



CARDINAL HEENAN
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

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The Attendance Policy is central to the mission statement and the aims and objectives of Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School.

Our Mission Statement

John Carmel Heenan (1905-1975) was Bishop of Leeds, Archbishop of Liverpool and Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. This school is a living tribute to a very faithful servant of God. We are proud to bear his name.

We wear the word Veritas (Truth) on our school blazers in memory of St Thomas Aquinas. He lived a life of prayer and study which led him to the Dominican Order, whose motto is "Veritas" or "Truth". He sought truth wherever it could be found and burned with the desire to know the one truth, God, which gives meaning to all truths.

The Catholic Christian community at Cardinal Heenan endeavours to help pupils to know and build a relationship with Jesus Christ and to live the Catholic faith through prayer, sacraments and service. We are committed to making learning challenging and enjoyable for all so that we will secure the best outcomes and remain lifelong learners who are committed to seeking truth. We strive to help all to learn and grow, treating one another with respect and generosity, whilst supporting parents as the first and most important educators of our children. Our aim is to inspire excellence by encouraging every individual to be the person that God calls us to be, in preparation for this life and the life to come.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is a happy, harmonious learning community, where pupils feel safe and secure. School life is characterised by a calm, purposeful environment underpinned by relationships built upon mutual respect. Excellent attendance and punctuality are key to ensuring that our students achieve the best possible outcomes supporting parents as the first and most important educators of our children.
- 1.2. It is the responsibility of pupils, parents/carers and school to work in partnership to ensure all our children are able to access all that Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School has to offer. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance this partnership should work together to remove any barriers to attendance by building relationships and achieving a shared understanding of what these barriers may be.
- 1.3. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policy and strategy relating to teaching and learning, curriculum planning, behaviour, safeguarding, special educational needs support, pastoral care, mental health and wellbeing.

2. Aims of the Attendance Policy

- 2.1 To provide background information into the importance of good attendance
- 2.2 To communicate clear expectations and responsibilities of pupils, parents and school
- 2.3 To provide clarity of how the school promotes good attendance, how the school will tackle poor attendance and how the school works with the Local Authority and other partners to provide the best possible interventions in removing barriers to good attendance
- 2.4 Provide a way of working that promotes good attendance for our students, reduces absence, including persistent and severe absence, ensures every pupil has access to the education they are entitled to, act early to address patterns of absence and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

3. The law, legislation and guidance on school attendance

- 3.1 Taken from Working together to improve attendance:
 - 3.1.1 “The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.” (Paragraph 9)
 - 3.1.2 “Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.” (Paragraph 10)

3.2 This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

3.2.1 Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

3.2.2 Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

3.2.3 Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

3.2.4 [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

3.2.5 [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

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

4. Expectations

4.1 Pupils will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend every timetabled lesson on time
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their Tutor, Class Teacher, Head of Year or Attendance Officer any problems that deter them from attending school

4.2 Parents/carers will:

- Ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time
- Notify school on the first day of absence before 8:50am
- Complete a request form for absence in term time for exceptional circumstances
- Supply medical evidence when required
- Ensure all contact details are up to date
- Provide school with two emergency contact details
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4.3 Teachers, Tutors, Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year will:

- Complete the register at the start of each session (morning and afternoon)
- Monitor daily patterns of attendance and punctuality
- Make parents aware of concerns over irregular attendance
- Input attendance data onto the system
- Take actions where concerns have been identified
- Inform parents of individual pupils attendance record
- Meet with parents whose children's attendance causes concern
- Be alert to early signs of disaffection or any Safeguarding issues which could culminate in non-attendance and report these concerns as soon as possible

- Work with Student Services Manager / Attendance Officer in requesting medical evidence if a pupil's attendance is below 90% or if there has been 3 periods of absence or a period of absence for 5 or more days.
- Work with Student Services Manager / Attendance Officer in making referrals to the Local Authority School Attendance Service
- Work with Student Services Manager / Attendance Officer in requesting Penalty Notices to be issued for unauthorised leave in term time.
- Work with Student Services Manager / Attendance Officer in requesting Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence

4.4 School Attendance Service will:

- Support the school in achieving its targets and addressing concerns
- Support families in ensuring their child/children attend school regularly
- Prepare and facilitate school attendance meetings for irregular attendance including punctuality
- Contact the parent/carer by phone, letter or home visit to discuss the schools concerns and how attendance and punctuality can be improved
- Quality Assure Penalty Notice requests for unauthorised absence
- Implement legal proceedings

4.5 The Student Services Manager / Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor and analyse attendance data taking appropriate action including first day absence alerts and recording reasons for absence
- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis, recording it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Head of Year in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Benchmark attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Work with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advise the Headteacher/Senior Assistant Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Send daily absence text message by the end of the morning period

Mrs Anna Marks (Student Services Manager) can be contacted via email ams@cardinalheenan.com or via the school office 0113 8873240

4.6 Designated Senior Leader Responsible for Attendance will work with the Head of Upper School and Head of Lower School to:

- Lead attendance across the school
- Offer a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluate and monitoring expectations and processes
- Have an oversight of data analysis
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Deliver targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Mr Daniel Mangan (Senior Assistant Headteacher: Pastoral, Behaviour and Safeguarding) can be contacted via the school office info@cardinalheenan.com or 0113 8873240

4.7 Headteacher (Mr Dominic Kelly) will have responsibility for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

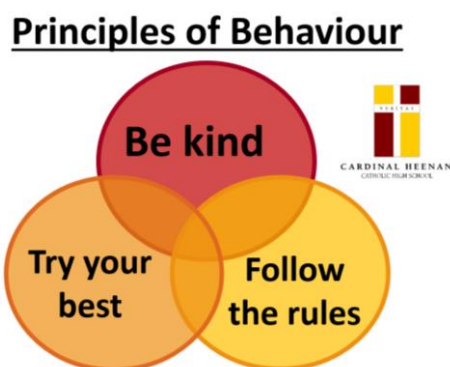
4.8 Governing body will have responsibility for:

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

The named governors for attendance are Mr Shaun Vickers and Ms Deborah O'Connor

5. How school promotes and incentivises good attendance

5.1. As laid out in our Behaviour Policy, we promote and prioritise intrinsic motivation in line with our three principles:



5.2 Our greatest strength, in relation to good attendance, is our understanding that it is working to our mission statement that creates an atmosphere where students want to attend regularly and experience all that Cardinal Heenan has to offer.

5.3 Within our universal offer:

- We endeavour to help pupils to know and build a relationship with Jesus Christ
- Make learning challenging and enjoyable for all so that we will secure the best outcomes and remain lifelong learners committed to seeking truth
- We strive to help all to learn and grow, treating one another with respect and generosity
- Inspire excellence by encouraging every individual to be the person that God calls us to be

5.4 We achieve this through a strong curriculum model, fantastic teaching, established pastoral care and a varied extra-curricular offer, which includes creating opportunities to enrich students' lives with prayer, sacraments and service.

5.5 As well as our universal offer, we understand the importance of supporting students in recognising their achievements and throughout the year include various strategies including year group and tutor group trophies/certificates for 100% attendance. At different stages of the year we also use targeted rewards/incentives based on a particular cohort or particular timing of the school year where there is targeted/specialist/individual support needed. Wherever possible we will target and promote the "intrinsic" motivation, involving parents as the first educators of their children by celebrating good and improved attendance by contacting parents/pupils to congratulate their child.

5.6 We will also include attendance information each time an academic report is issued (at least three times per year).

6. Punctuality

6.1 Being late to school has a significant impact on the amount of learning time lost over a school year. The table below will help you understand how much time is lost by being regularly late.

