



LITTLE HARROWDEN
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy

REVIEWED BY HEADTEACHER: December 25

BY GOVERNORS: February 26

NEXT REVIEW DATE: December 26

Little Harrowden Community Primary School is committed to ensuring the welfare and safety of all our children in school. We believe that pupils have a right to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment which includes the right to protection from all types of abuse. All of our school policies and procedures reflect this priority.

Kindness Respect Responsibility Resilience

INCLUSION

INVOLVEMENT

INTEGRITY

INITIATIVE

INSPIRING

Importance of good attendance

It is important to recognise the link between attendance and achievement. At Little Harrowden Community Primary School we encourage all children to attend regularly. Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. Pupils learn best when they arrive punctually at academies.

Expectations

The Education Act 1996 requires the adult responsible to ensure their child receives efficient full- time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any other special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Pupils are expected to attend the school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absence;

1. Authorised absence is where the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such a request.
2. Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's/carer's request. Please be aware that when a parent/carer telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised. Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.

Keeping your child off with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, a text message or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to the Office. (Please note that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost).

If your child has head lice, once they have been treated they can return to school on the same day.

Signing in/out procedure

- Any child arriving at the school after 8.45am must be signed in by their parent or carer at Reception, giving a reason for the late arrival.
- The office must be informed of any child who has to leave school during school hours for a medical appointment or similar reason Parents will be asked to complete a leave of absence form for all appointments and evidence of the appointment will be requested.
- Children leaving the school during the school day must be signed out at the main office by their parent or carer.

Attendance Protocol

- Doors to close at 8:45am. Any child arriving between 8:45am and 8:55am will be marked as L in the register. The office will record the number of minutes late that they are.
- Children arriving after 8:55am will be marked as a U in the register. The office will record the number of minutes that they arrive at school after 8:55am.
- First response – this needs to be completed by 9:30am with all relevant information added to Arbor so that the Family Support Worker can make phone calls/visits as required.

Dental and medical appointments

Parents and carers are asked most earnestly not to arrange dental and medical appointments during school sessions, except in cases of urgency or hospital appointments, so that considerable interference with school work is avoided. Please do not keep children out of school for the whole day unless absolutely necessary.

Pupils are expected to arrive in the school on time.

Registration Procedures

- Registers are taken twice daily, in the morning and in the afternoon, using Arbor.
- The morning register is closed at 8:55am and in the afternoon the registers are taken at 1.10pm.
- Any child arriving between 8:45am and 8.55am will be registered as late for that session and this will be recorded on Arbor
- Any child arriving after 8:55am will be registered as U (late after registers close)

What happens if pupils are late?

- Pupils who arrive after the doors and gates are locked will need to enter school through the main door.
- If a pupil is persistently late contact will be made with the parents to try to resolve the problem.
- If a pupil arrives in school more than 20 minutes late and there is no acceptable explanation, the pupil has to be recorded as 'U' for that session.

The school will monitor daily attendance and lateness rates and will notify the Family Support Worker if there is cause for concern.

Register Codes

The following codes are applied on the registers:

| CODE | DESCRIPTION | MEANING |
|-------------|--|-----------------------------|
| / | Present (AM) | Present |
| \ | Present (PM) | Present |
| B | Educated off site (NOT Dual registration) | Approved Education Activity |
| C | Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description) | Authorised absence |
| D | Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment) | Approved Education Activity |
| E | Excluded (no alternative provision made) | Authorised absence |
| F | Extended family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| G | Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement) | Unauthorised absence |
| H | Family holiday (agreed) | Authorised absence |
| I | Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments) | Authorised absence |
| J | Interview | Approved Education Activity |
| L | Late (before registers closed) | Present |
| M | Medical/Dental appointments | Authorised absence |
| N | No reason yet provided for absence | Unauthorised absence |
| O | Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description) | Unauthorised absence |
| P | Approved sporting activity | Approved Education Activity |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| R | Religious observance | Authorised absence |
| S | Study leave | Authorised absence |
| T | Traveller absence | Authorised absence |
| U | Late (after registers closed) | Unauthorised absence |
| V | Educational visit or trip | Approved Education Activity |
| W | Work experience | Approved Education Activity |
| X | Non-compulsory school age absence | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Y | Enforced closure | Not counted in possible attendances |
| Z | Pupil not yet on roll | Not counted in possible attendances |
| # | School closed to pupils | Not counted in possible attendances |

