



LEAGRAVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

‘Striving for Excellence, learning for life’

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Ratified by Governors:

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NON-STATUTORY

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations

Policy Statement:

At Leagrave Primary School we aim to:

- Ensure that regular attendance and punctuality are given a high priority by parents, carers, pupils and members of staff.
- Comply with Government regulations on attendance.
- Convey a clear message to parents/carers and pupils that regular attendance is vital and that unauthorised absences will be followed up.
- Keep records of all absences.
- Distinguish in those records between authorised and unauthorised absences.
- Establish effective procedures within the school to follow up unauthorised absences at the earliest opportunity.
- Establish clear communications with external agencies to keep absences to a minimum.
- Publish the school's record of attendance on the School Website and in the fortnightly Newsletters.
- State the child's attendance record in the pupil's Annual Report.

Aims and Objectives

To ensure that staff and parents/carers are clear about the procedures for attendance in our school.

Working with our designated Senior Leadership Team member, Attendance Officer and Local Authority Attendance Support Officer this policy aims to identify any issues to do with attendance and sets out expectations.

Intended Outcomes

- All children will have acceptable levels of attendance (above 97%).
- Parents/carers to know the importance of good attendance.
- Parents/carers to know the procedures to follow if their child is absent from school.
- All children to feel happy and safe in school and to want to attend regularly.

Procedures

Through various initiatives we encourage all children to arrive to school by 8.55am each day, to ensure prompt registration.

Registers

All schools are legally obliged to keep an attendance register which must be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Procedures for Leagrave Primary School are as follows:

Morning Registration

- Doors open at 8:30am for Nursery school.
- Doors open at 8:45am for all other year groups.
- Morning registration begins at 9:00am.
- The register will close at 9.15am.

Afternoon Registration

Monday to Thursday

- EYFS and Year 1 registration begins at 12.30pm.
- Registration begins at 12:45pm for Years 2 and 3.
- Registration begins at 1:00pm for Year 4.
- Registration begins at 1:30pm for Years 5 and 6.

Fridays only

- EYFS and Year 1 registration begins at 12:15pm.
- Registration begins at 12:30pm for Year 2.
- Registration begins at 12:45pm for Year 3 and 4.
- Registration begins at 1:00pm for Year 6.

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year.

Absence

All absences will be recorded as follows:

Authorised

- An absence is recorded as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer and school accept the reasons given.

Unauthorised

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

Parent/Carer responsibilities

Parents/carers have an obligation to phone the school on the first day of their child's absence and to explain the reason for the absence before 9.30 am. Failure to notify school is a safeguarding issue. This means that the school is obliged to try and contact you to establish your child is safe.

- If a message is not received the school will phone the contact number(s) of each absent child.
- When a phone call is received or made the message will be logged on the register.
- Parents/carers will be asked to supply the school with an emergency contact number which the school will use to enquire about the child's absence if no notification is received.
- On the day of return to school, evidence explaining the child's absence may be required.
- Failure to provide the school with a reason for the absence, will result in an unauthorised absent mark.
- Unauthorised absences will be followed up by the school.

Parents/carers should:

- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours, or provide evidence that this was unavoidable. The school will not authorise a medical/dental appointment in school time without an appropriate appointment card or doctors note. Generally, only 2 hours will be adequate and a child should attend before and after any appointments.

- Absences for shopping, looking after siblings, birthdays and other trivial reasons are not acceptable and will not be authorised. This includes when a parent/carer is ill themselves. Parents/carers will be required to make alternative arrangements to get their children to school.
- A note covering absence will not automatically guarantee authorisation and only the Headteacher can agree to authorise the absence.

Lateness

The school will rigorously monitor late arrivals and endeavour to improve punctuality.

- All entry doors/gates will be locked at 9:00am.
- Any child arriving into their classroom later than 9:10am is deemed late, and should report to the school's Reception Office where their attendance will be recorded in the 'Late' book.
- A member of the school's staff will escort children to their classrooms, if it is deemed necessary.
- Late arrivals before the close of the register will be authorised. This will be reflected with a code 'L' in the school register.
- All arrivals after the close of the register (9:15am) and without previous authorisation will be unauthorised. This will be reflected with a code 'U' in the school register. Unauthorised lateness will have a detrimental effect on your child's attendance percentage. In accordance with DFES guidelines, all unauthorised lateness will effectively result in an unauthorised absence for that session.
- Two or more late arrivals will generate a letter posted home.
- Repeated late arrivals (5 or more) will result in an investigation by our Community Education Officer.
- Where punctuality continues to be an issue a meeting will be arranged with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Parents/carers should always contact the school if they become aware their child will be late.

Late Collection

Under Section 457 of the Education Act 1996 and relevant Regulations the school governing body has the power to impose a charge on parents or carers who fail to collect their child from school within a reasonable time after the close of the school day or after school activity.

The school accepts, however, that a variety of emergency situations can arise due to unforeseen circumstances and will ensure that charges are not imposed on the parent where there is a genuine unforeseen emergency. Notification must be given to the school as soon as the situation arises or when collecting the child.

