



Lawn
Primary
School

Attendance Policy

Lawn Primary School, Norbury Close, Allestree, Derby DE22 2QR
e-mail: admin@lawn.derby.sch.uk www.lawn.derby.sch.uk

Tel./Fax: Derby (01332) 550178

Headteacher: Mrs S. Allison

Author: H Dobson

Approved by the Governing Body on:

Signed:

Date of Next Review:

Slight Amendments in some of the wording. This policy has been checked and verified by the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer

Introduction

Missing school for any reason can deprive a child of educational opportunities and hamper their progress at school. Children have a right to an education and, by denying children their rights, can have a long-lasting effect on ensuring children meet their true potential. There is a strong correlation between good school attendance and academic achievement

Nationally Government Policy is insisting that schools minimise the amount of teaching and learning time lost as a result of term time holidays and schools are now expected to adopt a more challenging response to requests for leave of absence for holidays in term time.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and the accompanying guidance make it clear that parents and carers **do not** have a legal right to take their child out of school for holidays in term time.

There are 190 statutory school days a year so there are 175 other days available for holidays that would not have a negative effect on a child's education. By taking a child on holiday in term time they may be getting an unspoken message that school is not important.

Leave of absence requests for the following reasons are **not** considered to be **special or exceptional**:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements
- Poor weather experienced in holiday periods

Leave of absence may be granted in **special or exceptional** circumstances only at the Head teacher's discretion.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness to parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents understand the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils', staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.

Definitions

Authorised Absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away for a legitimate unavoidable reason and the school has received notification from parent and carer.
- It is the school's decision to authorise absences.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To have consistent daily records which give detail of any absence or lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time
- To work with parents to improve individual pupil's attendance and punctuality.
- To refer to the Educational Welfare Service any child whose attendance causes concern.

- To report attendance statistics to Derby City Local Authority and the DFE when requested.

Responsibilities

Class Teacher

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance.
- Informing the Head teacher where there are concerns.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Follow up absences with requests for a written explanation.
- Discussing attendance issues at parent evenings where necessary.

Headteacher

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging to meet with parents.
- Making referrals to the EWO service.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

Administration Staff

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Ensuring parents are signing in their children when they arrive late.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance.
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance
- Informing the Headteacher of concerns regarding attendance and lateness.

Parents

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointment in school time and providing evidence as necessary.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary. These are only granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Registration

The school gates open at 8.45 a.m. and close at 8.55 a.m. This is sufficient time for all pupils to come into their classroom. Attendance registers are completed electronically by the teacher at 8.55 a.m. and again at 1.15 p.m.

Lateness

Once the gates are closed at 8.55 a.m. the only way to get into the school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way must be signed in by their parent. These pupils will be recorded with an L code. Any child who arrives later than 9.20 a.m. will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning – Attendance code U.

Children who come to school having attended a dentist or doctor's appointment will have the absence recorded as code M.

Absences

Parents/Careers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. If we have not received a message by 9.20 a.m. a text message will be sent out to parents asking them to call the office regarding the absence.

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home so that they can keep up with their school work.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school may write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the government abolished the right of headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason unless they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist.

Request forms are available for parents to complete and submit to the Headteacher for approval prior to the leave of absence. If the request is declined a letter will be sent informing the parents that they may receive a Penalty Notice if they take the time requested. On their child's return a Penalty Notice request will be forwarded to the Education Welfare Service.

Parents should ...

- Always fill in a Leave of Absence request form provided by the school - failure to do so may result in legal sanctions being taken against the parent[s] - and discuss any application with the school's Head teacher
- Consider very carefully the implications of taking a child out of school in term time and the impact on the child's learning.

Addressing Attendance concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 95%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early in their primary school career. It is the responsibility of the Head teacher and Governors to support good

attendance and identify and address concerns promptly. Initially concerns are raised with parents via letter with parents given the opportunity to discuss reasons for absence. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Education Welfare Service.

The Education Welfare Service will work in partnership with school to ensure that, if parents are found to be taking their children out of school without the Head teacher's authorisation, the Education Welfare Officer for the school will conduct an investigation which may lead to a parent[s] receiving a Penalty Notice or prosecution.

A Penalty Notice will be issued by the Education Welfare Service and will be of a value of £60 for each parent for each child if paid within 21 days and rising to £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000.