Minutes late per day	Number of days over a year
5 minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days
30 minutes	20.7 days

6.2 Late arrival to school is unacceptable. If a student is not in their tutor room by 8.55am they will receive Code L on the register. Tutor time finishes at 9.10am and any student that arrives after 9.20am will be marked as absent using Code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate. Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is alert to patterns of late arrival and as such late arrival could provide grounds for prosecution or a Penalty Notice being issued.

6.3 The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.40pm and will "close" at 2.10pm.

7. Absence Level and Persistent Absence Indicator

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

7.2 The table below shows an indication of approximately how many sessions a pupil needs to miss per half term to meet the threshold of persistent absenteeism.

HALF TERM	Number of sessions (1 session = ½ day)	Number of Days
1	7 sessions	3.5 Days
2	14 sessions	7 Days
3	20 sessions	10 Days
4	25 sessions	12.5 Days
5	31 sessions	15.5 Days
6	38 sessions	19 days

Average attendance of 85-90% over 5 school years equates to pupils missing half a school year of education.

Average attendance of 80% over 5 school years equates to pupils missing a whole school year.

7.3 To reduce persistent absenteeism the school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Make use of current best practice including suitable strategies as recommended by Leeds Educational Psychology Team regarding Extended School Non-Attendance: Guidance, Advice and Resources for School Staff (March 2021)

7.4 The table below shows our level indicator for attendance, identifying risk of underachievement. The figures are based on Department for Education published [research in 2016*](#) which found that: pupils with no absence are 2.2 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A* - C or equivalent including English and Mathematics than pupils that missed 15-20% of KS4 lessons. For the purposes of our level indicator we have used 4 as the grade C equivalent.

Category	Level	% Attendance	Weeks per year	Days per year	Hours of lessons missed	% Chance of attaining 5 Grade 4-9 including English and Maths*
Perfect attendance: No risk of underachieving	Level 1	100	0 days	0 days missed	0	78.7
Excellent attendance: Little risk of underachieving	Level 2	98-99.99	3 days	½ to 3 days missed	Up to 15 hours missed	
Risk of underachieving	Level 3	97-97.99	1 week	3 ½ to 5 days missed	Up to 25 hours missed	69.1
	Level 4	95-96.99	1.5 weeks	5 ½ to 9 ½ days missed	Up to 47.5 hours missed	
Serious risk of underachieving	Level 5	93-94.99	2 weeks	9 ½ to 13 days missed	Up to 65 hours missed	Less than 52.8
Severe risk of underachieving	Level 6	90-92.99	3 weeks	13 ½ to 18 ½ days missed	More than 65 hours missed	
Extreme risk of underachieving	Level 7	89.99 and below	More than 3.5 weeks missed	19 or more days missed	More than 95 hours missed	Less than 35.6

7.4 Recent data analysis by the Department for Education ([May 2022](#)) found similar trends including:

- “Pupils who did not achieve grade 9 to 4 in English and maths GCSEs in 2019 had an overall absence rate of 8.8% over the key stage, compared with 5.2% among pupils who achieved a grade 4 and 3.7% among pupils who achieved grade 9 to 5 in both English and maths.”
- “Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, 83.7% achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent.”

8. School Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

8.1 Children and young people may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child and young person is everyone’s responsibility. Promoting the welfare and life opportunities of all children and young people encompasses: Attendance, Behaviour Management, Health and Safety, Access to the Curriculum and Anti-bullying.

8.2 Children who are missing education are at greater risk than those who are seen regularly in school. These risks include:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Modern Day Slavery
- Forced Marriage
- Domestic Violence
- Honour Based Violence
- Human Trafficking
- Neglect

8.3 Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- bullying

8.4 This Attendance Policy is part of broader suite of Safeguarding Policies including the schools Child Protection Policy.

