



## Policy Directive and Procedures

# ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

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Contact:	Head of Inclusion and Services for Children & Schools		
 :	<a href="mailto:educationsportandculture@gov.gg">educationsportandculture@gov.gg</a>		
 :	Sir Charles Frossard House La Charroterie St Peter Port GY1 1FH		
 :	+44 (0)1481 224000 <a href="http://www.gov.gg/education">www.gov.gg/education</a>		
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## Summary of Changes<sup>1</sup> from Previous Versions

Version no/Date	Change	Comment	Section/ Page
V3.1 August 2021	Updated to reflect change of name from Education Services to Education Inclusion Services		Throughout
	Addition of 3 new codes relating to COVID-19	Codes 7, 8 and 9 can be used for absence relating to absence for COVID-19 and for self-isolation and shielding	P41
	Minor adjustments to section 10 on Home Education	Section clearly reflects statutory powers	P16
V3.2 March 2022	Changes to COVID-19 codes	Removal of codes 8 and 9, minor amendments to wording for code 7	P12 and P44
V3.3 October 2022	Addition of statement the impact of post-COVID-19 recovery on attendance targets		P9
	Addition of policy alignment with The Education Strategy		P7
V4 March 2023	General contextual update	Update ensures the policy is in line with current terminology, practice and research.	Throughout
	Reference to the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child	Reference to Article 3	P5
	Reference to the Children Law (Guernsey and Alderney), 2008.	The Children Law (Guernsey and Alderney) is referenced under Accountabilities and The Legal Framework	P6 and P8
	New guidance describing how schools should record a half day on SIMS	Schools should record a half day on the school diary in SIMS instead of repeating the morning marks for the afternoon session	P15
	Changes to the Termly School Audit Checklist and Action Plan	Description of orange rating added. Questions and descriptions of red and green ratings refined.	P20
	Changes to the Staged Approach to Attendance Management	Removal of "Stage 2 continued"	P27

<sup>1</sup> Material changes only. Minor changes (such as to punctuation, grammar, etc.) will not be listed

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

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	Change of approved educational activity codes	Code D changed to Present and Code S changed to Authorised Absence	P40 and P46
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### Contents

Summary of Changes from Previous Versions.....	2
1.0 Introduction .....	5
1.1. Policy Statement .....	5
1.2 Policy Objectives .....	6
1.3 Policy Application.....	6
1.4 Accountabilities.....	6
1.5 Linked Documents.....	7
1.6 Associated Documents.....	7
1.7 Alignment with the Education Strategy.....	7
2.0 The Legal Framework.....	8
3.0 Managing School Attendance .....	9
4.0 School Data Analysis .....	11
5.0 Attendance Registers .....	12
6.0 Individual Tuition .....	15
7.0 Recording Absence.....	15
7.1 Authorised Absence includes:.....	15
7.2 Unauthorised Absence includes: .....	15
8.0 Medical Absence .....	15
9.0 Staged Approach to Attendance Management .....	15
10.0 Home Education.....	16
11.0 The Schools' Attendance Service .....	16
12.0 Process for Requesting SAS Individual Casework with a Learner.....	17
13.0 How will the Attendance Policy be Evaluated? .....	18
Appendix 1: Termly School Audit Checklist and Action Plan .....	20
Appendix 2: Staged Approach to Attendance Management.....	27
Appendix 3: Suggested Model Letters to Parents/Carers .....	29
Letter for Unexplained Absence .....	29
Letters for Punctuality .....	29

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

---

Letters for Illness/Medical Reasons (more than 3 periods of illness in a term or an illness extending beyond 5 days).....	30
Letter for below 95% .....	32
Letter for below 90% Attendance.....	32
Appendix 4: Notification of Leave of Absence for Holiday (Optional Form for Use) .....	35
Appendix 5: Absence and Attendance Codes.....	36
Registration Code: / \.....	36
Registration Code: B.....	36
Registration Code: C.....	37
Registration Code: D .....	38
Registration Code: E.....	38
Registration code: G.....	39
Registration code: H.....	39
Registration Code: I.....	40
Registration Code: L.....	40
Registration code: M.....	41
Registration Code: 7.....	42
Registration Code: 8 and 9.....	42
Registration Code: N .....	43
Registration Code: O .....	43
Registration Code: P.....	43
Registration Code: R.....	44
Registration Code: S.....	44
Registration Code: T.....	45
Registration Code: V .....	46
Registration Code: W .....	46
Registration Code: X.....	46
Registration Code: #.....	47
Registration Code: Y.....	47

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1. Policy Statement

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture (“The Committee”) and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all, to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all learners registered for school education attend regularly and on time and that they access all that education offers. The Committee’s expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%.

The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual learners and families (*Working Together to Improve School Attendance, May 2022, DfE*). Therefore, schools need to work closely with families, carers and both professional and community partners to remove any barriers to attending school.

Recent research and reflections on good practice across the UK indicate that high levels of attendance are achieved when a high quality of education is offered to learners. This is achieved through providing a curriculum which is ambitious, broad and balanced, and led by specialists.

Article 3 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child states that “in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”<sup>2</sup>

Learners who do not attend school regularly are at risk of poor outcomes in regards to; low attainment, reduced social contact and vulnerability to compromised mental health and wellbeing. This has an impact on later life, including health risks and limited employment and social opportunities. The link between poor school attendance, poor academic achievement and limited life outcomes has been well established across international studies and local data also reinforces the importance of school attendance in terms of attainment at Level 2 qualifications.

It is therefore the intention of The Committee and schools that we act in the best interests of learners by promoting their attendance at their registered school.

The key principles which underpin the policy and procedures for managing attendance are that:

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<sup>2</sup> [The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

- Parents/carers whose children attend school have a duty to ensure that their children attend regularly and punctually to benefit most from their education
- Regular and punctual attendance at school is key to the academic and social development that will improve the life chances of learners
- Learners who attend school regularly and punctually are less likely to be at risk, both in terms of engaging in anti-social behaviour and in terms of their own health, safety and welfare

### 1.2 Policy Objectives

This Attendance policy directive and procedures set out the requirements for the management of learner attendance and absence. They reflect statutory requirements, national guidance and good practice.

### 1.3 Policy Application

All schools and settings<sup>3</sup> in Guernsey and Alderney must satisfy the statutory obligations relating to registration listed in Section 2.0. The further detailed direction provided within this policy and procedures applies to all States schools (including Catholic voluntary schools). Whilst this policy is primarily focused on children of compulsory school-age, policy statements regarding holidays in term time also apply to Post 16 provision at both The Guernsey Institute (TGI) and the Sixth Form Centre.

It is acknowledged that TGI have their own policies and practices which would align with the philosophy and practice of this policy. Schools are responsible for learners attending TGI College of FE Partnership Courses and should ensure registers are updated accurately.

Throughout this policy directive, 'Headteacher' refers to Heads of Service and the College of Further Education Principal, and 'school' refers to any education establishment.

The application of this policy is delegated to officers within The Education Office.

### 1.4 Accountabilities

Parents/carers have a legal duty under Section 17 of the Education (Guernsey) Law 1970 to ensure that any children of compulsory school age receive an efficient and suitable full-time education.

Headteachers are accountable for:

- Ensuring the maintenance of accurate school registers

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<sup>3</sup> Both States and otherwise

- Ensuring the management of attendance at whole school level, in line with effective whole school procedures

The Education Office, on behalf of The Committee has duties to:

- Carry out checks on school attendance registers in SIMS
- Remind parents/carers of school children of their duty to ensure their children access education
- Refer children to the Office of the Children's Convenor (under section 35 of the Children Law).

