

Learning for Ourselves, Respect, We Can



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy (including Leave from Learning requests)

***Reviewer : Attendance Leader - D South***

RRS :

1. Every child has the right to meet with other children and young people and join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.
2. Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environments.
3. Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

## **Lyndhurst Infant School Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2022**

Please refer to:

*'Working together to improve school attendance'*

*Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' May 2022*

**'Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn' (1.7)**

**'Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with schools' efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including pupil premium. It cannot solely be the preserve of a single member of staff, or organisation, it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners' (1.8)**

The law on school attendance says (1.9- 12)

- The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have
- It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at school
- If registered at a school, then parents have an additional legal duty to ensure that their child attends regularly,

Lyndhurst Infant School believes that regular attendance and good punctuality is important for successful learning at school. Patterns of good attendance and punctuality, should be established, at an early age, as this is an important life skill, and is linked to positive attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is a protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

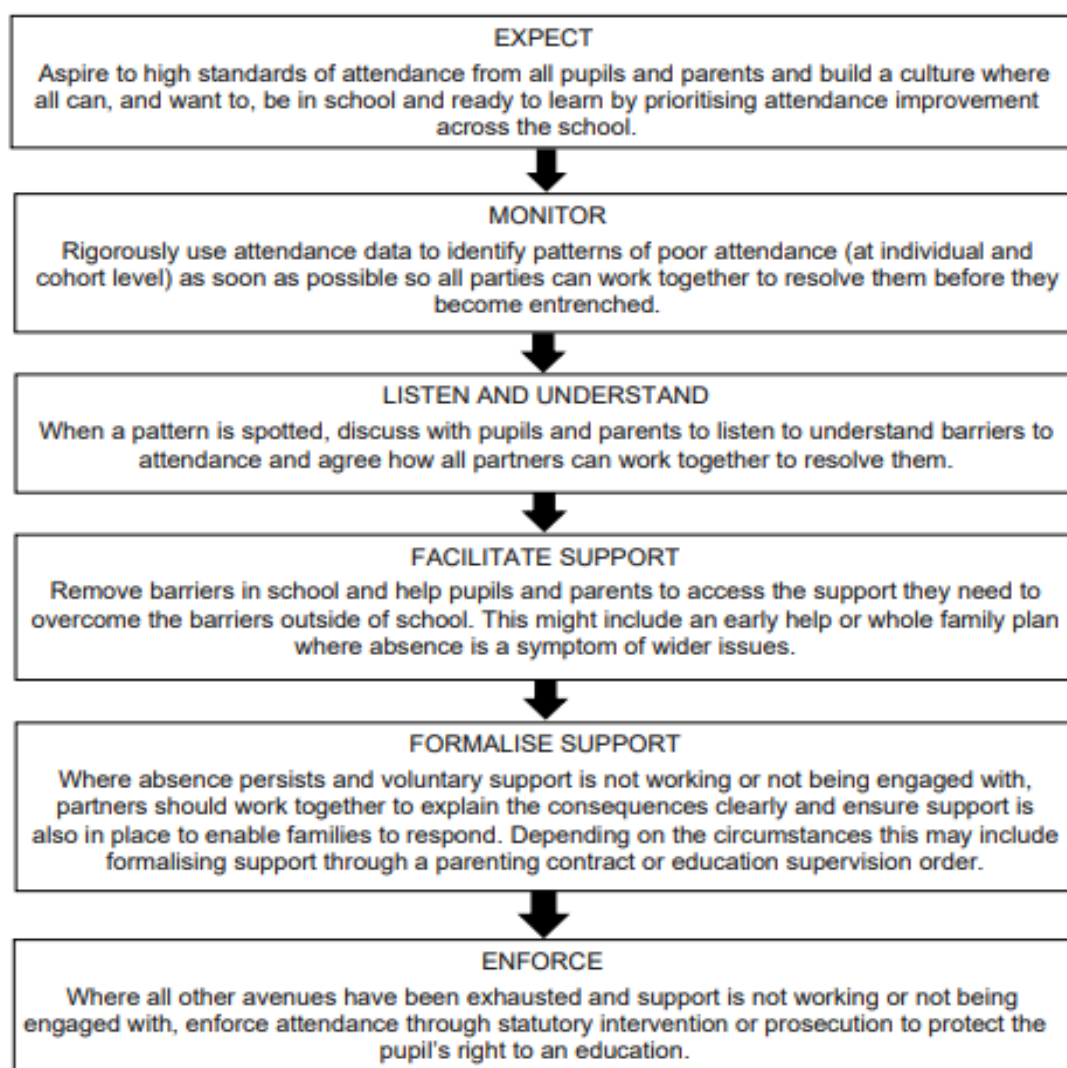
Overall Aims of this Policy:

- To ensure that every child is safeguarded and their right to education is protected.
- To ensure the school attendance target is achieved (95+%), through a meaningful and exciting curriculum, shared clear expectations with parent/carers, and by challenging persistence and regular absences.
- To raise standards and ensure every child achieves well through a high level of school attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure all the stakeholders, governors, parent/carers, pupils and staff receive regular communication, about the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- To keep accurate, up-to-date records and have a robust and rigorous system for analysing attendance.

