



# **Leominster Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Staff Responsible:

Head Teacher

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## **1. Introduction**

Leominster Primary School have high standards in respect of attendance and punctuality. Both of these are crucial for pupils to be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and in order to facilitate teaching and learning. Attending school regularly greatly improves a child's chances of fulfilling their potential and receiving a good education. We recognise that frequent long-term absence or frequent occasional

absence, affects a pupil's attainment through missed lessons and experiences, and this, together with the lack of opportunity to form social relationships with his/her peers, leads to an increased pattern of non-attendance.

All children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full time education. When a child is registered at school, the parent/carer has responsibility for ensuring the child attends regularly.

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2018) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- Data Protection Act 2018

Our attendance data is reported on a termly basis to our Governing Body and our Attendance Policy is reviewed annually in order to keep it updated and in line with local and national guidance/legislation. It is available on our school website or a paper copy can be obtained from the school office.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

This policy ensures that all the staff and governors at Leominster Primary School are fully aware and clear about the actions required to promote good attendance.

- To uphold a welcoming and positive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.
- To create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality is the norm and valued by the school.
- To encourage pupils to establish their own sense of responsibility for good attendance and punctuality.
- To aim for an attendance of 100% apart from those with chronic health issues.
- To maintain parents/carers and pupils awareness of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- To ensure clear communication within school and between school and parents.
- To improve pupils achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To establish a clear school policy which informs good practice.
- To ensure our policy includes Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.

### **We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:**

- Raising the profile of good attendance and punctuality among staff, parents and pupils through awareness.
- Ensuring parents take responsibility for their child's education through regular attendance and punctuality.
- Preparing pupils with age appropriate life skills needed to be responsible for good school attendance and punctuality.
- Maintaining effective and positive communication with staff, parents, pupils and governors regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Implementing effective procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor

attendance and punctuality.

- Working with families who are experiencing difficulties at home or school that may affect attendance and punctuality.
- Implementing procedures to follow up non- attendance at school.

### **3. Definitions**

#### **Authorised Absence:**

An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave following a notification from a parent/carer.

An absence for medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which school have granted leave following a notification from a parent/carer.

An absence for religious or cultural observations for which the school has granted leave following a notification from a parent/carer.

An absence due to a family emergency.

Only the school can make an absence authorised and consequently not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classified by authorised.

#### **Unauthorised Absence:**

Absence without permission from school.

Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without good reason.

Absences which have never been properly explained by parents/carers.

Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.

Absence due to day trips and holidays in term which have not been agreed.

Absence due to parents/carers or siblings illness.

Absence due to parents/carers being unable to get a child to school.

Arrival at school after 9.15am.

### **4. School Procedures**

#### **4.1 Attendance Register**

Class Teacher's and Office Staff have a legal responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance and lateness of all pupils. All attendance records are documented using SIMS software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used. The School and the Governing Body are registered under the Data Protection Act 2018 to safeguard all information. If there is a problem with SIMS a paper register must be taken down to the office and the register is to be completed by the Office Staff.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

/ = Present in the morning

\ = Present in the afternoon

L = Late arrival before the register has closed

C = Authorised absence

E = Excluded but no alternative provision made

H = Authorised holiday

I = Illness

M = Medical or dental appointments

R = Religious observance

B = Off-site education activity

G = Unauthorised holiday

O = Unauthorised absence

U = Arrived after registration closed

N = Reason not yet provided

X = Not required to be in school  
T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence  
V = Education visit or trip  
P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity  
D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment  
Y = Exceptional circumstances  
Z = Pupil not on admission register

## 4.2 Arrival and Registration Times

Pupils must arrive at school on time every day and be ready to learn.

- Nursery (EYFS) Doors are open **8.50am – 9.00am**
- Reception (EYFS) Doors are open **8.45am – 8.50am**
- Year 1 & 2 (KS1) Gates are open **8.35am – 8.50am**
- Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 (KS2) Gates are open **8.35am – 8.50am**

Pupils arriving after these times are classed as late (L Code).

### Morning Registration Times:

- Nursery (EYFS) **9am – 9.10am**
- Reception (EYFS) **8.50am – 9.00am**
- Year 1 & 2 (KS1) **8.50am – 9.00am**
- Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 (KS2) **8.50am – 9.00am**

### Afternoon Registration Times:

- Nursery (EYFS) **1.05pm**
- Reception (EYFS) **1.05pm**
- Year 1 & 2 (KS1) **1.05pm**
- Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 (KS2) **1.35pm**

## 4.3 Punctuality

Punctuality is of the utmost importance and lateness and early pick up will not be tolerated. Pupils who are persistently late or picked up early will miss a significant amount of learning and it can be disruptive for the teacher and children.