### 1.5 Linked Documents

[Home Education](#)

[School Audit Checklist and Action Plan \(Appendix 1\)](#)

[Staged Approach to Attendance Management \(Appendix 2\)](#)

[Model Letters for Parents/Carers \(Appendix 3\)](#)

[School letter – formal template for individual schools \(States of Guernsey Communication manual\)](#)

[Notification of Leave of Absence \(Optional form for school use\) \(Appendix 4\)](#)

### 1.6 Associated Documents

[SEN/Inclusion - Default](#)

[Behaviour - All Documents](#)

[School's Management Information Systems \(SIMS\) policy](#)

[Education Strategy](#)

[Model Safeguarding and Children Protection Policy](#)

*TGI College of FE Student Attendance Policy*

### 1.7 Alignment with the Education Strategy

The policy aligns with the following commitments under the Education Strategy

#### **Equity, Safety & Inclusivity**

1. Embedding whole-setting cultures and practices which promote inclusivity, challenge inequity, support health and well-being for all and remove barriers to personal ambition.
3. Ensuring that the protective measures in place to safeguard and keep learners safe are of the highest standard in all settings
4. Striving for excellence, by acting quickly to challenge any areas of under-performance and providing effective and responsive support to settings so that all learners receive a high quality of education

#### **Meeting the Needs of Our Community**

3. Operating in a spirit of openness and transparency so that all stakeholders understand the processes in place across the Bailiwick to maintain the highest quality of education

### **High quality learning and excellent outcomes**

1. Championing early intervention approaches in all phases and building on excellent foundations to provide the best outcomes for our learners

### **Outstanding Leadership and Governance**

3. Reporting regularly, accurately and meaningfully on the quality of education across the Bailiwick

4. Developing a shared culture of trust, honesty, open communication and reflection across the whole education sector that embraces and promotes continuous improvement and accountability at all levels

## 2.0 The Legal Framework

Section 17 of the Education (Guernsey) Law 1970 (the '1970 Law') places a legal duty on parents/carers of every child of compulsory school age (5-16)<sup>4</sup> to ensure that they are receiving efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by attendance at school or otherwise<sup>5</sup>.

Under Section 20 of the 1970 Law, parents/carers who fail to secure their children's regular attendance (at school) shall be guilty of an offence and Education Inclusion Services has a duty to take appropriate action by serving a School Attendance Order on the parent(s)/carer(s).

Under Section 35 of the Children (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 2008, the following conditions must be satisfied to justify a court or the Tribunal making an order about a child for reasons of non-attendance:

"There is, or appears to be, no person able and willing to exercise parental responsibility in such a manner as to provide the child with adequate care, protection, guidance or control, and;

(g) the child (being under the upper limit of the compulsory school age) is failing to attend school without good reason"<sup>6</sup>

In accordance with the Learners' Registration (Guernsey) Regulations, 1970, it is a statutory requirement for schools to:

- Maintain school registers

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<sup>4</sup> Compulsory school age is defined as the start of the term commencing on or after the child's fifth birthday, until the last Friday of June in the school year in which they reach 16 years of age (Section 16 of the 1970 Law, as amended by the Education (Guernsey) (Amendment) Law, 2009 and the Education (Compulsory School Age) (Guernsey) (No2) Ordinance 2008.

<sup>5</sup> 'Otherwise' refers to educational provision that does not take the form of attendance at school. The majority of these cases will apply to learners who are being home educated or receiving individual tuition or having an individualised learning programme as prescribed by a Determination of Needs.)

<sup>6</sup> [The Children Law \(Guernsey and Alderney\), 2008, page 57-58.](#)

- Accurately record the presence or absence of all learners at the commencement of each morning and afternoon session
- Make their registers available for inspection by Education Inclusion Services

### 3.0 Managing School Attendance

Schools are in the best position to raise levels of attendance. Schools have the primary responsibility for promoting regular attendance and for dealing with poor punctuality and attendance in the initial stages. The most effective model for managing attendance is through clear registration systems and an active whole-school staged and escalating approach involving all members of staff.

Attendance is an important whole-school issue and needs to be managed by a senior member of staff within every school. The Headteacher, with the support of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), needs to ensure that the management of attendance at whole school level is achieved with clear roles and responsibilities for Form Tutors, Headteachers of Year and the relevant SLT member. The management of attendance must be based on effective whole school procedures which set out how attendance will be addressed both in terms of individual learners and as a whole school issue. The school attendance procedures should underpin all actions and promote and improve attendance and actions to address absence.

Schools should consider carefully any use of exclusion in individual cases where regular and punctual attendance is an issue, as this may exacerbate and appear to condone or reward non-attendance.

The following guidance indicates the areas of responsibility for the Attendance Lead:

- Promoting the highest standards of safeguarding by ensuring that the attendance codes and notes which are recorded on the School's Information Management System (SIMS) are accurate and up to date
- Remind staff that the primary motivator for learners to attend school is the offer of a high-quality education
- Collating and analysing data for the purpose of intervention and forward planning
- Establishing whole school procedures, based on the Staged Approach to managing attendance, so that escalating systems and procedures are adhered to for the management of attendance (see Appendix 2)
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of these procedures in the School Termly Audit Checklist and Action Plan (see Appendix 1)
- Liaising with administration staff around the communication from parents/carers regarding absence and procedures

- Liaising with the Head of Year, Form Tutors, Class Teachers, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Family Liaison Officer (FLO)/Family Support Worker (FSW), Inclusion Lead, regarding systems, procedures and interventions
- Issuing letters to parents/carers as a follow up to non-attendance and where there are concerns about levels of absence (see Appendix 3)
- Arranging school attendance meetings with parents/carers as part of the Staged Approach to Managing school attendance (see Appendix 2)
- Meeting regularly with the designated School Attendance Service (SAS) Officer for the school to discuss whole school and individual cases including any new referrals
- Attendance at Education Inclusion Services Attendance Meetings (ESAM), when required
- Preparation of written reports and statements for legal purposes and representing the school in the Magistrates Court or the Child Youth Community Tribunal

The school prospectus should include a statement on parental responsibility for their child's school attendance, expectations regarding attendance and punctuality, guidance on notifying the school of learner absence, and unauthorised absence, including holidays in term time. Factual information such as '90% attendance is the equivalent to half a day off school per week' and 'a learner who has 10 days of holiday in term time can only achieve a maximum of 94.7% attendance for that school year' could also be included.

The school's information on the Attendance Policy for Schools must convey:

- Details of the systems for promoting attendance, recording attendance within SIMS and absence and for addressing lateness and absence of all learners to ensure consistent implementation
- Details of the Staged Approach to Attendance Management including escalation of concerns for absence beyond first day calling.
- Roles, responsibilities and contributions of the whole school community, including parents/carers
- The arrangements for monitoring of attendance within SIMS and the measures that will be taken to tackle poor attendance, including the involvement of external agencies and the use of statutory powers
- A clear statement on the timing of the school day and for register closure (20 minutes after the start of the school session for both morning and afternoon)
- Details on the procedures for parents/carers to notify school when learners are absent
- Details of how and when the school will contact parents/carers as a follow up to school absence
- Procedures for dealing with notifications of unauthorised absence, for example holidays in term time (Appendix 4 provides an optional form for use by schools)

- Information about systems for working with the SAS on whole school initiatives and individual referrals
- Information for advising parents/carers who are concerned or may need additional support

Schools are in the best position to raise levels of attendance. Schools should consider the use of targets for individuals, classes and year groups to promote good and improving attendance. There are various schemes and systems that can be implemented and schools should contact their school's Attendance Lead to obtain further information.

As school attendance is our key means of safeguarding learners, schools may encourage the provision of specific tasks for some learners to complete, as a transition item by which to have them come into school but any more substantial arrangement than this would be likely to reinforce their non-attendance.

It is recognised that schools are undergoing a post-COVID-19 recovery phase. During this time, incremental attendance targets aligned with the national (English) attendance headlines, from the previous term, can be used.<sup>7</sup>

Schools will regularly draw upon advice from the SAS to establish and review their own procedures. The School Audit Checklist (see Appendix 1) will be used on a termly basis.

### 4.0 School Data Analysis

School attendance data is held on SIMS and the school is responsible for the accuracy and maintenance of this data. Schools should analyse the patterns of attendance and absence on a regular basis. It is essential that the Attendance Lead uses this whole school data to determine how the school should address the attendance issues within their own context and to set meaningful targets for improvement. These interventions should be communicated and shared across the school.

Analysis of data should include consideration of:

- Patterns with particular subjects, classes or year groups

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<sup>7</sup> Schools should continue to track their attendance and set incremental, school specific attendance targets (in alignment with *FFT Regional Attendance Tracker*) to work towards achieving attendance 95% or higher. These figures should be appropriately applied as incremental, internal targets for the special schools, depending on the school setting. It should be noted that any review of attendance data within these settings should recognise the small and varied cohorts. It is acknowledged that certain learners who have been identified as requiring special school placement will commence those placements with a lower baseline attendance than would be the case of learners at mainstream schools. Attendance figures can be disproportionately affected by a small number of learners.

- Individual learners with punctuality problems, broken weeks of attendance or post registration absence
- The attendance of different groups of learners such as Special Educational Needs (SEN), Children in Care (CIC) and other vulnerable groups
- Difference in attendance and absence of male and female
- Analysis of absence by registration code
- The number of learners having short but regular absences
- The impact of a few learners with very high levels of absence

This list is not exhaustive but includes examples of analysis which the school should investigate. It is vital to analyse this data in order to identify areas for improvement. This enables different groups and strategies to be prioritised in order to improve attendance across the whole school as well as making effective use of resources. It is essential that the school communicates with parents/carers about attendance and absence. These communications must provide clear details and audit trails about school level action, as they may be needed at a later date to support escalated measures (as noted below).

It is of the utmost importance that school attendance records are entirely accurate and that school is in a position to demonstrate that every effort has been made to support learners who fail to maintain regular attendance at school. Factual information and records will need to be passed to the Children's Convenor or to the Law Officers of the Crown with any referral that is made.

### 5.0 Attendance Registers

Schools are legally required to maintain registers of attendance. The school has a duty to ensure these registers are accurate and timely to safeguard their learners, as detailed within the Model Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. The Education Office has a statutory responsibility to carry out register checks and the SAS is authorised by the Director of Education to inspect attendance registers.

Registers should indicate whether the learner is present or absent and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for absence or has accepted an explanation afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

It is important to note that The Bailiwick has bespoke attendance codes and descriptions differ from guidance published by the Department for Education. Schools should always refer to the Attendance Policy for Schools for guidance on the meaning of codes.

Only schools (not parents/carers) can authorise absence and schools must adhere to Absence and Attendance Codes (Appendix 5) as listed within this policy, relating to authorisation.

Schools must record separately if learners are on an approved educational activity using the correct code. This will count as a present mark but for health and safety reasons it is recorded separately. Such activities might include work experience, field trips, sporting activities or Year 6 learners attending 'taster days' at their secondary school.

Schools must be aware that they are responsible for Child Protection and Health and Safety of learners in all of the circumstances described in the above paragraph. The Headteacher/Principal must ensure accurate registration procedures and regular communication between the school and staff responsible for the alternative provision, such as work experience, regarding attendance. If the learner does not attend the alternative provision, they should not be marked as present in the school register, and normal procedures for dealing with non-attendance should be triggered. **Schools must not complete the register using a 'blanket' code to cover certain days in each week in advance. Attendance data should be exchanged between the provider and school on a daily basis and the school register updated accordingly.**

A building timetable in school may only be agreed as part of a planned package which has been implemented at a School Action Plus SEN Review meeting, or School Attendance Stage 2 or 3 meeting, or Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting. Schools should not place learners on building timetables for an indefinite period. Any building timetable should be time limited and include a plan to return to full time within six weeks at the longest. Schools should monitor and review any plan at least fortnightly, with a multi-agency meeting at least six weekly in order to look at what is working and what is not and try to amend any plan to find a way forward. All building timetables must be notified to the SAS via minutes and a copy of the timetable. All sessions for which the learner does not attend school should be marked in the register with a 'C' (Other Authorised Circumstances –statistical meaning authorised absence. See Appendix 5.)

School registers will be monitored in a variety of ways by School Attendance Service Officers:

- By viewing registers, either at school or remotely
- By requesting attendance certificates from school

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	STATISTICAL MEANING
/	Present (for morning session)	Present
\	Present (for afternoon session)	Present
B	Educated off site	Approved Educational Activity (counts as present)
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Time out or internal exclusion	Present
E	Excluded	Authorised absence
G	Special Circumstances (sent home)	Authorised absence
H	Holiday during term time	Unauthorised absence, including for Post 16 learners (for safeguarding reasons, school must be informed that holiday is taking place)
I	Interview	Authorised absence
L	Late during registration	Present
M	Illness or dental treatment	Authorised absence
7	Illness: Tested positive for COVID-19	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised circumstances	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting event	Approved Educational activity (counts as present)
R	Religious Observation	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave (Yr 11 & Yr 13 learners sitting public examinations only)	Authorised Absence
T	Late after registration closed	Present
V	Educational visit	Approved educational activity (counts as present)
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity (counts as present)
X	No attendance required	Attendance not required—not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all learners	Attendance not required—not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced school closure	Attendance not required—not counted in possible attendances

On the last day of term, where schools chose to close after the morning session, schools should record a half day for the afternoon session in the School Diary on SIMS. This will mean that attendance is not required during the afternoon session.

## 6.0 Individual Tuition

Learners engaged in an alternative provision programme of individual tuition, for example, delivered through an e-learning system, should remain on the roll of their school, with relevant codes (see Appendix 5) used as appropriate to record sessions.

## 7.0 Recording Absence

The Attendance policy for recording absence is in line with Guernsey Law. Should it become necessary for the States of Guernsey to use statutory power, the application of this policy should underpin that action.

Schools need to give careful consideration to authorisation of absence for some learners and the following guidance may be of help in making decisions concerning authorisation.

### 7.1 Authorised Absence includes:

The following absences from school are authorised by The Education Office: illness, medical and dental appointments (where these cannot be secured outside of the school day), interviews (with prospective employers or for further schooling), exclusions and special circumstances (See Appendix 5).

### 7.2 Unauthorised Absence includes:

The following absences from school are not authorised by The Education Office (as any unauthorised absence poses safeguarding risks for learners): holidays during term time, family events, spectating at sporting events (See Appendix 5).

### 8.0 Medical Absence

Please refer to Appendix 5.

## 9.0 Staged Approach to Attendance Management

The Staged Approach to attendance management is detailed in Appendix 2 and this should be followed by schools to ensure that there is a comprehensive and transparent process of management and intervention across the whole continuum of attendance management from school level, through the SAS to possible Child and Youth Community Tribunal or referral to Law Officers.

## 10.0 Home Education

Parents/carers have the right to educate their children other than at school. If a parent/carer decides that they wish to home educate then they must write to the Director of Education and make their child's school aware of their intention. A Children's Officer, SAS Officer and/or an appropriate officer from The Education Office will then arrange to make a home visit to seek parental confirmation that an appropriate alternative education programme is being provided for the learner and that the home is a suitable environment for this programme. Schools should not remove a learner's name from the school roll until they are notified to do so by Education Inclusion Services.

## 11.0 The Schools' Attendance Service

The SAS works within the legal framework of the 1970 Law and the Children Law 2008 is directly concerned with discharging legal obligations in relation to school attendance, welfare and employment of children. In particular, the SAS is concerned to ensure that the 1970 Law (which relates to the children of compulsory school age receiving full-time education) is applied fairly and equally for the benefit of learners. The SAS works in partnership with schools and with a wide range of other support agencies in order to support families and children in improving school attendance. The SAS becomes engaged in a case via the agreed referral process following the school-based stages of intervention as detailed within this policy.

In order to ensure that registered learners of compulsory school age attend school regularly and punctually the SAS uses a number of approaches:

- Allocation of a designated SAS Officer to each school
- Provision of strategic advice to schools in self-evaluation of attendance and in developing improved systems and policies for managing attendance
- Monitoring attendance through regular inspection of school records and liaising with the school Attendance Lead
- Gathering wider information on issues that impact on attendance, for example by researching the views of learners and parents/carers, being aware of information known to Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH)
- Participating in school meetings with parents/carers and learners, following staged and escalating intervention by the school
- Undertaking individual case work following staged and escalating intervention by the school
- Enforcing school attendance either through the provision of The Education (Guernsey) Law, 1970 or The Children (Guernsey & Alderney) Law 2008

The SAS will make routine visits to schools according to need and to meet a minimum schedule:

- Mainstream secondary schools will be visited once every week by the designated SAS Officer in order to meet with members of staff responsible for managing school attendance
- Grant aided colleges will be visited once every half term in order that the school attendance records can be inspected and any concerns discussed by the SAS Officer with a designated member of staff
- Primary and Special schools will be visited at least once every half term. The school is able to contact the SAS Officer in between these scheduled visits should concerns arise

## 12.0 Process for Requesting SAS Individual Casework with a Learner

Schools have responsibility to promote, manage and monitor attendance and to respond appropriately to non-attendance.

