

# Hassocks Infant School

## Attendance Policy



★ Explore    ★ Respect    ★ Flourish

Date policy agreed:	January 2024
Date policy to be reviewed:	January 2028
Responsibility:	Headteacher



## Hassocks Infant School Attendance Policy

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2005
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Advice on School Attendance (DfE)
- Improving Attendance at School (DfE)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police (DfE)

We believe that children cannot learn effectively if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school staff to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

A pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and the links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Truancy is a matter that we treat very seriously as we feel pupils are not only losing valuable learning time but they are putting themselves at serious risk as the school and their parents are not aware of their whereabouts.

We have a duty to ensure that all parents are aware of our 'legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders or penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school.' Parents have a duty to ensure their children are well behaved and attend school regularly as 'good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects'.

We believe it is essential to have a strong working relationship with the Local Authority which provides support for pupils and their families in order to promote good pupil attendance and to reduce truancy.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force on 1 September 2013. The amendments removed the discretion of Head Teachers to authorise absence in term time for a holiday and make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents wishing to request such an absence are required to submit a written request explaining the circumstances in order that a decision can be made. Examples of circumstances considered to be exceptional and therefore warranting consideration for authorised absence include:

- illness of a close relative
- funeral
- religious observance

We will exercise a consistent approach to ensure equity for all pupils.

We are committed to ensuring that standards for all pupils are higher than schools of a similar size and that standards continue to improve faster than the national trend. We believe we will achieve this by having in place a home-school agreement that all parents have signed up to and by improving pupil attendance and punctuality.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements which are connected with this policy.

## **Aims**

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school
- To have in place procedures to prevent truancy
- To work with other schools, particularly Windmills Junior School and Downlands School to share good practice in order to improve this policy

## **Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

### **Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Head Teacher to ensure all school staff are aware of and comply with this policy
- promote the importance of attendance and punctuality with all stakeholders
- ensure compliance with all statutory pupil registration regulations
- ensure the school identifies and follows up all absence and lateness

- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out
- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders
- monitor termly progress in attendance
- ensure the Head Teacher does not authorise absence if it is to the detriment of a child's education
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

## **Role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher will:

- work with the school community to develop this policy
- ensure all school staff, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy
- create a culture which encourages high levels of attendance
- address all school based causes of poor attendance such as bullying, racism etc
- undertake the monitoring of school attendance via the use of an appropriate and effective registration system
- ensure registration is taken in a timely manner at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session
- ensure school staff are fully trained in the registration process and with the appropriate categorisation of absence
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees
- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning
- ensure early intervention in order to prevent absenteeism and to put in to affect a range of procedures to deal with this problem
- target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders
- provide regular updates to staff on attendance and communicate expectations
- work closely with the Local Authority and Pupil Entitlement Investigation (PEI) team
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence
- question any parental explanation for pupil absence if there is doubt as to the validity of the explanation
- expect an explanation for every absence and if one is not forthcoming then the absence will be categorised as unauthorised
- report attendance data to the Governing Body termly
- remind parents regularly of their commitment to this policy
- write to parents if they have applied for a holiday during school time
- ensure school staff are aware that unauthorised absence is absence without approval from the Head Teacher and includes all unexplained absences
- apply a consistent approach across the school and ensure equity for all pupils
- publicise good attendance via newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body
- organise remote learning with the local support services for pupils with long term illness provided they are well enough to undertake the work
- adopt procedures for reintegrating long-term absentees

- organise training for school staff on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance
- improve teaching in order to improve pupil engagement
- work closely with the governing body and school office to monitor attendance
- strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff especially on bullying and the needs of vulnerable groups
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
  - monitoring trends and patterns as highlighted in attendance data
  - achieving results above the national average
  - looking at results from parent, pupil and school staff questionnaires

### **Role of the School Office**

The School Office is responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Head Teacher
- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9.30a.m
- sending a letter or email if no contact is made
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made
- Informing the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher and no reason has been given for the child's absence
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis
- keeping the Head informed of attendance figures and trends
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance
- organising meetings between the Head Teacher and parents to discuss their child's poor attendance
- responding to parent requests for absence during term time
- compiling attendance data reports for the Head Teacher, the Governing Body and the Local Authority, where appropriate
- updating the register when a child is absent and pass on the information to the class teacher

### **Role of the Local Authority and Pupil Entitlement (PE) team**

Upon attendance issues not being sorted between the parent/carer and the school, a child may be referred to the Local Authority Pupil Entitlement team.

