

Lyng Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy

Review Body:	Full Governing Body
Responsibility:	Headteacher
Type of Policy:	Statutory
Review Period:	Every three years
Reviewed:	May 2019
Next Review:	May 2022

Note Throughout this policy the term 'parents' represents one parent, both parents, or carer with whom the child resides.

Introduction

Lyng Church of England Primary School is committed to providing an excellent education for its pupils. We aim for every child to feel valued and included, to be able to achieve the best they can and make good progress.

The importance of good attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential to ensure uninterrupted progress and to enable children to achieve the best they can. It is parents' responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education. Every opportunity will be used to convey to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support this.

We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school and learning.

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

98+% Excellent- Well done! This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school.

96-98% Good –This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.

93- 95% Average – not bad, but strive to build on this.

85- 92 % Poor – Absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Please work with the school to improve the situation.

Below 85% Unacceptable – Absence IS causing SERIOUS CONCERN. It IS affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting your child's learning. We will work with you and the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) to improve your child's attendance.

Every family should aim for 100% attendance.

There are 175 non- school days each year in which to take holidays, have days out or routine appointments.

The government regards absence at 90% or below as 'Persistent Absence'.

90% attendance means this is equal to:

Missing half a day every week

Missing over four weeks of school in the year

Missing half a year of school over a five year period.

Poor attendance can seriously affect each child's:-

attainment in school

relationships with other children and their ability to form lasting friendships

confidence to attempt new work and work alongside others

Rewards

Good attendance is recognised and celebrated.

Individual children

Certificates are awarded at the end of each term for 100% attendance.

At the end of the academic year good attendance is celebrated. This is celebrated in the final whole school assembly.

Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates are awarded for high attendance with Gold certificates awarded for 100% attendance through the whole year. These children also receive a prize.

Individual incentives.

Where positive impact is required, all staff in contact with the child must take extra care to welcome the child each morning, praise punctual attendance and acknowledge the effort the child has made. It is also appropriate to recognise the effort the parent has made to secure the child's attendance.

Class Award

Attendance Mice – 'The 3 Mousekateers'

The 'Mousekateers' are awarded weekly to the class with the highest overall attendance. They spend a week with the winning class who give a report of their activities in our Friday Celebration assembly.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be noted in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

- Punctuality is stressed as lateness impact both on the individual child, and the class as a whole.
- All children should be at school ready to line up when the whistle blows at 8.55 a.m. each day. Children are entitled to enter the school playground from 8.45 a.m.
- The register is taken twice a day. A day counts as 2 attendances.
- Morning registration is at 9.00 a.m. Afternoon registration is at 1.10pm
- The registers will remain open for 20 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.
- Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration will be coded as late before registers close.

First day of absence

- When a child is unwell, or absent for another reason, parents should contact the school before 9.15am on the first day of absence informing the school of the reason for absence.
- As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school office will contact the parent or emergency contacts (if parent cannot be reached) if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.
- Once the reason has been established, the information code will be transferred to the register

Continuing Absence

If the pupil remains ill, then the parent/carer should inform the school either daily or give a date for when the pupil will be able to return.

Medical/ Dental Appointments

Every effort should be made to arrange medical/ dental appointments outside school hours to avoid disruption to the pupil's school day and a poor attendance record

Authorising Absence

- Only the school can 'authorise' absence. The school will not assess all reasons as 'valid'.
- Information provided to the school giving the reasons for absence will be recorded on the school's attendance system

Frequent Absence

Pupil attendance is an important issue that is treated seriously. The attendance pattern for all children is monitored regularly. Where a pupil's absence becomes a concern, the school will seek to resolve any problems with parents.

The school acknowledges that each case is different and no one standard response will be appropriate in every case. Consideration is given to all factors affecting attendance before deciding what intervention strategies to apply.

However, in every case

- early intervention is essential to prevent the problem from worsening. It is essential that parents/carers keep the school fully informed of any matters that may affect their child's attendance.
- the school will issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupils' absence. It is hoped that a quick response and change in levels of absence will resolve concerns
- The AIO (Attendance Improvement Officer) will be contacted where attendance concerns remain unresolved, and particularly where:
a pupil is absent for 10 consecutive days without explanation
absence falls to 85%

Leave of Absence during term time

The Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning.

Lyng CE Primary School has adopted a policy in line with the Department for Education Sept 2013 guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations. It is important to realise that time off school for family holidays is **not** a right. Schools are unable to authorise time off school for pupils in term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** pertaining to such requests.

- Leave of Absence will not be granted during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents are requested to apply for leave in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will reply, stating whether exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised absence or whether the absence is unauthorised.
- Where there are 10 or more consecutive sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence, The Headteacher can apply to the County Attendance Officer for a Fixed Penalty Fine. This is made clear in a letter sent out to all parents at the start of the academic year.

Examples of what *may* constitute exceptional circumstances:

- To have a short absence to attend a special family celebration (e.g. an 80th birthday of a grandparent, family wedding); or to attend a special religious/cultural festival, may constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- If a parent, due to the nature of their work, *cannot possibly* take time off during the regular school holidays then this may constitute an exceptional circumstance. A letter is required from the employer to confirm this.

To have a holiday in school time, because the cost is cheaper during term time, or because employment leave is more difficult **does not** constitute an exceptional circumstance

Responsibility

The Headteacher holds responsibility for attendance matters, supported by the School Administration staff, and the AIO (Attendance Improvement Officer)

Where school attendance problems occur, the school will endeavour to work with parents in the interests of the child to achieve a resolution.

Governing Body

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The Governing Body also has the responsibility for Attendance 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 the school's attendance figures remain high.

Review

Attendance Policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary (such as a change of government policy)

Appendix 1 Definitions

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- Unauthorised Absence
- Authorised Absence
- Approved Educational Activity

Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily.

- Absences that have never been properly explained.
- Leave of Absence not agreed.

Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996

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 parents. For example, if a child is unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised.

Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

Work experience placements

Field trips and educational visits

Sporting activities

Link courses or approved education off site

Most types of dual registration

Appendix 2

THE LAW and School Attendance

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 the governing body is responsible for making sure that admissions and attendance registers are kept.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 restrict leave of absence for family holidays to 10 school days a year in special circumstances. The decision rests with schools, and families have no “right” to such leave. The application for leave must be made in advance by the parent the pupil normally resides with.

The Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007 require governing bodies of all maintained schools to set overall absence targets. School governors are bound by the statutory requirement under Section 538 of the Education Act 2006 which requires governing bodies to provide information requested by the Secretary of State.

This includes absence data that will be collected every term through the School Census. Attendance is recorded and data stored and analysed using the SIMS Attendance module. It is a statutory duty for class teachers to call and maintain accurate registers; these are legal documents, and may be called for as evidence by the court. Class Teachers are legally responsible for marking their class attendance register twice per day at the start of each session.

Appendix 3

The registration system

The School uses a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity

L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers are printed out once a month and stored in annual volumes.

Entries in paper attendance registers are in ink.

All corrections are visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers must be safely stored. At the end of each registration they are kept in the school office.