



St Leonard's CE Primary Academy Attendance Policy 2018-2020

This policy should be taken and used as part of St Leonard's Church of England Primary Academy's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims, and values of a Church of England School. St Leonard's is a Church of England Primary Academy which celebrates a love of God and puts the Christian ethos at the centre of all that it does.

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for St Leonard's CE Primary Academy attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day. The school gate is open at 8.20am.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 8.35am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.55pm and will be kept open until 1pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parent/carers must notify the school by 9am on the first day of an unplanned absence - for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health (see also section 6).

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parent/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parent/carers will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parent/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Parent/carers may inform teachers or the school office verbally or in writing.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed (8.45am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Pupil's attendance is reported in the end of year school report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as being of unique and significant emotional or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments - as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

St Leonard's CE Primary Academy recognises that holidays are generally less expensive during term time but this does NOT count as an exceptional circumstance. Leave which is taken for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- *Availability of cheaper holidays or desired accommodation*
- *Poor weather experienced in school holidays*
- *Overlap with beginning and end of term*
- *Booking the wrong dates by mistake*
- *Booking by another family member*
- *Attending a wedding that is not a family member*
- *Family birthdays*

Attendance of pupils is closely monitored and should attendance fall below 90%, a letter will be sent to parent/carers at the end of a term, reminding them of the importance of good attendance. Closer monitoring will take place and should the attendance pattern continue, parent/carers will be invited to a meeting to seek and discuss solutions.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can request that an educational fine is issued to parent/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Head Teacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. The Governors and staff will fully support the Head Teacher's decision in the consideration process. This may take into account:

- *A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year*
- *One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission*

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The school will present an attendance certificate at the end of each term rewarding pupils for their 100% attendance to encourage pride in attendance and punctuality.

6. Attendance monitoring

The admin officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parent/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parent/carers are expected to call each day their child is unwell.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school collects and stores attendance data using the management information systems (SIMS). The school provides attendance data to the DfE, using SIMS to send data about the school census. The figures are then published by the DfE as part of the annual publication of school statistics. The school uses the attendance data to identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and to track the attendance of individual pupils.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Head Teacher and Governing Body. At every review, the policy will be shared at a Full Governors Meeting.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

Attendance Codes for Registers January 2018

/	Present (a.m.)
\	Present (p.m.)
B	Educated Off-Site (not dual registration)
C	Other Authorised Circumstance (e.g. visiting Warneford etc/piano/dance exams)
D	Dual Registration (enrolled at another educational establishment at the same time)
E	Excluded and no other provision
G	Family Holiday (unauthorised)
H	Family Holiday (authorised)
L	Late (before registration has closed)
M	Medical and Dental Appointments
P	Approved Sporting Activity
R	Religious Observance
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registration has closed)
V	Educational visit/trip
X	Non-compulsory school age absence (Reception class only)