



“Loving and Learning Together, for Life, as Jesus taught us.”

Leonard Stanley C of E Primary School

Attendance Policy

Title: Attendance Policy

Person(s) who created policy: Head teacher

Date reviewed: Apr 2025 (revised)

Review Frequency: Biennial

Date for next review: Apr 2026

Aims and objectives

“Loving and Learning together for Life, as Jesus Taught us.”

At Leonard Stanley CofE (VA) Primary School we believe that improving attendance is everyone’s business and that providing a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn is the foundation of securing good attendance. Working together to put the right support in place at the right time, in conjunction with all staff in school, parents/carers, pupils, Gloucestershire County Council and other local partners, we aim to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships.

Regular attendance is fundamental to the future success of children. **We expect pupils to be in school for every session of the school day and for every day that the school is open.**

Our objectives are to promote good attendance, ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled. By acting early to address patterns of absence we aim to reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- [Part 6 of The Education Act 1996](#)
- [Part 3 of The Education Act 2002](#)
- [Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
- [The Education \(Information about Individual Pupils\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school or message via EduLink to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Proactively engage with support offered informally or formally to help your child overcome any barriers to attendance

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

The governing body are expected to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies

- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Mr Skelton is our link governor for attendance, who periodically checks the attendance data and attendance action plan.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Requesting the issue of fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The deputy headteacher is responsible for:

- Championing and improving attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Communicating messages to pupils and parents
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Where there is a lack of engagement, holding more formal conversations with parents and raising the issue of the potential need for legal intervention.

The school attendance office, Lisa Williams is responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents/ receiving EduLink messages about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system (SIMS)
- Transfer calls from parents to the appropriate member of staff in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Keeping accurate and up to date records of calls and communication with parents
- To check yellow absence book, and (if notification of absence from parent is received) call parents to check reason for absence.
- If no contact is made with parents / carers (or all contact numbers on data collection sheets), inform HT of Child Missing Education (CME).

- Ensuring all attendance data is recorded on SIMS.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with school staff eg pastoral lead/fswSENCo to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher *or deputy headteacher* when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting the information to the school office by 9am each morning.
- Teachers need to fill in yellow absence books to indicate a child is absent without explanation and return to the Office manager (school attendance officer) to investigate

School processes for recording attendance and absence

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of the school day and once during each afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- 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

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not by using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from regulation 10 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50am on each school day.

The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.00am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for an unplanned absence on the first day by 9.00 am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school.

Parents should ideally use the Edlulin APP to record absence or telephone the school to leave a message.

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer 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 parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Attendance is monitored weekly and children with poor attendance will be placed on the attendance action plan. This plan dictates when meetings, letters and fines are to be considered.

Planned absence

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- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/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.

- The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as *significant family events*.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated, and in accordance with the school's leave of absence request form accessible on the school's web site or a paper copy from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad (Code C1)
- Attending a medical or dental appointment (Code M)
- Attending an interview for admission to another educational institution (Code J1)
- Studying for a public examination (Code S)
- Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school (Code X)

Procedures following unexplained absence

- The school gates to KS1 and KS2 playground are opened at 8:40 every morning, with registration at 8:45. Pupils must arrive in school by *8.50 am* each school day.
- After close of registration, EduLink will be checked by Office Manager (school attendance officer) to chase any unexplained absences (N Code).
- Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school by 9.30 a.m. a phone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return. All telephone messages will be dated and recorded in writing by the

Admin Officer or Head Teacher and put into the Black A4 Diary. This ensures that parents and the school are sure about the child's whereabouts.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- If the school is unable to make contact via the first contact number, in accordance with LA advice / guidelines, all subsequent contact numbers will be tried, and messages left. If no contact has been made to school to explain by 11:30, then a school visit will be made to the family home.
- If no contact is made on the visit, then the school will leave a letter to inform parents of the visit, and to explain that they need to contact the school urgently to explain the absence and confirm the welfare of the child. The letter will explain that if the school does not receive notification, then a call to social care may be required to notify them of a Child Missing Education (CME) in line with our Safeguarding Policy. The Head Teacher will call Social care or Police when necessary.
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will contact the Inclusion team and may make a referral to social services and/or the police.
- The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1:15 and will be kept open until 1:30.
- Any concerns about attendance or punctuality will be referred to the Head Teacher who will, if necessary, contact parents/carers to try to resolve any issues. If these issues cannot be resolved and there is unauthorised absence the Education Entitlement and Inclusion Team may be contacted for advice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

As a school, good attendance is widely celebrated on newsletters, in collective worship and in class sessions. We compare our data across the county and benchmark our data on a regular basis.