- To identify and challenge causes of low attendance/punctuality with individuals, classes and groups of pupils
- To work with external agencies, in order to address barriers to attendance and overcome them. These include the Virtual School, Social Workers and the School Attendance Support Team at West Sussex

## Working together to improve attendance

13. Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:



Lyndhurst Infant School will consistently promote the benefits of good attendance, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parent/carers, systematically analyse attendance data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance.

This will be achieved by (2.15):

- establishing a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance through its ethos and culture
- having effective day to day processes in place for tracking and following up absence

- building strong relationships with families, by listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and by working with families to remove them
- sharing information and working collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

#### Head Teacher and SLT will:

- be responsible for the overall management and implementation of policy and procedures, recognising that improving attendance is a leadership issue and should be part of school improvement planning. This includes providing attendance CPD
- liaise regularly with the Attendance leader and use resources such as the Pupil Premium effectively to improve attendance where necessary
- deal with parental/carers requests for 'Leave From Learning' in line with Government legislation and the school policy
- consider the use of Penalty Notices, in line with West Sussex Local Authority policies and procedures
- inform parent/carers of poor attendance and punctuality but also improved attendance and punctuality
- where needed, set up incentives for individual children and targeted groups of children so that both attendance and punctuality improves
- track attendance and punctuality regularly and challenge poor attendance
- liaise with outside agencies and support networks if necessary – such as the School Attendance Support team at West Sussex
- report on attendance regularly to Governors
- communicate levels of attendance to stakeholders
- liaise with Chesswood, and other locality schools, when there are concerns around absences across families, to track patterns and address safeguarding concerns

#### It is the role of the Parent/Carer to:

- ensure regular attendance and punctuality for their child. This includes children of EYFS age.
- when exceptional circumstances exist, to apply for leave from learning in advance where possible
- inform the school on the first day of absence
- contact the school in confidence, whenever problems occur which may keep children away from school.
- children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents should contact the school first thing. If a child has a minor illness e.g. mild headache, stomach-aches etc. parents should inform the school and bring them in. If they don't get any better, school will contact parents straight away, to collect them. If pupils have a dental, clinic or hospital appointment, parents should let the school know. Pupils should be brought back to school after appointments. Pupils should miss as little time as possible.
- Medical and dental appointments should not be arranged in school time wherever possible.
- We require parent/carers to work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.
- To organise and book holidays and Leave From Learning during the 175 days of school holidays and non-school days and not during the 190 days of learning time.

It is the role of the class teacher to:

- maintain accurate registers and records for the children
- follow up all absences
- bring poor attendance (as indicated against each name on the register) or trends of non-attendance that is noteworthy, to the attention of the Attendance Lead.

It is the role of the governors to:

- Support the school in challenging 'leave from learning'
- Ask the Head Teacher to report on Attendance regularly through reports and meetings
- Have a link governor for attendance

Leave from Learning

Parent/carers are reminded that all absences mean that a child will miss out on learning and teaching, and they are, therefore, requested to keep absence to a minimum. All absences are required to be authorised, or approved, wherever possible before they occur, and it is the parent/carer's responsibility to seek this.

Day to Day arrangements:

- The school day is from 8.55 to 3pm. The school doors open from 8.45am. This allows 10 minutes for ease of movement around the building first thing in the morning. All parent/carers are expected to be on school site ready to collect their child at 3pm.
- The register is taken first thing each morning and then again at the start of the afternoon session.
- The doors and gates close at 8.55. After this time, parent/carers must bring their child into school via the main office.
- A 'late' mark is given after 8.55am and arrivals after 9.25 am will receive an unauthorised absence mark.
- All absences need to be reported to the school by the parent/carers. This can be done via the main phone line, via email or through the Study Bugs App
- All unaccounted first day absences will be investigated after 9.25am. The office will contact all named contacts. If we are unable to make contact with the family, the DSL will decide on a course of action. This may include contacting a social worker, the Police or a home visit.
- Regular lateness, and absences which appear regular, or less than 90%, will be investigated by the Attendance lead. This may be via a letter, phone call or face-to-face meeting. The Attendance lead will communicate attendance expectations regularly with the school community.

