



Attendance Policy

Policy Approved 19th July 2021
To be reviewed 19th July 2023

School Vision, Values and Aims

Our school vision, values, aims and motto are rooted in the Church of England's Vision for Education; *Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good* and the biblical teaching of;

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength; and love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12.30,31).

Vision

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

Values

Respect	Mark 10.14: Let the children come to me
Responsibility	Colossians 3.23: Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart
Compassion	Colossians 3.12: Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience
Perseverance	Deuteronomy 31.6: The Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you or forsake you

Aims

Our principle aim - For all to know that they are welcome

To show kindness and forgiveness

To listen to one other

To seek enjoyment in our work.

To show patience with one other

To show love towards one other

To show courage in our work

To keep the children at the heart of our decisions

To embrace innovation and change

To trust one other

To inspire one another

To celebrate the dignity and worth of each individual

To begin each new day positively

To reach out to one other

To have confidence

To encourage one other

To support and challenge one other

To believe in one other

1 Introduction

1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

1.3 Equality of Opportunity

All pupils at Leckhampton C of E Primary School have an equal right to enjoy school and an equal opportunity to achieve their potential. Equality of opportunity underpins the school curriculum and the work of the school. Children at Leckhampton are valued as individuals.

We will endeavour to ensure each child will have access to an education, in an environment, which will enable him / her to meet these aims. We will encourage and educate children to be aware of how and why equality of opportunity should be an automatic right in society.

1.4 Safeguarding

The Governors of Leckhampton C of E Primary School are committed to ensuring that all children in our school feel safe and are free from harm. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the Headteacher can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

2.3 Lateness

When a pupil arrives late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the school day. Poor punctuality can also cause social disruption as children may feel uncomfortable and embarrassed arriving to the classroom when everyone else is already settled. When a pupil arrives late it disrupts the teacher and the rest of the class, compromising everyone's learning.

- The school day commences at 8.45am and all pupils are expected to be on school site before the school bell rings, in readiness for the start of the school day. Classrooms are supervised from 8.35am and pupils are welcome to arrive on site after this time.
- School registers open at 8.45am and close at 9.10am. Pupils arriving after 8.45am but before 9.10am will be marked as late in the register. After 9.10am all absence will be marked as unauthorised until the reason for absence has been established.
- Parents must sign children in if arriving after 8.45am and verbally provide a reason for lateness.
- Please note that parents must accompany a child into school if late and must not drop off at the main door. They must also report to the main office in the first instance before making their way into the rest of the School building.

3 If a child is absent

3.1 **THE PARENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR NOTIFYING THE SCHOOL OFFICE, BY TELEPHONE, BEFORE 10.00AM ON THE FIRST MORNING OF THE ABSENCE AND EACH DAY THEREAFTER.**

Parents should state the reason for the child's absence which is then recorded and passed to the class teacher. Class teachers are responsible for recording the reason in the register as part of the authorisation process. If the reason is unclear or has not been provided, parents may be sent a letter produced from the attendance system requesting clarification.

- 3.2 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register but not the reason. The class teacher should send a message to the office if a child is absent without an explanation of their whereabouts. If the school office has not been notified of the absence by 10am, the office will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian for clarification of the reason for absence.

- 3.3 For planned absences, a note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.
- 3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are **exceptional** circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child.
- 4.2 Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 removed references to family holiday and extended leave. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

As stated in the regulations, Headteachers may now only grant leave in exceptional circumstances however, we do understand that a parent may need to request legitimate leave of absence for a child.

We now ask that parents and carers contact the school, **at least two weeks prior to the requested leave dates in writing**, outlining the exceptional circumstances as to why leave must be taken in term time.

Should a parent/carer wish to discuss the circumstances around a leave request prior to putting it in writing, the Headteacher would be more than happy to arrange a time to meet.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the relevant support services.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

Penalty Notices

Missing school can seriously affect a child's long-term future and we are determined to make sure pupils are given every opportunity to succeed. Changes to the law mean we can now fine parents and carers who allow their children to miss school. Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children attend school regularly. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

The power to issue penalty notices was introduced in February 2004 as part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority at the request of the school.

For further guidance on Penalty Notices, what they are and what they mean, please see Appendix 1; *Gloucestershire County Council Penalty Notices Information for parents and carers*

7 Attendance targets

- 7.1 The school sets attendance targets each year when reviewing the Attendance Policy. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.
- The attendance target for 2021 – 2022 is 98%
- 7.2 The school is required to report attendance detail through the School Census. The School Census is a statutory return for all maintained schools in England. This includes percentages of un/authorised absences and details of individual pupils with high levels of absence. Levels of attendance are forwarded by way of Common Transfer File on an individual's movement to another educational setting.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the Headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 8.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

- 8.3 The rates of attendance will be reported on the School and College Performance Tables, published online by the Department for Education.
- 8.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 8.5 **This policy will be reviewed by the governing body bi-annually, or earlier if considered necessary.**