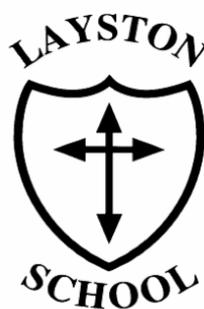




# Layston C of E First School



*Loving to learn, Learning to love. For every child a chance to shine*

## Attendance Policy

Reviewed

Oct 2021

Review due

Oct 2022

- Please see page 2 for Current Covid-19 Attendance Guidelines

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body on 20.02.2020.

It is due for review in Summer Term 2021 (up to 1 year from the above date) by the Governing Body.

Signature .....

Date .....

Head Teacher

Signature .....

Date .....

Chair of Governors



**COVID-19 - ADVICE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE - 22 MARCH 2020 (until further notice)**

The Secretary of State has written to Directors of Children's Services setting out the department's expectation that no parent is penalised for their child's non-attendance due to Covid-19. Based on this information the Hertfordshire Local Authority:

- Will suspend any penalty notice action or prosecutions for Covid-19 related absence with immediate effect.
- Will not issue new Penalty Notice applications and any cases from 16th March 2020 will be withdrawn.

At Layston CofE First School we want the whole school community - governors, staff, parents and pupils to be committed to high standards of attendance and punctuality.

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. Study after study has highlighted the positive link between attendance and educational achievement. Children who are persistently late or absent from school are vulnerable to falling behind with their learning. This can impact on their progress and their ability to meet age regulated learning expectations.

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

The nominated governor for attendance is Margaret Lawrence.

### **Expectations**

The responsibility for good attendance is shared between school, parents and pupils. All these groups need to understand the expectations which the policy makes of them.

The School will be expected to:

- Provide a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raise awareness in parents and carers of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that records of attendance are maintained according to Government legislation and guidance on a daily basis.
- Implement First Day Response - phone parents on the first morning of absence if no reason has been given for the child's absence.
- Discuss attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary.
- Contact families where concerns are raised about absence initially through a phone call followed by a letter to parents highlighting when their child's attendance is at or below 95% (letter 1) and then again if the absence rate is at or below 93% (letter 2). A formal letter advising parents of their child's unauthorised absence and warning that a penalty notice will be issued if the unauthorised absence reaches 15 sessions in the current and/or previous term (known as Appendix A) should also be sent. (See sample letters at end of document which can be tailored to meet individual situations).
- Notify the schools Attendance Officer (AO) of any child who fails to attend regularly.
- Use Fixed Penalty Notices by way of dealing with attendance matters/unauthorised absences (totally 15 or more in the current and/or previous term) and may request Hertfordshire County Council to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice on their behalf.
- Monitor individual attendance where concerns have been raised.
- Making referrals to the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) service where deemed necessary.

The Parents will be expected to:

- Ensure that the school is informed of any changes of contact details.
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn.
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly.
- Ensure they have read the attendance policy.
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Provide proof of absence i.e. a doctor's note, an appointment card, copy of a prescription where the absence rate is at or below 93%.
- Make requests for authorised absence in term time ONLY in exceptional circumstances. Any requests need to be in writing.
- Be vigilant about ensuring all children are in school during April, May and June when preparation for and statutory testing takes place. A child's absence during a test equates to failure which negatively impacts on the school standards.
- Inform the school on the first day of absence, of the reason for their child's absence from school.
- Return their child to school as soon as they are fit to do so. In relation to sickness and vomiting the child should have 48 hours free of symptoms before return to school. (See guidance on return dates to school following infectious illness copies available school office.)
- Confirm the explanation for absence in writing on return to school.
- Avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours. If unavoidable inform 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);
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve any issues which may lead to non- attendance.
- Maintain regular communication with school staff where necessary.
- Understand that term time absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.
- Do not book holidays during term times.

The Pupils will be expected to:

- Attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually.
- Be ready to learn and follow the 3 Golden Rules.

### **Doors Open**

- At 8.50 am. Pupils may enter the building at that time. Pupils should not arrive at school before 8.40 am.

### **Registration**

- Registers are called at 9.00 am and at 1.00 pm. Registers close at 9.10 am and at 1.10 pm. Registers are completed consistently by staff via SIMS.
- Any pupil arriving after 9.00 am but before 9.10 am will be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session. All late arrivals must be through the main School Office area.
- Any pupil arriving after 9.10 am will be marked as absent for that session.

□ For the afternoon session, any pupil arriving after 1.00 pm but before 1.10pm will be marked as 'late' but counted as present for that session. All late arrivals must be through the main school reception area.

□ Any pupil arriving after 1.10pm will be marked as absent for that session. Registers will be marked in accordance with DfES guidance.

### **Lateness**

□ Any pupil arriving after 9.10 am should report to the School Office to sign in.

### **Following up Lateness**

□ Parents whose children are regularly late for school will be contacted by the Head Teacher, who will work with the parent(s) to bring about an improvement in punctuality. A second late mark in any month will trigger a letter home.

### **Absences**

□ Notification must be provided for all absences from school. A telephone call is acceptable.

□ On return a written explanation should be provided to school to be kept on file.

□ Absences are authorised by the Headteacher.

□ The school may decide not to authorise absence, even when a reason is provided.

□ The school will check up on any absences where a reason has not been notified.

### **Definition of absence**

Absences as defined by the DfE are in 2 categories, authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence - illness, medical or dental appointment

Unauthorised absence - holiday unauthorised by school or in excess of agreement, if attendance falls below 93% and medical evidence has been requested (letter 2) but has not been supplied then absences following this will be deemed unauthorised.

