



LEIGH ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Together with God we challenge minds, recognise talents and build dreams

Attendance Policy

Date of Policy:	Autumn Term 2022
Review Date:	Annually
Member of staff responsible:	Pastoral Mentor – Safeguarding

- Leigh St Peter's is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.
- We endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.
- 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.
- 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.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance by making it a central part of our vision, values, ethos and day to day life.
- Set high expectations for every pupil which are communicated clearly and consistently to pupils and parents.
- Systematically analyse data to identify patterns and monitor the impact of improvement interventions and strategies.
- Work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.
- Will accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.

Attendance – Who to contact in school

Reporting Absence Collect a leave request form	Mrs C Dandy via, email, DOJO or voicemail Mrs C Dandy- Pastoral Worker – Attendance
Concerns about a child's attendance Request for support Enquiries about the Attendance Policy Enquiries regarding the law relating to school attendance	Mrs C Dandy- Pastoral Worker – Attendance Mrs S Arnold- Safeguarding Lead Mrs S Arnold -Safeguarding Lead Mrs S Arnold / Senior Leadership

The registration system

The school will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The national codes used to record attendance information can be found in **Appendix 2**

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, Safeguarding Lead or Pastoral Worker for Attendance can authorise an absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, or school are not satisfied with the reason given, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (O), and parents will be notified of this.

Punctuality

Morning registration starts at; **8.50am**

Pupils arriving after the start of school but **before** the end of the registration period at 8:55am 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) A medical letter / confirmation of appointment should be shown to school.**

Registration

Registration is twice daily at 8:50am 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.

Lateness will be monitored fortnightly. If your child is late on a regular basis, then a letter will be sent home. If the situation fails to improve parents will be contacted by school staff to discuss a way forward.

SIMs – Those responsible for attendance, 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 those persons responsible for attendance to view.

Expectations and responsibilities

The Governors

- Take an active role in attendance improvement by supporting the school to prioritise attendance, and work with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.
- Holds the Headteacher and other leaders to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

- Responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.
- Supports staff in the monitoring of attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.
- Where there is lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the Local Authority on legal intervention.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.

The Pastoral Worker for Attendance & Safeguarding Lead

- Report concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- Works with the LA to tackle persistent and severe absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises and supports the Headteacher to issue fixed-penalty notices.
- Ensure all staff keep accurate registers.

- Ensure all staff are aware of the procedures for reporting/recording absences.
- Monitor daily the attendance of all children.
- Ensure First Day Absence Calls take place or in their absence a member of the office staff.
- Ensure all absences are chased up re: reasons why they are absent from school.
- Monitor attendance weekly for any patterns, declining frequency and patterns of lateness.
- Monitor children whose attendance is at risk of becoming PA and take appropriate action.
- Take structured steps to address any of the above; the monitoring of persistent and frequent absence and the use of education penalty notices.
- Reward and praise children for prompt arrival and good attendance.
- Ensure that attendance awards are presented.
- Ensure any child with 100% attendance receives the school's attendance certificate every term.
- Ensure that staff have accurate information with regard to attendance and punctuality for progress meetings.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers.
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the Local Authority and other partners.
- Act as the Lead Practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the Lead Practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the Local Authority and partners.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Where there is lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Support staff in the monitoring of attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

Parents

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness)
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance following the school's procedure.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Work with the school and Local Authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the support offered by school staff and the Local Authority.

Absences

First Day Absence Procedure

- Parents / carers are expected to contact school **by 9:30 at the latest** to inform of the reason for absence by using one of the following options:
 - Contact school on 01942 671 442 selecting option 2 (Voicemail facility)
 - Emailing attendance@lspps.org.uk
 - Sending a message on class dojo to absence reporting on the messages option.
- 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 concerns.
- If no reason for absence is received, then this period will be recorded as unauthorised.
- In those circumstances when a pupil may have a Social Worker school have a duty to inform the pupil's Social Worker if there are any unexplained absences.

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. In exceptional circumstances where repeated absences have occurred and the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office who will take a copy for the Attendance Team. (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

Pastoral 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 be contacted to discuss. If a child's percentage fell to 90% or below, we will bring the matter to the attention of the Local Authority's Attendance Team. This will result in a child's attendance being monitored very closely and appropriate strategies being put in place to help improve attendance.

It is expected that school have the same ambition for attendance for children with medical conditions or SEND and work with pupils and their parents to maximise attendance. We will put in place additional support and adjustments, when required, such as an individual healthcare plan and will ensure that the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. If required we will consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.