## Attendance: What does it mean for my child?

# EVERYDAY COUNTS

We aim for 95%+ attendance.  
This is a maximum of 9 ½ days  
off school over the year.  
That means at least 180 ½  
days at school.

9 ½ days off over  
the school year is  
nearly 2 weeks of  
missed learning.

To get 90% attendance  
would mean having 19 days  
off over the year.  
That means 171 days at  
school.

19 days off over  
the school year is  
nearly 4 weeks of  
missed learning.

To get below 90% attendance  
would mean having more  
than 19 days off over the  
year.  
That means less than 171  
days at school.

85% attendance would  
mean having 29 ½ days  
off school in a year.  
This is equivalent to  
nearly half a term of  
missed learning.

There are 365 days in a year.  
190 of these are school days.

The other 175 days are  
weekends, bank holidays,  
INSET days and school  
holidays.

**You'll never know  
what you missed  
unless you show up!**

### Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)

FPNs are issued for unauthorised absence from school. This is when a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 10 school week period. Each school day is 2 sessions (AM and PM) This includes:

- absences recorded in the register as unauthorised
- persistent late arrival at school after the register is taken and is recorded as unauthorised
- a holiday taken in term time
- The first 5 days of when a child is excluded from school

If the school refers a period of absence that is longer than 15 consecutive days, Pupil Entitlement may consider that an FPN is not appropriate but may refer directly to the Courts.

The FPN is issued with an invoice for £120 per parent. This is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid within 28 days the Authority will consider instigating a prosecution.

### Pupils with medical conditions or special education needs and disabilities (40)

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, however, the attendance ambition for these pupils should be the same as they are for any other pupil. These pupils may need extra support to help them access full-time education and we will work in partnership with parent/carers and outside agencies to support pupils who are experiencing difficulties. This may include a plan of support or a target attended to an EHCP.

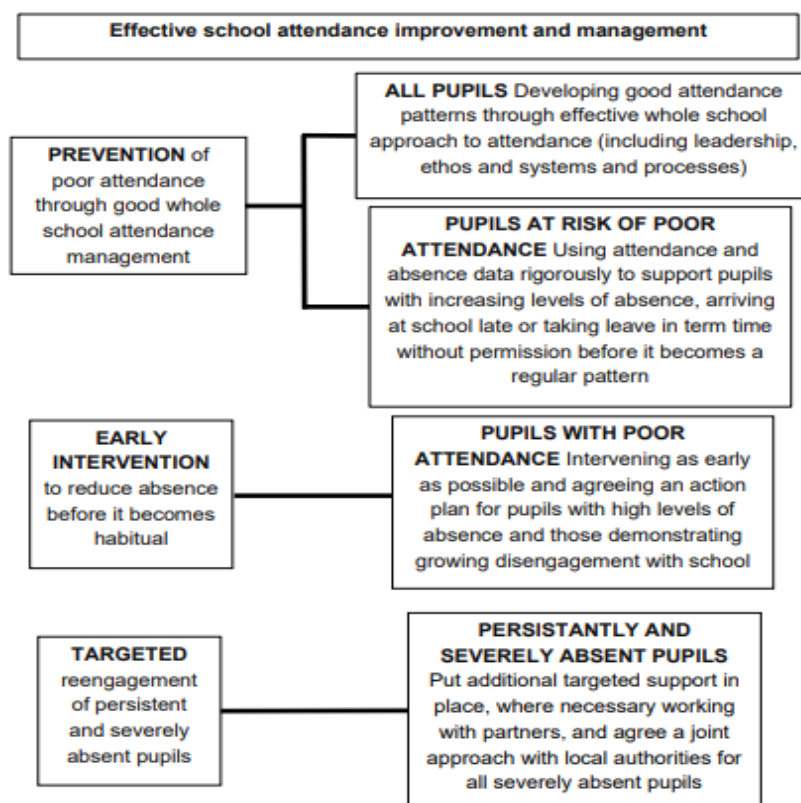
(4.3) All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in the pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet individual needs. This should not be used to manage behaviour. This should have a formal arrangement for regular review with parent/carers and pupils.

