



LEES PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Admissions & Attendance Policy

**This review presented to Board of Governors
2018**

Review date July 2019 or when required

Admissions

Goal Statement

Lees Primary School understand that parents and carers need clear direction and guidelines from policy and procedures when they are either seeking their child's first place in primary school or if they wish to move their child to a new primary school mid-year for whatever reason. Bradford Metropolitan District Council is the local authority under which Lees Primary School operates and as such the school has adopted the BMDC Admissions Policy and procedures relevant to the allocation of primary school places.

At Lees Primary School we are committed to ensuring **equality** of education and opportunity for all pupils, staff and carers irrespective of race, gender, disability, faith, religion, socio-economic background, sexual orientation, age or culture.

Objectives

- To provide a clear and concise process for the entry of children into school at the beginning of their school career and to enable children to join the school mid-year when the need arises
- To offer parents and carers support and information regarding the school admissions procedure
- To provide a structured, phased entry into school at reception level in order that all children benefit from the specialist support and nurturing that the school staff can offer in smaller transition groups
- To support children, parents and carers when a child moves from the school to either another primary school or a secondary school after Year 6, facilitating any transition process needed for each individual child

Admissions Protocol

A child will be admitted into primary school in September of the year following their fourth birthday. All parents/carers who contact the school will be made aware that we follow Bradford Metropolitan District Council's admission policy and procedures and that the school is not able to make or affect any decisions the council makes with regard to admissions. This includes decisions regarding deferment of places or start date.

For mid-year admissions, when a child is admitted into school from another primary school, as a matter of good practice Lees Primary School makes contact with the child's previous school before the child starts school at Lees unless this is not possible. This is to ensure that the school receives all the information regarding the child and to ensure that any safeguarding issues or special educational needs are highlighted. The school can then put into place strategies to support the child in school.

Transitions into Reception Class

Lees Primary School is committed to providing all children joining the school in their reception year with a comprehensive and supportive transition.

The school receives information regarding the allocation of places for the next cohort from the local authority. Lees Primary then contacts all parents on the list to invite them to a New

Parents Evening. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to have a look around the school, meet the staff and receive important information regarding starting school.

The school offers a number of opportunities for children and parents to meet with staff and visit the school as follows:

- Home visits – these are usually booked, if needed, at the New Parents Evening and are an important chance for staff to meet new children in their home environment where they are most relaxed. It also gives parents and carers an opportunity to discuss any issues they may be concerned with
- Pre-school settings – staff visit all children in their pre-school setting. This gives the staff another opportunity to see the child in a different environment. It also gives other care/educational professionals an opportunity to discuss potential needs that a child may require extra support with
- Open days – children are offered an opportunity to come into school on the transition day which is held in all schools at the beginning of July.
- Extra transition sessions – these may be offered when the parent/carer or school feels that a child would benefit from additional opportunities to visit the school and meet school staff. This is particularly relevant, but not exclusive to, children with special educational needs

Introduction into Reception Class

Lees Primary School understands that children starting school for the first time can experience a wide variety of emotions and that these are influenced by a number of factors including:

- How parents and carers feel about their child starting school and their experiences of school
- The child's previous experiences of pre-school settings
- The child's age and maturity. This is dependent upon the age the child starts school, any special educational needs amongst many other factors
- The transition experienced by the child moving from pre-school to reception class in primary school

The school understands the importance of ensuring that the transition process is achieved for each and every child in a way that optimises their experiences. In order to do this children are introduced into school under a phased start system. This enables all children irrespective of their pre-school status to gradually assimilate into the new group of children that composes their reception class.

Lees Primary School understands that this can be a difficult process for parents/carers in terms of time management and childcare. In order to reduce the impact this has school gives as much notice as possible to parent/carers and an also explanation of the phased start system during the New Parents Evening. The information is also available in the school prospectus online on the school website.

As a result of the logistics of organising the phased start system it is not possible to accept individual children starting reception class into school at times other than their planned group times. If a problem occurs with the times of a group which makes it difficult for parents/carers a child may be moved into another group if this is practicable.

Any additional transitional requirements as agreed between the school and parents/carers will be implemented alongside the phased start system.

Transition from Lees Primary School to secondary school

Lees Primary School recognises that the transition from primary education to the secondary system can be a challenging and emotional time for both children and their parents/carers. Some children need increased levels of support throughout this period and the school monitors this and accesses support in a variety of ways for these children.

Transition work starts in school long before the last term of the child's primary education and continues into their secondary school life. The staff at Lees School recognise that the transition process is an ongoing process, and that each child experiences this in an individual way.

The school works with all secondary partners to ensure that children moving up have all the transition input that they need.

This includes:

- Access to information regarding open days and transition events
- Support for parents/carers and children during the period when they are choosing secondary school and throughout until places are allocated
- Support if need for parents/carers who may need to appeal against a place allocation decision
- Access to transition events during school hours where a secondary school provides transport
- Extra input for those children who staff and or parents/carers feel they would benefit from extra support during transitions

Attendance

Lees Primary School recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact of non-attendance on attainment for children and views good attendance and positive behaviour as central to raising standards and pupil achievement.

It is a government legal requirement that all children attend school for 190 days. We are required by government to monitor attendance and apply the legal requirement.

