



## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

SLT Responsible Person: Mr Peter Carpenter

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### **To be read in conjunction with:**

SEND Policy

Managing Medical Conditions Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Supporting Children who are Unable to Attend School Due to Medical / Health Needs Policy

## **INTRODUCTION**

At Helston Community College we aim to promote and instil the importance of regular and punctual attendance at college. We believe that this will not only support our students to be successful during their time at the College, but also as they leave to become well rounded, valued members of our community.

Helston Community College recognises its responsibilities to ensure children are in college and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, Helston Community College works collaboratively with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all children are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning and frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress. Poor attendance can also have a negative effect on social and emotional development. This might include maintaining a group of friends and a sense of belonging to the college and wider community.

A student whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at Helston Community College miss just over 4 half-terms of learning or 19 full school days in each year.

Our policy applies to all students registered in Key Stage Three and Four at Helston Community College and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of students who are registered with us on our college website. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education, in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

The member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for attendance at Helston Community College is Mr P Carpenter, Assistant Headteacher.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

This Attendance and Punctuality Policy ensures that all staff, parents/carers and governors of Helston Community College are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the college.
- Raise the awareness of parents/carers and students of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a student's education.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure, and valued, and to encourage in students a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, tutors and our Attendance Manager, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents/carers and students.
- Ensuring that parents/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping students with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good attendance at Helston Community College and punctuality appropriate to the student's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents/carers, students, staff and governors on college attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting students who have been experiencing difficulties at home or in college which are preventing good attendance.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### ***Session***

This is a term related to the recording of absence data - every college day must have two 'sessions' (morning and afternoon), divided by a break, for which attendance must be recorded.

### ***Authorised absence***

An absence is classified as authorised when a student has been away from college for a legitimate reason and the College has received notification from a parent or carer.

*Only the College can make an absence authorised – Parents/carers do not have this authority. Where the absence is not authorised we will inform parents/carers of this.*

### ***Unauthorised absence***

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a student is away from college without the permission of Helston Community College.

If the absence is unauthorised, the Education Welfare Services will be notified of the absence and consideration may be given to a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings for non-attendance. A Penalty Notice is issued to each parent/carer of each student taken out of college and that this carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid on time, it may result in legal action being taken against parents/carers. **Parents/carers have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Legal action under Section 444(1) can result in a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.**

A Penalty Notice will be considered if a student's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. This is defined as falling below the threshold of 97%. In the Autumn Term, a student's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

**Further information on avoidable absences and the Law can be found in Appendix A.**

## **PROCEDURES**

Helston Community College will undertake the following procedures to support good attendance:

- Maintain appropriate registration processes.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and students.
- Consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- Follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the college.
- Inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- Work with parents to improve individual students' attendance and punctuality.
- Refer to the Attendance Manager any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to college initiatives to improve.
- Report attendance statistics to Cornwall LA and the DfE where requested.
- Staff will raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Attendance Manager and the Leadership Team.
- Carry out home visits as and when appropriate.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

All members of Helston Community College staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the responsibilities which individuals might have.

### ***Senior Leadership Team***

- Monitor attendance and where concerns are identified, consult with parents/carers/outside agencies to agree actions to address identified issues.
- Inform local Governors of attendance data through leadership reports.
- Inform parents/carers of attendance percentages for their child/ren in line with the college's reporting procedures.
- Promote excellent attendance by students and provide opportunities to celebrate good attendance.

### ***Headteacher (or member of senior staff with responsibility for attendance).***

- Consider requests for absence and meet with parents to discuss such requests as necessary.
- Make referrals to the Local Authority for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices, as appropriate.

### ***Tutor***

- Take registers accurately and within 10 minutes of tutor time beginning.
- Alert the attendance team when a student does not arrive to a tutor time or leaves part way through.
- Be the student's first point of contact and will monitor daily attendance.
- Highlight concerns regarding attendance with parents/carers.
- Discuss attendance during parent/carer consultations, telephone conversations or at individual parent/carer meetings.
- Raise concerns with the Attendance Manager/Pastoral Team where necessary.