Education Inclusion Services expects that the school will have implemented a variety of strategies and interventions in a staged and escalating process to attempt to improve the attendance of a learner including meetings with parents/carers and they will have made a written record of these interventions before a request is made for SAS involvement.

Appendix 2 outlines the staged and escalating attendance management process, including the criteria, processes, actions and responsibilities for schools, Schools' Attendance Service and Education Inclusion Services in ensuring that the Education [Guernsey] Law 1970 is effectively discharged.

The SAS has two levels of work with individual learners and their families:

### 1. 'Known to the SAS'

All learners whose attendance is:

- At secondary school, below 85%
- At primary school, below 90%
- And/or whose punctuality is cause for concern

will be discussed by the school Attendance Lead and the SAS Officer, for them to participate in the agreement of suitable next actions. Other learners with higher levels of attendance, but whose pattern of attendance is of concern, may also be discussed with the SAS Officer.

In some instances, the SAS Officer may participate in a school-organised one-off meeting with parents/carers and/or learners. (Stage 2 of the Staged Approach to attendance

management). The school must inform parents/carers, with two days' notice, that the SAS Officer will be meeting their child.

## 2. 'Active Casework with the SAS'

Requests for SAS casework involvement with a learner will be agreed between the school and SAS Officer so that they may co-work on the case. Such requests will be made by the school completing a Request for Involvement form, which notes details about the learner and the processes already used by school to improve that learner's attendance. These learners will be considered to be '**Active Casework with the School Attendance Service**' (Stage 3 of the Attendance Management Process).

The main reason for a request for involvement for Active Casework will be:

- Despite school staff carrying out actions in keeping with their attendance procedures, attendance remains poor and/or there is persistent lateness

**and**

- the school to receive support from the SAS Officer to carry out further work with the learner and family with a view to improve engagement and attendance

For all requests for involvement to be agreed, in keeping with the required stages of school level intervention, the school will have a robust record of key issues and the actions taken in relation to the learner's attendance.

## 13.0 How will the Attendance Policy be Evaluated?

If the policy directive is working, then the following outcomes would be expected:

- All schools will have attendance procedures in place
- All schools are operating first day absence procedures with escalating staged approaches beyond this
- Schools are actively promoting the importance of attendance
- Improved overall school attendance levels are evident across the Bailiwick
- Improved attendance is evident for vulnerable groups
- Schools have robust systems for collating, analysing and monitoring attendance data
- Improved attendance across primary, secondary and special schools is evident
- Schools are linking strategies for improving attendance to raising achievement with improved outcomes
- Reduced numbers of learners have attendance below 85% (persistent absentees)
- Reduced absence for holidays in term time is evident
- There is a reduction in the numbers of learners having unauthorised absences
- Absences due to medical or dental appointments are reduced in number and as a percentage of overall absence

- Schools raise awareness of the importance of improving school attendance for parents/carers
- There is a reduction in the number of learners becoming “Not in Education Employment or Training” (NEET) when leaving Year 11

## Appendix 1: Termly School Audit Checklist and Action Plan

Considerations	Development Points	RAG	Statements to aid considerations		
			Red	↔	Green
<b>Recent Performance</b> 1. Has the school created a welcoming environment to entice learners into the school, with strong relationships, routines and responses?			Few learners and parents/carers are made to feel welcome at the school	Some learners and parents/carers are made to feel welcome at the school	Learners and parents/carers are made to feel welcome and valued within the school
2. Is attendance improving across all year groups?			Attendance remains at low levels across all year groups.	Attendance remains at low levels across some year groups.	Attendance consistently improves or remains acceptably high across all year groups.
3. Is attendance improving across all departments?			Attendance is improving in a third of departments.	Attendance is improving in two thirds of departments.	All or almost all departments are showing improved attendance.
4. Are there structures in place by which the school analyses their attendance data on a regular basis?			The school does not have structures by which to analyse data regularly	The school has some structures in place by which to analyse data regularly	The school has structures in place to analyse data regularly.
<b>Capacity to drive progress</b> 5. Is attendance a priority for the school?			School has few, if any, evident strategies and related incentives in place by which to encourage attendance	The school has some evident strategies and related incentives in place by which to encourage attendance.	The school has a wide range of evident strategies and related incentives in place by which to encourage attendance.
6. Is attendance a priority area for the school, with the Attendance Lead a member of the SLT?			The Attendance Lead is not a member of the SLT and there is no time is prioritised for promoting attendance.	The Attendance Lead is a member of the SLT but little time is prioritised for promoting attendance.	The Attendance Lead is a member of the SLT and attendance is given clear priority within the school.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

7. Are all staff actively engaged in promoting regular attendance?		Staff are not engaged in promoting attendance, for example, not completing registers regularly and accurately or promoting attendance through a range of initiatives, including data analysis.	Some staff are engaged in promoting attendance, but others do not complete registers regularly and accurately or promote attendance through a range of initiatives, including data analysis.	All staff promote regular attendance, by completing registers regularly and accurately and promoting attendance through a range of initiatives, including data analysis.
8. Has the school got a concise picture of current attendance issues?		The school is unaware of the reasons for poor attendance and has no improvement plan in place.	The school is aware of reasons for poor attendance and has a focus on some learners.	The school has a concise view of the overall attendance issues and reviews this regularly.
9. Is time allocated to the Attendance Lead to manage attendance activities and permit their engagement with the SAS Officer so that effective support, guidance and challenge may be provided to the Attendance Lead?		The Attendance Lead is given little time to manage attendance activities and meet with the SAS Officer.	The Attendance Lead is given some time to manage attendance activities and meet with the SAS Officer but this is not adequate.	The Attendance Lead has identified protected time to manage attendance activities and meet with the SAS Officer, and this commitment is honoured.
10. Are all members of staff, learners, parents/carers and services clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to promoting regular attendance in the school?		Staff, learners, parents/carers and services do not perceive attendance to be their responsibility.	Some staff, learners, parents/carers and services perceive attendance to their responsibility, but others do not.	Staff, learners, parents/carers and services perceive attendance to be their responsibility and actively promote attendance with all learners.
11. Does the school work well with learners and parent/carers and are roles and expectations made clear?		There is poor co-operation with learners and parents/carers and roles and expectations are not well communicated.	Some co-operation exists with learners and parents/carers and there is some communication in relation to roles and expectations.	Good co-operation exists with learners and parents/carers and there is clear communication in relation to roles and expectations.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

<p>12. Does the school adhere to the Staged Approach to attendance management for promoting attendance and possible later referral to SAS (and other agencies as appropriate)?</p>		<p>Staged Approach to attendance management is not being followed and the SAS may be asked to be involved with a learner without following the prior stages.</p>	<p>Staged Approach to attendance management is followed but not consistently. The SAS may be asked to be involved with a learner without following the prior stages.</p>	<p>Staged Approach to attendance management is being followed and the SAS may be asked to be involved with a learner at the appropriate stage.</p>
<p><b>Quality Of Planning</b> 13. Does the school have attendance procedures which are based on the Attendance Policy for schools, which have been shared with all key stakeholders incl. staff, parents/carers and learners?</p>		<p>The school does not have clear attendance procedures and those which do exist have not been shared with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>The school does have clear attendance procedures but these might not be in keeping with the Attendance policy for schools and these may or may not have been shared with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>The school does have clear attendance procedures based on the Attendance policy for schools and these have been shared with key stakeholders.</p>
<p>14. Are the procedures rigorously and consistently applied across all levels?</p>		<p>Overall, inconsistent application of procedures.</p>	<p>Some procedures applied across some levels.</p>	<p>Procedures applied rigorously and consistently across all levels.</p>
<p>15. Is there a school level action plan to improve attendance (with timescales) that is in accordance with the Attendance policy for Schools?</p>		<p>There is no school level action plan which or where a plan does exist, it is not in accordance with the Attendance Policy for schools.</p>	<p>There is a school level action plan however it is not in accordance with the Attendance Policy for Schools.</p>	<p>There is a plan which is in accordance with the Attendance Policy for Schools.</p>
<p><b>Performance Management</b> 16. Does the Attendance Lead regularly collate and analyse data to enable effective monitoring of the school's attendance, using robust systems?</p>		<p>The Attendance Lead does not regularly collate and analyse the data.</p>	<p>The Attendance Lead collates and analyses the data but not on a regular basis. The systems in place are not robust.</p>	<p>The Attendance Lead regularly collates and analyses data within a robust system.</p>
<p>17. Are interventions, which are consistent with the Attendance Policy for Schools, reviewed and their impact monitored?</p>		<p>Interventions are inconsistent with the Attendance Policy for Schools. They are not reviewed and the impact is not monitored.</p>	<p>Interventions are consistent with the Attendance Policy for Schools, however they are not reviewed and impact is not monitored.</p>	<p>Interventions are consistent with the Attendance Policy for Schools, and they are reviewed and impact is monitored.</p>