Lees Primary School strives to achieve our attendance target set by the Board of Governors each year. We aim to maintain attendance at 97%

This policy is written to take account of the above statements and underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure that every pupil has access to the fulltime education to which they are entitled
- Support all children in the transition into school in Year Reception, and also when they moving onto secondary school in Year 6, by following a detailed transition plan
- Ensure that pupils succeed and realise their full potential whilst at Lees Primary School
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of their legal responsibilities and that they understand the impact on learning that results from poor attendance whilst supporting parents/carers to achieve and maintain high levels of attendance for their child

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless there is an unavoidable reason for absence.

Ensuring that a child attends school regularly is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason can cause an offence in law which may result in prosecution by the local authority.

Objectives

1 – To ensure that all parents/carers understand the school expectations for pupils to:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day

2 – To ensure that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that parents/carers contact school each day of any absence
- Notify the school immediately, or as soon as is practicable, of any changes to emergency contact details.

3- To ensure that school will:

- Provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment
- Maintain up to date and accurate records of attendance and punctuality for both morning and afternoon sessions for each individual child
- Contact parents when a child is absent from school and parents have not contacted school to notify an absence

- Reward good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition which may include whole school assemblies and attendance certificates
- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance
- Work with parents where attendance and punctuality are cause for concern

Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information on each and every absence is always required.

An absence will be marked as AUTHORISED when there is an acceptable reason for the absence. These may include:

- Pupil illness or accident
- Medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the school day
- Emergencies such as family illness

Parents MUST inform school of the reason for any absence otherwise the absence will be marked as unauthorised. Please try to make routine dental/medical appointments outside of school time.

UNAUTHORISED absences are those which the school does NOT consider reasonable and for which no 'LEAVE' has been given. These may include:

- Absence which have not been appropriately notified by parents/carers
- A child arriving too late to school to get a mark
- Day trips and holidays during term-time which have not been authorised in advance
- Absences for birthdays, shopping or looking after other children/family members

From time to time children may need to take some time from school for legitimate reasons for example a medical appointment. In such cases school must be informed in advance, preferably in writing and parents should provide accompanying documentation in the form of an appointment letter. Children should be taken out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary and returned to school as soon as possible straight after the appointment. Every effort should be made to organise routine appointments outside of school hours.

Procedures for Concerns Over Attendance

Should a child's attendance be a concern for the school, parents are asked to a meeting with the Headteacher to look at the issues and work together to improve the situation. Further advice may be sought from the authority and may lead to support from the Educational Welfare Officer.

Concern about attendance may not just be around high percentage of absence but may also be around frequent odd days off school, same days absent as siblings on a regular basis, or frequent half days or lateness.

We recognise that our duty is to protect children and, as such, our child protection procedures and policies will be followed.

Holidays in term-time

From the 1 September 2013 the Department for Education announced that parents no longer have any entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term-time.

Any application for leave can only be granted in very exceptional circumstances. An application form must be completed a minimum of two weeks before the holiday is intended to be taken. Forms are available online from the school website or from the school office.

The Head teacher will make decisions regarding request for holiday absence during term-time on an individual case-by-case basis. It is important that parents/carers understand the implications of absence and the affects that this has on their child's attainment.

Sanctions

Fining parents for taking children on holiday during term time or extended leave to visit family is the policy for many schools. At Lees, this will be instigated when:

- Children are absent on holiday and the requisite forms have not been completed and the school informed of the nature of the absence, resulting in concerns over a child's welfare and whereabouts.
- A child's attendance is already below 90% from other absences such as illness and further absence will have an increased detrimental effect on their education and social development in school. Whilst we recognise that illness cannot be helped, we request that further absence which can be avoided is minimised.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to the learning of that child and also to the other pupils in the class. It is essential therefore that all children arrive at school on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Good timing is a life skill that helps children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

The school day starts at 9.00am promptly and the bell rings at 8.55am so that children can be in class and settled in time for their school day to start. We expect children to be in the playground before the 8.55am start in order that they can line up to be escorted by their teacher into school once the bell has rung.

Children access school through the appropriate entrance for their year group. If their entrance door is shut they can access school via the KS1 entrance until 9.00am. A member of staff supervises this entrance until 9.00am to ensure children are kept safe.

Once the KS1 door access doors have been secured has been closed children must access school, accompanied by a parent or carer, via the main office entrance. Parents/carers must sign their child into school by completing the late arrivals log. Staff may sign in older children who come to school unaccompanied. This is so that the reason for lateness has been logged and we can inform the kitchen of any school lunches required.

The class registers are marked at 9.00am and children receive a late mark if they are not in class by this time.

If your child arrives after the register has closed they will be marked as being on site but will not be marked as present in school, this means that they will have an unauthorised absence.

If your child is not marked as present on the register and they have not be logged down as a late arrival a member of the office staff will contact the person/s with Parental Responsibility to determine a reason for the absence of that child. Please note that ALL un-notified absences from school are followed up.

Lateness and absences are continually monitored. If a child has three late arrivals in a two week period recorded, a letter will be sent home to ensure that parents/carers are aware of the situation, the effect that lateness/absence has on their child's education and also to provide an opportunity for parents to work with the school to address any problems or issues that prevent the child from getting to school on time.

If lateness continues the head teacher will contact the parents/carers to make an appointment to discuss why the child is persistently late and how the school what needs to be put into place to resolve the issue.

Publication of attendance information

The school has a legal responsibility to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. This can be found in the school prospectus available from the school website.

Document History

Document first created November 2011 by Mrs Gill Holland

This document prepared April 2014 by Mrs Jenny Mercer

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