



Long Lawford Primary School

Love, Learn, Persevere and Succeed

Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Headteacher	Claire Stringer
	Chair of Governors	Faye Padfield
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WHY?

Promoting good school attendance and reducing absence is vital to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education.
- ensure that pupils succeed and ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities when they leave school.

WHAT?

This policy outlines the **responsibilities of the school and parents** in ensuring that pupils' attendance at Long Lawford Primary School is as good as it can be.

HOW?

Excellent teaching and learning as part of an exciting child-led curriculum (see 'Curriculum and Teaching and learning policy) motivates children to want to attend school.

WHO?

All staff in school are responsible for promoting good attendance.

- The **Front office** checks absence after each register period, carries out first day calling. Liaise with the Attendance Lead to support school policy.
- **Class teachers** discuss attendance and punctuality daily, refer concerns to the Attendance Lead.
- **Attendance Lead** is responsible for monitoring and improving attendance.
- **Attendance Lead** decides which leave of absences to authorise.
- **The Inclusion Team** work with children and families who need support.
- **Families** support this policy by contacting school as soon as possible to explain any absence of their children and/or seek support and work with school to improve attendance.
- **WAS** support school with families of children with PA.
- Warwickshire's **Attendance & Prosecution Service** receive referrals and issue warnings and Penalty Notices.

Registers

Accurate registers enable the school to recognise and act upon attendance patterns; staff follow the Register protocols:

- Registers open at 8:40am and close at 8:55am each morning, children arriving after 8:55am are recorded as 'Late mark' (L symbol) and should report to the 'Late Gate' (main school gate).
- Any children arriving after 9:05am should report to the main office. If a pupil arrives after 9:30am they will be marked as absent for that session (U symbol).

Punctuality

Good punctuality plays a crucial role in supporting pupils to achieve their full potential.

- If pupils arrive between 8:55am and 9:05am, they should report to the 'Late Gate' to be signed in by a member of staff and taken to their classrooms.
- If pupils arrive after 9:05am they should report to the main school office to be signed in.

Absence

- Parents are requested to inform school, on the first day of absence, giving a reason for the absence.
- If no reason is given, or further information is required, a phone call will be made to parents.
- The Attendance Lead and Safeguarding Team may carry out home Visits. Medical evidence may be requested if absences are due to illness.
- If the child's attendance is a cause for concern, the Attendance Lead will contact parents/carers directly to discuss the issues. If there is no subsequent improvement, parents/carers will receive a letter informing them that their child's attendance is being monitored.
- If during this time children have more than 3.5 days or 7 sessions of absence over a 6-week period without sufficient medical evidence, the school will move onto the next stage of the escalation procedure. Due to new legislation from the local authority, the monitoring period also covers students arriving persistently late to school, if a child arrives late to school their mark will be recorded as a 'U' code which gives an unauthorised mark for that session.
- A daily register check is undertaken by the school office and shared with the Attendance Lead who will then take any further action necessary.

Unreported absences

- First day action is implemented via the text messaging. If parents/carers respond to this, the reason for absence is recorded.
- If parents/carers do not respond to this request, the school attendance officer will then telephone and record the call in the CPOMs.
- In the case of unexplained absences for pupils who are absent, the school attendance officer will carry out a risk assessment and may visit the pupil's home address in line with our safeguarding arrangements.
- If a repeated pattern of absence continues or if attendance falls below 90%, a meeting will take place with parents/carers.

Unexplained Absence

During Days 1-3 of any pupil absence which is not accounted for (no contact between home-school/no reason provided for absence), the following procedure is followed:

- Our Attendance Lead monitors all absences. If no reason is forthcoming from parents/carers regarding an absence, then the parents receive a text message asking for a reason for absence. If there is no response to this text, parents are phoned. If there is no response to the phone call, a voicemail message is left where possible requesting the parent calls school. We will contact emergency contacts if we are unable to contact parents. This process is repeated for each day of the absence if no response is given to ascertain why a child is absent.
- If the school is unable to establish a reason for absence and the absence procedures outlined above have taken place, on the 3rd day of absence, the Attendance Lead accompanied by another member of staff will visit the address of the pupil to check on the pupil's welfare. In some cases, this may take place at any stage of the absence, and this will be determined by individual risk assessments being made. Consideration will be given to inform the Local Authority if there are any concerns.
- The school uses contextual safeguarding information to assess the risk level around any unexplained absence and reserves the right to carry out home

visits as and when appropriate at any point within a period of absence, to locate and establish the whereabouts of the child and assess their safety and wellbeing. Staff will use their professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the child's whereabouts before notifying the police. Parents/carers will always be informed before contact with the police is made unless a child is at immediate risk of harm and a police response is needed. This will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

At all times, school staff will liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Warwickshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g., home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team.
- Does not arrive at the school as part of an admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts.
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the admissions team as they have not been registered at a new school. Where reasonably possible, all schools must hold more than one emergency contact number for each pupil. This will enable the school to make contact with a 'responsible adult' should a child be missing from education or a welfare or safeguarding issue or concern as identified.