Pupils must attend school on time to be given a mark for the session. The school gates/doors close promptly at 8.50am for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and pupils arriving after this time have to be signed in at the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way from 8.50am will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, which is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance Code L). Any pupil who arrives at school later than 9.15am, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning (Attendance Code U). Pupils who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.15am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance Code M).

## 4.4 Absence

Parents/carers are required to contact the school before 9.30am on the first day of their child's absence with full details of the reason their child is absent and each subsequent day of absence, in person, by letter, by email, by phone or by Parentmail. Accurate information of the absence is important and if there is evidence of the contrary, the Head Teacher has the authority to unauthorised absences. All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised on the child's registration certificate.

We initiate a first day contact process when a pupil is absent from school and contact has not been received from a parent/carer. After registration has closed at 9.00am Office Staff update registers and identify pupils who are absent and send a Parentmail to parents/carers requesting an explanation for the pupils absence. After 9.30am absences without an explanation will be recorded as unauthorised. This list is then passed to our Safeguarding Manager as part of the continuous approach to safeguarding all pupils.

The Safeguarding Manager will make contact with parents/carers to check the reason for absence. This will be via a phone call, email or a home visit to speak directly to parents/carers to check the welfare of the child. The pupil's absence will be unauthorised in this case (Attendance Code O) and expectations of contact from parents/carers for future absence will be set out. If there is no contact during the first day of absence and the child is absent for a second day, a home visit will be carried out by the Safeguarding Manager or Home School Liaison Officer and if the member of staff is still unable to speak with the parent/carer we will consider further safeguarding action.

#### **4.5 Appointments**

As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical, dental and optician appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible parents/carers should provide a note and appointment card to the school office. Pupils will attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

#### **4.6 Illness or Other Ligament Reasons**

If a pupil is unfit for school because of illness, parents/carers must make contact on each day of absence with full details of the illness to support the school with infection prevention and control for other children and staff.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period or be a repetitive absence, the school will do all it can to send appropriate work home so they can keep up with their school work and not fall behind.

If a pupil has repeated periods of illness over the course of an academic year, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence can be an appointment card, letter from the hospital, a doctor's note or a copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

If a pupil has been admitted to hospital we require a copy of the discharge notes before they return to school to assess if the child requires a healthcare plan.

#### **4.7 Term Time Leave**

The Head Teacher is unable to authorise holidays during term-time. The Head Teacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If parents believe there are exceptional circumstances a request must be put into writing, **using the schools template** to the Head Teacher in advance and the Head Teacher will need to be satisfied by the evidence which is presented, before authorising term time leave. The Head Teacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school during term time. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. Any requests for leave during term-time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. If parents/carers take their child out of school during term time without authorisation from the Head Teacher, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service who will take appropriate legal action against all parents/carers with parental responsibility.

## **5. Responsibilities**

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends and patterns in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the responsibilities which individuals have.

### Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Recording registration and attendance information.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting the whole school attendance incentive.
- Addressing attendance at parent's evenings as a significant part of the pupil's education, expressing concerns or highlighting success.
- Keeping an overview of class attendance and punctuality.
- Monitoring pupils with general poor attendance and punctuality, patterns and trends in absence, extended periods of absence or unusual explanations for absence offered by pupils and their parents/carers.
- Informing the Safeguarding Manager when there are concerns.
- Following up authorised absences with immediate requests for explanation from child or parent/carer which should be noted on the register.
- Consider the impact on pupil standards at pupil progress meetings and formulate strategies with Safeguarding Manger and Phrase Leader.

### School Office Staff are responsible for:

- Recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents/carers regarding absence.
- Identify pupils who are absent without parent/carer contact and sending a Parentmail to parents/carer requesting an explanation for the pupils absence.
- Produce daily report for Safeguarding Manger regarding absent children.
- Record details of children who arrive late or go home early.
- Ensuring parents sign their children in and out if arriving late or leaving early.