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

<p>18. Is there compliance with the Staged Approach to attendance management for groups of learners and parents/carers at all levels of attendance difficulty?</p>			<p>There is no compliance with the Staged Approach to attendance management, so attendance matters are managed inconsistently.</p>	<p>There is inconsistent adherence to the Staged Approach to attendance management. This results in attendance issues being overlooked or some escalated prematurely.</p>	<p>There is consistent compliance with the Staged Approach to attendance management, so attendance matters are managed proportionately.</p>
<p>19. Does the school understand the association between attendance and learner level attainment, and monitor these in parallel?</p>			<p>The school does not associate attendance with learner attainment.</p>	<p>The school recognises the association between attendance and learner attainment however has no clear process for assessing impact.</p>	<p>The school recognises the association between attendance and learner level attainment, and applies consistent procedures to monitor these in parallel.</p>
<p>20. Are the school staff aware of the target expectations of attendance levels set out by The Education Office?</p>			<p>School staff are unaware of the target expectations of attendance levels set out by the Education Office.</p>	<p>School staff have some awareness of the target expectations of attendance levels set out by The Education Office.</p>	<p>All school staff have an awareness of the target expectations of attendance levels set out by The Education Office.</p>
<p>21. Does the school use a wide and adequate range of effective strategies to provide support, incentives and sanctions for learners with persistent attendance difficulties?</p>			<p>The school does not use adequate strategies to support learners with persistent attendance difficulties.</p>	<p>The school uses some strategies to support learners with persistent attendance difficulties but these may be inadequate in their range or effectiveness.</p>	<p>The school uses a wide and adequate range of effective strategies to provide support, incentives and sanctions for learners with persistent attendance difficulties.</p>
<p>22. Is improving teaching and learning understood to be critical to raising attendance levels?</p>			<p>Teaching is understood to be critical to raising attendance levels.</p>	<p>There is some understanding that teaching is critical to raising attendance levels.</p>	<p>There is a good understanding that teaching is critical to raising attendance levels.</p>
<p>23. Does the school have a process to ensure that attendance codes are recorded accurately (in accordance</p>			<p>Attendance codes are not recorded accurately.</p>	<p>There is some accurate recording of codes with this is inconsistent.</p>	<p>There is consistent and accurate recording of attendance codes.</p>

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

with the Attendance Policy for Schools)?				
24. Are attendance levels fed back regularly to staff, learners and parents/carers?		There is no communication on attendance levels.	Attendance levels are reported to some audiences but not all.	There are a range of effective strategies to communicate attendance levels to the full range of audiences.
25. Does the school display high profile information on attendance in school with a clear purpose of encouraging learners to attend?		There is no communication of attendance aims.	Attendance aims are communicated but not in a high-profile way.	Attendance aims are high profile and clearly intended to encourage learners to attend.

**Action Plan for Attendance Management \_\_\_\_\_ Term 20\_\_**

<b>1. Recent Performance</b>				
<b>Actions / Tasks</b>	<b>By when?</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources and Training required</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
•				
•				
•				
•				
•				

<b>2. Capacity to drive progress</b>				
<b>Actions / Tasks</b>	<b>By when?</b>	<b>Responsibility.</b>	<b>Resources and Training required</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
•				
•				
•				
•				

<b>3. Quality of planning</b>				
<b>Actions / Tasks</b>	<b>By when?</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources and Training required</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
•				
•				
•				
•				
•				

<b>4. Performance Management</b>				
<b>Actions / Tasks</b>	<b>By when?</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Resources and Training required</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
•				
•				
•				
•				

## Appendix 2: Staged Approach to Attendance Management

	Stage 1: School Action	Stage 2: School Action +
	It is the responsibility of the Attendance Lead (who will be a member of the SLT) for the school to ensure that the following procedures are followed.	It is the responsibility of the Attendance Lead for the school to ensure that the following procedures are followed.
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance Lead is responsible for monitoring learner's attendance within SIMS</li> <li>Attendance Lead recognises that attendance is not at an adequate level</li> </ul> <b>Attendance Lead acts to attempt to ensure that attendance improves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Discuss patterns and causes of poor attendance and record relevant key points</b></li> <li><b>Agree and record attendance targets for the learner for the next 4 weeks</b></li> <li><b>Agree and record action to improve attendance with SLT</b></li> </ul>
Reason	<p>When for whatever reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance is below 95%, <i>and/or</i> Lateness recorded as 'T' for at least three sessions within a two week period <i>and/or</i></li> <li>Attendance situation (as observed in school register or from other information known to school) gives cause for concern, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular same day absence over time</li> <li>Greater clarity about medical absence necessary</li> <li>In school, but not attending lessons</li> <li>High number of occurrences of going home sick during the day</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	When Stage 1 actions have not resulted in improved attendance.
Action	<p>Member of school staff may visit the home unannounced to clarify reasons for unauthorised absence</p> <p>School staff may send written communication home, depending on the circumstances of the case, stating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of concern</li> <li>Possible outcomes if attendance does not improve (i.e. possible Stage 2 actions)</li> </ul>	<p>Headteacher/Principal or designated member of staff decide one of the following to be organised by school:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designated member of staff to meet with parent/carer and/or learner</li> <li>Designated member of staff to meeting with parent/carer, learner and SAS Officer ('known to SAS Officer'). School must inform parent/carer that the SAS Officer will be joining the meeting.</li> </ol> <p>Some of these meetings might involve multi-agency professional colleagues and any relevant information including attendance matters must be shared.</p>
Record Keeping	<p>School staff must log on SIMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date the written communication sent</li> <li>A copy of the content of written communication</li> </ul>	<p>School staff must log on SIMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which type of Stage 2 meeting has been held (a, b or c)</li> <li>Date of meeting</li> <li>Record of relevant key points discussed</li> <li>Attendance targets for learner for next four weeks</li> <li>Agreed actions</li> <li>Review date</li> </ul>
Impact Review	<p><b>Within four weeks of sending written communication:</b></p> <p>Headteacher/Principal or designated member of school staff reviews any change in attendance and uses judgement to decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Well done' written communication (where improvement), or</li> <li>Continue at Stage 1 action, or</li> <li>Move to Stage 2 action</li> </ul>	<p><b>Within four weeks of the meeting:</b></p> <p>Headteacher or designated member of school staff, in consultation with SAS Officer, review any change in attendance and use judgement to decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Well done' written communication (where improvement), or</li> <li>Continue at Stage 2 action</li> <li>Stage 3 action and determining whether request for SAS involvement required</li> </ul>

## ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR SCHOOLS

	<b>Stage 3: SAS Involvement</b>	
	It is the responsibility of the Attendance Lead for the school and the allocated SAS Officer in partnership to ensure that the following procedures are followed.	
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>School Attendance Lead has escalated concerns to the SAS Officer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SAS Officer may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Further identify and investigate reasons for the high number of absences</li> <li>○ Undertake casework with the learner and their parents/carers</li> <li>○ Develop relationships between learner, parents/carers and school</li> <li>○ Join school staff in developing and reviewing an Attendance Action Plan to improve attendance</li> <li>○ Consider multi-agency intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Reason</b>	SAS Officer and designated school Attendance Lead agree that the Stage 2 actions have indicated the need for SAS involvement is required alongside school action, and, school has made a written Request for Involvement of the SAS (using current proforma request form).	
<b>Action</b>	<p><b>Within three weeks of receipt of the written Request for Involvement</b>, key school staff and SAS Officer meet to draw up a Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan for the learner<sup>**</sup>. The SAS Officer to co-ordinate this meeting, appropriate school staff to attend, parents/carers and learner invited to the meeting. The meeting to go ahead between key school staff and SAS Officer even if learner and parent unable to attend. If there are a high number of Medical absences the SAS Officer will request that the parent/carer sign a declaration which will enable the SAS Officer to obtain/share all relevant health information with health care professionals.</p> <p>Once Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan has been drawn up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key school staff share the plan with other relevant school staff</li> <li>• If parents/carers and learner have been unable to attend the Attendance Action Plan meeting, the SAS Officer share the plan with them.</li> <li>• Key school staff and SAS Officer agree who will share the Attendance Action Plan with other professionals involved.</li> </ul> <p><b>Within six school weeks of Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan meeting</b>, key school staff and SAS Officer meet for a Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan Review. The SAS Officer to co-ordinate this meeting, appropriate school staff to attend, parents/carers and learner invited to the meeting. The meeting to go ahead between key school staff and SAS Officer even if learner and parent unable to attend.</p> <p>*If there is already a 'Team around the child' (TAC), the Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan meetings should be subsumed within a TAC meeting with the related discussion clearly minuted and any relevant information recorded in the Child's Plan.</p> <p><sup>*</sup>Specific, suitable arrangements will be made with St Anne's School in order to most appropriately manage this process.</p> <p>From time of receipt of written Request for Involvement, any SAS Officer casework with learner and their family, and liaison with school staff and other professionals, will take place according to the professional judgement of the SAS Officer.</p>	
<b>Record Keeping</b>	<p>School staff must log:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of Stage 3 Attendance Action Plan meeting</li> <li>• Record of relevant key points discussed</li> <li>• The content of the Attendance Action Plan</li> <li>• Review date</li> </ul>	<p>SAS Officer must log on SAS electronic file:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronology of their work</li> <li>• Attendance Action Plans</li> <li>• Correspondence and notes of other meetings related to the learner</li> <li>• Childs Plan / Reports</li> </ul>
<b>Impact Review</b>	<p><b>During the period of SAS Officer Involvement and casework, at least monthly, SAS Officer and key school staff review progress and use judgement to decide:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue at Stage 3 action, with SAS Officer involvement and amendment to the Attendance Action Plan as appropriate, plus consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multi-Agency Support Hub (MASH)</li> <li>- Office of the Children's Convenor</li> <li>- Education Service Attendance Meeting (ESAM)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Continue at Stage 3 action, with SAS Officer involvement and amendment to the Attendance Action Plan as appropriate</li> <li>• Return to 'Stage 2', because the attendance is improved enough and stable enough for SAS Officer involvement and casework to cease, but continued school action is required</li> <li>• 'Well done' written communication (where improvement)</li> </ul>	

## Appendix 3: Suggested Model Letters to Parents/Carers

The following gives suggested content for letters to parents/carers. The overall layout for letters should be in line with that set down in the States of Guernsey Communication Manual, where an example letter is provided for each individual school.

### Letter for Unexplained Absence

Dear

#### **Absence from School**

I am pleased to see that your child, (*name*), has returned to school following a period of absence. However, the school has not received from you an explanation for (*name's*) recent absence.

It is a legal requirement that the school maintains accurate records regarding learner attendance and in particular the reasons for any absence. Such records contribute to the process of promoting regular school attendance among learners.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture (“The Committee”) and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all, to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and on time and that they access all that education offers. The Committee’s expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard. I should, therefore, be grateful if you would contact the school at your earliest convenience with an explanation for (*name's*) recent absence from school.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

### Letters for Punctuality

Dear

#### **Punctuality at School**

I am writing to you to express concern regarding your child, (*name's*) punctuality at (*name*) School. Attendance records held by the school reveal that since (*date*), (*name*) has arrived late for school on (*number*) occasions.

I should like to emphasise the importance of learners arriving punctually at school for both morning and afternoon sessions. This ensures that learners do not miss out on important information at the beginning of each session, and it avoids disruption to the learning of other learners. Additionally, late arrival at school (after registration) may contravene Section 20 of The Education (Guernsey) Law, 1970 regarding regular school attendance.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture (“The Committee”) and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all, to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee’s expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with the school, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided.

Your co-operation in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Letters for Illness/Medical Reasons (more than 3 periods of illness in a term or an illness extending beyond 5 days)

Dear

### **Absence from School – Illness**

I am grateful to you for having notified the school of your child, (*name(s)*) ill health, which has been responsible for the recent absence(s) from school. This/these absence(s) has/have been recorded as ‘authorised’ in the school attendance register. However, in order to continue recording (*name’s*) absences as ‘authorised’, the school will require confirmation of (*name’s*) continuing ill health from a medical practitioner.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture (“The Committee”) and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee’s expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard.

I should, therefore, be grateful if you could provide the school with a letter or medical certificate from your family medical practitioner regarding (*name’s*) current state of health.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with the school, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided.

Yours sincerely

**OR**

Dear

### **Absence from School**

You will be aware through the school's contact with you that your child, (*name's*) record of school attendance during the (*name*) Term (*year*), has given cause for concern. During this period (*name*) attended school for (*number*) out of a possible (*number*) sessions, thereby achieving only (*number*)% attendance.

It is not entirely clear whether (*name's*) absences from school can be attributed to ill health. Should ill health be responsible for all or part of (*name's*) absences from school it would be in your interest to provide the school with evidence of this in the form of medical certificates or a letter from your family doctor.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture ("The Committee") and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee's expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard.

Should (*name's*) record of school attendance continue to give cause for concern and in the absence of medical certificates or a letter from your family doctor, it will be necessary for the school to decide what further action should be taken by both school and Education Inclusion Services.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with the school, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided.

Yours sincerely

## Letter for below 95%

Dear

### **Attendance at School**

I am writing to inform you that your child, *(name)*'s attendance is giving cause for concern. At present, *(name)* attendance for the current school year is *(number)*%.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture ("The Committee") and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee's expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard.

I understand there may be good reasons for *(name)* absence of which we may not be fully aware. If you feel *(name)* is experiencing any issues related to school that are affecting attendance, please contact the school using the contact details provided. This will enable us, as a school, to ensure the safety and promote the learning of your child.

Yours sincerely

## Letter for below 90% Attendance

Dear

### **Attendance at School**

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your child's attendance is currently *(number)* % for this academic year.

We have a duty to make you aware when your child's absence falls below an acceptable level. If you are experiencing any difficulties enabling your child to attend school, please contact school as there are many ways in which we can provide support and help.

All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually. If there is no improvement in attendance, a referral may be made to the School Attendance Service Officer. In extreme circumstances, one possible outcome when difficulties are not resolved is the initiation of legal proceedings.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture ("The Committee") and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The

Committee's expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A child who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard. Any child whose attendance falls below 90%, for whatever reason, including sickness absence and holidays, therefore becomes a cause for concern as this will constitute at least 20 days of absence across a full school year.

If your child is ill, please continue to inform the school on the first morning of absence as to the reason for the absence including the nature of the illness. In cases where there are frequent absences due to illness, we may ask you to provide medical evidence from your GP in order for the school to authorise the absence.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with the school, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

**OR**

Dear

### **Attendance at School**

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your child's attendance has been declining and is currently (*number*) % for this academic year.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture ("The Committee") and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all, to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee's expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%. A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard. Any learner whose attendance falls below 90%, for whatever reason, including sickness absence and holidays, therefore becomes a cause for concern as this will constitute at least 20 days of absence across a full school year.

Learners who do not attend school regularly are at risk of poor outcomes in regards to; low attainment, reduced social contact, vulnerability to compromised mental health and wellbeing. This has an impact on later life, including health risks and limited employment and social opportunities.

We have a duty to make you aware when your child's absence falls below an acceptable level. If you are experiencing any difficulties enabling your child to attend school, please contact school as there are many ways in which we can provide support and help.

As a result of this your child will be discussed with the School Attendance Service (SAS) Officer with a request for the involvement of that service to be made. The role of the SAS Officer is to monitor your child's attendance. Where appropriate a home visit may be made in order to discuss with you reasons for your child's absence and offer support to improve attendance. All parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually. In extreme circumstances, one possible outcome when difficulties are not resolved is the initiation of legal proceedings.

