



# LYDGATE INFANT SCHOOL

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy (October 2024)

We believe that good attendance and punctuality are vital if children are to attain their full potential as learners. As children start school their patterns and routines quickly become habits. An early intervention programme that establishes good attendance and punctuality habits will benefit the child throughout his/her school life and prevent poor routines developing.

The young child, however, is dependent upon the adults in his/her life to get them to school regularly and on time. Therefore our focus is to establish good habits and work with parents to improve attendance. The school operates within the Local Authority's framework with regard to attendance.

We are therefore committed to a whole school approach towards attendance and punctuality in a partnership relationship with parents/carers.

### **Aims of the Policy**

- Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by attending school regularly.
- Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by arriving at school punctually
- Ensuring parents and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring all teachers, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures.
- The commitment to allocate resources to support the policy.
- Addressing attendance and inclusion issues in the curriculum.
- Recognising and rewarding pupils attendance through appropriate reward structures within the school

### **Targets**

**Our attendance target for 2024 - 2025 is 96%**

### **The law**

The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- The LA must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session.

- The school must report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than ten days without explanation.
- The LA has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

## **Partnership**

The school expects pupils to:

- Attend regularly
- Be punctual
- Be prepared to work

## **The school expects parents/carers to:**

- Ensure pupils attend regularly and arrive on time
- Inform school on the first day for the reason for any absence
- Ensure pupils are properly prepared for the school day with correct equipment eg PE kit, library books etc.
- Inform school of problems preventing attendance
- Arrange medical and dental appointments out of school hours wherever possible, and to obtain an Authorised Pass from school if the appointment is unavoidable
- Arrange holidays out of school time wherever possible
- Speak with relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school

## **What pupils/parents can expect of school:**

- A broad balanced and enriched curriculum that is dependant on regular attendance at school
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school with regular encouragement and rewards
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
- The issuing of an Absence Pass for medical appointments etc. that cannot be attended at any other time.
- First day contact with parents where absence is unexplained if there have been previous concerns about attendance
- Prompt action and contact with home when problems arise
- Regular liaison with the Attendance Officer to support parents and pupils where needed
- When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Attendance and Inclusion Service

## Registration Procedures

Registers are a legal requirement, and are completed electronically within class. Great care must be taken to ensure registers are marked **promptly** and **accurately**.

Registers are closed (saved) at 8:55am and 1:15pm.

## Marking register sheets

1. Every child should have a mark in the register each session. There should be **NO** blank spaces.
2. If the reason for the child's absence is known the appropriate letter and symbol are used - see below:

/ Present a.m.

\ Present p.m.

L Late (after registration closes at 8.55am)

@ Late (if continuously late after 9.45am)

B Educated offsite (school visits, home tutor etc.)

M Medical/dental

I Illness

C Other authorised circumstances (only for exceptional circumstances  
eg family funeral)

H Annual Family Holiday (agreed)

G Unauthorised Holiday

D Extended Leave

R Religious observance

N No reason yet provided for absence (change to O (unauthorised  
absence) if no reason given after two weeks)

O Unauthorised circumstances

E Excluded

T Traveller Absence

X Non-compulsory school age absence

Y Enforced closure (eg no heating)

# School Holiday & Inset Days

\* Not on roll (a child leaving part-way through year)

If there is uncertainty of the reason or whether the absence has been authorised the Office Staff or the Headteacher should be seen.

3. If the reason is not known an N is put in the relevant space. It will then be followed up by the Office Staff.
4. Any notes from parents/carers are put in the register on the day they are received. They may be made available to officers from the Attendance and Inclusion Service.
5. If a child arrives in the classroom **after registration** has closed, the child should be sent to the Main School Office in order to be marked present by

Office Staff. The child's dinner requirements will also be recorded at this point by Office Staff.

6. The punctuality of all children is closely monitored, with any punctuality issues causing concern discussed and dealt with appropriately.
7. An explanation for absence is required on the first day. This can be verbal or written. This explanation will be entered onto the SIMS system.
8. Where there are doubts about an explanation the Office Staff will print off the child's attendance record, discuss it with the class teacher and/or the Headteacher, who will then decide upon the appropriate action.
  - Talk to the parents/carers
  - Send a letter to the home
  - Refer to EWO
9. First Day Calling - if no explanation for absence is received, Office Staff will utilise contact details kept for the child's family in order to seek an explanation for the child's absence. .
10. Where there are concerns about a child's health the Head Teacher will ask parents/carers for medical information or ask the School Nurse to contact the family.

### **Criteria for referral to the MAST**

- No response from parents/carers
- Response by parents/carers but making no difference
- Patterns of absence emerging
- Poor attendance generally (e.g. less than 90%)
- Poor punctuality developing.

The Head Teacher completes a referral form and faxes it through to MAST (Multi-Agency Support Team).

### **Holidays in term-time**

Term-time leave will only be approved by the school in exceptional circumstances. Please refer to the school's Exceptional Term-Time Leave Policy for more information in this regard.

### **Collecting and analysing data**

1. Weekly check for missing marks.
2. Fortnightly by Clerical Officer, and Headteacher.

The purpose of the above is to

- Identify attendance issues

- Keep parents informed issuing attendance reports at February half-term
- Provide attendance data for parents/carers on their child's annual report.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Class Teacher	Mark register, put in codes. Send notes to office, discuss problems with Head Teacher, return register to office after each registration period.
Clerical Officer	Amend register if child arrives late, put in codes when given an explanation. Take registers out during fire drill/alarm.
Clerical Officer	Contact home on first day of absence if unexplained and input attendance data and monitor attendance. Follow up unexplained absences, problems with attendance and punctuality. Liaise with other school staff and Attendance & Inclusion Service. Make referrals to EWO. Provide statistical data. Record any intervention or action taken.
Headteacher	To oversee the implementation of the Attendance Policy. To monitor and evaluate data and provide information for Governors.
MAST/Education Welfare Officer	To respond rapidly from referrals from school and provide verbal feedback and written report at the end of the half-term of action taken.

### **Strategies**

Our aims to improve school attendance at Lydgate Infant School have led to the following strategies:

- First day contact in cases in which no absence explanation has been received
- Keeping parents/carers, pupils and staff informed of attendance issues regularly
- Annual certificates for children whose attendance matches or is better than the attendance target for the school as a whole
- Termly attendance reports to all parents/carers whose children have attendance figures of less than 90%

- Information sent to parents regarding the school's policy on family holidays, religious holidays, other circumstances, etc.

### **Children Missing from Education**

The Headteacher is the nominated member of school staff to liaise with the Children and Young People's Directorate Children Missing from Education Team. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures (see policy Children Missing from Education)

### **Children in Public Care**

The Headteacher is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children Team. Looked After Children will be set up as an Attendance Group on SIMS and their individual attendance will be checked each half term.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Annual monitoring of policy and practice by Headteacher, Admin Clerk and Senior Inclusion Officer
- Analysis of data and targets looking at the effectiveness of the policy with recommendations for amendments of the policy, and where appropriate given to staff and Governors.