**Attendance Policy**

**Sep 2022-24**

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**Policy Status and Review**

This policy was created by the Head teacher; in consultation with the teaching team, and its implementation is seen as the responsibility of all staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the Head Teacher and Governors.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Written by: | Headteacher |
| Owner: | Headteacher |
| Status: | Approved |
| Approval date: | November 2022 Review date: October 2024 |

# 

# 1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

* Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
* Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
* Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

This policy should be read in line with our schools’ vision statement, ‘**Living and Learning Together with God’s Help**’, as it encompasses everything that we do. It stems from the Christian belief that all children are to believe in themselves, *being a unique human being, made by God and Loved by him,*and so develop a love of lifelong learning and a sense of community, as we grow together as part of God’s family; being with God and having his help as we live and learn together in all that we are and seek to be.

# 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

* [The Education Act 1996](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/part/VI/chapter/II)
* [The Education Act 2002](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/part/3/chapter/3)
* [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/part/7/chapter/2/crossheading/school-attendance)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/Images/amendment-regulation-2010_tcm3-8642.pdf)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/made)
* [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016](http://legislation.data.gov.uk/uksi/2016/792/made/data.html)
* [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/756/pdfs/uksiem_20130756_en.pdf)

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the [school census](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-census-2017-to-2018-guide-for-schools-and-las), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

# 3. School procedures

**3.1 Attendance register**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved off-site educational activity
* Absent
* Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

* The original entry
* The amended entry
* The reason for the amendment
* The date on which the amendment was made
* The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for St Leonard’s CE Primary Academy attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08.30am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08.30am and will be kept open until 08.35am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.50pm and will be kept open until 12.55pm.

**3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 09.00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents can report an absence via Parent Mail, via the school admin email address or by calling the school office.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

**3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents can notify the school in advance of a medical or dental appointment via Parent Mail, via the school admin email address or by calling the school office.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

**3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

The Head teacher will contact parents if there are ongoing punctuality issues.

**3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If absence is persistent a letter will be sent to the parents which will include the % absence and the need to improve.

If persistent absence continues, the school will involve the Education Welfare officer from the Local Authority.

**3.6 Reporting to parents**

A child’s attendance will be reported to parents annually in the written end-of-year report.

# 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

**4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher’s discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

* Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
* Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents’ religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
* Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes– this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

A parent will need to complete a request for Absence form (appendix 2) explaining why you are applying for an authorised absence and the circumstances, which make your application exceptional; and therefore the leave cannot be taken within the normal 13 weeks holiday your child has from school. If you are requesting authorisation to attend a specific event please confirm the date of the event and explain your travel arrangements.

**4.2 Legal sanctions**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority’s code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

* A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
* One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
* Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

# 5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will present attendance certificates at the end of each term rewarding pupils for their 100% attendance to encourage pride in attendance and punctuality.

# 6. Attendance monitoring

The administration officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parent/ Carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil’s absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil’s absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school collects and stores data using the management information systems (SIMS ). The school provides attendance data to the DFE, using SIMS to send data about the school census. The figures are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics. The school uses the attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils.

7. Roles and responsibilities

**7.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

**7.2 The Head teacher**

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Head teacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

**7.3 The Attendance officer**

The attendance officer:

* Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
* Reports concerns about attendance to the Head teacher (where this is not the Head teacher)
* Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
* Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
* Advises the Head teacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices (where this is not the Head teacher)

**7.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

**7.5 Office staff**

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

# 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head teacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

# 9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy.

# Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s guidance on school attendance.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **/** | Present (am) | Pupil is present at morning registration |
| **\** | Present (pm) | Pupil is present at afternoon registration |
| **L** | Late arrival | Pupil arrives late before register has closed |
| **B** | Off-site educational activity | Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school |
| **D** | Dual registered | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered |
| **J** | Interview | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment |
| **P** | Sporting activity | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school |
| **V** | Educational trip or visit | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school |
| **W** | Work experience | Pupil is on a work experience placement |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **Authorised absence** | | |
| **C** | Authorised leave of absence | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances |
| **E** | Excluded | Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made |
| **H** | Authorised holiday | Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances |
| **I** | Illness | School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness |
| **M** | Medical/dental appointment | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment |
| **R** | Religious observance | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance |
| **S** | Study leave | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations |
| **T** | Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence | Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school |
| **Unauthorised absence** | | |
| **G** | Unauthorised holiday | Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school |
| **N** | Reason not provided | Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time) |
| **O** | Unauthorised absence | School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence |
| **U** | Arrival after registration | Pupil arrived at school after the register closed |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **X** | Not required to be in school | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend |
| **Y** | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances | School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody |
| **Z** | Pupil not on admission register | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school |
| **#** | Planned school closure | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |

**Appendix 2 – Request For Absence Form**

Leave of Absence Request

**St Leonard’s Primary School**

Due to Government regulations regarding absence requests from parents, **Headteachers are no longer permitted to authorise any leave or**

**absence from school unless the circumstances are “exceptional” relating to a “one off” isolated situations.**

“Exceptional” circumstances no longer cover:

**Holidays of any description, unless necessitated by work contracts.**

**Family birthday celebrations.**

**Visiting relatives abroad.**

If the school refuses your request, and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and noted on your child’s attendance record, Unauthorised absences **may** result in a penalty notice. These amendments came into force on 1st September 2013.