If your child is ill, please continue to inform the school on the first morning of absence as to the reason for the absence including the nature of the illness. In cases where there are frequent absences due to illness, we may ask you to provide medical evidence from your GP in order for the school to authorise the absence.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further with the school, please do not hesitate to contact us using the contact details provided.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 4: Notification of Leave of Absence for Holiday (Optional Form for Use)



States of Guernsey  
Education Inclusion  
Services

### Notification by Parent/Carer of Leave of Absence for Holiday During Term Time

The Education Office within the States of Guernsey cannot and does not approve of school learners taking holiday in term time.

For reasons of safeguarding though, it is essential that schools are informed as to a learner's whereabouts when not in school during term time.

There is therefore a requirement for you to complete the form at the foot of this page and submit it to your child's Headteacher/Principal at least 2 weeks in advance of the date of the proposed holiday.

As holidays during term time are not authorised, your child will be marked as absent from school throughout the period of the holiday.

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture and schools seek to provide high standards and high expectations for all, to enable learners to be successful and pursue a happy and fulfilling life. It is essential that all of the learners registered for school education attend regularly and punctually and that they access all that education offers. The Committee's expectation is that all learners will achieve an attendance of at least 95%.

A learner who has 10 days of absence across the school year will not meet this minimum standard.

Learners who do not attend school at or above 95% of the school year are at risk of poor outcomes in regards to; low attainment, reduced social contact, vulnerability to compromised mental health and wellbeing. This has an impact on later life, including health risks and limited employment and social opportunities.

I am notifying you that (name of child): \_\_\_\_\_

Will be taking leave of absence from (name of school): \_\_\_\_\_

from (date): \_\_\_\_\_ to (date): \_\_\_\_\_

in order to take part in a holiday.

**I understand that this absence is not authorised by the school and will have a detrimental impact on my child's educational opportunities.**

Signature of parent/carers: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5: Absence and Attendance Codes

Registration Code: / \

<b>Brief description</b>	Present / =am \ =pm
<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	Present
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Present
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	In for whole session

### Additional useful information:

- Learners should be marked present within the first 20 minutes of the first morning and afternoon session when they are in school for registration. Activities outside the school day are not recorded. Participation in other activities organised by the school should be recorded via another register if deemed appropriate.
- Any learner arriving after registration has taken place should have their attendance coded using the appropriate late mark.
- When a learner is on site they should be recorded as being present with the appropriate present code applied e.g registration code D for Internal Exclusion. Where a learner is attending an approved educational activity off site, they will again be recorded as present under the appropriate present code e.g registration code P for Sporting or Cultural Activity.
- If a learner were to leave the school premises after registration they would continue to be counted as present for statistical purposes
- The afternoon registration must take place within the first 20 minutes of the afternoon session.
- Schools have a primary duty to ensure the safeguarding of their learners. They therefore must be aware of where learners are, and confident that they have been able to record the whereabouts of those coming in and out of the school site. Some schools achieve this through a paper system in the school office, such as requiring learners to sign in and out as they come and go, to record that a learner has left the premises. The secondary schools can use the 'Lesson Monitor' in SIMS reports to identify learners who are missing from lessons. In cases of unexplained absence, the school must follow this up in a timely manner and provide first day calling, such as through the use of Group Call or through their office administration staff.

Registration Code: B

<b>Brief Description</b>	Educated off site
<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	Approved educational activity
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Attending approved educational activity

**Additional useful information:**

This code can be used for learners who are present at educational provision which is not based at school. **The updating of the learner’s absence and attendance must be completed at least on a daily basis and learners must not be given ‘blanket’ codes indicating attendance at alternative provision for the whole school year.** Examples of when this code would be used:

- Attending a taster day at another school
- Attendance at the College of Further Education
- Individual tuition at home or other agreed location (only for the sessions when they are receiving this)
- Work experience where this is part of an educational programme or alternative curriculum. Not to be used for general work experience
- This code must not be used if the learner is participating in the alternative provision on the school site
- Schools should not use this code if a learner has an agreed building time timetable as part of reintegration or transition. The school is authorising the absence for the sessions that a learner is not required to be in school for the period of time agreed, and the learner should be recorded as Code C for those sessions. Building time timetables are a useful strategy to help learners adapt or re-adapt to the school setting but must only be used as a short term measure.

Registration Code: C

<b>Brief Description</b>	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code)
<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	Out for the whole session

**Additional useful information:**

Only exceptional occasions warrant leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking the following into account:

- The nature of the event for which leave is requested
- Its frequency (is it one-off or likely to be on-going)
- Whether the parent gave advance notice
- The learner’s overall attendance pattern

Learners who are absent from school for the purposes of attending weddings, funerals, specialist exams (e.g. dancing exams, music grade exams) should receive code 'C' in the attendance register, providing parents/carers have given prior notice to the school of the reason for absence **and the school has agreed to this absence.**

This code C is also used for learners of statutory school age who, for one reason or another, are not required to attend school for a specific session. This code should be used for:

- Learners on a temporary building timetable as part of a planned package which has been agreed at a School Action Plus SEN Review meeting, or School Attendance Stage 2 or 3 meeting, or Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting. Schools should not place learners on building timetables for an indefinite period. Any building timetable should be time limited and include a plan to return to full time within six weeks at the longest. Schools should monitor and review any plan at least fortnightly, with a multi-agency meeting at least six weekly in order to look at what is working and what is not and try to amend any plan to find a way forward. The SAS must be notified of all building timetables via minutes and a copy of the timetable.
- This code should be used together with a comment in the comment box on SIMS in which 'no attendance required' should be entered

See guidance on code X regarding learners who are of a non-statutory school age who are not required to attend certain sessions.

### Registration Code: D

<b>Brief Description</b>	Time out or internal exclusion
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Present
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Present
<b>Physical meaning</b>	In for whole session

#### **Additional useful information:**

This code is available to be used for secondary schools and is to be used for learners who are present in school, but are temporarily apart from other learners (for the purposes of their accessing time out or complying with an internal exclusion).

### Registration Code: E

<b>Brief Description</b>	Excluded
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

Schools should consider carefully any use of exclusion in individual cases where regular and punctual attendance is an issue, as this may exacerbate and appear to condone or reward non-attendance.

This code is used to record learners' absence because they have been excluded from school:

- Parents/carers must receive the notification letter within 24 hours of exclusion and must be notified before then regarding attendance at school for the day after the exclusion. The Exclusion Letter should state very clearly the length of the exclusion in terms of days and the date and time of when the learners should return to school
- Learners who fail to return to school following a period of exclusion should be recorded as 'N' (no reason yet provided)

Registration code: G

<b>Brief Description</b>	Special circumstances (sent home)
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out of school for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

This code is used when learners are sent home under special circumstances (previously known as 'cooling off'). This includes:

- The day when the learner is sent home and a maximum of one additional day. This is conditional upon parents/carers agreeing to their child being sent home and agreeing to attend a meeting in school. If parents/carers do not agree to their child being sent home, schools may decide to implement an alternative behaviour management strategy

Registration code: H

<b>Brief Description</b>	Planned holiday during term time
<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	Unauthorised absence
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	Out of school for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children receive full-time education as far as is possible and avoid any disruption to their education.

Holidays in term time are not a right and will not be authorised.

A learner who has 10 days holiday in term time during one whole academic year will only attain a maximum of 94.7% attendance.

For reasons of safeguarding, should parents/carers arrange a holiday in term time, they will be required to inform the Headteacher/Principal in writing of their intention and the dates of the holiday in advance (there is an optional proforma available for this at Appendix 4.) This process should be explained in the school prospectus and emphasis should be placed on the fact that there is a wide body of research indicates that holidays in term time are likely to be prejudicial to children's education.

Schools are under no obligation to set or mark work of learners whilst they are on holidays during term-time.

Any additional absence due to unforeseen circumstances should be recorded as appropriate using the Attendance Policy for Schools.

### Registration Code: I

<b>Brief Description</b>	Attendance at interviews directly related to career or continuing education
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

#### **Additional useful information:**

This code should only be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers for career progression or for a place at a further or higher education establishment (Years 11, 12 and 13). It should not be used for interviews for other reasons.

Schools need to be satisfied that the interview is linked to further education or employment and school staff should normally ask for advance notice and proof of the appointment.

### Registration Code: L

<b>Brief Description</b>	Late during registration
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Present
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Present
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Late for session

#### **Additional useful information:**

Education Inclusion Services advises that schools should close the register to learners 20 minutes after the start of the session for both the morning and afternoon period and that the register should not be left open for the whole session.

