



St. Lawrence Primary School



Attendance and Leave during Term Time Policy

This policy aims to:

Describe our procedures and processes relating to school attendance, punctuality and welfare of all pupils on roll.

Set out the arrangements that are in place to enable pupils to fully benefit from the educational opportunities available by maximising attendance and punctuality, and in addition to support families to fulfil their statutory obligations.

Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that all staff tasked with recording pupils' attendance are made fully aware of the legal requirement placed upon them in regard to these procedures. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance and welfare, although this is delegated to the Pastoral Care Coordinator (Miss Jansen) and then to the class teachers.

It is the responsibility of the school to record and monitor attendance, punctuality and the general welfare of the pupils.

We take attendance very seriously and actively monitor attendance with a view to improving it. We:

- Encourage, promote and maintain positive individual pupil attendance and punctuality;
- Implement strategies and initiatives to improve 'whole school' attendance;
- Ensure that registers are accurate and up to date, using the correct codes (see Appendix 3);
- Monitor and promote the welfare of every child and young person;
- Regularly monitor registers to identify any pupils with attendance and/or punctuality concerns;
- Ensure that all appropriate information and records are available to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) as part of a school's request for Education Welfare Service (EWS) involvement.
- Communicate information about attendance and punctuality to parents/carers and pupils, including holidays in term-time;
- Collate and utilise attendance data effectively;
- Recognise of the importance of early intervention, including first day response in contacting parents/carers;
- Ensure that children and young people with chronic/long term illness are supported in accessing their learning needs.
- Ensure consideration is given to critical times (for e.g.) Key Stage 2-3 transition;
- Have a range of strategies in place to deal with absenteeism, lateness;
- Consider the use of attendance incentive strategies when considered appropriate;
- Attend regular structured meetings between the schools and the EWO;
- Follow procedures before requesting the involvement of the EWO;

Attendance and Punctuality



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Our average attendance is 96% and this is the level of attendance we expect from our pupils. We categorise and respond to attendance as follows:

- 96%+ Good Attendance. Verbal Praise. No action.
- 94-95% Average attendance. No action.
- 90-93% Low attendance. Informal monitoring, informal action.
- 85-89% Very Low attendance. Careful monitoring. Discuss with EWO. Consider Attendance Plan or further action.
- Below 85% Concerning Attendance. High level weekly monitoring. Attendance Plan and EWO involvement likely.

Cumulative actions to support good attendance:

1. Class teacher discussion with parents
2. Head teacher discussion with parents
3. EWO discussion of the case at school meeting
4. Letter to parents from Head teacher. Weekly monitoring by school.
5. Attendance Plan in place. Weekly monitoring by school.
6. Referral to EWO. Weekly monitoring by school.
7. Attendance Panel. Weekly monitoring by school.

As soon as improvements are made, reduced levels of action are taken.

Punctuality

Children can arrive at school from 8:30 am and can enter classrooms from 8.45. Children need to be in class and ready for registration by 8.50 am (after 8.50 they are marked as 'Late'). Children not in class will be marked as 'N' meaning unexplained absence, and changed to a 'L' (Late) on arrival and the arrival time recorded.

We have a breakfast club, which provides supervision from 7:30-8:30am.

We monitor punctuality closely. Children arriving at school late are monitored and where patterns of lateness or regular lateness occurs the following actions occur:

Cumulative actions to support good punctuality:

1. Class teacher discussion with parents
2. Head teacher discussion with parents
3. EWO discussion of the case at school meeting
4. Letter to parents from Head teacher. Weekly monitoring by school.
5. Attendance Plan in place. Weekly monitoring by school.
6. Referral to EWO. Weekly monitoring by school.
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As soon as improvements are made, reduced levels of action are taken.

We make every effort to engage with parents/carers over attendance and in doing so, where appropriate, introduce an Attendance Plan (Appendix 1). Review dates should be agreed with a view to improvements being made. Where there are no significant improvements, and when we have exhausted all our strategies and absence and/or punctuality continues to deteriorate, schools should engage with parents/carers to agree to the support of the Education Welfare Service. A Request for Involvement (RFI) form will then be completed (Appendix 2) and the EWO becomes actively involved.

Welfare Concerns

In such cases where the welfare of the child is of a concern, we make every effort to engage with the parents/carers with a view to the situation improving. If this is not the case, we will consider an 'Early Help' assessment. The outcomes of this assessment will determine the needs of the family, which will in turn dictate the need of internal/external and third sector services. The EWO may or may not be required to be part of the assessment and/or outcomes.

Emotionally Based Non Attendance (EBNA)

It is important to distinguish between non-school attendance, truancy and emotionally based non-school attendance, the latter being considered an emotional need. There could be a number of contributing factors to EBNA. We use the Education Department's EBNA Assessment Tool to establish the route of the problem. Once this process has been completed schools, along with parents/cares, should request the appropriate involvement of services such as Education Psychologists or Family Support Worker in order that the appropriate support can be put in place to support the pupil.

Looked After Children (LAC)

Each school is responsible for supporting, monitoring and raising concerns in relation to attendance and/or punctuality and welfare for Looked After Children. The EWS are tasked with supporting schools by consistently raising LAC children during EWO/school consultation meetings. Attendance and punctuality data will be collated at the end of each academic year.