Attendance data monitoring, reporting and analysing

The school will:

- Regularly inform parents of their child's attendance levels *in parents' meetings and in school reports*.
- Monitor attendance and absence data (*half-termly*) across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
- Provide regular attendance reports to *the Senco and SLT* to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- *Write letters to parents to provide clear information regarding individual cases, see Appendix A and B.*
- Formalise support or use legal sanctions, in conjunction with Gloucestershire County Council, for example through using a parenting contract, engagement with social services, Education Supervision Order or consideration of attendance prosecution in the Magistrates Court

Legal sanctions

The school must consider requesting Gloucestershire County Council issue a fine to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age and the national threshold has been met. Notices to Improve and Fixed Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct: visit [Attendance - Schoolsnet \(gloucestershire.gov.uk\)](https://www.attendance-schoolsnet.gloucestershire.gov.uk) for further information.

If issued with a fine or penalty notice each parent must pay £80 (per child) if paid within 21 days rising to £160 thereafter. If not paid within 28 days, the Local

Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice – note there is no right of appeal in court by parents against a fixed penalty notice. The national framework for penalty notices sets out that a maximum of 2 penalty notices per child, per parent can be issued within a rolling 3-year period (the second one being payable at £160 with no option to reduce fine by making payment earlier). If the national threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) time within 3 years, the Local Authority will consider prosecution through the magistrates' court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

In Education Law (Section 576 of the Education Act 1996) 'parent' means:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil
- Any person who has care of a child or pupil ie lives with and looks after the child

Links to other policies and monitoring arrangements

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is update, and as a minimum *annually by the head teacher*. At every review the policy will be approved by the full governing body.

Children who go missing during the school day

Guidelines and procedures to be followed in the event of a child going missing from the school premises or during school activities

A separate procedure exists for Children Missing Education. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a child missing education as a child who is not on a school roll and has been out of education for more than 4 school weeks. The term Children Missing from Education (CME) therefore refers to all children of compulsory school age who are neither registered at a school nor educated otherwise (i.e. home educated or privately educated.)

Missing Definition

When a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be the subject of a crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another.

Is the pupil at significant risk?

A pupil missing during schools hours incident would be prioritised as significant risk' where:

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the child/young person is in danger through their own vulnerability. Vulnerability characteristics may include;

- Children on a plan (Early Help, Child in Need, Looked After or Child Protection Plan)

- A disability and/or special educational needs
- Substance misuse
- Education health care plan

The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the public is in danger.

There are indications that the child/young person has already come to harm (CSE, CCE, grooming, radicalisation etc.)

Other contributory factors should be taken into consideration when determining if the pupil is at significant risk, for example;

Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?

- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk? e.g. rites of passage, female genital mutilation or forced marriage planned for the child?

Procedure:

Once a pupil is identified as missing by any member of school staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed.

Staff will use professional judgement and risk assess the urgency of the situation to help inform the timeframe required in establishing the pupils' whereabouts before notifying the Police. Timeliness should be on a case by case basis.

Designated Safeguarding Lead should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability.

School staff will try to locate the pupil and try to establish the whereabouts of them.

School staff will contact home and try to contact the pupil via their mobile telephone if known.

Notifying the Police

The information required by the Police to assist in locating and returning the pupil to a safe environment is as follows:

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- The pupils name/s; date of birth; status (for example looked after child); responsible authority;
- Where and when they went missing;
- Previous missing episodes and where they went;
- Who, if anyone, they went missing with;
- What the child was wearing plus any belongings they had with them such as bags, phone etc.; include mobile number.
- Description and recent photo;
- Medical history, if relevant;
- Time and location last seen;
- Circumstances or events around going missing with relevant safeguarding information;
- Details of family, friends and associates:
- Contact details of safeguarding lead if it was after school hours.

Whilst the search is ongoing, the school will continue to liaise with the police and act in accordance with police instructions.

Option 1 – if the child returns before the police have arrived then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 2 - if the child returns to school of their own volition, then the Police must be informed and own school procedures need to be followed.

Option 3 - if the police locate the child and bring them back to the school the Police will conduct the safe and well interview and the school will follow School procedure.

Where a pupil has a known risk of being missing, a risk assessment for the pupil will be written and put in to place.