



Attendance Policy

Date July 2016

Review October 2018

Member of staff responsible	Mr John Read
Governor responsible	Malcolm Wilford
Sub-Committee responsible	
Date agreed with staff/parents	
Date discussed with pupils	
Date agreed at Sub-Committee	
Date approved at Governing Body	July 2016
Frequency of policy review	2 years (dependant on Government guidance)
Date next review due	July 2018

Document Version Control

Issue Number	Issue Date	Summary of changes
I	July 2016	

Signed and Dated by the Chair of Governors

Signed:

Dated: 1st July 2016



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Rationale

At Lyneham Primary School, we want to ensure that children get into a good pattern of attendance, right from the first day that they start school. This is because good attendance leads to better learning, which can lead to better qualifications and ultimately better employment and life chances for our children.

Purposes

- To set up good attendance patterns in all children
- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm
- To improve attendance and punctuality across the whole school
- To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence and increase the percentage of complete weeks
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school

Broad Guidelines, including:

- Responsibilities of parents:
 - Informing the school regarding absence
 - Ensuring children are in school on time
 - If attendance falls, working with the school to improve attendance
- Responsibilities of the school:
 - Providing information to parents
 - Providing support and advice to parents
 - Setting attendance targets
 - Monitoring and reporting attendance
 - Celebrating good attendance
- Absence
 - Types of absence
 - Absence due to illness
 - Medical appointments
 - Request for absence



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Distribution List

- **Full Governing Body**
 - Ratification at Full Governing Body
 - Review is the responsibility of the Full Governing Body
- **Internal**
 - Lyneham Primary School Web Site
 - Staff Meeting
- **Internet Copies**
 - Lyneham Primary School Web Site <http://www.lynehamprimary.co.uk/>



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Responsibilities of parents

KEEPING YOUR CHILD SAFE We need to know your child is safe if they do not arrive at school. Parents should let us know by 9.30 at the very latest if their child won't be in school

Parents have a key responsibility for promoting patterns of good attendance with their children, including ensuring children arrive at school on time and ready to learn every day. Parents also need to be aware of the importance of avoiding 'broken weeks'. A broken week is where some sessions are missed which leads to disjointed education. Parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the Headteacher if they are worried about their child's attendance.

Informing the school regarding absence: Parents are asked to call the school before 9.00am (and no later than 9.30am) on each day that their child is absent so that the attendance records can be kept up to date and children kept safe. If a child is absent from school and we are not informed by 9.30am, then school staff will contact parents/carers to find out why the child is absent.

If a child is absent from school, we are not informed as to their whereabouts and we are not able to locate them, this could be considered a Child Protection concern. We have a duty of care to inform the Local Authority of any child who may be missing from education. Our Education Welfare Officer can make home visits to locate children missing from education.

Ensuring children arrive to school on time: Parents have a responsibility to make sure their children arrive on time. The school doors open at 8.45am. All children should be in class by 8.55 am. Anyone arriving after this time will be marked in, but late. Registers close at 9am. **Any child arriving after 9am will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence.**

Registers for the afternoon session close at 1pm. Anyone arriving after this time will be marked in, but late. **Any child arriving after 1pm for the afternoon session will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence.**

Our School Attendance target is 97%. If your child's attendance falls below this the school may take further action to address this. You may be invited to attend a meeting to discuss ways of helping attendance improve. If attendance continues to fall parents would be expected to work closely with the school, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and the Parent Support Adviser to improve this.

The school work collaboratively with Wiltshire Council to manage attendance concerns and to consider legal action where appropriate. This could be a



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prosecution for failure to ensure your child attends school regularly or the issuing of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absences (see below for guidance on Penalty Notices).



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Responsibilities of the school

Information to parents: The school will send attendance letters to parents to inform them about their child's attendance three times a year. Parents are free to request an update at any time. Attendance is reported regularly on the school newsletters.

Attendance targets: The governors will set attendance targets in line with recommendations from the Local Authority in order to improve attendance. The current attendance target for 2016/17 is 97%.

Attendance monitoring: The school will monitor attendance of all pupils, including their overall attendance, lateness, broken weeks and unauthorised absence. School will take action, where appropriate, by meeting with parents or contacting the Educational Welfare Officer. The Education Welfare Officer may also attend meetings with parents.

Celebrating good attendance: In order to help promote good attendance, 100% attendance awards will be given to individual children.