### ***Class Teacher***

- Take registers accurately and within 10 minutes of a lesson beginning.
- Alert the attendance team when a student does not arrive to a lesson or leaves part way through.
- Discuss attendance during parent/carers consultations, telephone conversations or at individual parent/carers meetings.
- Raise concerns with the Attendance Manager/Pastoral Team where necessary.

### ***Attendance Manager***

- Overall monitoring of college attendance.
- Identify trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Contact families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitor individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Make referrals to the Education Welfare Service.
- Meet parents/carers in danger of being issued with a first warning.
- Liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers and report concerns to the Headteacher.
- Inform the Headteacher where there are concerns and act upon them.
- Provide background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring the follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Follow up absences with immediate requests for explanation via telephone calls or email.
- Ensure attendance issues are raised by teachers at parent/carers consultation evenings where necessary.
- Collate and record registration and attendance information.
- Take and record messages from parents/carers regarding absence.
- Contact parents/carers of absent children where no reason for absence is received.
- Record details of students who arrive late or go home.
- Send out standard letters regarding attendance.

### ***Pastoral Support Assistants (PSAs)***

- Contact families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues.
- Monitor individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Keep an overview of year group and individual attendance.
- Provide background information to support referrals.
- Follow up absences with immediate requests for explanation via telephone calls or email.
- Take and record messages from parents/carers regarding absence.
- Contact parents/carers of absent children where no reason for absence is received.

### ***Parents/Carers***

- Ensure that their child attends college regularly and punctually, unless prevented from doing so by illness, or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contact the College office on each morning of absence.
- Inform the College in advance of any medical appointments in college time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence, we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (appointment card/letter/prescription paperwork or packet.)

- As far as possible, ensure that non-urgent medical or dental appointments are made outside of the College day or avoiding registration periods.
- Make requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Contact the College as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to college so that problems can be quickly identified and resolved.
- Promote the link between attendance and social skills/attainment/progress.

### ***Students***

- Aim for high attendance (an average student would achieve an attendance of over 97%)
- Be on time for college and every lesson/tutor session.
- Attend college appropriately prepared for the day.
- Take pride in attendance and punctuality.

### ***Governors***

- Attendance data will be shared with Governors during Governors' meetings, enabling Governors to offer challenge and support.
- A named Governor for attendance will maintain an overview of policies and procedures in relation to attendance.

### **REGISTRATION**

The College gate is open from 8.15am. Morning registration starts at 8.45am. Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any student who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning session. The attendance register must be completed by the Tutor by 8.55am (Attendance code / for students who are present.)

All attendance records are documented using SIMs software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept securely and preserved for a period of at least three years after the date they were last used.

### **LATENESS**

Any student who comes into college late will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those students who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each student (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for college later than 9.15am (30 minutes after start time) will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning. (Attendance code U).

Students who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to college later than 9.15am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (attendance code M). Routine dentist or doctor's appointments should be made outside of the college day.

Students who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness, **the Senior Leader responsible for attendance will meet with the parent/carer to create an action plan to improve punctuality. Should punctuality not improve the Local Authority may be approached to give consideration for a fixed penalty notice.**

## **ABSENCES**

Parents/carers should contact the college by 8.30am on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with full details of the reason for their absence. Please avoid using phrases such as "poorly" or "sick".

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences using SIMs. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence (and no response is received when efforts are made to contact parents/carers) the absence is recorded as unauthorised (attendance code O).

## **FIRST DAY CONTACT**

Where a child is absent from college and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent/carer, the Attendance Officer/PSA will telephone home daily. If no response is received, other contacts held for the child will also be contacted. If we have not heard from any contacts, then a home visit may be conducted.

Where we feel necessary, we will also contact home to clarify the reason for the absence.

