

Inspiring and flourishing together

Lightcliffe C of E Primary School

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Attendance Policy and Procedures

Date Policy Approved: 20.2.23

Approving Body: LGB

Next Review Date: February 2023

Previous Review Date: January 2022



At Lightcliffe C of E Primary School, we strive to secure the very best outcomes for our pupils. We fully appreciate that regular attendance at school is vitally important in helping pupils reach their academic potential, develop socially and emotionally as well as developing a range of life skills which will support them as they leave school and enter the world of work or higher education.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Children who frequently miss school often fall behind and they are likely to have lower and fewer school qualifications which can impact on their ability to access further education and/or employment. Lightcliffe C of E Primary School staff will work in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers to ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the opportunities and experiences offered by the school. Lightcliffe C of E Primary School will encourage and support parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Ensure that pupils are safe; having parent/carer contact when they are absent so the school know (to the best of their knowledge) where the pupil is when absent. Monitoring trends and patterns of absence of individual, vulnerable pupils;
- Support pupils and their parents/carers in establishing the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to improve each pupil's academic outcomes;
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Ensure parents/carers are aware of their legal responsibilities.

Expectations

The government expects:

- schools and local authorities to:
 - Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
 - Act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend the school every day.
- Be on time for the start of the day.
- Not leave the school site for any unauthorised reason.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure their child(ren) regularly attend school.
- Ensure that their child arrives at the school punctually at the start of the day.
- Ensure that they contact the school, daily, of an absence and explain the reason for their child's absence.
- Apply to the Headteacher for a period of absence in advance where there are exceptional circumstances.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- Where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance parents are expected to work with school staff to address these concerns.
- Parents should not ignore, agree with or condone their child's truancy.
- Parents are expected to support school attendance by not taking family holidays during term-time.
- Parents will support the policy by respecting any sanctions given by the school.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a welcoming and supportive atmosphere which enhances pupils' progress and development.
- Promote, recognise and reward outstanding and good attendance and punctuality through a strategic whole school initiative.
- Respond to any child's or parent's concerns that may impact the pupil's attendance or punctuality.
- Maintain regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality; ensuring registers are taken for the morning and afternoon within the first 5mins and missing pupils are reported for safeguarding purposes.
- Follow the First Day Calling Procedure - refer to appendix A.
- As a safeguarding priority, aim to contact parents by 9:20am when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Monitor and report whole school, class, identified cohorts and individual pupils' attendance to inform planning.
- Follow up unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence.
- In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, a plan will be drawn up to maximise attendance.
- Monitor the attendance and punctuality of pupils using the 'Traffic Light' system and take appropriate actions at the identified thresholds – refer to appendix B. Extenuating circumstances, such as medical conditions, will be taken in to consideration when making decision about actions to take.

- Meet with the attendance representatives from the Trust and where appropriate the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- Notify the local authority after 10 days continuous unexplained absence following the Children Missing in Education process of the local authority.
- Make a copy of the policy available on the school website.
- Communicate with parents/carers regarding individual pupil attendance on a regular basis during parents' meetings, mid-year and end of year pupil reports and attendance letters – refer to appendix C.
- Communicate with parents/carers regarding general school attendance on a regular basis through regular school newsletters.
- Report a set of comprehensive attendance data to governors and the Abbey Trust at least termly.
- Recognise and reward good individual and class attendance and punctuality.

Absences

Examples of absences. (Note this is not an exhaustive list):

Authorised absences:

- Genuine illness of the pupil
- Urgent hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the pupil
- Religious observances
- External exams, educational assessments and supervised educational activities

Unauthorised absences:

- Family term time holidays
- Shopping, day trip, birthday treat
- Oversleeping due to a late night for example late return from family event etc.
- Looking after other children / other family member
- Appointments for other family members

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Good punctuality to the school is crucial. Lateness into the school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount, therefore, that all pupils arrive at school on time. The school gates are open from 8:30am with classrooms open for pupils from 8:35am. All pupils are expected to be in their classrooms by 8:50am for registration.

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. Lessons start after registration is complete at 8:50am. Morning registers close at 9:20am. If a pupil arrives after the start of school (8:50am) but before the register closes (9:20am), they will be recorded as

late (L on the register) and the minutes late recorded. After this, lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority. Afternoon registration is taken within the first 5mins of the start of the afternoon: 12:45pm for EYFS and KS1; 1:15pm for KS2.