Parents may wish to contact Pupil Entitlement themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and can give impartial advice. The Pupil Investigation team telephone number is: 03302 228200.

### **Role of School Staff**

School staff will:

- comply with and implement this policy
- be aware of all other linked policies
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance
- ensure registration is taken promptly at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day

- ensure registers are up to date
- be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations

## Role of Parents

Parents/carers will:

- comply with this policy
- work as partners with the school in the education of their children
- ensure their children of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education
- ensure their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance
- inform the school on the first day of absence
- inform the school of any changes to their contact details
- collect their children on time
- avoid taking holidays during term time
- be aware that where parents fail to seek permission for time off then the absence will be treated as unauthorised
- be encouraged to take an active interest in their child's work and to take an active role in the life of the school by attending
  - parents and open evenings
  - parent-teacher consultations
  - class assemblies
  - school concerts
  - fundraising and social events
- encourage effort and achievement
- encourage completion of home learning and return it to school
- join the school in celebrating success of their child's learning
- supporting the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school

## Monitoring Attendance

A designated member of the school office staff is responsible for inputting attendance data and monitoring pupil's attendance and punctuality. The Head Teacher will meet half-termly to review pupil attendance.

The school has a target of 97% for pupil attendance. When attendance drops below this figure, the following procedures will be implemented:

- **Attendance falls below 97%:** The class teacher will meet with the parents to discuss the child's absence. Parents are expected to work with the school to improve attendance.
- **Attendance falls below 95%:** Letter 1 is sent to parents. The pupil's attendance is monitored.
- **Attendance falls below 90%:** Letter 2 is sent to parents. The parent is asked to meet with the child's class teacher and key stage leader to discuss attendance. A target for attendance is agreed as well as clear strategies to support the family.
- **Attendance remains below 90%:** Letter 3 is sent to parents. The school will seek guidance from the West Sussex Pupil Entitlement Team.

## **Dealing with Lateness**

Punctuality is important as it allows pupils to settle in to the school day and ensures that they do not miss opportunities to learn. Classroom doors are opened at 8:50 am and pupils may enter the building from this time until 9:00 am. Those arriving after this time are required to sign in at the office and will be recorded as late before the register closes (authorised). The register is closed at 9:30 am and 30 minutes after the start of the afternoon session. Those arriving after these times will have their attendance recorded as “late after register closes”.

Children arriving after 9am will need to be signed in by parents at the school office. Parents will be asked to provide a reason for the lateness.

The Headteacher will work with the office team to monitor punctuality. If a child is regularly late for school, the school will work with parents to improve punctuality:

- Two late arrivals without an exceptional reason: the key stage leader will contact parents reminding of the school’s expectation for punctuality and to offer support / guidance to improve punctuality.
- Four late arrivals without an exceptional reason: a letter will be sent to parents reminding them of the school’s expectation for punctuality
- Continued late arrivals after has been sent: a letter will be sent to parents inviting them to meet with a Senior Leader to improve the child’s punctuality

The school will work with external agencies, including Early Help and the Pupil Entitlement team to address persistent lateness.

## **Dealing with Truancy**

If a pupil is thought to be playing truant then the school will immediately inform:

- the parent/carer
- the police

All truants will receive:

- support
- a programme of monitoring and support

The Police must be informed immediately if a pupil leaves school without prior permission.

## **Absence**

**Holidays during term time** – parents are expected to take a family holiday outside of term time. Leave of absence is only allowed in exceptional circumstances. Parents are asked to complete a holiday form requesting permission to take their child on holiday.

**Religious Observance** – a maximum of three days absence is allowed for religious observance. This is at the discretion of the Head Teacher.

**Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments** – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child’s education. Any unavoidable appointments during school time will require evidence such as a letter from the doctor or hospital confirming the appointment.

## **Raising Awareness of this Policy**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Handbook/Prospectus
- the school website
- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops
- school events
- meetings with school staff
- communications with home such as newsletters
- reports such annual report to parents and Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body
- information displays in the main school entrance

## **Training**

All school staff:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on this policy on induction which specifically covers:
  - the importance of good attendance and punctuality
  - all aspects of this policy
  - the use and understanding of attendance codes
  - authorised and unauthorised attendance
  - looking at trends and patterns
  - bullying
  - the needs of vulnerable groups
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

## **Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy**

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the Head Teacher and the governing body.



