



Leigh and Bransford Primary School

## Attendance Policy

Reviewed: March 2021

Date of next review: June 2022

## Leigh and Bransford Primary School Attendance Policy

The purpose of the attendance policy is to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. A consistent level of attendance enables children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Research shows that children who attend school regularly are likely to be more successful. A pupil who misses a day of school a week misses an equivalent of two whole years in their school life. This obviously leads to gaps in their knowledge that become difficult to fill.

The DfE recognises the importance of regular attendance at school and requires the Headteacher to decide in every case whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised. Clearly if a child is unwell s/he may need to be absent. In addition there will be a limited number of occasions when absence for other reasons will be unavoidable or exceptional. Parents and carers are required to ask in advance for authorisation for all absences, other than for illness, and the Headteacher will have absolute responsibility for making the decision.

### **Requesting leave of absence**

When parents are considering a forthcoming absence, they need to write to the Headteacher to do so. This should be filled in and submitted before firm plans are made. The Headteacher will decide whether the absence is 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'.

### **Authorised Absence**

It is always best to avoid absences if possible, but the following are examples of the sort of absences that will be authorised:

- illness
- Medical/dental appointments, but we do urge parents to make routine appointments outside of school time. We accept occasionally there will be the need for emergency appointments, however these will be rare.
- day of religious observation
- educational visit
- approved sporting/musical exam or activity

### **Unauthorised absence**

It is always best to avoid absences if possible, but the following are examples of the sort of absences that will be unauthorised:

- days out for shopping, birthday treats or tiredness caused by a late night or weekend away
- holidays in term time because it is cheaper
- holidays at the start of a term because this time is crucial for establishing sound patterns of learning and social relationships;

- holidays in the months of May for children in Years 2 & 6 because of SAT's administration and June for years 1 & 4 for the phonics screening and timetable tests

When an absence is unauthorised it is recorded as such in the statistics that the school has to report to the LA and to the DfE. It is also a requirement that it is recorded on the child's end of year report.

### **Family Holidays**

All holiday leave is actively discouraged and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances; there is no automatic entitlement to holiday in addition to the school holidays. The following criteria will be used when making a decision:

- overall pattern of attendance
- time of the year and examinations (SATS, phonic screening, timetable test)
- length, destination and purpose of leave and whether it is likely to be a rare event in the life of the child
- family circumstances and the parents/carers reasons for wanting to take their annual holiday during term time

### **Unexpected absences**

Registration is taken at the start of each morning (9.05a.m.) and each afternoon (1.05p.m) Children who arrive after 9.05 a.m. are marked as 'late' in the register. If a child is absent, it is essential that the parent either:

- rings the school office, giving the reason for the absence and the expected length of time the child will be away
- sends a written message giving the reason for the absence and the expected length of time the child will be away

Everyday a child is absent from school and we have not received a message, we will make contact with parents to clarify the absence.

### **Punctuality**

- Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 9 a.m., arriving between 9.05 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. will be considered as late.
- Pupils arriving after 9.05 a.m. must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.
- Pupils arriving after 9.30 a.m. will receive an unauthorised late mark unless a satisfactory reason is given. This will result in the pupil being absent on the attendance report for the whole morning session at school.
  - Valid reasons for lateness may be medical appointments (parents/carers must notify school in advance by phone or in writing) or agreement by the school.

- If lateness persists the parents/carers will receive a letter and may be invited in for a formal meeting to discuss it further. In some cases, where persistent lateness does not improve referrals to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) will be made and can incur penalty notices.

### **Poor Attendance**

School attendance of 95% or less is below average and indeed below our school target of 97%. Children whose attendance falls below 95% will be closely monitored by the Leadership team and further action considered. School will challenge the attitude of those pupils and parents/carers who give a low priority to attendance. Schools will analyse individual pupil data to identify patterns of absence which cause concern and parents will be informed in writing where their child's attendance causes concern.

### **Persistent Absences**

Pupils with persistent absences 92% will be notified by letter and invited to a formal attendance meeting where an action and support plan will be put in place.

### **Attendance Meeting**

An Attendance Meeting is a formal meeting to discuss the child's school attendance, identify barriers and agree a formal plan of action and support, in order to improve school attendance. Where the child's attendance remains a concern following supportive strategies (90% or less) a letter will be sent to parents explaining that external agencies will be involved - the Local Authority Education Welfare Service (EWS).

### **Rewards**

We have a number of attendance rewards in order to promote the importance of attendance and punctuality and our ethos that 'school attendance matters.'

- All staff reward good attendance and punctuality on a daily basis through praise and encouragement.
- Weekly assemblies promote attendance through a class certificates and five minutes extra playtime for the class with the highest percentages, these are displayed on the classroom doors for the academic year and celebrated in the weekly newsletter.
- The weekly overall school attendance figure is displayed on the weekly newsletter with the school target.
- Golden 100% attendance stickers are awarded to individual pupils termly and celebrated in assembly.

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

All absences, authorised, unauthorised and lateness, will be reported to the parents/carers at the end of the academic year within the end of year school report.

## **Conclusion**

We want Leigh and Bransford School to be an excellent school for all children. It is important that pupils attend regularly to ensure progress is being made. As teachers and parents we need to share with our children the importance of regular attendance and being punctual as these are vital in the way that children learn and discipline themselves in the future.



## RECORD OF LETTERS SENT

YEAR - R 1 2 3 4 5 6 (circle the appropriate year)

PUPIL'S NAME -

DOB -

Dates letters sent		NOTES
First		
Second		
Third		
Late Letter		



## Leigh and Bransford Primary School

Hoopers Close, Leigh Sinton, Malvern, Worcs. WR13 5DX

Telephone: (01886 832 342)

E-mail: [office@leighbransford.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:office@leighbransford.worcs.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Stuart Bill BSc Hons, PGCE, NPQH

Dear Parent

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to below 95% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important because missing school can have an impact on learning; also as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement for your child to attend school.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If your child does need to be absent from school please ensure you let school know according to our schools policy (found on the website).

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



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Dear Parent

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s Attendance is still causing concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting «forename»'s progress and we need to meet with you urgently. You are required to attend a meeting to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date:

Time:

Should «forename»'s attendance remain irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**, and a fine of up to **£2500 and/or 3 months in prison**.

Medical evidence is now required for any future absences to be authorised with immediate effect. We look forward to meeting you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support our students in making good progress. I hope that you will work with us to improve «forename»'s attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher





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Headteacher: Stuart Bill BSc Hons, PGCE, NPQH

Dear Parent

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance has not significantly improved since I last contacted you.

I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absences are authorised or unauthorised.

I am now formally requesting the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer who will contact you in due course to arrange a meeting.

I will continue to be available to discuss this matter with you. Please telephone me on the number above should you require an appointment.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



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Dear Parent

I have noted during a recent attendance review that your child is beginning to show a pattern of persistent lateness.

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school regularly and punctually. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any possible classroom disruption

If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's education, I would welcome the opportunity of meeting with you to discuss this.

Please note that if your child arrives after registers close this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. I must remind you that as parent(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 he/she is registered, regularly and punctually.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher