



St Luke's CofE Primary School Attendance Policy



Through God's love, we are the rich soil where roots grow and seeds flourish. Luke 8:4-15

At St Luke's our vision is that everyone is to be nurtured, respected, and challenged to the best that they can be, where every child is valued for their uniqueness and thus supported in their personal journey of learning and growth within an environment of encouragement, compassion and nurture.

Date taken to LGB	17/5/2022
Date ratified	17/5/2022
Review Date	September 2023
Person Responsible for reviews	Headteacher

Attendance Matters

At St Luke's CofE Primary School we continue to focus our attention on attendance. We are keen to ensure that we promote the highest attendance possible for all our young people as this is a fundamental life skill that will ensure young people's future success. Not only is it vital that our young people establish the very best habits and routines to ensure their success as future employees but there is also very clear national data that clearly shows the impact that poor attendance has on young people achieving the best possible outcomes and educational achievements. In short, if young people are not at school, we cannot teach them and this will affect their academic achievement at all levels.

As a result of this we continue to take a very firm and consistent view when parents seek permission for an absence from school for their child due to circumstances other than genuine illness. All parents can expect that all requests from parents seeking permission for leave of absence for their child will be refused and therefore unauthorised. As you will be aware, permission may be sought where there are exceptional circumstances such as attending the funeral of a close family relative.

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 The school aims to work together with Parents/Carers to ensure that all children registered at the school attend both every day and punctually.

2. Parents/Carers' Responsibilities

- 2.1 As parent/carer(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which they are registered regularly and punctually.
- 2.2 Parents/Carers should ensure that if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reasons such as sickness, they should contact the school as soon as possible, but by 9:15am, on the first morning of absence.
- 2.3 Parents/Carers should ensure that their child arrives at school in time for the start of registration (9 am). If a child is late (9:10am and 12:30 –KS1 and 1:05pm –KS2) they should report directly to the school office with their parent if appropriate so that they can be registered as present as part of or safeguarding arrangements. If the parent is unaware of the lateness, then they should be contacted by an appropriate member of staff. **Lateness is monitored and will be recorded as unauthorised if a child arrives after the times set out above.**
- 2.4 We are keen to ensure that we promote the highest attendance possible for all our young people as this is a fundamental life skill that will ensure young people's future success. Not only is it vital that our young people establish the very best habits and routines to ensure their success as future employees but there is also very clear national data that clearly shows the impact that poor attendance has on young people achieving the best possible outcomes and educational achievements. In short, if children are not at school we cannot teach them and this will affect their academic achievement at all levels.

As a result of this we are taking a very firm and consistent view when parents seek permission for an absence from school for their child due to circumstances other than genuine illness. All parents can expect that all requests from parents seeking permission for leave of absence for their child will be refused and therefore unauthorised. Permission may be sought where there are exceptional circumstances such as attending the funeral of a close family relative.

3. **School Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
- 3.2 Registers will be called twice daily at 9am and 12:30pm(KS1) 1:05pm (KS2). Registers will close at 9:10am and at 12:35pm(KS1) and 1:10pm (KS2). Any child arriving after the closing of the register will be recorded as 'late' for that session.
- 3.3 Teachers will complete registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the register. Registers are reviewed with LAAO (Local Authority Attendance Officer) whose responsibility is attendance, at regular intervals.
- 3.4 Should a class teacher have particular concerns about an individual child's attendance or punctuality, **their** concerns should be brought to the Headteacher.
- 3.5 If a child is absent the office staff will enter the appropriate code in the register. If no explanation has been received by 9:15am from the child's Parents/Carers then, on safe guarding grounds, the school will endeavour to make contact with the parent. The school will contact all emergency phone numbers and may follow up with a home visit. If no contact with the child can be made, the school will phone the police and social worker (if one has been appointed to the family).
- 3.6 The Headteacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the school's LAAO. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify respective tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the LAAO. The DfE deem 90% or less attendance over a given period will be classified as a persistent absentee pupil.
Where absence falls below acceptable levels, the school will require evidence, medical or otherwise for any illness or other absence from school.
- 3.7 The school will employ a number of strategies to promote regular, punctual attendance:
 - the Headteacher and class teachers will communicate regularly with Parents/Carers on attendance matters;
 - appropriate personal encouragement or congratulation will be offered to individual children and classes;
 - clear attendance information will be entered in the school brochure and on the website
 - Local Authority Parents/Carers leaflets will be sent to all new Parents/Carers.

Definitions

Authorised Absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate, acceptable reason and the school, has received an appropriate notification from the parent/carer. For example, should a child be unwell and the parent/carer writes a note of explanation and/or telephones the school to explain the reason for absence.
- Only the Headteacher or a properly designated member of staff may authorise any absence. Parents do not have the authority to do so. Consequently, not all absence supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised Absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and the parent/carer or if the child is away from school without good reason even with the support of a parent/carer (eg shopping or a birthday).

Holidays taken within the school term (except in exceptional circumstances agreed by the Head teacher) will be deemed as unauthorised absence. The expectation of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as they are likely to lead to the issuing of a penalty notice.

- Parents/Carers who take their children on unauthorised term time holidays and/or whose child is persistently absent over a given period may be issued with a penalty notice or subject to court proceedings for failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance under section 444 of the Education Act 1996

The fine for a Penalty Notice is £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. This reduces to £60 if paid within 21 days. If a Penalty Notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child(ren), which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months (per parent).

- Exceptional circumstances will be considered on an individual basis, but the following will not meet the criteria:
 - Cheaper holidays in England or abroad
 - Visiting family. friends who have different half term holiday dates
 - Family weddings for more than 2 days or visits to see family abroad
 - Relatives coming to visit

4.0 This attendance policy will be reviewed in September 2023