



Attendance Policy

School Values

**ENJOYMENT HONESTY CARING RESPECT
EQUALITY**

At Larkhall Primary Campus we believe that regular attendance of pupils correlates closely to raising achievement. Therefore, we are committed to the successful implementation of a whole school attendance policy as a necessary step towards improving overall attendance. If children are to derive the maximum benefit from their education they must attend regularly and on time. All members of the school community are required to actively uphold the aims of this policy as outlined below:

- The school works in conjunction with Lambeth Education Welfare, using as a basis for monitoring the Attendance Intervention Model for Mainstream Lambeth Schools.
- The Attendance Intervention Model (AIM) is designed to be used in School settings to improve the attendance of compulsory school aged children and young people. It is a tool for both Schools and Education Welfare Officers (EWO's) to identify the actions needed when pupils are at risk of reaching Persistent Absence (PA) or who have already reached PA. The AIM is intended to reduce PA following a timeline based upon the fast track prosecution method where evidence is gathered over a maximum of a 6 month period.
- The AIM timeline indicates the minimum level of intervention and support required according to the number of sessions absent. At each stage of the AIM process the actions are recorded for their use at a later stage if the case progresses to court for prosecution or to a Vulnerable Pupils Monitoring Group. The AIM provides interventions and actions which are robust, transparent and consistent and allow key stakeholders the ability to track casework and quality assure the process.

Responsibility of the Governing Body is to

- Ensure systems are in place for registers to be properly kept
- Ensure that regular returns of attendance figures are made to the Local Authority
- Ask the Head Teacher for a report on any aspect of issues linked to attendance
- Facilitate an annual report for parents/carers in which they may include reference to the school's attendance figures
- Provide a framework for their own in-service training which may include attendance related matters

Responsibility of the Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team is to

- Oversee the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures
- Ensure the collection of accurate statistical data
- Develop efficient monitoring and evaluation systems for attendance and punctuality
- Form positive links with outside agencies such as the Education Welfare Service (EWS) and Social Services
- Refer pupils to the EWS
- Report back regularly to the governing body on attendance

Responsibility of the Class Teacher is to

- Ensure accurate register keeping
- Positively promote good attendance within the classroom
- Make positive links with parents/carers
- Year 6 Class Teachers to work with Year 6 children re: independent arrivals

Responsibility of the School Administrative Attendance Officer is to

- Set up of registers at the beginning of the school year
- Record late arrivals
- Receive telephone communication from parents/carers, recording of information and arranging how that is communicated to teaching staff for consideration or authorisation
- Make first day contact with parent/carers of absent pupils
- Send out standard letters on unauthorised absence
- Assist the Senior Leadership Team in the collection of data

- Assist the Senior Leadership Team in the admission, casual admission and off rolling procedures

Responsibility of the Educational Welfare Officer

- To meet with a designated member of the school staff regularly
- To undertake referrals for individuals with less than 90% attendance
- To initiate court action against parents of children with less than 80% authorised attendance
- To make home visits to parents with children whose attendance is causing concern
- To input into the schools procedures for managing absences

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

- To ensure their child attends school regularly
- To ensure their child arrives on time for school
- To contact the school if their child is unable to attend for a valid reason and provide a note for authorisation purposes
- To ensure their child is prepared with the necessary equipment to attend school
- To support the school in its aim to raise the achievement of their child through full attendance at school including annual signing of home school agreement

Responsibility of Pupils

- To attend school regularly
- To arrive on time
- Year 6 children to arrive independently

Registration Procedures

Class teachers register the children twice a day, once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

The school gates close at 8:45am. A member of Senior Leadership and/or the Attendance Officer will be on duty on the gate between 8:45am and 9:00am to speak to those parents/children arriving between these times. Pupils who arrive after 9:00am should report to the office straight away where a record of their arrival time will be kept. At this time parents/carers are expected to come into the office with their child and sign in and provide a reason for lateness. If a child is late two times in any one week, a letter will be sent home and a copy kept on the pupil’s file.

Where persistent lateness exists the parent/carer will first be invited into school to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. If punctuality remains poor, a written referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service or Social Services.

Class teachers should only use / or N to represent a child being present.

The following symbols and procedures are used in registers:

/ \	PRESENT
O	UNAUTHORISED ABSENT – this mark is to be used if the student is not present in the classroom at the time of registration
L	LATE – to be entered when a student is in school and is late
M	MEDICAL OR DENTAL TREATMENT – when prevented from attendance by a medical appointment. To be substantiated by a parental letter or an appointment card.
I	Illness for children who are unwell and at home, and parent/carer has contacted school
R	RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE – the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student or his/her parents belong
E	EXCLUSION – for fixed or permanent exclusions
G	Unauthorised absence due to holiday
C	Other reasons or circumstances
B	Attending another school/Part Time Elsewhere
V	Educational Visit

RECORDING OF ABSENCE

The office staff are responsible for recording reasons for absence into the register – reasons for absence should be clear, with as much information as possible. All notes recorded on the system should be initialled by the person who has recorded it. It is the responsibility of the office staff to record the total numbers of absences and for completing weekly percentage figures.

