

Long Whatton CE Primary School



'Learning and Growing together'

Attendance Policy

Date of policy: March 2019

Date adopted by Governors: March 2019

Date of review: December 2021 Attendance Policy

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Rationale:

Long Whatton CE Primary School is committed to providing high quality inclusive learning opportunities for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to reach their full potential, then excellent attendance is crucial.

Both parents and children need to understand how crucial it is to take full advantage of the education on offer, when so many children in the world have no access to any education at all.

Overwhelmingly, evidence shows that children who attend regularly are more likely to achieve at school and to maintain closer friendships with other children. We expect staff, governors and parents to support good attendance.

Aims:

It is our policy of to celebrate achievement. Full attendance is a critical factor in ensuring positive educational outcomes for our pupils.

As a school we will:

- Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our pupils.
- Emphasise to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance.
- Not authorise leave in term time, except for exceptional circumstances [see holiday absence]
- Investigate, identify and strive to resolve attendance problems as efficiently as possible.
- Promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Officer and other agencies in order to support parents and pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Parents and Carers: - Once your child is registered at school, it is your responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly and on time. You are also responsible for informing school before 9.30 on the first day of absence and on subsequent days. Telephone calls, letters, emails to the school office and personal contacts are all acceptable ways of doing this. The school always follows up any unexplained absence and this is recorded in our 'Children Missing from Education' book. We will telephone or email to ask why your child is not in school using the two telephone numbers you have provided. If we are unable to contact you, we will follow this up with a visit to home to make sure all is ok.

As a school we will:

- Call the register twice a day - once at the start of the morning session (9.00am) and once at the start of the afternoon session (1.10 pm).
- Intervene early where there are concerns about attendance and maintain a record of all contact.

- Inform the Education Welfare Officer of pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern.

The Local Authority will carry out its statutory duty of pursuing legal action against parents who fail to ensure the regular school attendance of their child.

Procedures

- Parents should contact the school office, before 9.30 on the first day of absence.
- The school secretary always follows up any unexplained absence immediately.
- Any unexplained absences will be coded as unauthorised.
- Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration.
- Children arriving after 9:00am will be recorded as late. Registers will close at 9.15 am.
- Children arriving after 9:15am will be recorded and coded as an unauthorised absence.
- Children whose attendance falls below 95% may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer to address the matter further.
- School finishes at 3:20. Parents are expected to collect their children on time and to notify the school as soon as possible if they are unable to do so.

Lateness and children leaving school during the day

Parents must sign and give a reason for late arrival in a record book in situated in the secretary's office.

Children who arrive at school after the register has closed will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless the child has attended an appointment.

If a child has an appointment which requires them to leave and return to school during the day, parents should sign them in and out as required in the record book situated in the secretary's office and provide the school with the appointment card/letter.

Authorised and unauthorised absences

The following are guidelines as to what are considered authorised or unauthorised absence:

- **Illness, medical dental and optician appointments** are considered 'authorised' providing that the school is satisfied that the absence is genuine. You may be required to give evidence. Parents must sign when taking their child out of school for any reason.
- **Family bereavements** A request in writing or completion of a leave of absence form is required. Where a child is absent for more than the agreed period, this will be discussed with the EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER.
- **Days of religious observance** Absence is permitted as a result of participation in a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- **Public performances:** Evidence will be required.

- **Traveller children** Travellers are protected from prosecution if they show that the nature of their trade requires travel from place to place, and that the child has attended school as regularly as possible. Also where the child has attained the age of six years and has made at least 200 attendances during the previous twelve months.
- Leave without permission, arriving after the register has closed, shopping and days off for birthdays will be coded as unauthorised.

All absences will be coded as unauthorised if the school is not satisfied with the reason given or if evidence is not provided.

Leave of absence during term time: holiday [exceptional], religious, compassionate.

Since September 2013, schools are no longer allowed to authorise absence for family holidays during term time. However, the school recognises that there are **exceptional circumstances** when it may be appropriate to grant holiday leave. These include:

- **forces personnel** on leave from a foreign posting;
- **cultural and religious** requirements;

Where a family requires a leave of absence for a holiday during term time, a written request should be submitted to the Headteacher. If leave is granted, it will be for a maximum of five days in one academic year. Any additional leave will be considered unauthorised.

If the request for leave can be shown to be of significant educational benefit, the Headteacher may authorise such leave for an agreed period.

Should your child's leave of absence be recorded as unauthorised, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer who in turn may submit matter to the Local Authority. This could result in you being issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days), or, your case could be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court for the purposes of a criminal prosecution.

Authorising requests for leave of absence

The new regulations do not permit the Headteacher to authorise absence during term time unless it meets the criteria above.

Evaluation

Constant lateness or absence results in a loss of learning and disruption to the class and teacher. We will actively promote positive attitudes and supporting pupils to attend school on time as much as is reasonably possible.

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