



# LEIGH ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

**Date of Policy:** Spring Term 2019

**Review Date:** Annually

**Member of staff responsible:** Attendance Officer

- For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. From the age of 5 years of age, parents have a duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.
- School attendance is subject to various Education laws (**see appendix 1**) and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- The school will examine its attendance figures and review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

### School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or the Attendance Officer can authorise an absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

### Punctuality

Morning registration will take place at; **8.50am**

Pupils arriving after the start of school but **before** the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close. **(L)**

**Registers will be closed at 9.30am.** Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as unauthorised **(U)**. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered **(M)** **once an appropriate medical letter or similar is shown to the Attendance Officer.**

### Registration

Registration is twice daily at 9am and 1pm. All registers should be completed at these times on the SIMs system. In circumstances where an electronic register cannot be completed a manual paper register should be collected from outside the main office and returned there promptly.

**Staff taking the register should not leave any blank spaces.**

**On the SIMS system & Paper registers the marks required will be either / or an N code only.**

**SIMs** - The Attendance Officer will override N codes on a register according to information on reason for absence is received. If you are made aware of a reason for a child's absence after entering your N code, right click and an option to add a comment will appear. Type any information here and click ok. This will be available for the Attendance Officer to view.

## **Absences**

### **First Day Absence Procedure**

- Parents / carers are expected to contact school to inform of the reason for absence by using one of the following options:
- Contact school on 01942671442 selecting option 2 (Voicemail facility)  
Or by Emailing [attendance@lspps.org.uk](mailto:attendance@lspps.org.uk)
- A member of the Pastoral team will try to contact by telephone the parents/carers of children who are not present without good reason after registration has closed.
- Home visits **may** be made by a member of the Pastoral team if there is no response by telephone.
- However, if we still have not been able to get a response then we will report it to the police, for a welfare check, as your child will then be classed as a '**Missing Child**'. This procedure is to ensure that we know where your child is and that you are **all** safe, as we do have a duty of care.
- Other agencies may be contacted if school has any child protection concerns.
- If no reason for absence is received, then the period of absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Please be aware that when a parent/carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)

### **Medical Appointments**

Whenever possible; medical appointments should be made for out of school hours or at the end of the day. General GP/Dentist appointments will not warrant a full days' or a full sessions absence. E.g. If your child's appointment is mid-morning they should attend school before limiting the amount of learning time missed.

### **Head lice treatment**

Only one session will be authorised for treatment – children should not be kept off school for a full day because they have received treatment for head lice.

### **Information sharing with Parents and Carers**

The Attendance officer will contact parents/carers if there is concern regarding your child's attendance. Our school target is currently for every Child to achieve 96% or above. Those children who fall below this may receive letters, or contacted by the Attendance Officer to discuss. If a Child's percentage fell to 90% or below this could be taken over and managed by the Local Authority.

## **Children Missing Education**

The school has adopted the Local Authority policy for Children Missing Education and follows the guidelines and procedures in this policy.

### **Attendance monitoring /intervention**

- In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the attendance continues to fall or there is little improvement the school will invite parents/carers to attend a meeting to endeavour to resolve the problem; this may mean that parents/carers will be asked to comply to an Early Help Plan. At this time, it will be explained that no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence. The school may also refer to the school nurse if the problem appears medical.
- If attendance shows little or no improvement this will be opened up to the Local Authority to manage. A Lead Attendance Officer will then coordinate the case and may take up legal proceedings against parents/carers.

**Persistent Absence** (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences) If a child continues to have persistent periods of absences (which our schools target is 90%) parents/carers will be invited to discuss schools concerns.

If there are no significant improvements school will refer for an Education Penalty Notice.

### **Holidays in term time**

Holidays during term time are to be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. Amendments to the 2006 school attendance regulations make clear that ***Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.*** Holidays taken without permission of the Headteacher will result in these absences being marked as 'unauthorised.' leaving parents open to Local Authority investigation and potential financial penalty. (If the Headteacher agrees that the criteria for exceptional circumstance has been met up to a maximum of 5 days (10 sessions) will be authorised.

**There is no automatic entitlement in Law to time off in term time to go on holiday  
Unauthorised leave taken in term time may result in the issuing of a fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution.**

### **Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-school attendance (see appendix 2)**

Working within a code of conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90 % attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

Our school is committed to supporting parents and children to improve Attendance and want to avoid this option where possible.

## **The registration system**

The school will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

### **CODE DESCRIPTION MEANING**

/ Present (AM)

\ Present (PM)

B Educated off site (NOT Dual registered) – Approved Educational Activity

C Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code)

D Dual registration (i.e pupil attending another establishment)

E Excluded (no alternative provision made)

F Extended family holiday (agreed) – authorised absence

G Family holiday NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement – unauthorised absence

H Family holiday (agreed) authorised absence

I Illness – NOT medical or dental or appointments etc – 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 Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)

P Approved sporting activity – approved education activity

R Religious observance – authorised absence

S Study leave – authorised absence

T Traveller absence – authorised absence

U Late (after registers closed) – unauthorised absence

V Educational visit or trip – approved educational activity

W Work experience – approved educational activity

X Untimetabled sessions for non compulsory school age pupils

Y Enforced closure

Z Pupil not yet on roll

# School closed to pupils

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

### **Categorisation of Absence**

**Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories:**

**1. Unauthorised absence**

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

**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 off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes:

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

## **Appendix 1**

### **1. The Law**

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive full time education suitable:

- a. To his age, ability and aptitude and
- b. To any special needs he may have.

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child. The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

These procedures are based on:  
Race Relations Act 1976  
Equality Act 2006  
Children Act 1989  
Education Act 2002  
Children Act 2004  
Wigan ACPC  
Safeguarding Children Wigan Council

## Appendix 2

Dear Parent,

**Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance** Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12 week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school.

Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Headteacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date