

# Leamington Community Primary School

*'Together we make a Difference'*



## Attendance Policy

**Last reviewed:** October 2015

**Adopted by Governors:** 30<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Next Review:** October 2016

**'Together we make a Difference'** is our School moto; in order for every child to achieve their full educational potential a high level of school attendance is essential.

At Leamington Community Primary School we believe promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. Within School we promote good attendance through creative approaches to the curriculum. This includes topics of high pupil interest and choice, supported by a wide range of learning resources.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To ensure all pupils take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school
- To ensure the well-being and safety of children at Leamington Community Primary School
- To set school targets for attendance
- To monitor pupil absence and challenge non-attendance

### **Intentions**

- To actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils.
- Every week the best attending class in Key Stage 2 and Reception/Key Stage 1 will receive 10 class points and be celebrated in assembly.
- To reward each class whose daily attendance is 100%.
- To reward each class whose weekly attendance is 95% and above with credits.
- To reward being in school every day and on time with a raffle with interesting prizes.
- At the end of term hold an attendance raffle with prizes of significant value for those children which have been in school each day and on time.
- To celebrate 100% attendance for term/whole year with certificates and trophies.
- To monitor regular or extended absence and take steps to resolve this.
- To work with Inclusion Officer to ensure no child is absent without school being aware of the reason.
- To ensure that discretionary power to grant leave is only used in exceptional circumstances.
- To use the School Information Management System to analyse and monitor pupils' patterns of absence and work with parents to rectify patterns.
- To ensure the parents of children whose attendance is not meeting the 95%+ standard are held to account.
- To issue fixed term penalties to those families where more than 10 sessions have been missed.
- To issue Court proceedings to parents of children who are at persistent absenteeism levels.

## **Teaching and Learning Impact**

Leamington Community Primary School will endeavour to reduce the disruption to children's learning through unnecessary absence and will work with families towards avoiding lateness or avoidable time off from school.

## **Equality and Inclusion**

All children will be dealt with in the same manner. Allowances within this policy will be made for children with severe disabilities or illnesses who require additional time off for administration or medication.

## **Safeguarding**

If a child is absent for any reason unknown to the school, Parents or Carers must contact the school office in some way before 9.30 am on the first day of absence and every subsequent day of absence thereafter. If no information or a phone call is received on your child's first day of absence, school will make contact to ensure the child is safe and their absence is genuine. If necessary home visits will be carried out by the safeguarding team.

## **Registration of pupils**

Leamington Community Primary School will ensure that staff are aware of any new legislation with pupil registration.

- Registers are to be completed accurately at the beginning of every session i.e. morning and afternoon and returned to the office at 9:15am and 1:15pm.
- Parents to be aware of importance of contacting school to report absence before 9.30am
- Senior Managers and School Governors to ensure evaluation of attendance procedures
- Regular reports will be provided for the Governing Body of Leamington Community Primary School

## **Contents of the Attendance Register**

Each class teacher will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. On each occasion they will record whether every pupil is present or absent.

The school will follow up any absences to:

1. Ascertain the reason;
2. Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
3. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not; and,

4. Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

### **Registration and Absence Procedures**

All absences will be recorded on school registers using the national codes. Any pupil who is on role but not present in school must be recorded within one of these categories:

1. Unauthorised Absence - This is for pupils where no reason has been given or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This can occur if a child arrives after 10:00am.
2. Authorised Absence - This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.
3. Approved Educational Activity - This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken offsite but with the approval of the school.

If your child is late arriving at school always report to the school office and make sure your child is signed into our late arrival book by an adult (after 9am) If they arrive after registers have closed (after 10:00am) they will receive a U mark in the register; accompanied with the number of minutes late the child was. A record of late minutes is kept for individual children and the same procedure for absence is followed if lateness is a concern.

### **Reporting Absences**

It is a parent's responsibility to inform school of any reasons for a child's absence, before 9.30 am each day that they are absent from school (unless otherwise arranged with school) and to provide further information as required. This should be followed by a letter of confirmation, on the child's return to school. We will send a letter requesting information if an explanation has not been received. We will refer the matter to the school's Inclusion Officer if no response is forthcoming.

