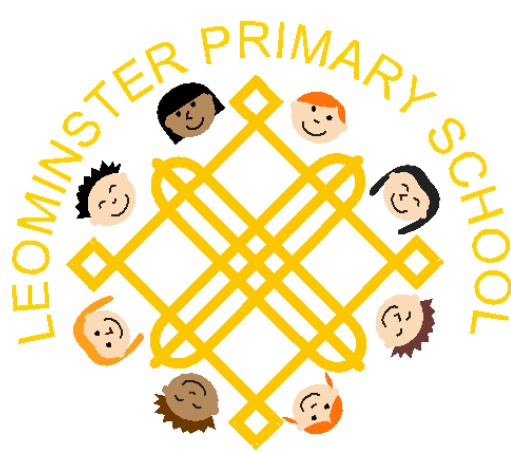




# **Leominster Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Staff Responsible:

Head Teacher

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# **Contents**

1. Introduction
2. Aims and Objectives
3. Understanding types of absence
4. School Procedures
  - 4.1. Attendance Register
  - 4.2. Arrival and Registration Times
  - 4.3. Punctuality
  - 4.4. Absence
  - 4.5. Appointments
  - 4.6. Illness and Other Legitimate Reasons
  - 4.7. Term Time Leave
5. Responsibilities
6. Monitoring Attendance
  - 6.1 Notice to Improve
7. Positive Attendance
8. Developing and Reviewing the Attendance Policy
9. Expectations of Parents and Carers
10. Summary

## **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 (2024) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2015) 'Child performance and activities licensing legislation in England'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2024) '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. Understanding types of absence:**

Students are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- Authorised absence is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised;
- Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a students' leave of absence from school after a parent's request. This includes: parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays or to look after sibling's truancy during the school day and absences which have not been explained. School can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

## **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 six 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.

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. Please see a separate appendix for the coding.

## **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**

## **Safeguarding and Attendance**

Leominster Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and safeguarding students. If a student does not attend school it is considered a potential safeguarding matter. This is why information about the reason of any absence is always required. Attendance registers are scrutinised on a daily basis. Should contact with a parent not be established and a satisfactory explanation for the absence not be obtained, then safeguarding procedures will commence. A risk assessment is conducted which determines the level of intervention needed. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the student, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family members. We may visit your family home and if not satisfied with information provided, a request may be made to the Police for a 'safe and well' check .

## **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.

Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.

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: [admin@lps.school.gov.uk](mailto:admin@lps.school.gov.uk), by phone: 01568616919 or by MCAS App. Accurate information of the absence is important and if there is evidence of the contrary, the Head Teacher has the authority to unauthorised absences.

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 should attend school before and after the appointment.

## 4.6 Illness or Other Exceptional Reasons

Leominster Primary School will make every effort to reduce absences such as making first day phone calls to encourage the student back to school. The Attendance Officer will scrutinise attendance data regularly to identify individual students or cohorts that need further support. Where there is an emerging pattern to a student's absence with or without explanation, the school will take further action to support that child's attendance. We will contact parents and carers to discuss the reasons for absence and any further support that may be necessary. If this does not prove successful, we will invite parents and carers to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents/carers and student to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. We are keen to offer sensitive and appropriate support and guidance to parents/carers concerning student attendance. Where there continues to be no improvement in the students' attendance, we may issue a 'Notice to Improve' to encourage improved school attendance. Where there is no further improvement, we will work closely with Herefordshire Council to improve attendance and will consider appropriate legal action such as Penalty Notices and alternative legal measures. Further useful information on school attendance can be found on the Herefordshire Council website; [Attendance information for schools – Herefordshire Council](#)

The school promotes the NHS guidance to parents: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#)

## 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, [Request of Leave Form.pdf](#) to the Head Teacher Six weeks 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 Herefordshire Council Enforcement Team who will take appropriate legal action against all parents/carers with parental responsibility. [Microsoft Word - Penalty Notice - Local Code of Conduct 2024](#)

### **Unauthorised Absence or Legal Measures to tackle poor attendance**

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school. Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness We will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:

1. the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. the child or family has failed to engage with help and support and parents are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures may be used for students of compulsory school age who are registered at a school and the decisions are made by Herefordshire Council in accordance with their code of conduct:

- Parenting contracts
- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

## 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 Manager and Phase 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 MCAS to parents/carer requesting an explanation for the pupils absence.
- Produce daily report for Safeguarding Manager 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 Manager and Phase 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 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.

**The Government expects that:**

- Schools will promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Schools will ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence, by working in partnership with parents.
- Parents and carers will perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly in accordance with the school's home/school agreement.
- All pupils will be punctual for their lessons.

## **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:

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 Herefordshire Council to 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. Penalty Notices code of conduct -[School attendance and absences information for parents and carers – Herefordshire Council](#) / [Penalty Notice - Local Code of Conduct 2024 \(herefordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

### **6.1 Notices to improve**

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in [Herefordshire](#) code of conduct.

They will include:

Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences

The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

Details of the support provided so far:

Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with:

A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by case basis.

A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period

The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

## **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 9.30 am 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.