Appointments

Parents/carers are requested to provide written proof of medical appointments during the school day to the school office. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor/dentist (appointment card/letter/text message).

If parents/carers take or return their children, prior to or following an appointment, they will sign their child out of/into the school by using the electronic InVentry signing in system. A member of the admin team is happy to help any parent/carer with this if they need it.

As a school we appreciate that consultancy appointments/hospital stays are incredibly difficult to change/avoid and therefore at the discretion of the Attendance Lead. Parents are requested to provide a copy of the letter requesting that their child attend a consultancy appointment/stay at the hospital to the school office.

Holidays

All holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absence (symbol G), unless exceptional in circumstance.

Parents/carers are requested to complete a leave of absence form, available from the school office, at least four weeks in advance of the proposed holiday so that all pupil absence is accounted for.

From October 2023 the school will issue action plans to families to monitor attendance and set targets after a holiday.

Parents/carers who feel strongly that their circumstances are exceptional are asked to put their request for a holiday during term time in writing directly to the Headteacher for consideration.

Following a request for a holiday you will receive a message from school either informing you that the absence is unauthorised or authorised and a follow up phone call with the Attendance Lead.

Where leave of absence has not been granted, and parents still take children on holiday, school may request the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice. Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act states that penalty notices may be used as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and this allows the parent or carer to discharge liability for conviction by paying a set fine.

Monitoring and addressing irregular attendance

The Attendance Lead and Safeguarding Team are informed about any extended or persistent absence, where there are concerns about a child's welfare a joint home visit will be made by members of the Safeguarding team.

The Attendance Lead regularly monitors cases where attendance is below 95%. For children whose absence has decreased, actions are taken which aim to support families to improve pupil attendance. These actions may include:

- sending out letters
- making home visits
- arranging medical or family support
- referring the child to the mentoring team
- setting up a Parent Contract involving WAS Warwickshire's attendance service.

If there is no improvement and attendance continues to be a concern (below 94%), or a pupil becomes Persistently Absent (below 90%), a referral may be made to the Local Authority's Attendance and Prosecution Service.

Term-time leave

The Attendance Lead will only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances. Periods of unauthorised leave will be referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Service, who may in turn issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please ask the office for a leave of absence form prior to a period of leave.

Recognising and rewarding good attendance

Classes

Daily – Class teachers take registers at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. They celebrate good attendance and involve children in updating the classroom Attendance Rocket display poster.

Weekly - The classes in each phase with the highest attendance win the attendance trophy, which is shared in our weekly celebration assembly. Class winners are displayed on the attendance display in the school hall. The winning class each week will receive an extra playtime the following week. The class with the most wins over a term will receive an additional prize, chosen by the children.

The role of parents/carers is crucial in ensuring pupils attend school.

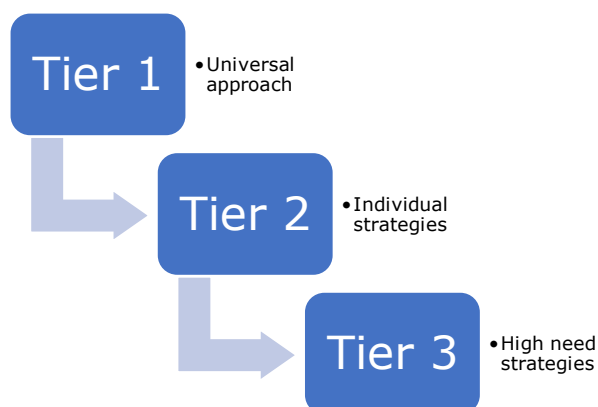
- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor/dentist (appointment card/letter/text message).
- Informing the school in advance of any holidays by submitting a leave of absence form.
- Talking to school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Tiered approach

At Long Lawford Primary School we use a tiered approach that starts with support for the whole school. These foundational supports (Tier 1) are followed by more Individual support (Tier 2), and High need strategies and interventions (Tier 3).