If no reason is given for absence after the child returns to school a letter will be sent home and a note that this action has been taken will be entered in the register. Reference to the attendance policy will be noted in the letter.

Where persistent non-attendance exists the parent/carer will be invited into school to meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the school's concerns and to offer support, if appropriate. We will investigate any circumstances within school in an effort to identify any school based difficulties that may be affecting the child's attendance. If parent/carers fail to respond to the school's requests to discuss a pupil's absence, the school will refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service or Social Services.

NON-CONTACT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Larkhall keeps 3 emergency contacts for each child. Where a child has been recorded as absent from School, and their parents/carers have not been in contact with School regarding the absence and the School is unable to reach any of the child's emergency contacts, the school must follow procedures to investigate the safety of the child and their family. The office staff and Administrative Attendance Officer are responsible for regularly trying to make contact with all recorded emergency contacts and, together with the Learning Mentor or a member of senior leadership, organise a home visit if contact has not been made within 3 days. If the absence occurs on a Thursday or Friday, a home visit will be made within 1 or 2 days to ensure the child and family's safety is verified before the weekend. If a home visit does not verify the safety of the child and family, the matter will be referred to the Local Authorities.

CONTACTING PARENTS

A letter will be sent to parents/carers following an absence if no explanation is received for non-attendance. Further, a note that this action has been taken will be entered in the register.

AUTHORISING ABSENCE

By law only the school can authorise an absence. A written note or telephone explanation by a parent/carer does not, in itself, oblige the Head Teacher to authorise the absence.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEES

Since September 2015, the "persistent absence" threshold has been 90% attendance, meaning pupils missing more than 10% of sessions. Due to this increase there is an expectation that schools will intervene earlier when there are attendance concerns about a pupil.

SEVERE ABSENTEES

Children with attendance lower than 50% will be classed as severely absent. Larkhall will continue to support several absent pupils to improve their attendance and will work alongside the Local Authority and EWS.

CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR SEND

Larkhall will maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and their families to maximise attendance for those who have poor attendance due to a medical condition or SEND. We will ensure there is a joined up approach with pastoral support and will ensure any provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.

ILLNESS, MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'no offence is committed where a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness'. If the Head Teacher is satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness the absence will be treated as authorised. The Head Teacher may refuse to authorise an absence without medical evidence. Under no circumstances will the school pay for medical certificates.

CHILDREN WITH A SOCIAL WORKER

Larkhall will communicate clearly with Social Care and inform Social Workers allocated to families when there are unexplained absences or if pupil is to be removed from the register.

HOME LEARNING REQUESTS

School prohibits all children being taken out of school for holidays during term time. In exceptional circumstances the Head Teacher will listen to requests from parents, however, this does not guarantee that holidays will be authorised. Parents will be asked to engage in home learning whilst their children are not in school and should arrange a meeting with their child's teacher to discuss learning opportunities. Home learning may be provided via google classroom or paper packs.

NON-STARTING PUPILS AND PUPILS TAKEN OFF ROLL

Pupils will not be recorded on the register until their first session of attendance. Where pupils on the acceptance list fail to arrive, we will make enquiries to ascertain the pupil's whereabouts and notify the Local Authority in which the pupil lives as necessary.

A pupil will be taken off role if they fail to attend school, without prior arrangement, or agreed exceptional circumstances, after 20 sessions. At this stage the parent/carer will be notified in writing that the child has been taken off roll.

When a pupil's name is removed from the school register and no information is provided regarding a new educational placement, the Local Authority will be notified so that enquiries can be made.

CHILDREN AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION

All schools must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be removed from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have a certified medical condition that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period; or,
- have been permanently excluded.

The Local Authority should be notified in advance of the removal, when the school becomes aware that the deletion will be made. All schools must agree with the relevant local authority, the regular interval that the school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

PROMOTING POSITIVE ATTENDANCE

We aim to promote positive attendance and to encourage parents/carers to support the school in its aim to reduce unauthorised absence and lateness in the following ways:-

- Clear expectations explained at interview/admission
- Discussions with parents/carers on an informal basis and during termly parents meetings
- The inclusion of the attendance/lateness section on the school website
- Recording attendance statistics on newsletters to parents
- Sending home the Attendance Procedure giving clear guide-lines for authorised and unauthorised absence and parent/carer responsibility
- Collecting and analysing attendance statistics on a weekly/monthly basis
- Early intervention with parents/carers of children causing concern, inviting the parent/carer to discuss the situation and giving clear consistent messages about what the school will accept as a valid reason
- Sending standard letters and individual letters to parents/carers if there is a cause for concern
- Awarding certificates and badges at the end of each term for children with 100% attendance and punctuality, and certificates and 'prizes' for 100% attendance and punctuality for the year as part of a whole school certificate award system

Policy agreed by Governors December 2022