If no response is received to this home visit the child is referred to the Local Authority as a possible Child Missing Education. Contact may also be made with Children's Services and/or the Police in line with safeguarding procedures.

## **ILLNESS**

When students have an illness that means they will be away from college long term, the college will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their college work.

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

Where over the course of an academic year, a student has repeated periods of illness, the college will write to parents/carers to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness-related absence. This evidence could be a doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the college to make their own enquiries.

### **Parent/Carer Request for Absence from College for Holiday:**

With effect from September 2013 the Government abolished the right of the Headteacher to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year. Instead, the Headteacher will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied that *exceptional circumstances* exist.

**Should parents/carers be considering a holiday during term time a leave of absence request form must be completed by all adults with parental responsibility BEFORE the holiday is booked.** Where a holiday is not authorised, consideration will be given to requesting a penalty notice from the Local Authority for this period of absence if a child's attendance is deemed as 'not regular'. ***This is defined by Helston Community College as falling below the threshold of 97%.*** In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

### **ADDRESSING ATTENDANCE CONCERNS**

**The college expects attendance of at least 97%.**

It is important for students to establish good attendance habits early on in their college career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. Parents/carers should ensure their child attends college regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed.

Concerns about attendance are raised with parents/carers via letters which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the college with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time, then the Attendance Manager has a responsibility to make a referral to the Education Welfare Service. A first warning will be issued, then an educational planning meeting will take place, before a final warning. From this point, if there are no further improvements, court proceedings will begin.

Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure regular attendance and if they fail to do so, may commit an offence under Sections 7 & 444 of the Education Act 1996.

### **MONITORING ATTENDANCE**

The Attendance Manager has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded on the SIMs attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the Educational Welfare Officer to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings, such as letters sent to parents/carers or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.



## APPENDIX A

**IMPORTANT:** Please read carefully the information below.

**WARNING:** If you allow your child to miss college in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the college, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice\* per parent/carer per child or made the subject of court proceedings under section 444 Education Act 1996. As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss college for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason. \*Penalty notice £60 if paid within 21 days increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM TIME	
THE FACTS	THE LAW
<p>School-aged students in maintained schools in Cornwall are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a student might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc.) the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.</p> <p><b>WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER</b></p> <p>Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.</p> <p>Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.</p> <p>If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as <b>unauthorised absence</b> and you may receive a £60* fine per parent/carer per child if your child's attendance is deemed to be 'not regular'.</p>	<p>The law allows the school to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However, before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are <b>exceptional circumstances</b> which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient evidence/information in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from the parent with whom the child normally resides.</p> <p>If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance.</p> <p>If the child is away for a period of four weeks or more, the school may have the option to take the child off roll subject to the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006</p> <p>In case of unexpected extended absence, it is advisable that the parent/carer fully informs the school as to the reasons. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school.</p>

<p><b>Unavoidable absence from school will be authorised. Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuine illness</li> <li>• Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these after school if at all possible)</li> <li>• Days of religious observance</li> <li>• Seeing a parent/carer who is on leave from the armed forces</li> <li>• External examinations</li> <li>• When traveller children are on the road with their parents/carers for work purposes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other examples of absence from school that <u>will not</u> be authorised include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any type of shopping</li> <li>• Looking after siblings or unwell parents</li> <li>• Minding the house</li> <li>• Birthdays</li> <li>• Resting after a late night</li> <li>• Relatives visiting or visiting relatives.</li> <li>• Parental appointments</li> </ul>
<p>Please contact the Headteacher if you wish to discuss this issue.</p> <p><b>The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full-time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time.</b></p> <p>We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.</p>	

## APPENDIX B

### INFORMATION LETTER TO ALL PARENTS (ANNUAL)

#### Helston Community College Warning Letter regarding unauthorised leave of absence (holidays)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Date

Dear Name of Parent/Carer(s)

Here at Helston Community College, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a student is genuinely too ill to attend college, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of college hours or a request for leave has been agreed in exceptional circumstances.