If no information or a phone call is received on your child's first day of absence, school will make contact with you to ensure your child is safe and that their absence is genuine. Further contact will be made on every subsequent day of absence.

### **Requests for 'Leave of Absence' during Term Time**

Since September 2013 the Head teacher may only authorise leave for 'exceptional' circumstances. Head teachers are now only allowed to authorise any leave of absence when an application has been made in advance and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance; the annual family holiday would not be deemed an 'exceptional' circumstance.

### **What should parents do if they wish to request a leave of absence?**

Parents should complete a holiday request form and return it to the Head teacher and Chair of Governors. This must include details and reasons why you wish to take leave during term time. We would strongly recommend that this is done before planning/booking flights, hotels etc.

### **What happens if a child goes on holiday in term time or takes leave of absence for other reasons without permission from the school?**

The absences will be marked in the school register as unauthorised absences and this may result in a Penalty Notice of £60 (rising to £120) per parent per child being issued by the Local Authority. In some cases, parents may be prosecuted for the offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

### **Other circumstances will be considered, judgements will be made on individual requests. Circumstances where a Penalty Notice may be issued:**

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
- There will be no limit on the times a Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence can be used in an academic year.
- In cases where there is more than one pupil in a family with unauthorised absences, Penalty Notices may be issued for more than one child.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in the first five days of exclusion.

### **Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time**

- Even where attendance levels are high Penalty Notices may still be issued
- More than one Penalty Notice could be issued for repeated absence without permission during term time.
- A combined total of ten sessions (not necessarily grouped as 5 consecutive days) could trigger a Penalty Notice.
- Instead of monitoring and totalling holiday absences taken across each academic year, they will now be monitored across the previous three terms, regardless of academic year

### **Penalty Notice for persistent absence**

Parents whose child is repeatedly absent will now only receive one warning notice period to bring about improvement in attendance in a single academic year. If attendance deteriorates again then no further formal warning notice will be issued and the Local Authority can automatically consider other statutory actions if unauthorised absence re-occurs.

Please note school classes regular attendance as being 96% and persistent absenteeism is classed as 90% and below.

### **Mis-reporting 'Sick Leave'**

Where strong evidence exists that the reporting of 'sick leave' is not genuine, Fixed Penalty Notice procedures will be imposed.

Evidence could include:

- Social Media
- Non-contact with School
- School are unable to contact Parents/Carers
- Children returning to school with a 'suntan'
- Children reporting a holiday, either before or on returning to school
- Children reporting non-illness

### **Medical Appointments**

Parents of children attending a medical appointment during the school day need to produce an appointment card/letter or similar paperwork prior to the appointment. Where possible all medical/dental appointments should be made outside of the school day.

We can then confirm lateness as a 'medical' absence and therefore authorised.

### **School Action on Repeated Absence**

Where a child is persistently late or absent, even if the Head teacher has been informed, the following steps will be taken:

- A letter will be sent home informing parents of the number of late arrivals.
- If lateness persists then the parents will be contacted by the Inclusion Officer
- Please note that any lateness or unexplained absence will be monitored by the Inclusion Officer as a matter of course.
- Schools and Inclusion Officers must now adhere to the 'Code of Conduct under the Provision of the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2007 and Subsection (1) Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003'.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Attendance is overseen by Mr Vine, Deputy Head teacher and the attendance team. The team consists of Jackie Stocks (Attendance Mentor), Miss Monaghan (Admin Assistant) and Iris Kellher (School Mentor). Jackie Stocks maintains a record of children’s attendance rates and reasons for absence. The attendance team meets weekly with the Head teacher to hand over all figures for the week. Children causing concerns are also identified at this point and appropriate procedures, as outlined in the policy are followed.

**Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

School staff are committed to working with parents to ensure every child achieves the target of 96%+ attendance.

**Due for Review: Autumn 2016**

Signed .....Chair of Governors

Signed ..... Headteacher