Punctuality will be monitored on a regular basis. Parents will be contacted if there is a cause for concern with appropriate support offered and actions taken as needed.

Pupils Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in a position of loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are only allowed to leave the site with an adult.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school unless there is a family emergency or other genuine circumstances that require the pupil to leave.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time; only urgent appointments should be attended during the school day.
- Parents are requested to contact school verbally, in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is permitted to leave the site.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission a safeguarding call will be made as a priority to the parents/carers to inform them of the absence (truancy). If parents/carers cannot be contacted staff will attempt to use emergency contact details for the pupil. If this is unsuccessful the police will be informed or Children's Social Care will be informed for particular vulnerable cases.

Leave of Absence

The school term times and holiday dates are published a year in advance and are published on the school website. School training days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change. However, the school will ensure they communicate any changes to parents/carers through text, newsletter, website etc.

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence: The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Parents and/or carers do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time and holidays taken during term time will not be authorised by the Headteacher.

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

Parents/carers should make any request well in advance via the online Absence Request Form available on the school website. Only the parents/carers with whom the child is resident are permitted to submit an Absence Request Form. Requests for absence for reasons such as compassionate leave, special family events, sporting or musical competitions etc., should be made in the same way.

All requests are considered individually, taking into account the circumstances of the request. Other factors will be taken into account, such as:

- the time of year the pupil will be absent;
- the attendance record of the pupil;
- the number of previous requests for leave of absence;
- the pupil's ability to catch up.

Parents will be notified of the school's decision by email.

Where a parental request has been refused, and parents continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. We reserve the right to apply to the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

Lightcliffe C of E Primary School will attempt to support all pupils to achieve maximum possible attendance and will inform parents/carers when attendance starts to fall. Where attendance is falling to a level causing concern parents will be invited in to school to discuss ways to improve. Where attendance continues to fall, a further meeting may be held with governors or Abbey Trust representatives. Refer to appendix B

A Penalty Notice may be issued to parent/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or other agencies including the local authority Education Welfare Service. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

Penalty Notices

Parents and pupils are supported by the School and by Abbey MAT and the LA to overcome issues that prevent regular school attendance through a wide range of intervention strategies. Where this intervention fails a penalty notice can be issued for unauthorised absence and if a parent/carer fails to ensure regular school attendance. This policy is in line with the Local Authority and falls under Sections 444a and 444b of the Education Act 1996. The Education (Penalty Notices:

England) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice Scheme.

Circumstances in which a penalty notice may be issued are:

- Irregular school attendance
- 10 unauthorised sessions (AM and or PM sessions) over a 12 week period
- Overt truancy
- Parentally condoned absences which are not authorised by school
- Unauthorised holidays in term time
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed
- Being in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion

Payment of Penalty Notices

- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days
- The amount payable is per parent, per child
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to refer the case for prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, for failing to ensure regular school attendance or withdraw the penalty notice

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Lightcliffe C of E Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next;
- The address of the new school;
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority for follow up through the Children Missing in Education procedure.

Useful Links

- [Department for Education/Gov.uk – Legal sanctions to enforce school attendance](#)
- [Department for Education/Gov.uk – School Attendance and Absence](#)
- [BBC Learning Parents information – School attendance and your legal responsibilities](#)

