

# Leamington Community Primary School

*'Together we make a Difference'*



## Attendance Policy

**Last reviewed:** October 2018

**Adopted by Governors:** TBC

**Next Review:** October 2019

**'Together we make a Difference'** is our School motto; 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 and as a result we take unauthorised absence very seriously and act decisively to ensure that attendance is maximised. 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.
- To investigate, identify and work in partnership with families and students to resolve problems which affect attendance.
- To involve an Education Welfare Officer at the Local authority if the problems persist.
- 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 96% 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 96%+ 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 currently 90%. Absences at this level can cause considerable disadvantage to children's educational prospects.

## **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## **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, medical evidence must be provided.

## **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. If there is still no contact, this may lead to a referral being made to our Educational Welfare Officer or Careline. In cases where a child is missing for 20 days or more, the case will be referred to the Children missing from Education at the Local Authority.

## **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 saved on SIMs by 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;
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 e-signing system (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 9.30am 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 is not deemed to be adequate or has not been received. We will refer the matter to the school's Attendance 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. This will be via a phone call or home visit. Further contact will be made on every subsequent day of absence.

If a child is absent due to sickness for more than 2 days medical evidence must be provided. Any absence without this evidence will be recorded as unauthorised and may lead to referral to EWO.

## **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 Headteacher 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.

There are 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend school. There are 175 days in the year when the students are not expected to be at school. Taking holidays in term time is perceived to affect children's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

While it is accepted that some holidays offer huge benefits to the children's growth -emotionally, personally and socially - the school believes that the 175 days of any calendar year provide sufficient capacity for the families to plan and benefit from organised family time or holidays.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or additional days to that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may lead to a referral to the EWO resulting in a Penalty Notice or prosecution.

### **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**

### **The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **The attendance officer**

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head Teacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Head Teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

## **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. Parents may contact the Attendance Officer at any point to gain information regarding their child's attendance.

School staff are committed to working with parents to ensure every child achieves the target of 97%+ attendance.

## **Due for Review: Autumn 2019**

Signed .....Chair of Governors

Signed ..... Head Teacher

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	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
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day