## 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
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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
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

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2: Request for Absence in School Time



### HASSOCKS INFANT SCHOOL & WSCC (West Sussex County Council)

#### PARENTAL REQUEST TO SCHOOL TO AUTHORISE AN ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Child's Name	
Date of birth	
Year Group	
Class/form	
Name of person making request & relationship with child	
Address	
Phone Number	
Dates your child will be absent from school	
Total number of school days missed	

Absences will only be authorised if this request is made in advance of the dates your child will be absent from school AND if the circumstances of the absence are exceptional. There is no entitlement to take a child out of school for a family holiday.

The law states that parents must ensure their children regularly attend school to receive their education. The Headteacher can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. An exceptional circumstance is likely to be rare, significant, unavoidable and short.

Whether the absence is exceptional is at the Headteacher's discretion and based on their assessment of the situation. This can vary from school to school. A weeks' absence for holiday and a weeks' absence for illness would give an attendance figure below 95%. The Government considers attendance below 95% unacceptable.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for your absence request. You may be asked to provide evidence to support your request. Please note that having already booked a holiday will not be considered as a good reason for term time absence. In relation to 'unavoidable' absence, the Headteacher will also consider whether the event could have reasonably been scheduled at another time. Issues of cost will not be considered as an exceptional reason.

If you wish for this absence to be authorised, you will need to fully explain (together with evidence) why the circumstances of this absence are exceptional. Please fill in the box below and overleaf.

Why is this absence exceptional?
Why is this absence exceptional? (continued)

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true. I understand that if I do not fully complete this form, fully respond to requests for further information or that ultimately the absence is not authorised, my child's attendance will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I understand that I must ensure my child attends school regularly and that failing to do so is a criminal offence which may result in legal proceedings being taken against me, either through a Penalty Notice or by prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Signed:..... Date: .....  
 (Parent/Carer)

Full Name:.....

Unless further information is required, a decision will be sent to you within 5 school days.

For School use	Date received:	YTD % Attendance:
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Has been authorised     Has not been authorised     Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued

Reason:

- Holidays cannot be authorised in term time
- Reasons given for time away from school are not 'exceptional'
- FPN will be issued as more than 10 sessions in a 10 week period have been missed which are unauthorised (5 school days - a school day is two sessions AM and PM)
- FPN will be issued as attendance is a concern (10 sessions, in 10 weeks)
- FPN will not be issued as the absence is less than 5 days. However, attendance will be monitored and further absences may result in a FPN being issued in line with policy.

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Headteacher: Mr Adrian Bates-Holland

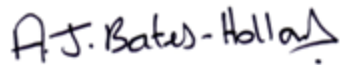
## Appendix 2: Term Time Absence Authorised Letter Template

Dear [Parents/Carers]

Thank you for your request to take [name(s)] out of school between [date] and [date].

This attendance has been authorised and our school registers will be updated accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A.J. Bates-Holland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Mr Adrian Bates-Holland

Headteacher

### Appendix 3: Term Time Absence Not Authorised Letter Template

Dear [Parents/Carers],

Thank you for your request to take children out of school on / between dates.

In this case I regret I cannot consent to your request.

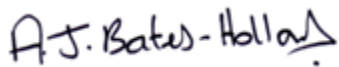
Our school, while acknowledging that each family's circumstances are different, is dedicated to the education of all our pupils and believes regular attendance throughout the year is essential to every child's success and fulfilment.

I have not made this decision lightly. A request for an absence is considered on its merits at the time and many variables are taken into consideration. Under Department for Education guidance, authorised absences can only be granted for exceptional circumstances.

You are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. Unauthorised leave of absence could result in legal action and a Penalty Notice being issued. A penalty notice involves a fine of £60, per parent/carer, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120, per child, per parent/carer if paid within 28 days.

Please note that all unauthorised absences are monitored by the school. Persistent unauthorised absence may result in the involvement of the Local Authority Pupil Entitlement Team and possible legal proceedings.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

### Appendix 3: Template for Letter 1

Dear [Parents/Carers]

Re: Name of pupil

Dob: xxxx

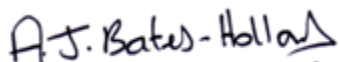
Attendance for Last Year: xx%

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage\_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of their learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have a significant impact on learning. Good attendance enables children to keep up with their learning. There is also a legal requirement for parents and carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If possible, and again if it is medical please ensure we have relevant doctor's notes and appointment details. If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me so that we can work together to support an improvement in school attendance.

Yours faithfully



Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

Enc. Record of attendance

## Appendix 4: Template for Letter 2

Re: Name of pupil

Dob: xxxx

Current Attendance: xx%

Dear [Parents/Carers]

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s attendance is causing great concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting «forename»'s progress and we need to meet with you urgently.