Lightcliffe CE Primary School, First-Day Calling Procedure

- 1) Registers saved.
- 2) Late children checked against registers.
- 3) Absence calls listened to/attendance emails checked and recorded.
- 4) Identify any missing pupils for whom we have not received notification.
- 5) First day text sent to first name on contact list within half an hour of school start time asking for response.
- 6) If no response to text start calling first name on contact list within 45 minutes of school start time.
- 7) Ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
- 8) Alert HT/DSL that this child is absent and no contact has been made within an hour of school start time.
- 9) If no reply, email parents.
- 10) Send further text and/or email if no response is made by 10:30am, to advise that a home visit may be carried out if there is no immediate response.
- 11) Contact any other agencies involved to ascertain whether they have any further information which may be helpful, or know the whereabouts of the child or family, and contact MAST to see if there has been any incident that they are aware of.
- 12) Home Visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agency involved.
- 13) Complete Risk Assessment:
 - **No apparent risk (Absent):** There is no apparent risk of danger to either the child or the public. This may be appropriate for children who you have reason to believe are absent from school but not at harm due to previous patterns of behaviour or information from other people e.g. a child who often goes on holiday at this time of year and parents always fail to contact. School can continue to make enquiries but it would not be proportionate to contact police at this stage.
 - **Low/Medium risk:** The risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as possible but minimal or the risk of harm to the subject or the public is assessed as likely but not serious. This may be relevant for those children where there are no additional vulnerabilities however you have minimal contact information and making parental contact is always difficult.
 - **High risk:** The risk of serious harm to the subject or the public is assessed as very likely. This would be relevant for children already considered vulnerable. This may be due to risk of child sexual exploitation or abuse and also consider protected characteristics; mental health, forced marriage, honour based violence, trafficking, and female genital mutilation. This may also be relevant for those children where the absence and lack of ability to make parental contact is highly unusual.
- 14) If assessed as 'No Apparent Risk' – as a school, you can make the decision to continue to make enquires and not contact the police if you do not feel that this is necessary or proportionate. These cases should not be ignored and must be monitored over time and consideration given to escalation if there is a change to the circumstances that has increased the level of risk

- 15) If assessed as 'Low/Medium Risk' – contact the Police on 101 and complete the referral checklist (*please also see Key Information on last page of this procedure*)
- 16) If assessed as 'High Risk' and there is a need for an immediate response, then contact the Police on 999 (*please also see Key Information on last page of this procedure*)
- 17) School enquiries continue and any further information shared with Police

Primary Schools First-Day Calling Procedure – Checklist

(to accompany referral to Police 101)

Name of School: _____

Contact Name & Number: _____

- 1) First day text sent to first name on contact list at _____am:
 - a. Name: _____ Number: _____
- 2) No response received to text so called first name on contact list at _____am
- 3) No contact made so rang down contact list
 - a. Name: _____ Number: _____
 - b. Name: _____ Number: _____
 - c. Name: _____ Number: _____
 - d. Name: _____ Number: _____
- 4) No reply so sent second text and email to parents at _____am
- 5) Still no reply so sent a text informing of a home visit at _____am.
- 6) Other agencies involved with child:

- 7) Any information from MAST? _____
- 8) A Home Visit was made at _____am to the following address:

By (please tick):

- | | |
|--|-----|
| a. School | [] |
| b. Other agency (please specify) _____ | [] |
| c. It has not been possible to do a Home Visit | [] |

Comments regarding home visit or reason why home visit has not been done:

- 9) Child is assessed as Low/Medium Risk []

Attendance Monitoring and Actions*

	Gold/Green Excellent	Yellow Good	Amber Concern Arising	Red Concern
Attendance % Threshold	100% 99.9% - 97%	96.9% - 93%	92.9% - 90.1%	90% and below
Who monitors?	Class teacher Deputy Headteacher	Class teacher Deputy Headteacher	Class teacher Deputy Headteacher	Deputy Headteacher Head Teacher
Parental contact	Verbal attendance update (Autumn 1 and Spring 2 Parents' Evening)	Verbal attendance update (Autumn 1 and Spring 2 Parents' Evening)	Verbal attendance update (Autumn 1 and Spring 2 Parents' Evening)	Verbal attendance update (Autumn 1 and Spring 2 Parents' Evening)
	Gold / Green Attendance Letter (Mid-year and end of year pupil reports to parents)	Yellow Attendance Letter (Mid-year and end of year pupil reports to parents)	Amber Attendance Letter (Mid-year and end of year pupil reports to parents) *If there is a particular concern direct contact via a phone call or in person will be made.	Red Attendance Letter (end of Autumn 2 and any subsequent half term) (Mid-year and end of year pupil reports to parents) *If there is a particular concern direct contact via a phone call or in person will be made.
Frequency	Mid and end point of each half term	Mid and end point of each half term	Weekly Mid and end point of each half term	Weekly / Daily
Actions Interventions	Celebration assemblies Praise and reward	Encourage, monitor and support	Encourage, monitor and support	Parental meeting as needed Attendance Support Plan as needed Instigate legal processes if necessary