8.5 A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. That is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

9. Using data to monitor, analyse and improve attendance

9.1 On top of daily monitoring, the school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

9.2 Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

9.3 The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

- Provide regular attendance reports to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

9.4 The school will use the data to determine appropriate strategies which will include:

- Text messages and letters sent home to inform parents of the current level indicator for attendance and/or risks of underachievement.
- Phone calls to highlight absence improvements
- Parental meetings
- Attendance monitoring cards
- Fast-track process in line with the Leeds City Council Guidance

10. Unplanned absence

- 10.1 The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school absence line 0113 8873241 stating the reason for the absence. Please also ring if your child is going to be late.
- 10.2 We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- 10.3 If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- 10.4 If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

11. Authorised Absence

11.1 Authorised absence is defined as:

- Genuine illness
- Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- Bereavement – (Headteachers discretion)
- Religious observance (where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart)
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers.

Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- Approved leave in term time where there are *exceptional circumstances*, as agreed by the Head Teacher.

11.2 Planned absence for medical or dental appointment

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

11.2.2 The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence in advance of a planned absence as soon as practically possible by calling the school absence line **0113 8873241** stating the **reason** for the absence. A note should be written in the student planner if the student is required to leave school during the school day. This will allow the student to get the planner signed by their Head of Year no later than the morning of the planned absence which will give permission for the student to leave at the arranged time.

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

11.2.4 The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

11.3 Exceptional circumstances

11.3.1 Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time.

11.3.2 Absence in term time will only be considered if parents/carers make a request to the school on the appropriate "Application for Exceptional Absence" form giving exceptional reasons why the application for absence has been requested and provide information to support their application. Please note that requests for holidays in term time or term time leave for reasons such as parental work commitments, visiting relatives at home or abroad, or cost, do not constitute exceptional circumstances and therefore will not be authorised.

11.3.3 The Headteacher will decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

11.3.4 Parents/carers, who take their children out of school during term time without authorisation, may be issued with a penalty fine of up to £120 and face a possible prosecution in court.

12. Unauthorised absence

12.1 Unauthorised absence is defined as absence in term time where permission has **not** been given by the school in accordance with this attendance policy. This means that parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time.

- Late after the registers have closed - 'U' code
- Unexplained absence. Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for an extended period (10 days) will be referred to the Local Authority as a Child Missing Education (CME)
- Staying at home to care for younger children or sick relatives;
- Going shopping or having a haircut;
- Any absence that the school has not been informed of by letter or by telephone;
- Birthdays;
- Weddings or Anniversaries including Parents' Weddings;
- Transport issues or car broken down;
- Holidays in term time ;(following the Department for Education's Guidelines)
- Travelling to airport to meet relatives/friends;
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment.
- Translating
- Visiting sick relatives

13. Following up unexplained absence

13.1 Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Contact the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This contact will be a text message. On receipt of this message, if parent/carer expects their child to be in school, they must contact school immediately as this becomes a safeguarding concern. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may follow procedures to safeguard students in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

14. Continuing concerns regarding attendance

14.1 If attendance continues to be of concern and there are a number of unauthorised absences then this may lead to a referral being made to the ARM Cluster, Guidance and Support meeting. This is a multi-agency meeting where concerns are discussed and appropriate

support is then offered. Alternatively, a referral may be made directly to the Leeds City Council, School Attendance Service.

14.2 Ultimately parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council's, School Attendance Service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the Local Authority in order to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education. Where necessary statutory action can and will be taken, which may take the form of a Penalty Notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrates Court resulting in a fine, or a statutory order.

14.3 Legal Sanctions

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

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

14.3.3 Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

14.3.4 The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

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

Appendix 1

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

Type	Code	Definition	Scenario
	/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
	\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
	L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
	B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
	D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
	J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
	P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
	V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
	W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Authorised Absence	C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
	E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
	H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
	I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
	M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
	R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
	S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
	T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised Absence	G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
	N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
	O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
	U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
	X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
	Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
	Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
	#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day