Attendance Procedures and Recording Attendance and Punctuality



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The following procedures underpin the principles in this Policy and generate good practice in matters concerning attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Registers

Attendance registers are legal documents and particular attention should be paid to accuracy. It is the role of the class teacher to ensure these are completed accurately. Incomplete registers are not acceptable.

Registration

Staff and pupils should be aware that registration is a key part of the school day. **Attendance registers must be completed twice daily**, at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon.

Pupils must be marked as:

- Present (/ \)
- Engaged in approved educational activity off site (B)
- Ill (I)
- Medical/Dental appointment (M)
- No reason yet provided (N)
- Unauthorised absence (O)
- Other authorised absence (C)
- Late (L)
- Leave during term time – authorised (H)
- Leave during term time – unauthorised (G)
- Approved sporting activity (P)
- Pupils who miss part of a session as a result of a medical appointment can be marked as present. A whole session missed would be recorded as a medical absence (M). The school must have prior notification of such appointment and be recorded in the SIMS data base.
- Pupils arriving late must go directly to the school office, so that the register can be updated.

Absences should be authorised by way of written or verbal communication with the parent/carer. Parents are required to telephone the school before 8:45 am and explain why they will be absent. If a child is absent for more than one day, as long as a communication is made with the school on the first day, parents might not need to phone on subsequent day.

The appropriate code should be entered into the register and a reason for absence entered into the SIMS Events.

If the school does not receive a phone call, the school secretary will contact parents/carers directly. If no contact can be made then, in the interest of safeguarding children, the school will inform the Education Welfare Officer who will take further measures to ensure contact.

Punctuality



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We actively discourage late arrivals due to the disruption this causes not only to the individual but also to the remainder of the class. Patterns of lateness can develop into non-school attendance if left unchallenged. We are flexible where local conditions such as weather or local transport have an adverse effect on pupils arriving on time. We have a consistent approach to lateness so as not to differentiate between classes/form groups and siblings.

Children Missing from Education

[Please refer to the Education Department's Attendance Policy Appendix 5 \(Children Missing from Education\)](#)

Parents/carers Responsibilities

Parents/carers are required by law to ensure that all children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 16) receive a full time education either by registering a child at a school or be arranging an alternative to school in line with the Education Department's Policy.

These responsibilities extend beyond ensuring regular attendance and punctuality, it requires parents/carers to make certain that each child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed with the correct equipment and prepared for learning.

Parents/carers can support their child/ren by keeping requests for absence to a minimum. It should not be automatically assumed that schools will agree to absence requests. Nor should unjustified absences from school be condoned. If a student is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents/carers are responsible for notifying the school on the first day of absence and to keep the school updated on subsequent days.

Parents/carers should work in partnership with schools in all matters concerning their child/ren's education by actively supporting school policies on attendance, punctuality, behaviour and homework.

Parents/carers should avoid taking their child/ren out of school for holidays during term time. Such absences can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is at the discretion of the Head teacher to grant leave, only in exceptional cases.



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Leave of Absence

The Education Department and St Lawrence School do not, at any time, support leave during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances the head teacher has the discretionary power to grant leave in accordance with the Education Department's Attendance Policy.

If parents are forced to take their child out of school during term-time they must request leave of absence by completing an 'Authorised Absence Request Form' prior to any booking being made (see Appendix 4).

We will write back and complete our section of the Holiday form, informing you whether or not permission has been granted.

Each case is considered carefully taking into account:

- The age of the child;
- The time of year;
- The nature and purpose of the trip;
- Family circumstances;
- Attendance pattern of the pupil;
- Previous requests.

We also refer to Education Department guidance for exceptional circumstances. Whilst each case is unique, this guidance strives for consistency across all schools.

Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw their child/ren from school for a holiday and must request permission in advance from the Head teacher.

Furthermore, parents must make a strong case to justify taking pupils out of school during term time as the absence can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is expected that parents will support their child's education by arranging holidays to coincide with school holidays.

Where a pupil is absent for longer than the agreed time, s/he should be marked as taking unauthorised holidays. The same applies to those parents/carers who remove their child/ren from school without permission.

Parents/carers who wish to take their child/ren out of school for longer than **four weeks** will have to re-apply for their school placement. It should not be considered that a pupil has the automatic right to return to the school.



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Attendance Data

Attendance data will be collated centrally by the EWS at the end of each term and is shared with our school. This information will be broken down into year groups, allowing the EWS to direct their services appropriately. Furthermore, all information will form part of our self-evaluation.

This information will provide:

- The number of pupils attending;
- The number of authorised/unauthorised absences;
- The number of absent days broken down into year group;
- The average number of late arrivals (including after the close of registration);
- The number of authorised/unauthorised holidays;
- The number of Emotionally Based Non Attendance (EBNA) pupils;
- Pupils with a diagnosed significant illness impacting on their attendance.

Looked After Child (LAC) Attendance Data

- Attendance Data will be collated at the end of each academic year.

CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Date Issued	Issued by	Reason for Change	Presented To (initials to agree policy has been read and understood)	Approved by:	Date
0.1	February 18	Amory Charlesworth	Draft			
0.2	Nov 21	Amory Charlesworth	Update with CME on p5	Whole staff	Astrid Jansen	10/11/21
0.3						