Punctuality Monitoring and Actions*

Tier	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Punctuality Thresholds	100% punctuality	Three lates in one half term	At least two lates in one week Late at least once a week over a period of three weeks	Ongoing regular lateness
Monitoring and Actions	Half termly monitoring Praise	Half termly monitoring Encourage, monitor and support Punctuality message	Weekly monitoring Encourage, monitor and support Punctuality message Direct contact with parents if deemed necessary based on circumstances.	Ongoing monitoring and support Parental meeting Punctuality Support Plan as needed Instigate legal processes if necessary

*Extenuating circumstances will be considered when deciding what actions to take.

Appendix C

100% Attendance Letter

[Date]

Dear Parents and Carers,

Your Child's Attendance

I wrote to you at the start of the academic year to tell you about the traffic light approach the school would be taking to supporting your child to achieve a good level of attendance, and I am now writing with an update.

Your child's attendance is:



100% Attendance: Exceptional



This is a fantastic achievement, well done! You are supporting your child to achieve the best they possibly can.

Kind regards,

C Senior
Abbey MAT
Safeguarding and Attendance Strategic lead

G Hilton
Head Teacher

Green Attendance Letter

[Date]

Dear Parents and Carers,

Your Child's Attendance

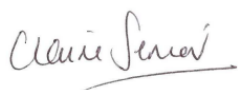
I wrote to you at the start of the academic year to tell you about the traffic light approach the school would be taking to supporting your child to achieve a good level of attendance, and I am now writing with an update.

Your child's attendance is:

Green	Attendance between 97 – 99.9% - Excellent
-------	---

This is a fantastic achievement, well done! You are supporting your child to achieve the best they possibly can and to maximise learning and social opportunities.

Kind regards,



C Senior
Abbey MAT
Safeguarding and Attendance Strategic lead



G Hilton
Head Teacher

Yellow Attendance Letter

[Date]

Dear Parents and Carers,

Your Child's Attendance

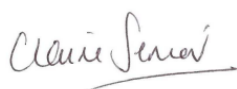
I wrote to you at the start of the academic year to tell you about the traffic light approach the school would be taking to supporting your child to achieve a good level of attendance, and I am now writing with an update.

Your child's attendance is:

Yellow	Attendance between 93 – 96.9% - Good
--------	--------------------------------------

Well done, this level of attendance will help your child achieve their potential. Even better would be attendance at 97% or more. Many thanks for your continued support.

Kind regards,



C Senior
Abbey MAT
Safeguarding and Attendance Strategic lead



G Hilton
Head Teacher

[Date]

Dear Parents and Carers,

Your Child's Attendance

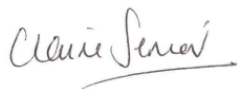
I wrote to you at the start of the academic year to tell you about the traffic light approach the school would be taking to supporting your child to achieve a good level of attendance, and I am now writing with an update.

Your child's attendance is:

Amber	Attendance between 90.1% – 92.99% - Concern Arising
-------	---

At this level of attendance your child is missing learning opportunities and time socialising with their friends. We understand that absence sometimes cannot be avoided but please talk to us if you have any concerns about your child.

Kind regards,



C Senior
Abbey MAT
Safeguarding and Attendance Strategic lead



G Hilton
Head Teacher

[Date]

Dear Parents and Carers,

Your Child's Attendance

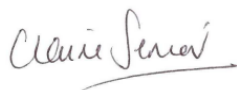
I wrote to you at the start of the academic year to tell you about the traffic light approach the school would be taking to supporting your child to achieve a good level of attendance, and I am now writing with an update.

Your child's attendance is:

Red	Attendance 90% or less - Serious Concern
-----	--

At this level of attendance your child is missing learning opportunities and time socialising with their friends. When attendance is 90% that equates to 1 whole school day missed every two weeks. Whilst we understand that absence sometimes cannot be avoided this level of absence causes concern. The school has a statutory duty to monitor low attendance and we will be in regular contact with you to offer support to help improve attendance.

Kind regards,



C Senior
Abbey MAT
Safeguarding and Attendance Strategic lead



G Hilton
Head Teacher