Parents

- In this instance, under Section 576 Education Act 1996, a parent/carer is defined as any adult who has day to day care of the child during the period in question.
- Under current legislation, parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. Should a child be unable to attend the school for whatever reason or is late, parents are requested to notify the school by telephone before 8.45 a.m. on the first day of absence and on each subsequent day of absence.
- The school must consider a pupil's absence or arrival after the registers are closed to be unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is given by a parent or guardian.

Children Missing from Education Procedures

- If a child is absent and initial contacts are not returned, and contact cannot be made with the parent/carer, then the Family Support Worker Officer will visit the home address in order to establish the safety of the child.
- Letters will be sent to the family and a record will be kept in the school office.
- If a pupil does not return to school for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days, the pupil can be removed from the admission register when the school and LA have failed to jointly establish the whereabouts of the child.

Information taken from the DFE Children Missing Education – Statutory guidance for Local Authorities September 2016.

Leave of Absence (including term time holidays)

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices has been introduced. The regulations came into effect on the 19th of August 2024. The aim is to improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England. The Framework states that headteachers continue to be unable to authorise term time holidays)

The national framework includes:

- A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) for any unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 week period may span different terms or school years. For example, 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the summer term and a further 8 within the autumn term.
- An increase to the rate of a penalty notice from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.
- A national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool must be considered (such as prosecution or another attendance legal interventions).

To clarify:

If you take your child out of school for an accumulative total of 5 days or more (10 sessions) over a period of ten weeks, the school will deem this as irregular attendance and will consider a referral to the Local authority for consideration of legal action.

This could include:

- A Penalty Notice payable up to £160 fine.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.
- Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

Systems

- Individual attendance levels will be monitored and steps taken if a child's attendance is below 96%, there has been 6 sessions of unauthorised absence in the previous 6 weeks or there has been 5 consecutive days of unauthorised absence.
- If a child's cumulative attendance falls below 96% then the Stage 1 standard letter will be sent to inform parents/carers.
- If cumulative attendance remains below 96% after six weeks then the Stage 2 letter will be sent inviting the parents to a 'Parent Contract Meeting' (PCM). Notes to explain the purpose of this meeting will also be sent. A Parent Contract Meeting (PCM) will take place to set targets for attendance and identify any support required. All meeting notes will be recorded on standard form
- If parents/carers fail to engage with the PCM process then the Stage 3 letter will be sent inviting the parents to implement an EHA with the Family Support Worker.
- An EHA will be offered for all PCM cases. If it is declined, this will be recorded on the pupil's file and confirmed in writing to the parents. The child's views will be sought. From this point absences will not be authorised without medical evidence.
- A review period of 6 weeks will be set.
- After 6 weeks a review will take place and the outcome will be recorded. If targets are met, then there is no longer a need for the contract. If there has been some improvement monitor for a further 6 weeks. If no improvement, we will seek advice from Educational and Inclusion Partnership Team and possibly make a referral

- If a child has 5 consecutive days of unauthorised absence then a referral will be made to Education and Inclusion Partnership Team and the parent informed in writing.
- If a child's attendance continues to be a concern then a referral to the Education and Inclusion Partnership Team could result in legal action being taken.

Monitoring

- Individual pupil attendance data will be reported to parents at least annually.
- School attendance data will be monitored monthly including analysis and trends for different groups of pupils.
- Attendance reports will be shared at LAC meetings including the number of children at each stage of the process.

Late Collection

- If children are not collected when school finishes at 3.15pm then parents will be contacted.
- If this becomes a regular problem the academies Family Support Worker will be informed