

Ladywood Primary School



Attendance Policy

January 2023

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Attendance Policy

Rationale

Ladywood Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which maximises opportunities for each child to reach his or her full potential. Research shows a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment.

Aims

Ladywood Primary aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching **96%** attendance to ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies we are able to ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular school attendance, for all students at Ladywood Primary.

School roles and responsibilities

In order to manage and promote regular school attendance Ladywood Primary will;

1. Contact parents on the first day of absence if no contact has been made with school.
2. Keep parents updated on attendance and the school calendar, via letters home, newsletters and the school website.
3. Follow the DfE and Government guidance in relation to school attendance and Covid-19
4. Follow Public Health guidance should any local lockdowns or outbreaks in school occur.
5. Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this, via regular Pupil/Parent/Teacher Meetings.
6. Monitor individual student's attendance in order to celebrate good and improved school attendance and reward this through termly certificates, prizes and events including whole class rewards.
7. Where attendance is below the school target of **96%** attendance will be continuously monitored across year groups.
8. Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance by following the procedure as follows:

Attendance Monitoring Procedures

Wave 1

- Sending a text to alert parents that attendance has fallen below school target of 96% and will be monitored.
- Follow-up letter will be sent if no improvement is seen after 4 weeks (Letter 1)

Wave 2

- Sending a letter to notify parents/carers when attendance falls below 90% or no improvement is seen following initial monitoring and request that medical evidence is provided for any further absence to be authorised. (Letter 2).

Wave 3

- If there is no improvement 2 weeks after sending Letter 2 parent/guardian will be invited to an Internal School Attendance Panel (Letter 3). The Education Welfare officer will attend the meeting.
- Hold Internal School Attendance Panel meeting.

At any point deemed necessary by the school referrals will be made to the Education Welfare Service and home visits conducted by either the EWO or school staff.

Parents' roles and responsibilities

In order to manage and promote the regular school attendance of their children parents will;

1. Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
2. Understand their responsibility to keep the School up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2018.
3. Model to their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick, or unable to attend e.g. due to medical appointments or Covid-19 isolation requirements.
4. Establish effective communication with Ladywood Primary and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school, so that we can work together to resolve this.
5. Contact school on the 1st day of absence to inform school of the reason for absence and when the child is expected to return.

6. Keep school informed if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.
7. Provide school with any medical appointment cards, and where ever possible make appointments out of school hours, where this is not possible parents will ensure that children attend school prior to or following their appointment.
8. Attend any meetings called by school and partner agencies to discuss school attendance.
9. Seek approval for any leave of absence in term time for special circumstances, e.g. Holidays, participation in a competition or performance.

Education Welfare Service roles and responsibilities.

In order to manage and promote regular school attendance Education Welfare Service will;

1. Work in partnership with the School/ Academy through Service Level Agreements for additional support and collaborative working as part of the statutory functions.
2. Attend meetings called by Ladywood to address with parents any worries the school and Education Welfare may have about a child's attendance.
3. Support the school in promoting attendance by attending Pupil, Parent, Teacher Meetings and events.
4. Receive referrals from school to address matters of poor school attendance by
 - a. visiting parents' homes to challenge and improve attendance.
 - b. Involve other agencies where appropriate, such as the school nurses.
5. Complete a safeguarding visit when absence is unexplained.

In situations where all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will enforce Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989, which may result in a fine up to £2,500; a Parenting Order; a community order; or a custodial sentence. Consideration will also be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice in case of unauthorised absence where appropriate.

Guidance Notes for Ladywood staff and parents

Registration

- Morning registers should be completed by the following times;
 - 09.10am for Nursery
 - 8:55am for Reception to Y6

- Afternoon registers should be completed by the following times:

FS1 - 12.25pm

FS2-12.55pm

Y1 to Y3 -1.25pm

Y4 to Y6 - 12.55pm

Any pupils arriving after these times should report to reception so that they can be given a late mark, pupils arriving after 9.15am should be accompanied by a parent so that a reason for lateness can be given; the number of minutes late is recorded in order to measure the impact of lost education due to late arrival. A letter will be sent to parents after 5 late marks are recorded. After 10 marks a visit from the Educational Welfare Officer will take place. Arrivals over 30 minutes after the designated start time will be recorded as a 'U' which signifies an unauthorised absence.

Absences

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences however it is school who make the final decision whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence. School will make this decision based on the information they have so parents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible and evidence such as appointment cards, medication or application for leave of absence forms will assist school in making this decision.

Re-occurring unauthorised absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and this may result in a fine.

Request for leave of absence in term time

Ladywood Primary have adopted the Local Authority code of conduct (September 2019) in respect of leave of absence in term time.

All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form.

If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, Ladywood Primary may refer to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission, (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given), and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.

Absence for participation in a performance

In these instances Ladywood would follow Barnsley MBC guidance and by laws, working in partnership with Education Welfare Service to ensure, that any performance absence is within the perimeters of the law.

Parents will be asked to complete a leave of absence form and the child's performance license. A copy of all documents provided will be submitted to the Local Authority and the Education Welfare Service to support the school to make an informed decision regarding authorisation.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm, if they do not attend school regularly, safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The following policies all link into our Safeguarding Policy to ensure that we are working together to safeguard the children:

- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use (of IT) Policy
- Remote Learning Contingency Plan
- Data Protection Policy

We have also adopted the LA policies on Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education and leave of absence during term time. Ladywood Primary also follow Local Authority guidance in relation to coding absence for families who travel as part of their culture.

All these policies have been endorsed by our Governing Body, who supports the school in all attempts to improve the attendance and safeguarding agenda.

COVID-19

- The school has a risk assessment in place to mitigate against the spread of infection and we understand the impact this may have on pupil attendance.
- Current Government Guidance is followed - symptomatic children are advised to: isolate (register marked as an X) and obtain a PCR test.
- Confirmed cases either by Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) or PCR tests, are marked as illness (I) and subcodes distinguish Covid illness from other reasons for absence due to illness.

- Parents are encouraged to carry out LFT's as per current guidance to enable pupils to return to school at the earliest possible date.
- The Remote Learning Contingency Plan procedures are followed to minimise lost learning for any Covid related absence.

Review

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually (January 2024) unless changes to procedures or legislation determine an earlier review.

Policy written by Gabriella Clark, Clare Grainger and Julie Haywood (EWO)

Policy last updated January 2023 by Clare Grainger-Roystone and Cheryl Hodgson