SHANKLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Policy Control Details			
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Prepared by:	Helen Brown	Signature	Date
Approved for issue by:	Gareth Pearson	Signature	Date
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Responsibility for review:	Performance Improvement Committee		

Attendance Policy

1. Introduction

Shanklea Primary School seeks to encourage staff and learners to aspire to fullness of life so that they may achieve their potential. The School's attendance policy plays a central role in this by:

- Empowering learners to become independent and responsible learners
- Encouraging high standards of leadership, behaviour and attainment
- Instilling respect among learners for themselves and others

We place very high value on all aspects of learner attendance and punctuality. Therefore all aspects of policy and practice relate to promoting and sustaining positive attitudes to attendance and punctuality and this is at the heart of teaching and learning.

Shanklea Primary School is committed to ensuring that all learners who register with us will have access to high quality full-time education.

- The Government's goal of "raising educational standards for all young people" requires that learners attend school as a pre-requisite to engaging with the curriculum and learning. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.
- It is Northumberland Local Authority's responsibility in law to enforce the regular school attendance of registered learners of statutory school age.
- The Education Welfare Service (EWS) must serve attendance orders on parents and may institute proceedings against parents of a child who are in breach of a school attendance order or who are failing to secure the regular attendance of their child at school, having first considered whether to a apply for an **Educational Supervision Order with respect to the child (Sections 437, 443 and 444 of the Education Act 1996)**
- Shanklea Primary School has a legal duty to maintain Admissions and Attendance Registers and to record learner attendance or act early to address patterns of absence, including persistent absence.
- Shanklea Primary School also has a duty to have effective systems in place to track and manage learner attendance by developing clear whole school policies and procedures and by engaging with parents, other agencies and the wider community.
- Parents/carers have a duty to ensure that their child/ children receive a full –time education and that children registered at a school attend regularly and punctually.

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Shanklea Primary School will consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances such as:

- the nature of the event for which leave is sought;
- the frequency of the request;
- whether the parent give advance notice; and
- the pupil's attainment, attendance and the ability to catch up on missing schooling.

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a

happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

2. Definitions

The Governing Body is responsible for making sure the School keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and/ or a parent/ carer.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

3. Action in event of absence

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, for example, if a child has a medical appointment. Parents/carers are encouraged to avoid any absence from school and they are made aware that they should not arrange holiday or routine medical check-ups during term time.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4. Requests for leave of absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. We do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event; However, the recent government amendments make clear that schools ***'may not grant any***

leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'. We expect parents to contact the school at the earliest opportunity to obtain approval. Requests will be heard on an individual case by case basis.

It is not an automatic right to absence. Authorization will depend on whether the application meets the DFE 'Special circumstances' criteria, the pupil's current attendance record and other criteria set out in the school's 'Attendance Policy'.

There are key times in the academic year when authorization will not be granted:

- in the first term of any new school placement,
- during the Year 1 Phonic screening test,
- during Year 2 SATs,
- during Years 3-5 Optional SATS and
- leading upto and during the Year 6 SATS.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion and is not a parental right. The application must be made well in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. The head teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

5. Long-term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6. Repeated unauthorized absences

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorized absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorized absences the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LEA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governing body, supported by the LEA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7. Penalty Notices

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice.

Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

8. **Rewards for good attendance**

All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one term will receive an excellence certificate for attendance which will be awarded at the last assembly of the term. There are special gold certificates and book vouchers for any child who has 100 per cent attendance for a whole year.

9. Attendance targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governing body at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LEA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

10. Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governing body to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the head teacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governing body will therefore examine closely the information provided them, and seek to ensure that the school's attendance figures are as high as they should be.