### The role of the local authority (65)

**66. The local authority, statutory safeguarding partners and other local partners therefore have a crucial role in supporting pupils to overcome those barriers and ensuring all children can access the full-time education to which they are entitled. Local authorities are facilitators of wider support needed by individual families and schools to overcome barriers in the short term. They are also strategic leaders that work across a geographical area to remove barriers in the longer term.**

Local Authorities (West Sussex) will provide:

- Communication and advice
- Targeting Support meetings – termly conversations with schools and access to services for pupils
- Multi-disciplinary support for families i.e. Early Help
- Legal intervention if needed
- Monitoring of children with a social worker through the Virtual School



### Legal Interventions (90):

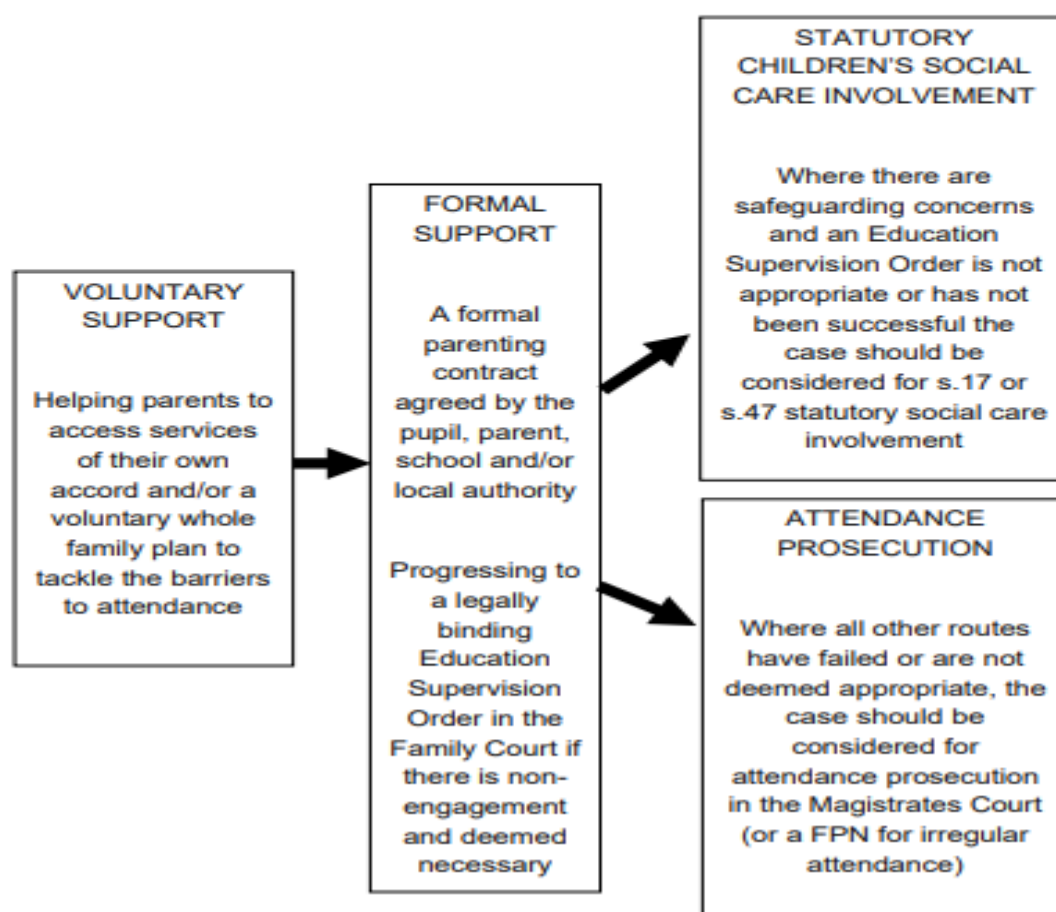
Schools, trusts and local authorities are expected to work together and make use of a full range of legal interventions rather than rely solely on FPNs or prosecution. These are

- Parenting contracts
- Education supervision orders



- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders
- Fixed Penalty notices

89. As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, schools, trusts and local authorities should always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. Attendance legal intervention can only be used for pupils of compulsory school age and decisions should be made on an individual case by case basis.



### Equal Opportunities

We will aim to ensure that all children will have an equal and equitable opportunity to explore their potential regardless of gender, ability, cultural or religious background with reference to our school's equal opportunities policy.

#### **IMPORTANT:**

Child Protection and safeguarding concerns must be acted on immediately, in line with the school Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### Home Educated Children

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children

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outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home. Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school.

### Children at Risk of Missing Education

School governing bodies, academy trusts, and other school proprietors must have regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated. This may include a home visit or a Police welfare check.

## **Other relevant legislation and guidance**

### **Relevant legislation**

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Children Act 1989](#)

[The Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#)

[The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Sentencing Act 2020](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

### **Relevant government guidance**

[Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour](#)

[Children missing education](#)

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

[Working together to safeguard children](#)

[Elective home education](#)

[Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)

[Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

[Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)

[Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)

[Approaches to preventing and tackling bullying](#)