**I request leave of absence to be granted to**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Child’s Name | Year group | Requested date of absence | |
| From | To |
|  |  |  |  |

Signed Date

Detailed Reason:………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

My Exceptional Circumstances are:.................................................................................................

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......................................................................................................................................................

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Number of school days child(ren) will be absent from school days

Signed:…………………………………..............................................................Parent/Guardian

Print Name:..............................................................................Date:..........................................

**Absence REQUEST APPROVAL/REFUSAL**

**(To be completed by the Head Teacher)**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_**

%

%

%

Attendance rates to end of last week

Number of day’s absence previously authorised this year

Absence request: **Authorised**  Absence request: **Unauthorised**

Your request for authorisation of absence during term time has been carefully considered but unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:

Circumstances do not meet the criteria to qualify as “exceptional”.

The proposed absence is during exams/standard assessment tests.

The proposed absence is considered to be detrimental to your child’s education because

...........................................................................................................................................

.............................................................................................................................................. ......................................................................................................................................

The leave has not been requested in advance.

Signed: ………………………............................................ Headteacher

Date: ............................................................................

Appendix 3 - Attendance policy: coronavirus addendum

# 4. Where ‘non-attendance in relation to coronavirus’ applies

We will only accept ‘non-attendance in relation to coronavirus’ in circumstances where a pupil’s travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

* Against guidance from Public Health England and/or the Department of Health and Social Care relating to the incidence of coronavirus or its transmission
* Prohibited by any legislation or statutory directions relating to the incidence of transmission of coronavirus

4.1 Pupil develops symptoms or lives with someone who does

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school on the first day that their child needs to self-isolate. The pupil will stay at home until they or the symptomatic person they live with receives their coronavirus test results.

**If the pupil’s test result is negative**: the pupil will return to school when they feel well and no longer have symptoms similar to coronavirus. They should continue to stay at home if they remain unwell (i.e. with a different illness).

**If the person the pupil lives with tests negative:** the pupil will stop self-isolating and return to school

****4.2 Pupil or a ‘close contact’ of theirs receives a positive test result****

The pupil’s parent/carer must notify the school about the positive test result as soon as possible.

Pupils who test positive must self-isolate for at least 10 days from the onset of symptoms, and must only return to school when they no longer have symptoms (other than a cough or a loss of sense of smell or taste).

If a member of the pupil’s household or a ‘close contact’ tests positive, the pupil must self-isolate for 14 days. The pupil must do this from when the member of their household first had symptoms, or the day the pupil last met with the ‘close contact’ who received the positive result.

See the definition for ‘close contact’ in section 2 of this addendum.

4.3. Pupil has to quarantine after travel abroad

The parent/carer must notify the school if their child has to quarantine after travel to a country that is not on the government’s [exemptions list](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-corridors#countries-and-territories-with-no-self-isolation-requirement-on-arrival-in-england).

The pupil must quarantine for 14 days on their arrival to the UK and return to school thereafter.

4.4 Pupil is required to shield during a local lockdown

The parent/carer will notify the school if they are advised by the government to stay at home and will provide proof of their shielding letter by sending a scan to the school’s administration email address or a photocopy to the school address.

The pupil will stay at home until the shieling measures in the local area are paused. Once the shielding measures are lifted, we will contact the pupil’s parent/carer to set the expectation that they can return to school.

4.5 Remote learning provision

If a pupil is not attending school because of circumstances related to coronavirus, but where the pupil is not ill, the school will provide the pupil access to remote education.

* Our approach and expectations regarding remote education are set out in our remote learning contingency plan.
* We will keep a record of, and monitor, pupil engagement with remote learning.

**5. Recording attendance**

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

* Present
* Attending an approved off-site educational activity
* Absent
* Unable to attend due to ‘exceptional circumstances’ (as defined in section [insert section 4] of our normal attendance policy)
* Unable to attend for reasons related to coronavirus (see appendix 1 for the relevant absence codes and when we will use them)

Pupils must arrive in school at their designated time slot on each school day. These have been outlined in the school’s reopening plan.

The register for the first session will be taken at these designated times for each year group and will be kept open for 5 minutes after this time. The register for the second session will be taken at the designated start times for each year group and will be kept open until for 5 minutes after this time.

# 6. Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, we will:

* Follow up on their absence with their parent or carer via a phone call.
* Notify their social worker, where they have one

If a pupil does not attend because they, and/or their parent/carer are concerned about returning to school because of coronavirus, we will discuss with the parents/ carer the protective measures the school is taking to keep pupils safe and further steps that can be taken for the individual concerned, to enable a full transition back to school.

6.1 Legal sanctions

Normal rules on legal sanctions apply.

# 7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the LA or Department for Education is updated, and as a minimum every 2 months during term time by the Head teacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full governing board.

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| --- | --- |
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**Appendix 1: pupil absence codes**

The following codes are taken from the DfE’s addendum to their school attendance guidance for the 2020/21 academic year. If not covered here, our normal attendance codes apply.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Definition** | **Scenario** |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate because they have symptoms or live with someone who does, and are waiting for their test results |
| **I** | Illness | Pupil remains unwell following a negative test result (i.e. with a different illness) |
| **I** | Illness | Pupil has to continue to self-isolate because they tested positive |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because someone they live with tested positive |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to self-isolate (for 14 days) because they are a close contact of someone who tested positive |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil has to quarantine (for 14 days) after a trip to a non-exempt country |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil is required to shield in the case of a local lockdown, or lives with someone who is required to shield |
| **X** | Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) | Pupil is asked not to attend in the case of local lockdown |