

Lancasterian Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Version No.	Date	Approved by	Review Frequency	Review Date
5	Sept 2026	Governors	3 Years	Sept 2029

INTRODUCTION

Lancasterian Primary School is committed to ensuring that all pupils receive a full-time, appropriate education that enables them to achieve their potential. The school provides a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment where all members of the community can participate fully. High levels of attendance and punctuality are essential for pupils to make the most of educational opportunities, achieve strong outcomes, build confidence with peers and staff, and develop positive future aspirations. Staff work closely with pupils and families to promote regular attendance and punctuality, except where absence is unavoidable.

The school aims for 100% attendance for every child and will consistently promote the importance of regular and punctual attendance to pupils and parents/carers. A range of strategies will be used to recognise improvements in attendance and punctuality, while also supporting and challenging families where these are given a lower priority. Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a full-time education and attend their registered school regularly; failure to do so may constitute an offence under Section 444(1). While parents/carers hold primary responsibility, attendance issues are most effectively resolved through collaborative working between the pupil, parent/carer, school and local authority.

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The aims of this Attendance and Punctuality Policy are to:

- Ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and arrive punctually so that they can achieve their full educational potential and benefit from all learning opportunities.
- Promote a culture of high attendance and punctuality by working in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the local authority.
- Provide appropriate support, challenge and recognition to encourage positive attendance habits and address barriers to regular attendance.
- Fulfil the school's statutory responsibilities and support parents/carers in meeting their legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 96%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying.
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment, or training.

We define attendance as follows:

- 98.0% or more: Excellent
- 96.0% - 97.9%: Good
- 93.0% - 95.9%: Not yet good

- 90.1 % - 92.9%: Urgent attention required
- 90.0% or below: Persistent absence
- 50.0% or below: Severe absence

The Overall School Attendance Target for the whole year is **96.0% and above**.

2. ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents/carers and the child. There are two attendance sessions everyday AM and PM, therefore missing school for a whole day counts as two absences.

Key Roles in Relation to Attendance and Punctuality at the School

Role	Named Person	Key Responsibilities
Attendance Lead & Pastoral Care Manager	Gemma Horgan	• Lead, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance • Ensure the Attendance & Punctuality Policy is consistently applied throughout the school • Lead the allocation of children at – or at risk of – PA to SLT and Pastoral Mentor for individualised intervention at the start of each term • Analyse attendance data and act upon findings • Ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties • Organise Initial and Second Attendance Meetings as required, following processes outlined in this policy • Ensure that daily school attendance figures are shared with the Department of Education • Send beginning and end of term Parenthub messages about the importance of attendance
Pastoral Mentor	TBD	• Support the Pastoral Care Manager in ensuring the Attendance & Punctuality Policy is consistently applied throughout the school • Undertake First Day Absence processes • Undertake Third Day Absence processes • Undertake procedures to follow-up on poor punctuality, following processes outlined in this policy • Work preventatively in relation to attendance with children at risk of persistent absenteeism and their families
Senior Admin Officer	Anna Kupczyk	• Undertake Tenth Day Absence processes • Send out Warning Letters to families • Refer persistent absentee families to the Education Welfare Service • Refer families for fixed penalty notices
Admin Officer	Rahel Mogesse	• Manage register completion by class teachers • Monitor and record absence messages, and alert the Pastoral Mentor about any children absent without reason by 9:45am each day • Register late children, asking for reasons for lateness • Undertake First Day Absence processes in the absence of the Pastoral Mentor • Complete weekly attendance class winner assembly certificates, updating attendance display accordingly
Co-Head Teachers	Charlotte Clinton Paul Murphy	• Ensure the implementation of the Attendance & Punctuality Policy • Allocate families vulnerable to persistent absenteeism (based on historical attendance) to SLT members • Meet with parents/carers in relation to attendance issue where other processes outlined in the policy have been exhausted • Order weekly games bundles with weekly class attendance winners, when attendance is above 97% • Maintain prominent display class weekly class attendance winners, and allocate end-of-term prizes of a non-uniform week • Remind staff in Friday briefings about the importance of post-absence check-ins with children and parents/carers • Support House Captains in attendance improvement work action planning

Education Welfare Officer (Local Authority)	-	As per the Local Authority Education Welfare Service description
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Responsibilities of Parents/Carers:

We expect that all parents/carers who have day to day responsibility for the children, will help prevent your child missing school by:

- Bringing their children to school every day and on time, unless there are valid reasons for absence or lateness.
- Contacting the school on every day of absence.
- Supporting the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Making sure they understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Discussing any problems they may have at school, by informing their class teacher.
- Not allowing their children to have time away from school for minor ailments.
- Arranging appointments, holidays and outings after school hours, at weekends or during school holidays, helping to prevent disruption to your child's education and to the school.
- Address issues related to lack of sleep appropriately. If your child has been ill in the night and has had broken sleep and absolutely cannot attend in the morning, please consider sending them into school in the afternoon. Your child may feel better and they will have the chance to catch up on the learning.

Responsibilities of Pupils:

- Do their best to attend school every day unless they are too unwell or have an authorised absence.
- Take responsibility for being ready for school and arriving on time each day.
- Sign in at the Main Office if they arrive late to school.

Responsibilities of Classroom Staff:

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately.
- Promote & praise good attendance at all appropriate opportunities.
- Speak to both children and parents/carers at the point of return to school to acknowledge the absence, check in with them and welcome them back to school; it is important for children and parents/carers to see that absence does not go unnoticed.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence; absences of 3 days or more without explanation must be reported to the Pastoral Care Manager via CPOMS.
- Liaise generally with the Pastoral Care Manager on matters relating to attendance and punctuality in their classes (e.g. trends, patterns, etc.)

3. PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES - ATTENDANCE

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an **exceptional reason** for the absence. Schools must legally take an attendance register twice a day.

Registers open and close at the following times:

Morning Register:

Year Group	Register Open & Close Times
6	8:30am – 9:25am*
N	8:45am – 09:15am

1	8:50am – 9:20am
2	8:50am – 9:20am
3	8:55am – 9:25am
4	8:55am – 9:25am
5	8:55am – 9:25am
R	9:00am – 9:30am

*Y6 children come into school early for additional SATs preparation work, but are not obliged to be registered until the same time as other key stage 2 classes, hence the longer registration period.

Afternoon Register:

Year Group	Register Open & Close Times
N	12:45pm – 13:15pm
Y1	1:00pm – 1:30pm
Y2	1:00pm – 1:30pm
R	1:15pm – 1:45pm
Y4	1:30pm – 2:00pm
Y6	1:30pm – 2:00pm
Y3	1:45pm – 2:15pm
Y5	1:45pm – 2:15pm

Any absences will be recorded with a specific code depending on the type of absence. Absences fall into two main categories:

- **Authorised Absence:** When the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences **cannot** be authorised.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** When the school has not received a reason for absence, or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent/carers request.

Absence from school can only be authorised for the following reasons:

- Sickness which prevents attendance (e.g. chicken pox, vomiting and diarrhoea, but not colds, coughs, sore throats, etc.).
- Unavoidable medical or dental appointments with evidence provided (appointment letters, cards, texts etc).
- Religious observance (1 day) with notice given via the absence request form available on the school website or by emailing admin@lancs-pri.haringey.sch.uk to request a link to the form.
- Bereavement of a member of the close family, where duration of absence will be authorised according to individual circumstances.

Absences that the school will not authorise include:

- Minor ailments (e.g. colds, coughs, sore throats, etc.)
- Tiredness
- Sickness of a parent, or other family member
- Inadequate clothing for school
- Child being used as a carer
- Problems with transport
- Non-urgent medical treatment
- School refusal or truancy
- Days off for birthdays, shopping trips
- Family holiday

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent/carer states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence that they have been on holiday.

Processes and Procedures to Encourage and Support Good Attendance

The school will put in places the following, to support children and families with attendance:

- Weekly whole class attendance certificates, announced in Friday assemblies. Winning classes with attendance at 97%+ will choose a 'games bundle' for Golden Time.
- Ensure that games bundles for class attendance winners are given out in assemblies, not just handed to classes.
- Have a prominent display which records weekly winning classes for best attendance in each key stage, with an end-of-term 'non-uniform' reward for the class in each key stage which has won the attendance certificate the most times.
- Remind staff weekly in Friday briefings that when a child returns to school after an absence, class teachers must welcome them back and ask why they were away, and speak to parents/carers if they do drop-off/pick-up.
- Parenthub parents/carers at the beginning of each term to remind them about the importance of good attendance.
- Parenthub parents/carers at the end of each term to remind them about the importance of returning to school promptly at the start of each term.
- Carry out targeted interventions (individual child incentives, parent meetings, etc.) for children/families at risk of - or at - PA level; in autumn term use data from the previous year. Allocate the children/families to members of the SLT and the Pastoral Mentor at the start of each term, agreeing individual strategies for each case.
- Pastoral mentor will also work preventatively in relation to attendance with children at risk of persistent absenteeism and their families, undertaking targeted bespoke interventions with children and/or parents/carers. This may include referrals to the school nurse where this would be helpful.
- The school House Captains will also plan action to encourage good attendance, if this is a school improvement priority.