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 with 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.
- It is our school policy to work with and support our families to remove the barriers to attendance. However, if attendance shows little or no improvement a more formalised approach will be taken in conjunction with the local authority.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences) If a child continues to have persistent periods of absence parents/carers will be invited to discuss schools' concerns. If there are no significant improvements school will refer for an Education Penalty Notice.

Severe Absence (defined in legislation as 50% or more absences). All severely absent children will have a multiagency support plan in place in conjunction with the local authority in order to improve their attendance.

What the attendance percentages mean:
100% Zero time absent – Your child will be making excellent progress both academically and socially.
95% 9 ½ days absence – Progress will still be good but further time off should be avoided. The Attendance Lead will monitor your child’s attendance.
90% 19 days absent – Your child is persistently absent. This is the equivalent to ½ a day of lessons being missed every week. Your child may start to find it difficult to catch up. The Attendance Team will write to you to inform of your child’s attendance. Further time off may not be authorised and proof of why your child needs any time off may be required before the school will authorise any more absences. If your child’s attendance continues to drop, you will be invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance & Safeguarding Lead to agree any necessary support and a plan of action to improve your child/ren’s attendance.
85% 28 ½ days absent – This is equivalent to ¾ of a day of lessons being missed every week. Your child will be finding schoolwork a struggle. The Attendance Team and LA Attendance Officer will invite you into school, to discuss this matter and an Early Help may be opened. This may require a referral into the StartWell services for Early Help support.
75% 47 ½ days absence – This is equivalent to 1 ¼ days of lessons being missed a week. This will affect your child’s progress both academically and socially. Your child could start to become more and more reluctant to attend school and struggle with their work and also their friendships. No further time off school will be authorised without medical proof. The school will have to liaise further with the Local Authority.
70% 7 days absence – This is equivalent to 1 ½ days of lessons being missed a week. School will already be liaising with the Local Authority. No further time off school will be authorised without medical proof.

Requesting Leave in term time (see Appendix 5)

Requesting leave during term time is discouraged. We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the best progress possible. Absence does have a detrimental effect on children both academically and socially.

Attendance regulations make clear that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** Leave taken without permission of the Headteacher will result in these absences being marked as ‘unauthorised’ leaving parents open to Local Authority investigation and a potential financial penalty.

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. If you believe to have an exceptional circumstance to request leave, an application must be made using the form in Appendix 5. These are available from the school Office.

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-school attendance (see appendix 3)

Working within a code of conduct the Headteacher can instruct the Local Authority to 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

Other methods of legal intervention that may be taken by the local authority are outlined in appendix 4.

Our school is committed to supporting parents and children to improve attendance and want to avoid legal action where possible.

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 celebrations and achievements

Attendance is central to raising standards and ensuring children can reach their full potential. We reward and praise children for prompt and good attendance, presenting certificates and organising class activities on a half termly basis. Children achieving 100% attendance for a whole term will be presented with a certificate during assembly and an opportunity to celebrate with the Attendance Team.

Termly RAG reports will be produced for parents and carers – Green 96% or above, Amber 90-95.9% and Red- below 90% along with an annual report at the end of the school year.

All children who have 100% attendance at the end of the year will receive a certificate and placed into a draw to win a voucher in recognition of their attendance.

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

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 3

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

Appendix 4

Legal Authority action to enforce school attendance

The Local Authority support schools and can use various legal powers if your child is missing school without good reason

Parenting Order	This means you have to go to parenting classes. You'll also have to do what the court says to improve your child's school attendance.
Education Supervision Order	If the Local Authority thinks you need to support getting your child to go to school, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order. A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The Local Authority can do this instead of prosecuting you, or as well.
School Attendance Order	You'll get a School Attendance Order if the Local Authority thinks your child isn't getting an education. You have 15 days to provide evidence that you've registered your child with a school or that you're giving them home education. The order will require you to send your child to a specific school. If you don't, you may be prosecuted.
Prosecution	You could get a fine of up to £2500, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The Court also give you a Parenting Order.

ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

IMPORTANT

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (amendment) Regulations 2013

Leave of absence during term time will NOT be granted unless the Headteacher considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

EPN Criteria September 2022:

Any parent taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time will be issued with a £60 fine under the following criteria:

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

Pupil Details

Name: _____

Class: _____

DOB: _____

Dates of Requested Absence: From _____ to _____

Total Number of school days: _____

Exceptional Reason for absence:

I understand that keeping my child off school for any longer than agreed or if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as Unauthorised. This may result in action being taken against me for non-school attendance.

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature _____

Date of Request _____

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