**Lillington Nursery and Primary School**

Attendance policy



**Attendance Policy**

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Lillington Nursery and Primary School.

At Lillington, all staff work collaboratively to encourage every pupil to strive for excellence. Every child will be supported, challenged and valued. One way in which we strive to do this is by encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their maximum potential. We are determined in encouraging the development of high self-esteem and for our children to take pride and ownership of their learning. In conjunction with this, we will continuously provide a clear framework for parents and staff as well as clear procedures for involving parents and/or external agencies where appropriate.

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

Lillington encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that ***“parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly”*(DfE 1999).**

**Aims & Objectives**

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

Through this policy we aim to:

* Improve pupils’ achievement by ensure high levels of attendance and punctuality.
* Achieve a minimum of 95% for all pupils, 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 Nursery and Reception age children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
* Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education 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 in promoting good attendance.

**Responsibility of Parents/Carers**

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. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

**Punctuality**

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

-          To ensure that their children arrive to school on time. Both KS1 and KS2 gates open at 8:35am until 8:45am. This is sufficient time for all pupils to get to their class.

-          To ensure children who are late after 8:45am report to the school office to sign in. Records are kept of the pupils that are late with an L code in the register. Any child that arrives after 9:15am will be marked with a U code, equivalent to an unauthorised absence.

-          To ensure children are collected promptly at the end of the school day and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child’s normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this.

**Absences**

It is the parent/carer’s responsibility:

-          To notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:15am or as soon as possible. Parents can report an absence by telephoning the school office or emailing on admin@lillingtonschool.org

-          To provide medical evidence where possible, on the child’s return to school.

-          To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.

-          To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.

Parents/carers of children for whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted after 9:30am.

**Illness/Medical absences**

In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

The school will automatically request medical evidence for any illness absence taken immediately before or after a school holiday.

**Leave of Absence**

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

• Head teachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

• Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

• Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

• The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.

• Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

• Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

• All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.

• The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council’s Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance).

• If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council’s Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

**Absence for Other Reasons**

Absences for reasons such as religious observance (up to 2 days per year) or close family bereavement *may* be authorised by the Head Teacher.  These requests must be discussed with the school. Absences for close family members’ weddings or funerals will be limited to one day’s authorised absence, if granted.

It is the parent/carer’s responsibility:

-          To inform the office, in writing, of the need for leave in circumstances which are known in advance.

-          To inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that the appropriate code can be recorded in the register.

**Unexplained Absence**

When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority.

Regular monitoring is carried out by the Learning Mentor. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited into an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support.

**Role of the Education Welfare Officer**

-          To investigate absence which exceeds more than 10%, and to hold meetings with these parents as required.

-          To investigate lateness which exceeds more than 5%.

-          To investigate any unexplained absence which exceeds more than 5 consecutive days.

-          To ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.

-          To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school and Education Welfare Officer.

-          To report accurate whole school and individual attendance data when required.

**Children Missing in Education**

If a child is absent (unexplained) for at least 5 consecutive days, the Education Welfare Officer will be notified. A home visit may be carried out. If the absence continues for a total of 10 days, the family will be referred as a CME case for the Local Authority.

**Persistent Latecomers**

Children who repeatedly attend school late after 8:45am will be brought to the attention of the Learning Mentor. Warning letters will be issued to the parents/carers of these children. Parents/carers should note that children who arrive late after 9:15am are given a ‘U’ code, which is the equivalent of an unauthorised absence and this will affect the child’s attendance figures. **Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers whose children persistently arrive after this time.**

**Agreed by governors: 11.07.2022**

**Review Date: July 2025**