Processes and Procedures to Follow-Up on Poor Attendance

First Day Absence:

- In the case of absence parents/carers must contact the school on the first day of absence, and all subsequent days of absence.
- Parents/carers must call or email as early as possible and by 9am at the latest on 020 8808 8088 and select option 2 from the menu to report an absence, or email admin@lancs-pri.haringey.sch.uk, again by 9am at the latest.
- If the school does not receive a reason for absence, parents/carers will receive a phone call from the school to request further information about their child's absence.
- If we are unable to establish contact with the parent/carer, we will contact the emergency numbers on file at the school.
- If the pupil has a social worker, they will also be informed if there are unexplained absences from school as in normal safeguarding practice.
- Parents/carers will be asked to provide evidence to support illness-related absences. The school recognises that medical evidence will not always be available, particularly where medical advice has not been sought, but parents/carers should provide any available evidence when requested (e.g. appointment messages, prescriptions in the child's name).

Third Day Absence:

- If a child has not been seen at school and contact has not been established with parent/carers for three days, the Pastoral Mentor will conduct a doorstep visit to establish contact and reason for absence, and to physically see and speak to the child.
- If concerns arise either because there is no-one at home or the situation at the home is worrying, then these concerns may be escalated through the appropriate social care channels.

Tenth Day Absence:

- We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupils who are absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days.
- If the child has not been seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer, Haringey Education Welfare Service will be notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'.
- Education Welfare staff will visit the last known address and may alert other key services to locate the child if required.

Attendance Over Time Processes:

- If a pupil's attendance falls below **97.0%**, parents will be informed. This will be a Warning Letter to raise your awareness and will ask that you inform the school of any concerns you may have at this early stage.
- If a pupil's attendance falls below **95.0%** parents will be invited in for an Initial Attendance Meeting in school to discuss the reasons for poor attendance.
- If a pupil's attendance falls below **93.0%** parents will be asked to attend a Second Attendance Meeting with the Pastoral Care Manager and the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.
- Attendance that falls below **90.0%** is classed as persistent absenteeism and will be formally referred to Haringey's Education Welfare Officer, which could result in legal action.
- Attendance that falls below **50.0%** will continue to be addressed through ongoing work with the Education Welfare Service, with potential involvement of other services such as children's social care, e.g. if there are concerns about neglect.

Fixed Penalty Notices for Non-Attendance

The school will ask the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice under the following circumstances:

- If a pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This 10-week period can cross over terms or over academic years
- The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence codes e.g. 4 sessions of unauthorised absence with 6 code U lates.
- However, the school can ask the LA to fine before the threshold is met if particular circumstances warrant it, e.g. holidays during term time that fall just under the 10 sessions

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total) as follows:

- First Leave of Absence Offence: the amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- Second Leave of Absence Offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): the amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- Third Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Haringey Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

If the fine remains unpaid the Haringey Education Welfare Service will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves and are paid directly to the local authority. Parents/carers may also be prosecuted in court by the Local Authority, in accordance with section 444 of the Education Act 1996, for failing to secure their child's regular attendance to school. The current maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of up to £2500 per parent, per child, and/or a custodial sentence of up to 3 months.

4. PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES - PUNCTUALITY

It is important to be on time at the start of each day. The start of school is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late, they can miss work, time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be upsetting for them leading to possible further absence.

- If your child arrives after register has been taken by the class teacher (usually within 5 minutes of the start-of-day time) they will receive a "Late before registration closes" mark.
- Students who arrive after the register closes (see table above) will be marked with an unauthorised absence code 'U' in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) guidance. This mark shows them to be on site but is legally recorded as an absence for the whole session. This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the student to be late.
- Any student arriving after gates are closed will need to report to the school office to receive a late slip and have their name recorded for registration.

If pupils need to be collected from the premises legitimately during the school day (e.g. for a medical appointment) the school office will record that the child has left the school site and will mark them present when they return.

Processes and Procedures to Follow-Up on Poor Punctuality

- If a pupil is late before registration closes 10 times in a term parents will be sent a letter and will be asked to inform the school of any concerns they may have at this stage and where necessary support offered.
- If a pupil is late 20 times in a term parents will be invited in for a meeting in school to discuss the reasons for poor punctuality and where necessary support offered.

Where lateness results in an unauthorised absence being recorded (because a pupil has arrived after 9.30am) the attendance procedures will be followed including the issuing of fixed penalty notices.