Late collection of children will be monitored by the school. The school operates a late charge system as follows:

- Should a child not been collected at the end of the normal school day, their names will be recorded in the late collection book, they will be sent to after school club and a late collection fee of £5 per fifteen minutes will be charged.
- If a child is not collected by 5pm the charge will increase to £10 per 15 minutes to cover salary costs.
- If a child is not collected by 5:10pm, the school will use the contact numbers listed on the school management information system (Scholarpack) to find out the reason for non-collection. Following this if a child remains uncollected the school will contact social care. If this is unsuccessful and we have had no response by 5:30pm, a member of Senior Leadership Team will contact the

Headteacher and then the local police station as the child concerned will then be considered abandoned.

Please note: Our fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change.

Illness

Whilst it is understandable that children do become ill, it is essential that absence due to illness is kept to a minimum. The DfE has issued clear guidelines on exclusion periods for illness. These can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/children-and-young-people-settings-tools-and-resources> and <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>.

If attendance becomes a concern, parents/carers may be asked to provide supporting documentation when their child is absent from school. You will be notified by the school if this is the case. If this is not received the child's absence may not be authorised.

Attendance below 90% categorises a child as a persistent absentee and severely impacts their education and learning. If your child has a genuine medical issue you will be expected to regularly supply doctor/consultant information to the school and be involved in a specific care plan for your child.

Religious Observance

Days set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs, is deemed an authorised absence.

- Parents/carers must apply for the authorised absence before the leave is taken.
- Any additional absence for religious observance will not be agreed and will be deemed as an unauthorised absence.

Enforced School Closure

Where school closure is not foreseen the school will endeavour to advise the community via:

- Luton Borough Council. www.luton.gov.uk
- School Website. www.leagraveprimary.co.uk
- Parent email and text

Rewards

- All class attendance from the previous week will be listed in the newsletter.
- The class with 100% will receive further recognition in the newsletter.
- Each full term pupils with 100% attendance will be eligible for a bronze certificate.
- 100% attendance for two completed terms will be rewarded with a silver certificate
- 100% attendance for three completed terms will be rewarded with a gold certificate.
- Each class in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two with the best weekly attendance will be awarded the attendance trophy and attendance bear for the week.

The Attendance Support Service

- The school will continue to work with the Local Authority Attendance Support Officer; who will provide the school with advice, guidance and strategies to improve attendance.
- The school may instruct the Attendance Support Officer to issue Penalty Notice Warning Letters and Penalty Fines and take other legal action as necessary.

School Monitoring of Attendance

- The school Attendance Officer is responsible for recording and monitoring absences from school.
- The Community Education Officer will carry out home visits when a child is absent from school and there is cause for either clarity or concern.
- The school will publish information on term dates for the current and next academic year on the school website to ensure parents/carers are aware of the days their child needs to be in school.
- The School Action Plan will continue to detail measures aimed at improving school attendance.
- The school Attendance Officer will carry out monthly register checks to identify and review low attendance in order to challenge trends and offer support when needed
- If attendance continues to be below 95%, the school may do the following:
 - Conduct telephone interviews with parents/carers.
 - Write to parents/carers about our concerns.
 - Invite parents/carers to a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Where there is a failure to improve, the Headteacher may instruct the Attendance Support Team to issue a penalty notice warning letter or a penalty notice.
- The Governing Body will be kept informed on issues related to attendance. They will have a role to play in analysing attendance data and disseminating the information to staff, pupils and parents/carers.

National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices

Attendance penalty notices issued after the 19th August 2024 will be issued in line with the new regulations, which are as follows;

- Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent. For example, for a family with 2 parents and 3 children, each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 in fines. The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil within 3 years, will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days with no option of a reduced amount.
- In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, alternative action will be taken, which may include prosecution or other legal interventions.

Penalty notices will be issued for term time leave and irregular attendance. Term time leave does not just include holidays. Where a child is absent and it is believed it is due to term time leave, schools will be expected to carry out a home visit and see the child on or before the 3rd school day of absence.

Irregular attendance, where a child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in any 10-week period, the school must consider escalation to prosecution. Sessions refer to each half of the school day, with 2 sessions each day. The school will consider the reasons for the absence, the support already offered and the engagement of the parent/carer and young person. These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks or unauthorised absences.

Working Together to Improve Attendance Guidance

The Department for Education have updated the Working Together to Improve School Attendance Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance> which is available on the DFE website. This clarifies the expectations for parents, schools and the local authority to promote the importance of regular attendance at school and to provide ideas for support and interventions when a young person is not attending school on a regular basis.

Attendance data sharing

Your child's attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the local authority every day as live data. This will help the DFE to provide schools with the tools to monitor and see improvement in attendance and allow the local authority to provide advice, support and early help services. It will also allow tracking of attendance trends. For example, if a child is reported ill the same week every year, or a certain year group/cohort with patterns of absence.

The priority is to support pupils to access school every day. Regular and punctual attendance is both a legal requirement of parents and essential to ensure uninterrupted progress to enable children to fulfil their full potential.

Monitoring this Policy

This policy will be monitored as part of our regular Policy in Practice schedule.