



## ATTENDANCE POLICY 2016

At the Leys Primary and Nursery School we expect children to attend school every day. School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life and research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance, punctuality and educational progress and attainment. Excellent attendance and punctuality are therefore important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer and is vital for children to develop important life skills.

Parents/carers and the school staff are partners in making this a success and this partnership is very important to the school. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that your child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that children arrive at school on time and return home safely.

The school register is a legal document.

### Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Promote school aims: to accelerate learning, to promote pupil wellbeing and to raise attainment.
- Support pupils' and their parents/carers to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Ensure that all children have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to accelerate learning.
- Enable pupils to make good and consistent progress throughout the school.
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets.

### Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school **every** day.
- "Be in the line by ten to nine."



- Attend appropriately prepared for the day.

**We expect that all parents/carers will:**

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time and prepared for the school day.
- Ensure that they contact the school daily of any absence or in advance, if known.
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school Attendance Officer any problems that may affect their school attendance.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

**We expect that the school will:**

- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality. Monitor individual pupil's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents on the first day of absence when a child fails to attend, where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents/carers. Although parents/carers may offer a reason, only the Headteacher can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body will be requested.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- Class teachers will promote and encourage good attendance on an ongoing basis.
- Communicate with pupils and parents on a regular basis e.g. surveys, to ensure pupils' attendance is high due to enjoyment of all aspects of the curriculum.
- Regularly inform parents/carers of the % attendance of all children



- Meet regularly with parents and carers of pupils' where there are concerns with either attendance and punctuality; setting targets, writing support plans, and offering support; involving other professionals if relevant.
- Meet regularly with the HCC Attendance Improvement Officer to monitor, support and set challenging targets for school attendance and punctuality.
- Refer and review irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the HCC team.
- Notify the Local Authority after 15 consecutive days sickness or after 10 days unexplained absence.

## Absence

Everyday counts as two sessions

### When to Report Absence to the School

- All absences must be reported on a daily basis.

#### **In all cases of absence the parents/carers should:**

1. Only keep your child away from school if really necessary (the school will always call and send home an unwell child).
  2. Telephone the school on 01438 314148 at the earliest opportunity to let them know why your child is going to be absent. Please try and phone by 9.15 am at the very latest. The office has an answer machine and messages can be left.
  3. Please call daily and keep the school informed if more than one day's absence is necessary.
- If medical appointments are absolutely necessary, please ensure your child attends school both before and after appointment.
  - If your child fails to register or is absent and we have not received notification by 9.15am a call will be made to you. This only applies on the first day of absence. It is the parent's/carer's responsibility to call the school each day their child is off school and explain the reason why.



- Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. The reason for each absence is always required, preferably in writing or by telephone.
- **Authorised Absence:** an absence is classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. The Head teacher authorises the absence.

Examples of authorised absences:

- genuine illness of the pupil;
  - hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil;
  - major religious observances;
  - visits to prospective new schools;
  - external exams or educational assessments;
  - immediate family bereavement.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** an absence is classified as unauthorised when the school does not consider the explanation as reasonable and for which no 'authorisation' has been given by the Head teacher.

Examples of unauthorised absences:

- holidays during term time;
- travelling to a special event;
- shopping / day trip / visit to a theme park / a birthday treat;
- being tired or oversleeping due to a late night;
- looking after other children/other family members/parent illness;
- appointments for other family members.

**Each child's attendance can be summarised as:**

96% +

Expected attendance - Well done! This will help all aspects of your child's progress and life in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic. Your child's attendance is at, or above, the expected target.



93% - 95%	Below expected - Strive to build on this. Your child's attendance is below expected and will be monitored. A letter may be sent to you to monitor your child's attendance.
86% - 92%	Well below expected attendance - Absence is now significantly affecting your child's attainment and progress. This is a cause for concern and will be closely monitored. The school will meet with you to review the particular context and to plan for improved attendance and/or punctuality.
85% & below	Unacceptable - Absence is seriously affecting attainment and progress and disrupting your child's development. Your child's attendance is now a major concern. It is probable that a referral to the HCC Attendance team is likely to be made and a meeting will be convened at school to put in place strategies to improve attendance rapidly. Legal proceedings may follow.

