

POLICY

Langar Church of England Primary School



Attendance

Co-ordinator

A. Johnson - Head Teacher

April 2015

P065 Revised	

Issued: 15/03/15	Attendance Policy	Policy: P064
Author: A Johnson		Revision:0.00

Attendance Policy

Philosophy

As a school we are committed to ensuring that all children achieve the highest possible level of attendance. We promote good attendance and punctuality because it has a positive effect on achievement and progress and is a necessary life skill.

1. Aims and Targets

- Work in partnership with parents/carers and the Targeted Support Service. □ Provide clear guidelines for pupils and their families.
- Regularly remind parents/carers of school policy and practice.
- Raise the profile of attendance among children and their families.
- Carefully monitor attendance.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities, along with the legal position are outlined in the Department for Education publication 'School Attendance. Departmental advice for maintained schools academies, independent schools and local authorities (October 2014) which can be found on the DfE website.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- and,
- Act early to address patterns of absence.
 - Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
 - All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

3. Procedures

We will ensure all staff are aware of the registration procedures and that they will complete accurate registration processes at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 5 minutes of the start of the morning and afternoon session.

First day Contact

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school office early on the first day of absence (by 11 a.m.)

- If the parent has not contacted the school by 11 a.m., then the parents of identified pupils should expect to be contacted by the office manager either by telephone or by email.
- Parents will be asked to give a written reason if the school does not hear by telephone or verbal message.

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It is the view of the school that first day contact works by:

- Raising awareness of the importance of full attendance
- Addressing problems before they become serious
- Improving home-school liaison
- Sending a clear message to parents and pupils that if a child is absent she/he will be missed
- Alerting parents who may be unaware that their child is missing and therefore may be at risk
- Requiring and promoting a high level of communication within the school staff working as a team
- Reducing the number of pupils who have short-term absence, thus reducing the overall absence rate
- Assisting parents and pupils to develop habits that reduce casual absence and encouraging early contact from parents

Unreported absences

- First day action is implemented via the telephone/email.
- If parents/carers do not respond to this request, the school office staff, issue them with an absence enquiry.
- A second enquiry is issued if parents/carers fail to respond.
- The absence is recorded as unauthorised if the second absence enquiry is not returned to school.
- If a repeated pattern of unauthorised absence continues or if attendance falls below 85%, a meeting/telephone call will take place with parents and if necessary a referral is made to the Targeted Support Service.
- Parents/carers are informed that ultimately, the LA may pursue cases of poor attendance i.e. attendance below 85% through the courts.

Punctuality

Parents are expected to ensure that children are present at registration. Registers will close at 9.00 a.m. Children arriving after 9.00 a.m. but before 9.20 a.m. will be recorded as late and a reason requested and recorded. Children arriving after 9.20 a.m. will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

There are three negative results caused by pupils who constantly arrive late:

- The loss of learning suffered by the pupil themselves which over a year can add up to a significant proportion of their time in school.
- The disruption to other children in their class as the teacher's attention is taken from the task at hand.
- Can raise levels of unauthorised absence.

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The strategies that the school will use to tackle lateness will include:

- Class Teachers will have informal contact with parents whose children are persistently late.
- A standard letter may be issued if appropriate.
- If a pattern of lateness continues, a referral is made to the Targeted Support Service
- Use of Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence.

Authorisation of Absence

In Langar Primary School the decision as to whether an absence will be authorised will be taken by the Head Teacher. This may be after a period of absence, a pattern of missed absences or continued lateness.

Authorised Absence: an absence agreed by the Head Teacher with an explanation from parents

Unauthorised Absence: an absence not agreed or unexplained

Medical: an appointment such as hospital, doctor or dentist

Illness: illness as informed by the parent or on receipt of doctor's/hospital notes if required.

Full guidance on attendance codes is held in the school office.

Holidays in term time

- Following a directive from the DfE from September 2013 school will no longer authorise any holidays taken during term time except in exceptional circumstances.
- All holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absence (symbol G).
- Parents/carers who feel strongly that their circumstances are exceptional are asked to put their request for a holiday during term time in writing directly to the head teacher for his consideration. Note, the school no longer issues holiday forms.
- Parents/carers are requested to complete a 'Withdrawal from Learning' request form, available from the school office so that all pupil absence is accounted for.
- Completed forms are retained in the office and the information recorded on our school's holiday recording sheet. This makes it easier to track absences due to holidays.
- Failure to inform the school of the reason for absence may result in a direct referral to Targeted Support for further investigation.

Parent Contracts

Attendance is part of the Home- School Agreement.

Penalty Notices

In accordance with Government guidelines, the Local Authority reserves the right to fine parents who take their child out of school for holidays during term time without approval.

When it is suspected that a child has been taken on holiday and medical reasons are given for the absence, we reserve the right to request a doctor's certificate verifying the illness.

We appreciate that there will from time to time be exceptional family circumstances that require a child to be taken out of school. Parents are asked to write a letter explaining the situation and

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attach it to a completed 'Withdrawal from Learning' request form. Every consideration will obviously be given under such circumstances.

School should not be placed in a position of having to decline approval for a leave of absence and having to refer the absence to the Local Authority, who have the power to impose a fine. The School's attendance policy states that we will not authorise any holiday leave requested unless it is for special circumstances. We greatly value the success of our children and any absence can be to the detriment of a child's learning; it is therefore imperative that avoidable absences like holidays are discouraged.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The SIMS computerised system is used to collect attendance data. This is input daily by the class teachers.
- This system of recording enables the Head Teacher to have access to a variety of reports and is used to monitor trends and patterns of absence.
- The Head Teacher monitors individual attendance on a half termly basis and issues letters to those parents whose children's attendance has fallen below the school target of 96%.
- Class teachers will incorporate personal attendance targets in the classroom setting for those children giving cause for concern.
- Termly attendance returns are submitted to the LA via the school census.
- An annual return is submitted to the DFE.

5. Involvement of Governors

Governors take an active interest in the monitoring of attendance and punctuality through:

- The Head Teacher's termly report to the Governing Body.
- Termly attendance report

Date agreed: 26th March 2015

Date to be reviewed: March 2018

Signed : *Mark Ebb*

Chair of Governors