



Lightwoods School

Policy Library

TITLE:

Attendance

L056



Lightwoods Primary School

Attendance Policy

Contents

Aims	2
Why Regular Attendance is so important:.....	2
Learning:	2
Safeguarding: -	2
The Law relating to attendance	2
The Law relating to safeguarding.....	2
Promoting Regular Attendance	3
To help us all to focus on this we will:	3
Understanding types of absence	3
Authorised absences.....	3
Unauthorised absences.....	3
Persistent Absence (PA).....	4
Attendance at 96% or below	4
Evidence of Absence	4
Attendance at 90% or below	4
Absence Procedures	4
Telephone numbers	4
Lateness	5
How we manage lateness	5
Holidays in Term Time	5
The Attendance and Prosecution Service	6
Penalty Notice Fines issued by the Local Authority.....	6
School targets, projects and special initiatives.....	6
People responsible for ensuring good attendance.....	7
Our Legal Duty.	7

Aims

Lightwoods Primary School is a hardworking school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

Attendance

Behaviour Management

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Anti- bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him or her to receive efficient full time education suitable:- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents and carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular newsletter and during assemblies.
- Report to you each term on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment and progress.
- Celebrate good attendance by sharing class achievements
- Reward good attendance by rewarding an Attendance trophy each week to the class with the best attendance.
- Recognise good or improving attendance and share school targets with children and parents.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.

This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required by telephone call and preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/carers 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 an attendance mark in the register
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your 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 the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. Lightwoods Primary School offers an open door policy to solving problems, however small and the head teacher affirms this in the newsletter.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Lightwoods Primary School has average annual attendance of 96%

Attendance at 96% or below

We monitor all absence thoroughly. When a child has reached the 96% or below mark for any reasons, including only genuine absences, the headteacher will write to parents to alert them and offer support. Attendance below 95% is regarded as heading towards persistent absence and the headteacher may ask to see parents in order to offer support and discuss the matter.

Evidence of Absence

Evidence includes appointment cards, evidence of medicines being prescribed by a doctor or evidence of the circumstances necessitating the absence from school. If evidence is not provided, then any absence will be unauthorised.

There are consequences of unauthorised absence.

Attendance at 90% or below

When a child's absence falls to 90% or below we will have already been in contact and offered support.

The head teacher will write to parents to inform them that their child's attendance has been referred to the Attendance and Prosecution Service who have legal powers to prosecute, issue penalty notices and make home visits. The Attendance and Prosecution Service is independent of the school and is part of the local authority. Our school works with an attendance consultant. If between the school, attendance consultant and the parents/carers we are unable to resolve persistent absence issues these will be referred to the local authority Education Investigation Service for consideration for legal proceedings, home visits or penalty notices.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence, ideally by 9.00am.
- Call into school and report to a member of the staff

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the local authority if attendance becomes a serious issue.

Telephone numbers

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Help us to help you and your child by making

sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence.

How we manage lateness

The school day starts at 8.45am on our Key Stage 2 site and at 9.00am on our Early Years and Key Stage 1 site.

We expect your child to be ready to enter class at that time. Registers are marked and closed within 10 minutes of the start of the school day. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not present in the class. The register will be closed 30 minutes after school's start time. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site late but after the close of register. This will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists. If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of school staff and/or Attendance Consultant to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time. Should school be unable to resolve an ongoing lateness issue we reserve the right to bring forward the close of register. This would mean that your child's lateness would be recorded as unauthorised which could result in the Local Authority considering enforcement proceedings against you. We will always inform you in writing should this action be necessary.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Leave of absence shall not be granted unless – (A) An application has been made in advance to the proprietor by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides: and (B) The proprietor, or a person authorised by the proprietor in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Lightwoods Primary School will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances. All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least 10 school days prior to the requested leave date. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, prior notice to school and in excess of that agreed with school, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.

[The Attendance and Prosecution Service](#)

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff and our attendance consultant in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance and Prosecution Service at the Local Authority. This service can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Attendance and Prosecution Service themselves to ask for advice or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice in accordance with their statutory duties Their telephone number is **0121 569 8147**.

[Penalty Notice Fines issued by the Local Authority](#)

The Attendance and Prosecution Service at the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice Fine of up to £120 (per parent/per child) or instigate legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court in the following circumstances:

- Where an excluded child is identified in a public place in the first 6 days of an exclusion
- Where a Formal Warning Notice has previously been issued regarding unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence is accrued
- Where there is recorded unauthorised term time leave of absence/holiday leave

Further information regarding Penalty Notice Fines and other enforcement proceedings relating to school attendance can be obtained from the Attendance and Prosecution Service.

[School targets, projects and special initiatives](#)

The school has targets to meet in relation to attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. The minimum target level of attendance for this school is 96% and we will

keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our ambition is to achieve better than this because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletters and we ask for your full support.

People responsible for ensuring good attendance

Mr. Nigel Roberts – Acting Headteacher

Mrs. Jenny Wright – Acting Headteacher

Mrs. Sarah Verrecchia – Office Manager

Mrs. Michelle Tomkins – School Secretary

Miss. Florence Kirwan – Admin Assistant

Mrs. Katie Chatterley – Finance Administrator

Our Legal Duty.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents/carers and to promote attendance. Equally, every parent/carer has a duty to make sure that their child/ren attends. All school staff are committed to working with parents/carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. It will be reviewed as part of the school's cycle for reviewing policies.

Its success should be judged by answers to the following questions:

- Have we reached our attendance target of 96%?
- Did all the classes reach their attendance target?
- Is everyone aware of the procedures to be followed?
- Do class teachers and children have high expectations of themselves and others?
- Are forms and records regularly completed?
- Do newsletters include updates on attendance?
- Has the trophy been allocated?