All issues which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties are to be promptly investigated by the class teacher, and referred to the Head teacher if necessary. Where pupils are admitted in-year, information about attendance will be sought from the previous school, and any concerns addressed with parents before admission.

Non-attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. However, each case is different and the school acknowledges that no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

There may be an occasion when a decision needs to be overturned and an authorised/unauthorised absence is changed. This will only happen after discussion between the Head Teacher and either the school Attendance Officer or the HCC Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

## Rewards

- The main benefit from regular and punctual attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.
- As a school, we acknowledge good attendance through a variety of rewards:

Presentations in weekly assemblies and reported in the newsletter.



★ Accelerating Learning ★ Promoting Wellbeing ★ Raising Attainment

- weekly certificate and HEDDY Bear (Here Every Day) presented for class with best attendance;
  - weekly OTIS Bear presented for class with best punctuality;
  - individual Annual 100% Attendance Awards;
  - individual Termly 100% Attendance Awards;
  - occasional class treat for exceptional attendance/and or punctuality.
- Members of staff will be allocated to support pupils where there are issues with their attendance. Each child will have an individual attendance plan will be monitored daily. Pupils who fall below expected attendance may have a sticker chart to encourage improvement, and reward for improved attendance and/or timekeeping.

## Punctuality

It is paramount that all children arrive at school on time. For junior pupils the main playground is supervised from 8.40am. Parents and carers must accompany Infant pupils to the line.

- Registration starts at 8.50am and closes promptly at 8.55am. If any pupil arrives after this time, they must enter via the school office where they will be signed in. The pupil will receive a 'late' sticker' to let the teacher know they have been signed in. These pupils will be recorded as 'late' on the class register.
- Any pupil who arrives after 9.10 a.m. will receive an unauthorised absence for the morning, unless their absence is authorised.
- A parent/carer should notify the class teacher or the school office if their child is going to arrive late. Staff will ask for a reason for lateness, as the office keep a "Late Register" to monitor how many times a child is late. The Head teacher monitors this weekly.
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Regular meetings are held to discuss both punctuality and absence across the school - parents/carers are sent letters/contacted by a member of the office staff/head teacher to discuss related issues.

Members of staff will be allocated to support pupils where there are issues with either punctuality. Each child will have an individual attendance plan and punctuality will be monitored daily.

## **Pupils Leaving During the School Day**

During school hours, the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Children are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents/carers should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents/carers are requested to inform the school of the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, and the expected return time. PLEASE PROVIDE EVIDENCE AS APPROPRIATE.
- Where a child is being collected from the school, parents/carers are to report to the school office before the child is allowed to leave the site.
- Children must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- If a child leaves the school site without permission, their parents/carers will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police. The health and safety of pupils are given the highest priority.

## **The Law**

By law, parents and carers must ensure that all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) receive a suitable, full-time education (Education Act, 1996). As a parent/carer, you may be committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly.



This may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice, prosecution or application for an Education Supervision.

Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any absence must be requested as far in advance as possible, and no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. A form (Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time) will need to be collected from the office and completed.

**The guidance states that if a parent/carer takes their child out of school e.g. on holiday or other unauthorised leave of absence, without the authority of the Head teacher, each parent/carer may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who is absent.**

Under existing legislation, each parent/carer commits an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as 'unauthorised'. Depending on circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

With the exception of unauthorised 'leave of absence' taken in term time, parents/carers will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

**The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 (issued to each parent/carer, for each child) if paid within 21 days. Penalty Notices will increase to £120 after 21 days but within 28 days. After 28 days, the LA may prosecute under Section 444 Education Act 1996.**

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Signed:

Chair of Governors

Signed:

Headteacher





**Appendix 1**  
**ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS**

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Present at off site educational activity	Approved Education Activity
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another educational establishment	Not expected to attend this session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Holiday authorised by the school	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Other unauthorised absence	Unauthorised absence
P	Supervised sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Day set aside exclusively for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence for occupational reasons	Authorised absence
U	Late and arrived after the registers closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Not required to be in school (non-compulsory school age pupils)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to all pupils (Planned)	Not counted in possible attendances