If the learner arrives late for school through no fault of their own, but as a result of late arrival of the school bus then either the code 'L' or the code 'T' should be used, depending on whether the lateness is during or after registration, together with a comment in the comment box in which 'late due to transport' is entered.

Registration code: M

<b>Brief description</b>	Illness or dental treatment, medical
<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

This code should be used for illness other than COVID-19. Where a learner does have COVID-19, please use code 7.

Parents/carers and learners should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Sight of an appointment card and/or letter from parents/carers is advisable.

If the learner is present for registration but has a medical appointment later, no absence need be recorded for that session. Schools should keep a record of learners leaving or returning to the site in case of emergency.

When parents/carers contact the school they should be asked to provide a specific reason for absence and indicate when it is anticipated that their child will be fit to return to school. Clearly there are some illnesses where the learner's absence is likely to extend beyond three school days. Parents/carers should be encouraged to keep the school regularly informed of their child's progress.

**Code 'M' should not normally be continued beyond three days without confirmation from the parents/carers of their child's continuing ill health. The latest Public Health guidelines should be applied and a comment on the reason for absence should be entered in the comment box.** In the case of longer term medical absences or where a learner has more than three medical absences within a half-term, weekly contact by the parents/carers with the school is of particular importance.

Where an absence persists beyond three days and there is no reason provided then the school should contact the parents/carers to discuss any difficulties which may be preventing the learner from attending and the relevant attendance code can be applied; good practice would be to invite parents/carers into school to meet and discuss these difficulties.

Where the illness absence persists beyond five days or where there are repeated medical absences which reach the threshold (three separate illness absences during a single half term period regardless of the length of each) then it is reasonable for schools to request that parents/carers provide legitimate medical evidence in support of their child's future medical absences from school. Evidence can take the form of medical certificates, medical notes and letters from medical practitioners, or appointment notifications. In order for the school to fulfil their safeguarding duty to the school, they will seek this information to confirm that it is a genuine medical reason. Should there be a need to take future legal action, this information will be of benefit to both the school and the parents. The school may choose to consult with the School Nurse in regard to such medical matters.

If there are regular short term illness absences which reach the cumulative threshold of three separate illness absences within a half term that are not supported by legitimate medical evidence then the school should arrange a meeting with parents/carers to address the reasons for these absences. The most effective method of dealing with such school attendance meetings is to schedule them once every half term as a discrete group within the Stage 2 School Attendance Meetings and consideration should be given to involving the School Nurse in these meetings (See Appendix 2 for Stage 2 School Attendance Meeting)

### Registration Code: 7

<b>Brief description</b>	Illness: Tested positive for COVID-19
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

#### **Additional useful information:**

If a learner is absent from school parents/carers are required to contact the school on the first day of absence with an explanation of their child's absence. In the event of the absence being because they have contracted and tested positive for COVID-19 (whether symptomatic or asymptomatic), the code '7' is to be used.

### Registration Code: 8 and 9

Please note that registration codes 8 and 9 (relating to self-isolation and shielding from COVID-19) will still be present on the system but **should not be used**.

## Registration Code: N

<b>Brief Description</b>	No reason yet provided for absence
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Unauthorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

This code is restricted to absences for which explanations from parents/carers have not been received. **This is a temporary code and should be substituted by the relevant code within three school days of the initial entry.**

## Registration Code: O

<b>Brief Description</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code)
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Unauthorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical Meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

Examples might include:

- Learner's/sibling's/relative's birthday
- Shopping
- Having hair cut
- Special treat
- 'Couldn't get up'

This code should be used in cases where despite attempts by the school to obtain an explanation from parents/carers for a learner's absence, no explanation has been received. The Code 'N' should therefore be substituted by the code 'O'. This code should also be used for ongoing absences which have not been adequately explained.

## Registration Code: P

<b>Brief Description</b>	Approved Sporting Event
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Approved educational activity
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Attending approved educational activity
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

This code applies to learners who are physically absent from school but are undertaking a exceptional sporting or cultural event that can only be attended during the school day, as part of the individual’s personal development or some other form of specific educational activity that meets with the approval of the school

For example, the P code should be used for those learners:

- Participating in Eisteddfod events (whether entered by school, parents/carers or out-of-school group)
- Participating in the Jersey Dance World Cup

The learner must be taking part in the activity. Spectating at an event must not be treated as an approved educational activity.

If schools have concerns about the appropriateness of an activity then they can seek advice from the SAS. However, the final decision rests with the school and they should take the effect on the learner’s general education into account when deciding whether to authorise this or code it as ‘O’ unauthorised absence

The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is given.

### Registration Code: R

<b>Brief Description</b>	Religious observance
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

#### **Additional useful information:**

Absence permits members of specific faith communities to carry out their religious observances on days which have specifically selected to be religious festivals by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong. Parents/carers should be encouraged to give advance notice.

If the religious organisation has not set the day aside then there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence.

### Registration Code: S

<b>Brief Description</b>	Study leave
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Authorised absence
<b>Legal Meaning</b>	Absent

<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session
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**Additional useful information:**

This code should only be used for Year 11 and Year 13 learners sitting public examinations. When calculating the use of study leave, and therefore the authorised absence caused by recording this, schools should be aware that:

**For Year 11 learners sitting public examinations:**

- Study leave should not be granted for mock examinations
- The earliest that use of code 'S' can commence in advance of public examinations is following the Summer half-term holiday
- Learners cannot leave school until the last Friday in June of the school year when they reach 16 years of age. Code 'S' should be used for Year 11 **until** the last Friday in June, with code 'X' (attendance not required) being used after this date until the end of the summer term

**For Year 13 learners sitting public examinations:**

- The availability and timing of study leave will depend upon the type of course being undertaken
- If granted for mock examinations, it should only be used during the mock examination period (not in advance)
- If learners are not required to return to lessons after the public exams, code X should be used from the end of the examination period until the school's official end of term

## Registration Code: T

<b>Brief Description</b>	Late after registration closed
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Present
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Present
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Late for session

**Additional useful information:**

Schools should close the register 20 minutes after the start of the session for both morning and afternoon sessions.

This code should be used when a learner arrives late after the close of registration and a comment should be made to explain the reason for this.

## Registration Code: V

<b>Brief Description</b>	Educational visit or trip
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Approved educational activity
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Attending approved educational activity
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

Approved educational activity must be supervised by someone authorised by the school. It must also take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

Learners who are involved in approved field trips or activities within or outside the Island including activities that form part of 'activities week/project week' should be recorded as 'V' in the register.

## Registration Code: W

<b>Brief description</b>	Work experience
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Approved educational activity
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Attending approved educational activity
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Out for whole session

**Additional useful information:**

This code is used for learners in Year 10 and 11 who are attending an approved 'work experience placement'.

Approved educational activity must be supervised by someone authorised by the school.

## Registration Code: X

<b>Brief Description</b>	No attendance required
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	No attendance required – not counted in possible attendances
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Absent
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Not required to be in school

**Additional useful information:**

This code should only be used in relation to learners of non-statutory school age who are not required to be in school.

This code should be used for:

- Learners in Reception who are following a phased entry into school

- Year 11 **after** the last Friday in June, the official school leaving date, until the end of the summer term.
- Year 13 learners who are not required to return to lessons after public exams, from the end of the examination period for their course, until the school’s official end of term.

The code should **not** be used in cases where the school places a compulsory aged learner on a building timetable, for example as part of an integration programme.

Registration Code: #

<b>Brief Description</b>	School closed to learners
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Legal meaning</b>	No session held
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Not required to be in school

**Additional useful information:**

This code will apply to InSeT days or days exclusively set apart for staff.

It is also used for whole school planned closures such as between terms, half term.

Registration Code: Y

<b>Brief description</b>	Forced and partial closure
<b>Statistical meaning</b>	Attendance not required
<b>Legal meaning</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Physical meaning</b>	Not required to be in school

**Additional useful information:**

In the event of schools being forced to close (partly or fully) due to emergency repair work, adverse weather conditions, health and safety reasons etc. the code ‘Y’ is to be used.

The code should not be used for planned closures of the school site which could be recorded as Code ‘#’.

Where the whole or part of the school is forced to close in exceptional circumstances then this can be recorded in SIMS by way of selecting a ‘system wide’ entry for the whole school and applying enforced closure to all learners in the school.