



Pupil Attendance Policy

*'At the **forefront of education**, our vision is to provide opportunity and excellence in all branches of learning. By creating a flagship school that is a 'Centre of Excellence' in scores of disciplines, academic and beyond, each unique child's potential is explored and natural talents discovered. At Langney Primary School our vision is to uphold the balance between **EXCELLENCE** (standards) and the **ENJOYMENT** of learning (Vision Statement April 2014).*

Review Date	Policy Reviewer	Approval Date	Approved By:	Chair Printed Name
07.05.17	Julie Prentice (Head Teacher)	22.05.17	FGB	Jane McCarthy-Penman

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflect the vision and aim of Langney Primary School by:

- ✓ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- ✓ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

PRINCIPLES

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open; unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives them the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the information about the cause of each absence is always required, in writing or by telephone.

Authorised absences are morning and afternoons away from school for a reason such as a genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which "no leave" has been given. This includes:

- ✓ ***parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;***
- ✓ ***truancy before or during the school day;***
- ✓ ***absences which have never been properly explained;***
- ✓ ***children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.***

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may seek involvement from the East Sussex Behaviour Attendance Service (ESBAS). ESBAS will work with the school and parent to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed then ESBAS can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or three months imprisonment.

PROCEDURES

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Role of Parents and Carers

- to ensure that the aim is for their children to achieve 100% school attendance;
- to ensure that pupils are on the premises between 8:40 and 8:50am and not before 8:30am;
- the school front gate opens at 8:30am however pupils remain the responsibility of parents or carers until the school doors open at 8:40am;
- to take children who are late (8:50am onwards) to the main entrance to sign in;
- to collect children promptly at the end of the school day, which finishes at 3:10pm. After this time, children are the responsibility of their parents or carers;
- to collect children promptly from after school clubs;
- to ensure that the school has current parent/carers and emergency contact telephone numbers and addresses.

Absences for Medical Reasons

It is the responsibility of parents or carers:

- to notify the school by telephone on the first and subsequent days of absence, as early as possible and not later than 9:00am.
- to agree a later registration time with the Headteacher if the child needs regular medical attention before coming to school. The child must always sign in on arrival.
- to inform the office in writing or to provide Medical Appointment Cards if the child needs to attend a medical appointment in school time. Whenever possible, please try to make all appointments out of school hours.
- To liaise with the school about specific family problems, which might cause absence.

Withdrawal from Learning Requests

Responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parent and pupil. It is made clear to parents that any absence from school will disrupt their child's learning.

Absence during term time is not authorised, unless the Headteacher deems it to be an exceptional circumstance.

Parents must seek permission from the Headteacher by making an application in advance through completion of the 'Withdrawal from Learning Request Form.' Forms may be obtained from the school office or downloaded from the school website <http://www.langneyprimary.co.uk/homeschool-communication>.

If the absence requested is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, the absence (if taken) is recorded as unauthorised.

If the absence during term time is 5 days or more than ESBAS is notified and a Penalty Notice issued. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 which increased to £120 if not paid within the first 21 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid this will result in further legal intervention.

Role of The School

- to register the children promptly and accurately;
- to record absence appropriately, including signing in and out during school hours;
- to record as late, pupils who arrive after 8:50a.m. and before the close of registers at 9:00am.
- to record as unauthorised absences, pupils who arrive after the registers close at 9:00a.m.
- to record as late, pupils who arrive ten minutes after class afternoon registration time;
- to check registers daily for first day absence;
- to telephone those parents who have not contacted the school by the required time on the first day of absence, priority being given to:
 1. children on the Protection Register or involved with Social Services such as LAC or those with Child Protection Plans;
 2. children in families where there is a particular concern;
 3. children, whose parents or carers are normally fastidious in making contact.
- to send a letter home that day to parents who cannot be contacted, to ask why their child is absent.
- to keep records of all telephone calls and keep all letters concerning absence;
- to monitor regularly absence and lateness, to look for patterns and take appropriate action;
- to involve ESBAS if there are any concerns regarding absence or punctuality;
- to obtain details of telephone contacts for all pupils and to ensure that records are updated regularly by writing to parents to remind them of their responsibilities, whilst requesting current contact information. An emergency telephone number must be recorded for every pupil.
- to send reminders regarding absence and punctuality on the school's regular newsletters;
- to raise concerns regarding absence at parent consultation meetings, or sooner if necessary.
- to discourage the practice of taking children out of school for odd days and holidays;
- to report all authorised and unauthorised absence on the child's annual report;
- to publish attendance data to parents;
- to set attendance targets annually and monitor.

The school will not authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which cannot be arranged out of school time.

Frequent Absence / Poor Attendance

The school aims always to work with parents / carers and support them in ensuring their child has a good attendance record. Where attendance drops, parents will be notified as follows:

- persistent lateness will trigger a letter notifying you;
- attendance below 93% will trigger a standard letter notifying you that attendance has fallen below that level and warns that the child may become a persistent absentee should their attendance reach <90%;
- attendance below 90% will trigger a letter and an attendance meeting with the Headteacher, Attendance Officer and / or ESBAS to discuss reasons for a formal referral, and possible legal intervention, to be made / not made.

If a child is late for school eight times, an attendance meeting will be held with the Headteacher, Attendance Office and / or ESBAS and an individual 'register close' time of 8:50am will be established. If a child is late again it will be unauthorised. Ten unauthorised absences trigger a referral to ESBAS or a fine.

Rewarding Good Attendance

The majority of pupils at Langney Primary School have a good attendance record. Pupils are given incentives to attend a regularly and punctually:

- ✓ Weekly Attendance Award – one child is given an award during the school's celebration assembly for best / improved attendance.
- ✓ Certificates / rewards given for pupils with outstanding termly attendance.
- ✓ Rewards for outstanding annual attendance include certificates, contact home and group attendance outings.
- ✓ Improvement post cards sent home for effort in improved attendance and / or punctuality.

Six times a year parents will receive a letter:

97% and above – Green Attendance Category

94% - 96% - Amber Attendance Category

Below 93% - Red Attendance Category

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs. Prentice – Headteacher

Mrs. Harman – Attendance Officer

Mrs. Barrow – School Secretary

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.