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

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

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

You are welcome to contact the college to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this or if you feel you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Helston Community College is committed to maximising the education of all its students and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved.

The decision to submit a request for the issue of a Penalty Notice will be considered when a child's attendance is deemed 'not regular'. The definition of 'not regular' in this instance is when it is below the threshold set by Helston Community College of 97%. In the Autumn Term, a child's attendance for the previous academic year will be considered before deciding on a course of action. From January onwards, the decision will be based on attendance data from the current academic year.

Yours sincerely

A Lingard  
Headteacher

## APPENDIX C

### EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE LEAVE REQUEST NOTICE TO PARENTS/CARERS

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

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

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

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

I hope you will support our efforts in raising attendance and attainment at Helston Community College.

**APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER (to be completed by each parent/carer) – (APPENDIX C ATTACHMENT)**

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

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Year/Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

First day of absence: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of return to college: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Total number of days missed: \_\_\_\_\_ days Reason for absence: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the college may request that Cornwall Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of college and that this carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me.*

***I understand that parents/carers have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at college and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.***

Name of child \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Dated \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Below to be completed by the school:**

FAO – Headteacher

% Current	% Last Year	Comments:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ **AUTHORISED:**

Request has been authorised for the following dates only \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

☐ **UNAUTHORISED:**

Signed by the Headteacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Letter sent / Phone Call / Other	Signed:	Date:
Action: PN Request	Signed:	Date:

## APPENDIX D

### PN MODEL LEAVE REFUSAL LETTER (FOR SCHOOL USE)

NAME AND ADDRESS

Date

Dear Name of Parent/Carer(s)

I am writing regarding your request to take (Student Name) out of college on Date until Date. The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for students in 'exceptional circumstances'. Here at Helston Community College, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence; we look at each request on its own merit, before reaching a decision. Under the circumstances, we regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If (Student Name) does not attend college on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. In cases where parents subsequently report their child as ill during this period, medical evidence may be requested to support this.

I urge you to reconsider your decision.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

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I would like to offer you the opportunity to contact {enter staff contact } at Helston Community College if you would like advice or support in helping your child attend more regularly. Helston Community College is committed to maximising the education of all its students and aims to work with parents to ensure this can be achieved. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the college.

Yours sincerely

A Lingard  
Headteacher

## Appendix E - Information specific to Post 16 Only.

### Motivation and Rewards

Pupils in Post 16 are recognised and praised for good attendance and punctuality through assemblies. Good attendance and punctuality is a pre-requisite to pupils being awarded home study privilege in Year 13.

### Procedures

The Post 16 Administrator emails an updated Attendance Report to all members of the Post 16 Leadership team every four weeks. The Attendance Report shows all pupils with an attendance of less than 90%.

95% Plus	90 to 95%	80% to 90%	Below 80%
Good	Cause for concern	Serious concern	The student's place at the College is under threat and immediate action is required:
No action required	A phase 1 letter will be sent to parents making them aware of the attendance rate [it will include a breakdown of attendance to each subject].	The Co-Director of Post 16 will discuss attendance with the student and engage with parents to put remedial strategies in place. The Co-Director will monitor using an attendance report card. Immediate improvement is expected.	The Co-Director of Post 16 will meet with the student and parents, to put additional strategies in place and issue a Post 16 Contract*. The CoDirector and Director of Post 16 will monitor attendance using an attendance report card. In addition to attending College, the student must attend all lessons and study sessions that are relevant to their timetabled programme of study. The student will also be required to catch up and complete all tasks missed due to previous absences. Repeated incidents of truancy are likely to result in the student losing their place at the College.

\*A Post 16 Contract is a formal written warning that a student's place at the College is under review, unless all terms of the contract are met. The contract will clearly set out what is expected from a student, and if the student fails to adhere to the terms of the contract, their place in the College is under threat.