### The Safeguarding Manager is responsible for:

- Send out a standard letter to parents/carers at the start of the academic year outlining school attendance expectations.
- Review the attendance of pupils daily to safeguard the welfare of all pupils. Contacting parents/carers by phone, email or home visit if a pupil is absent and there has been no contact received to speak directly to parents/carers to check the welfare of the child.
- Hold weekly meetings on a three week rota (Week 1 - Year 5 and 6, Week 2 - Year 3 and 4, Week 3 – Year R, 1 and 2) with the Home School Liaison Officer to identify children with attendance concerns, identifying those children within vulnerable groups and implementing actions and support.
- Consider the impact on pupil standards at pupil progress meetings and formulate strategies with Safeguarding Manger and Phrase Leader.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

### The Home/School Liaison Officer is responsible for:

- Attend weekly meetings on a three week rota (Week 1 - Year 5 and 6, Week 2 - Year 3 and 4, Week 3 – Year R, 1 and 2) with the Safeguarding Manager to identify children with attendance concerns, identifying those children within vulnerable groups and implementing actions and support.
- Planned or unplanned home visits to families that have been identified as a concern regarding attendance, lack of contact or punctuality problems.
- Making referrals to the Education Welfare Service at Herefordshire Council.

### The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Identifying those children within vulnerable groups.
- Providing reports and background information as required for Governors and external agencies.

## **6. Monitoring and Supporting Attendance**

The Safeguarding Manager reviews the attendance of pupils daily to safeguard the welfare of all pupils. Weekly meetings on a three week rota (Week 1 - Year 5 and 6, Week 2 - Year 3 and 4, Week 3 – Year R, 1 and 2) are held with the Safeguarding Manager and Home School Liaison to identify children with attendance concerns and implement actions:

### Identified children are:

- Pupils between 90-96%
- Persistent Absentees (attendance below 90%)
- Pupils with 6 or more unauthorised absences
- Pupils who have returned after an unauthorised period of time
- Pupils with on-going legal proceedings
- Pupils within the following groups – Looked after Children, English as Additional Language, Free School Meals, Pupil Premium, Special Educational Needs, Child Protection and Children in Need

### Appropriate actions and support include:

- Information sharing with relevant members of school staff
- Letters to parents/cares
- Parentmail sent to parents/carers
- Email sent to parents/carers
- Meeting with parents/carers at school to discuss attendance concerns
- Announced or unannounced home visits
- Medical Evidence Requirement letter and GP consent
- Attendance mentoring for child within school
- Attendance contract
- Referral to external agencies for support
- Referral to the Local Authority after 10 days if a child is missing education.

If concerns for attendance cannot be resolved after actions and strategies are put in place, and there is no improvement with attendance, the school will refer pupils to the Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Service will take action in accordance with their policies and protocols and this may include issuing Penalty Notices to the families or even a direct referral to court.

## **7. Positive Attendance**

Whilst we do a lot of work with poor attendance and punctuality we also recognise the children that have good attendance and celebrate this across the school.

- Whole school attendance incentive.
- Assemblies with a focus on attendance success each term.
- Rewards for pupils with positive attendance each term.
- Rewards for pupils with improved attendance each term.
- Rewards for children with 100% attendance for the whole academic year.
- Letter to parents with positive attendance each term.
- Letters to parents/carers for children with improved attendance each term.

## **8. Developing and Reviewing the Attendance Policy**



We regularly review the schools approach to attendance and develop it accordingly through:

- Attendance analysis.
- Set attendance targets and produce detailed and useful attendance data.
- Monitor and evaluate existing procedures to improve school practices.
- Create a high profile on attendance and punctuality and raise awareness with all staff, parents and pupils.
- Identify ways in which attendance can be usefully linked to the development of other aspects of the school, especially pupils' welfare, behaviour and achievement.
- Analyse pupil attainment with reference to attendance data and trends.

## **9. Expectations of Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school or receives an appropriate education.

Parental agreement:

- Show your child that you think school attendance and punctuality is important by guaranteeing they are present every day unless they are unfit to attend.
- Ensure your child arrives on time. Arriving late can be embarrassing for your child and disruptive to the class, especially if lessons have started. Your child may miss important information which is often given at the start of the day.
- Contact the school before 10.00am on each day of absence to inform us of the reason why your child is absent and when we can expect them back.
- Make medical appointments outside of school hours or in school holidays where possible and make sure your child attends school before and after the appointment wherever possible if you cannot get an appointment out of school hours.
- To keep in touch with regular updates if there is an extended period of absence, so that school can support you and your child.

## **10. Summary**

This policy is based on the belief that a committed and consistent approach by everyone will make a difference to attendance and punctuality, and in turn support the academic and social aspects of all pupils' education whilst at Leominster Primary School. It is our duty to make a pupil's time here interesting and worthwhile, giving attention to the school environment, an emphasis on early intervention and detailed monitoring of attendance. Our success in improving attendance relies on a close involvement of staff and parents or carers in order to carefully target individual pupils both pastorally and in the classroom.