Absence

Types of absence:

Examples of Unauthorised Absence:-	Examples of Authorised Absence:-
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Truancy▪ Shopping, birthday treats or trips▪ Late arrival after register has closed▪ Illness of siblings/parent▪ Holiday taken during term time▪ Where the reason given for absence is not given or not judged as acceptable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Illness (including medical and dental appointments)▪ Days of religious observance▪ Other authorised circumstances agreed by the school

Absence due to illness: When pupils are clearly not well, they should not be in school. Parents are asked to inform the school before 9.30 am, on each day of absence.

If a child is absent from school for 5 or more consecutive days, we will require a doctor's note or other evidence to confirm the reason for absence. If we do not receive this evidence, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Medical appointments (e.g. dentist/doctor): Parents are asked to try to get these appointments after school or late in the afternoon. If they have to be in school time, parents should inform the school prior to the appointment in person, in writing or by phone. If parents/carers arrive in the middle of the school day to remove their children for appointments without prior notice, this may be counted as an unauthorised absence.

Request for absence: No holiday will be authorised in term time. In line with recent government requirements, any absence other than illness or religious holiday will only be authorised if the school is informed in writing at least two weeks before a planned absence and the absence is considered as 'exceptional circumstances'. A 'request for absence' form or letter must be filled out at least 2 weeks before the planned absence and parents/carers will be informed if the absence has been authorised.



Fixed Penalty Notices

In line with government regulations, all schools can now request a Fixed Penalty Notice be issued for pupils whose attendance and/or punctuality is of significant concern. These Fixed Penalty notices are considered a last resort as we are keen to work with parents/carers to support their child's attendance.

A Penalty Notice may be issued to a parent in one or more of the following circumstances where more than 10 sessions of absence are recorded in 7 school weeks (i.e. 70 sessions). There are 2 sessions per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon:

1. where unauthorised absences are recorded
2. where more than 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday are recorded and;
 - a) the parent has not informed the school; or
 - b) the leave was not authorised; or
 - c) the child did not return on the agreed date
3. where the child is persistently late arriving at school after registers have closed
4. where a combination of more than 10 sessions of a) to c) above have been recorded.

The fine is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. For example, a two-parent family taking 2 children out of school for an unauthorised holiday would be liable for a total of £240 if paid within 21 days or £480 between 21 and 28 days. The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full **before the 28 days** allowed, the authority is required to commence legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failure to ensure regular attendance at school.

If proven, this could result in a fine of up to £1,000 under Section 444 (1), a Parenting Order or other sanctions at the Magistrates disposal. Parents/carers are strongly urged to seek legal advice if they are considering not paying the Penalty Notice.

Right of Appeal:

Appeals must be made in writing to:
The Penalty Notice Officer
Schools and Learning Area Office - South
Wiltshire Council
PO Box 2281
Salisbury
SP2 2HX



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NB: Appeals can only be considered if they are in writing

If you believe it to be incorrectly issued to you, you should contact the Penalty Notice Officer:

Tel: 01722 438123

Email: PNLO@wiltshire.gov.uk



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Lyneham Primary School attendance/punctuality procedure:

1. Records of attendance will be reviewed by the Headteacher on a regular basis and reported to school governors.
2. Lyneham Primary School implements a 'Traffic Lights Approach to Attendance' under which attendance is considered over a fixed period, 4-6 weeks and at the end of the period.
3. Those pupils with 100% attendance will be rewarded.
4. Over 95% equates to GREEN.
5. Between 95% and 90% equates to AMBER and a letter will be sent to the parents/carers giving the exact attendance figure and the pupil's attendance will continue to be monitored.
6. Under 90% attendance results in a RED letter being sent to the parents/carers inviting them to a meeting with the Headteacher or member of SLT to discuss how working together could improve the pupil's attendance. Lyneham Primary School recognises that during this monitoring period, the absence may not be typical for the pupil and this will be taken into account. However, if there is no improvement in attendance a further meeting will be called. During this meeting it will be made clear that the school will proceed by involving the Education Welfare Service and ultimately legal action if no sustained improvement occurs.
7. If it is considered that a Fixed Penalty Notice may be required, then parents will be informed of this in writing and given 15 days to improve attendance.
8. If the child's attendance and/or punctuality still does not improve, then a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action will be requested from Wiltshire Council.

Further information

Department for Education - School attendance: Statutory guidance and advice:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f00221879/advice-on-school-attendance>

www.childrenslegalcentre.com 0808 802 0008

www.adviceguide.org.uk 08444 111 444

www.ace-ed.org.uk 0300 0115 142

Conclusion

All Wiltshire Schools are expected to follow the Wiltshire Code of Conduct and send notification to the Penalty Notice Officer after a period of unauthorised leave of absence.