student is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday
- the pupil / student is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission.

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:
- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may visit the family home to check on the welfare of the student. We will also inform the LA of every pupil who fails to attend regularly, which is interpreted to mean those pupils who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 continuous absences.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider visiting the home.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

As CAL is a small school, the Head of School will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the parents and the Governance termly. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

As Centre Academy London is exclusively a school for children with special educational needs, it is imperative that attendance is monitored at all times throughout each day. Accordingly, attendance is taken for the entire school each morning by teachers and checked by the Office Manager. Each teacher also monitors attendance at the beginning of each subject lesson and informs the office/SMT of any absences. In essence, the school's policy is designed to ensure that the whereabouts of each child is known throughout the entire school day.

We believe attendance is essential for all our students and accordingly it is analysed termly; we are particularly cognisant of children who previously have been school refusers or otherwise have been vulnerable to poor attendance.

It is imperative that the school works with parents in keeping them aware of their child's attendance and that measures are in place to:
- Safeguard their child
- Keep them informed of the importance of attending school regularly to meet their child's potential

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Head of School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head of School's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as:
- where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example:
  - A pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's / student's overall pattern of attendance will be considered,
  - In exceptional circumstances, permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance.
- where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend
- where the pupil / student has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand)
- where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence, which is beyond the family's control, e.g., extreme weather conditions
- the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's / student's parent belongs
- the pupil / student lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority
- the pupil / student is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the pupil / student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months
- in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a limited period

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorized. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house
- the pupil is shopping during school hours
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g., a birthday
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office (see appendix 2). The Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:
- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Head of School, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:
- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place, during school hours, without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We have introduced the following to promote attendance:
- House points awarded weekly to the students with 100% attendance
- Whole school attendance and house attendance to feature in the weekly school newsletter
- An 'end of term award' for the highest attendee or 100% attendance.
- House privilege to the house with the best attendance record each half-term
- Posters to be displayed around the school promoting attendance
- Class poster displaying their attendance from the previous week to be placed on each mentor's classroom door.

7. Attendance monitoring

- All staff at CAL are involved in monitoring attendance through the completion of registers.
- Attendance percentage included in end of term reports to parent/carers.
- Weekly/termly attendance figures discussed at SLT meetings.
- Weekly attendance figures to be publicised in the weekly CAL newsletter
- SMT Attendance Lead/Head of School is advised daily of any unauthorised absences.
- Individual attendance is monitored for any persistence absence, if required letters to be sent to parents.
- Mentors encourage their students to attend school daily
- Mentors to discuss the attendance of the class from the previous week in Monday mentor time

7.1 Monitoring attendance

We will:
- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and compared alongside the national statistics. The school Secretary and the SMT attendance lead will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Using data to improve attendance

We will:
- Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place, in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum will be reviewed annually by the Head of School and the SLT Attendance Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governance board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Student Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles
- Student Conduct Discipline & Exclusion Policy
- Teaching and Learning Remote Learning Policy
- Mental Health and Well-being policy

- Self-Harm Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (physical or mental health)
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to halfterm/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Summary of responsibilities as outlined on p.16

Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance (publishing.service.gov.uk) and Working Together to improve school attendance expectations relating to social, emotional and mental health issues and attendance.

Parents/carers are expected to:	School staff are expected to:	Governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:

Make sure their child attends school	Set and maintain high expectations for attendance for children with mental health concerns and work with pupils and parents/carers to maximise their attendance	Regularly monitor and consider the approach to Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)within the school to understand how it is working	Work in conjunction with relevant services and partners such as local mental health services, and provide access to voluntary sector support and council services where necessary
Work with the school and other partner organisations to establish a shared understanding of perceived barriers to attendance, with a view to supporting their child to maintain full-time attendance at school	Facilitate support for pupils experiencing mental health problems as well as for those experiencing normal but difficult emotions through sensitive conversations with pupils and parent/carers	Satisfy themselves that the building of emotional resilience is sufficiently delivered through school curriculum and pastoral support, promoting a strong ethos and culture	Promote and protect the health and wellbeing of the school-age population
Proactively engage with any support offered	Consider additional pastoral care inputs such as home visits from the school counsellor, Head of School and mentors. Where appropriate making referrals.	Support the school or take a holistic approach to Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)	Work with partner organisations to signpost schools to support available in the local community and prioritise targeting support for children and young people most in need
Keep in touch with the school and be open in communicating information that will help improve the quality and nature of support being provided	Engage with parents at an early stage in conversations to support their child experiencing anxiety o ensure robust support for the child.		
Take action as best they can to support their child(ren) to recognise and manage their social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing.	Support parents if they feel the child needs to visit a specialist in relation to a mental health concern. There is no need to routinely ask for medical evidence to support recording an absence as authorised. Schools should encourage parents to		Where support is provided but not engaged with voluntarily, consider whether to formalise support or to enforce attendance through legal intervention in the normal way under their existing powers. Determine whether alternative provision should be provided under section 19 of the Education Act 1996 as outlined in statutory guidance where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days. Review EHC plans where required.
Support is available at Children's mental health - Every Mind Matters.			

	make appointments out of school hours where possible. Only request medical evidence of a mental health-related absence where there is a genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness, whether the illness should constitute an absence or to inform any agreed actions to support attendance.		

Appendix 3: Request for Leave of Absence

Centre Academy London

Request For Leave of Absence

To be submitted two weeks before the requested date

Removing your child from school during term time may harm your child's academic progress. Please read the notes (overleaf) carefully before submitting this form as refusal often offends. We aim to be consistent and transparent within the law.

Absences may only be authorised at the discretion of the Head Of School in **exceptional circumstances.** Therefore please be certain to provide details of the exceptional circumstances relating to your application below and attach any supporting evidence.

Name of Child(ren)	
Date of Birth	
Class	
Date of First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Number of Days requested	
Known siblings and school(s) attending	

Exceptional Circumstances (reason) for Leave of Absence during term time:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…

Signed: _____ Date submitted:

_____

Print name: _____ Relationship to child(ren)_____ **For school use**:

Attendance %:
Total sessions pupil absent this academic year: Total unauthorised absence this year:
Request authorised: Yes/No
Evidence Submitted: Yes/No

Definitions of terms

Leave of Absence during term time – Important Information

The Department for Education states; *every day at school counts enormously and so does every consecutive day attended by pupils. Pupils need to be able to absorb new facts and knowledge, acquire new skills and consolidate before building further and progressing. They simply cannot do so if their structured school terms are disrupted by too many preventable absences.*

Absence during term time

Parents do not have a legal right to take children out of school. The Head of School may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Requests for Leave of Absence

A request for a leave of absence must only be considered if.
• The parent the child normally lives with applies in advance for the absence; and
• There are **exceptional circumstances** for the absence

Exceptional Circumstances

Dictionary definition of exceptional (*Adjective)* •
unusual; not typical.
• forming an exception or rare instance; unusual; extraordinary.

A request for leave of absence could be considered exceptional in the following circumstance;
• For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking leave of absence outside term time at any point in the academic year; Providing written proof respectfully requested
• The terminal illness or bereavement of a parent of sibling if the absence is concurrent.

Any other absence?

There may be other circumstances when a parent may request an absence for their child, which may involve some time away from home. Examples of these include:

• The wedding of a family member
• Family bereavement
• Prison visits

The overriding principle should be that the absence ought not to be authorised if it will have a detrimental effect on the child's education**.** Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that the Head of School may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The

Head of School should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Unauthorised Absence

If the absence has not been authorised by the school and an absence occurs, where the child's total unauthorised absences amounts to 10 or more sessions (5 school days), continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic

Attendance Policy

year (including the most recent unauthorised absence), schools are expected to notify the Education Welfare Service. **In all circumstances a written application must be made by the parent with whom the child normally resides at least two weeks before the requested leave**. The Head of School has the discretion to authorise up to ten working days of leave if exceptional circumstances are agreed. The burden of proving this lies with the parent.

The Head of School is not allowed to authorise:
- Availability of cheap holidays or flights
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holiday periods
- Overlap with the beginning or end of term