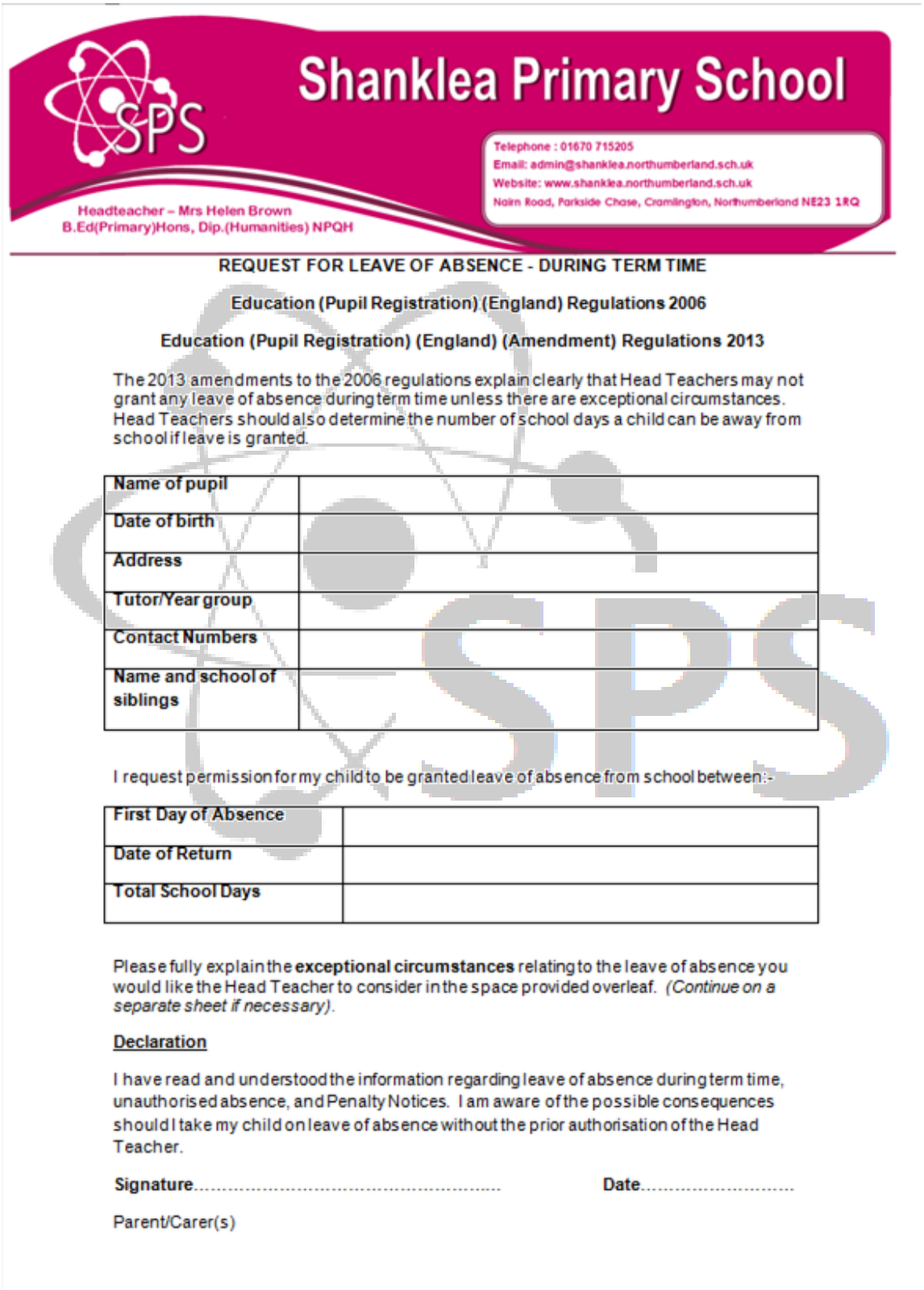
The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus and website, and in the termly Headteacher's report to the Governing Body.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardian.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Appendix A: Request for leave form



Shanklea Primary School

Telephone : 01670 715205
Email: admin@shanklea.northumberland.sch.uk
Website: www.shanklea.northumberland.sch.uk
Nairn Road, Parkside Chase, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 1RQ

Headteacher – Mrs Helen Brown
B.Ed(Primary)Hons, Dip.(Humanities) NPQH

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE - DURING TERM TIME

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations explain clearly that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head Teachers should also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Name of pupil	
Date of birth	
Address	
Tutor/Year group	
Contact Numbers	
Name and school of siblings	

I request permission for my child to be granted leave of absence from school between:-

First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Total School Days	

Please fully explain the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the leave of absence you would like the Head Teacher to consider in the space provided overleaf. *(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).*

Declaration

I have read and understood the information regarding leave of absence during term time, unauthorised absence, and Penalty Notices. I am aware of the possible consequences should I take my child on leave of absence without the prior authorisation of the Head Teacher.

Signature..... **Date**.....

Parent/Carer(s)

Important Information for Parents/Carers

The Education Act (1996) requires parents to ensure their child attends school regularly. There is no automatic right to take your child out of school during term time. The Law does however allow Head Teachers to consider individual requests to authorise a Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstance(s).

The Head Teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to justify an authorised absence. It is the parent's responsibility when submitting the request to provide all the information and evidence to prove exceptional circumstances.

The request for authorised Leave of Absence must be made at least two weeks in advance and the Head Teacher may invite the parent/carer(s) into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.

If the Head Teacher authorises the Leave of Absence it is expected that the child's attendance will be of a satisfactory level both prior and after the date covered by the request.

If the Head Teacher refuses Leave of Absence and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Head Teacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies.

Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child.

- Failure to pay due will result in prosecution before Magistrates Court.
- Prosecution under Section 444 (1) Education Action 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to **£1,000**.
- Prosecution under Section 444 (1a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to **£2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.**

Research suggests that children who are absent from School may never catch up on the learning they have missed, which may ultimately affect exam and test results. As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss school for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

Exceptional Circumstances (please provide further information to your request for leave during term time)