

Lansbury Lawrence Primary School



Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy – Reviewed November 2017

Due to be reviewed – November 2019

LANSBURY LAWRENCE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Lansbury Lawrence Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are **persistently late or absent** soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. Here at Lansbury Lawrence we have an expectation that **every child's attendance should go not below 96%**. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and are clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of **96% attendance** for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, and staff and the Attendance and Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.

- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

Definitions

Authorised absence

- 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 a parent/carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.
- **All children to achieve 96% attendance.**

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Persistent Absence

Pupils with attendance each term below **90%** are at risk of persistent absentee. Any absence including illness, medical appointments, term leave, punctuality and unauthorised absence will affect your child's attendance rate. If your child is put on the Persistent Absence Register their attendance is monitored by the School and our Attendance and Welfare Advisor from London Borough of Tower Hamlets. You will be invited in to meet with them regularly and if your child has been absent from school you will be required to take your child to seek medical advice. If your child's attendance continues to be a cause for concern, then a referral will be made to the Local Authority who will then meet with you and discuss the implications.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality
- To refer to the Attendance and Welfare Service any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To report attendance statistics to LTBH where requested.
- All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Headship Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

Responsibilities

School

- We have a statutory duty to keep detailed records of attendance, absences and poor punctuality.
- To keep registers accurate and correct
- To communicate clearly with parents/carers about the importance of regular, prompt attendance.
- To hold Attendance Focus Week twice yearly.
- To recognise pupils with 100% Attendance termly and reward Annual 100% Attendance with prizes and certificates.

Parents

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence. (0207 987 4589).
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter)
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Registration

Children are expected to be in the school playground at 8.45am. Gates close at 9am.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.10 and by 1.20pm. (Attendance code / for pupils who are present) These registers are then returned to the school office.

All attendance records are documented using Integris which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

Lateness

School gates are closed at 9am. The only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school late will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

ABSENCES

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absence. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

We at Lansbury Lawrence **do not authorise holidays** during term time and adhere to the LBTH Policy of FPN. Please do not book your holiday until you meet with Ms Maureen Padmore (Home School Liaison).

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 96%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their primary school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns. Initially concerns about attendance are raised with parents via letters which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence with our Home School Liaison Officer to see what support may be available. Where a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Attendance and Welfare Service.

The Attendance and Welfare (AWA) will issue penalty notices to parents where there has been a referral to AWA from the school as part of the school's processes to address poor attendance patterns.

In addition, education-related parenting orders are available by direct application by a school or LA to the Magistrates' Court as an ancillary order following a successful prosecution by the LA for irregular attendance or breach of a school attendance order.

Our Attendance and Welfare Advisor visits our School every week to check and monitor attendance. He carries out regular register checks to identify children with low attendance (usually below 90%). He works with the school to improve attendance and may issue fixed penalty fines if attendance support meetings held by the school do not improve attendance.