You are required to attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date: xxx

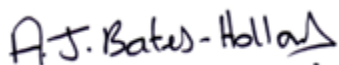
Time: xxx

Should «forename»'s attendance remain irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under Section 444 Education Act 1996. Medical evidence is now required for any future absences to be authorised with immediate effect.

We look forward to meeting you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support our children in making good progress. I hope that you will work with us to improve «forename»'s attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours faithfully



Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

Enc. Record of attendance



## Appendix 5: PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

Dear [Parents/Carers]

Re: Child Name:

DOB: xxx

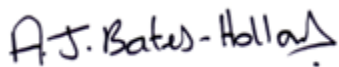
Attendance to date: xx%

It has been brought to my attention that «forename»'s has been absent from school for xxx sessions this school year; based upon a calculation over the previous xxx weeks. I enclose a record of «forename»'s attendance.

As parent(s)/carers it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually.

I am therefore writing to inform you that this case has now been referred to West Sussex County Council for a Penalty Notice fine to be issued.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

Enc. Record of attendance

## Appendix 6: Punctuality Letter

Dear [Parents/Carers],

I'm writing to you because [name] has been late to school [number] times in [timeframe].

[He/she] arrived at school after the register had closed on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

[He/she] also arrived at school late (but before the register had closed) on the following dates:

- > [date]
- > [date]
- > [date]

The school day begins at 8.50am and all children should be in their classrooms, ready to start their day promptly by 9am. Afternoon registration takes place between 1pm and 1.10pm.

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn't miss work, and that disruption to the teacher and other pupils is minimised. Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time.

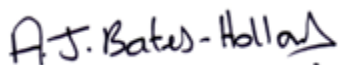
We're committed to working with families to make sure every pupil gets the support they need. We would therefore like to arrange a meeting to discuss how we can work with you to help improve [name's] punctuality.

I have organised a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date: xxx

Time: xxx

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Bates-Holland  
Headteacher

## Appendix 7: Suspected Holiday Letter

Dear [Parents/Carers],

I am writing with regards to <pupil's name> absence from school from <date> to <date>.

From information received from other sources, we believe that the absence was due to a [family holiday/ trip/ birthday]. This means that you have not followed the correct procedure for requesting leave of absence during term time. Please note that we understand that for a range of reasons, families are compelled to book a holiday in term time. However, Government guidelines indicate that leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances. We do ask that families are truthful regarding their intentions.

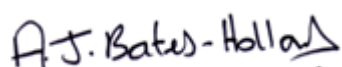
We would be grateful if you could confirm the reason for the absence within 7 days of the date of this letter so this period can be recorded appropriately on the attendance register. However, if the absence was not due to a family holiday and it was due to illness, please provide medical evidence to support this.

If we do not hear from you within the next 7 days, <pupil's name> absence will be recorded as 'G' denoting an unauthorised family holiday.

If unauthorised absences are recorded a Penalty Notice can be issued by the Local Authority to each parent/carer in respect of each child who is absent from school. However, if a Penalty Notice is not issued, your child's attendance will be monitored and this, along with any further unauthorised absences, would be discussed with you which may lead to legal action being taken under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 if the attendance fails to improve.

Kind regards,

Adrian Bates-Holland



Headteacher

## Appendix 8: First day of absence process



### Hassocks Infant School

#### First day of absence process

1. Parents telephone or email the office advising of absence
2. Details updated into Bromcom on receipt of the call or email (the time for this can vary depending on who takes the call). As well as setting the relevant mark in the register i.e. L, M, I etc, the reasons given for absences are recorded as a comment for that child / session in the register – when it is a verbatim comment or directly from an email it is put in double quotes to make this clear.
3. Electronic registers are checked by the office as close to 9.10am as possible
4. Office staff physically check on class absences i.e. to confirm those children not marked in register aren't here, *before* telephoning the primary contact
5. If contact is not made with the primary contact, a voicemail message will be left asking them to phone back asap. NB. secondary contacts will sometimes be called if this is appropriate for that family. An email will sometimes also be sent, again if this is appropriate.

NB. Office staff regularly challenge parents if the illness is mild, reassuring them that we will keep an eye on children during the day and contact them if we have any concerns. If there is no proper reason to keep the child off the parent is told that the absence will not be authorised.

6. The laminated 'Children Absent' sheets in the office are updated with those away from school. These are also updated with anyone arriving late or leaving early throughout the day.