The Tiers of Intervention

- **Tier 1** strategies are aimed at encouraging better attendance for all students and at preventing absenteeism before it affects achievement.
- **Tier 2** interventions are designed to remove barriers to attendance for students where attendance begins to become a concern, such as those who missed 10% of the school year.
- **Tier 3** interventions provide intensive support to students missing the most school, often involving not just schools but other agencies such as health, education and social services. Students missing 20% or more of the school year benefit from the addition of this intensive level of support.



Tier 1 - Universal approach

- Clear, concise and consistent communication about expectations.
- Routines, rituals and celebrations related to attendance and engagement.
- Personalized positive communication to families when students are absent.
- Recognition of good and improved attendance.
- Impact of attendance on whole child widely understood.
- Connection to a caring adult in the school.

Tier 2 – Individual strategies

- Common community and school barriers identified and addressed.
- Action plans.
- Attendance strategies added.

- Home visits.
- Learning mentor support.
- Expanded learning opportunities.
- Small group interventions and supports for students.

Tier 3 – High need strategies

- Educational support champions/advocates.
- Housing stability supports.
- Warwickshire attendance service.
- Legal Intervention (as a last resort).

Staged response to monitoring attendance

Whole school attendance is monitored regularly. The whole school attendance target is 94%. This is based on national averages. Attendance is more closely monitored of pupils whose attendance is below the whole school target.

Letter	Attendance Band	Trigger	Outcome
	Pre	Attendance begins to drop below 94%	Phone call: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlines current attendance • Offer of support
	Letter 1	Attendance continues to fall below the whole school target and the child's attendance is of concern.	Letter 1 will be sent to parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing concern about attendance • Outlining current attendance. • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities • Notifying parents that attendance will be monitored for 4 weeks.
	Letter 2	Parents have received Letter 1 and attendance remains of concern.	Letter 2 will be sent to parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expression of ongoing concern about attendance. • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period. • Enclosing a registration certificate. • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the nature of persistent absence'. • Requesting that the parents provide medical evidence of absence for illness, to enable the school to consider the authorisation of absence. • Welcoming parents to arrange an appointment if they wish to discuss attendance further. • Notifying parents that attendance will be monitored for 4 weeks.
	Letter 3	Parents have received Letter 2 and attendance remains of concern.	Letter 3 will be sent to parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expression of ongoing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period • Enclosing a registration certificate • Reminding parents of their legal responsibilities and the definition of 'persistent absence' • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing attendance, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, such as WAS, and setting an internal school attendance target.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying parents that should they chose not to attend; the meeting may take place without them.
Letter 4	<p>Parents have received Letter 3 and failed an internal school attendance target. Attendance is below the level of Persistent Absence (90%).</p>	<p>Letter 4 will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing parents of ongoing concern about attendance • Informing the parents of attendance during the target period • Enclosing a registration certificate. • Inviting parents to an appointment with the Attendance Lead on a specific date, with the purpose of discussing attendance, agreeing an action plan of support, considering whether it may be appropriate to involve outside agencies, such as WAS, and setting an internal school attendance target. • Notifying parents that the school intends to discuss their child's attendance with its Education Casework Officer, WAS, and may make a formal referral.
Post	<p>During a monitoring period, attendance improves.</p>	<p>A Letter of Praise will be sent to parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the parents of attendance during the monitoring period. • Praising parents for the improvement in attendance. • Notifying parents that the school will continue to monitor attendance to ensure sustained improvement.

Example of letter sent to parents/carers

Dear Parent/Carer,
Date:

Re: Attendance update of: xxx

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils, we monitor attendance on a regular basis and identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We are therefore writing to you due to your child's current level of attendance:

Number of days absent:	xxx
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If a pupil has a total of 19 days absent within an academic year their attendance will drop below 90%. This means they will be classed as persistently absent. Falling below this will likely have a negative impact on [his/her] academic achievement. Regular attendance throughout the year is essential for their success and fulfilment.

We acknowledge that each family's circumstances are different and we aim to work with parents to provide the best education for every child.

This is to notify you of your child's attendance so that it can be worked on before it reaches the next step of our attendance policy and possible involvement with the Warwickshire Attendance Service. When attendance becomes a concern, in line with law (Education Act 1996), the local authority may take legal action and prosecute parents; issuing fines of upto £2,500.

We will monitor attendance for the next four week and if attendances does not improve then you will be invited into school for a meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Leave of Absence

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e., the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council's Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case-by-case basis and on its own merits.