



Peninsula East
Primary Academy



LEIGH
Academies Trust

Attendance Policy

Peninsula East Primary Academy

Policy agreed by L Rimmer and Medway Attendance

DATED: September 2023

INTRODUCTION

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils and to enable them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. The School's ethos encourages children to feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late. The School will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the Policy.

At Peninsula East Primary Academy we take seriously our responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all our pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

AIMS

- To maximise attendance of all children
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Attendance Advisory Practitioner and multi-agency teams.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To set out and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

Principal

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns
- To monitor individual pupils, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the Policy and practice
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of attendance for each child in their class
- Send any notes from parents to the office daily

Attendance Officer (Jane Dyke) and Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and coordinate the use of the Bromcom Attendance Manager System
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary
- To meet with the Principal at least once per term to discuss attendance and look at data analysis
- To establish patterns of persistent absence and identify those children that could become persistent absentees and put strategies in place to improve attendance
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week

- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Principal whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised

Pupils

- Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available

Parents

- Parents have a duty under the law to ensure their children attend school everyday.

ADMINISTRATION

- The school uses Bromcom to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relation to attendance. Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions
- Registers are returned to the School Office after the closure of the registration period. Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

ABSENCE

LATENESS

- Registration in the morning is at 8.45am and afternoon registration is at 1.15pm.
- Pupils arriving after 8.45am must report to the School Office so that their attendance and meal choice can be recorded
- Pupils arriving after the register has been closed at 9.00am will be considered as late. Children arriving after 9.00am will formally be recorded on the school systems as late
- Pupils arriving after 9.15am will be considered as an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment. It is advised that medical evidence is given to the School to keep on record. If the School is not in receipt of medical evidence it is not obliged to authorise the absence.

- Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality
- Pupils who are consistently late disrupt not only their own education but also that of others
- Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern our Principal or Office Team will contact the family and liaise with the Attendance Advisory Practitioner at Medway (AAP) to organise a meeting and whether any further action will be taken.

System for Punctuality

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| On the fourth instance of lateness (4 times in the late book as code L, Late before the register close) | 'Lateness Concerns' letter is sent to parents reminding them of the importance of punctuality, school timings. |
| Following 3 more instances in the late book as a Code L, Late before the register closes. | 'Attendance Meeting' letter is sent out stating that the parent must come into school for a meeting with the Principal and Attendance Officer to address concerns. |
| Following 3 or more instances in the late book as a Code U (Late After The register closed) | 'Attendance Meeting' letter is sent out stating that the parent must come into school for a meeting with the Principal and Attendance Officer to address concerns. |
| If punctuality does not improve | Prosecution might be considered for further periods of unauthorised absence. Action may be taken by the school and local authority against parents/carers who fail to ensure that their child is properly educated. The action may result in a formal warning, a Penalty notice, or court action. |

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence.

- Where Office Staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Vice Principal or Principal should be informed.
- If a child is kept off from school due to illness for 4 or more days and medical advice has not been sought (proof of which will need to be provided) then we would not be able to authorise these days. For some illnesses, such as chickenpox, the school will seek advice from the Department of Health.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments (Appointment Card, letter inviting to appointment etc)
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours

When medical evidence is required

The 1996 Education Act clearly states; 'If any child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly, the parents/carer of the child shall be guilty of an offence'. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 also introduced the use of penalty notices as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance at school may result in prosecution in the courts or a penalty notice being issued.

If your child's attendance becomes a concern, you will be invited to an Attendance meeting with the Principal and Attendance officer and if your child's attendance continues to be a concern, we will then request medical evidence. If your child is put onto medical evidence, please be aware that this will continue through their subsequent years at the school.

In the event of 10 unauthorised sessions recorded with no medical evidence for any absences taken, a referral may be made to the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA). If your child incurs 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a six-school week period, a penalty notice may be issued resulting in a £60 fine, increasing to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice, within 28 days, will result in a court prosecution for your child's irregular school attendance. Please see the guidance from the DfE - [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#).

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

Revised regulations on education from September 2013 state that no holidays will be authorised in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In light of this the Governors have taken the decision that under no circumstances will holidays during term time be authorised. A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity or learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons on their return. If the holiday is for 5 consecutive days or more there may be a referral to the **Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies AASSA** at Medway who will issue a Penalty Notice.

No holidays will be considered for authorisation unless parents/carers have contacted the Principal by letter or email to request holiday and given reasons for it. The Principal will consider all requests individually and will **ONLY** authorise in exceptional circumstances but will otherwise not authorise holidays taken during term time as set out above.

Revised regulations on education – related penalty notices (from September 2013.)

The Amendments to the 2006 Regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 per parent per child residing in the household within 21 days or £120 per parent per child residing in the household within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice within 28 days will result in prosecution.

Please note that all requests for absence must be made by the parent/carer who has day-to-day care of the child, even if they are not attending the holiday themselves.

The procedures and consequences outlined above applied equally to persistent lateness after registration has closed.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

OTHER ABSENCE

In some instances, there may be a need to apply for leave for special circumstances and these will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or un-authorise the absence.

CHILDREN NOT COLLECTED AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

There are rare occasions when perhaps due to an emergency, parents are not able to collect their children promptly from school, or make arrangements for their collection at the end of the school day. If the child is not collected, the school will make enquiries to find the parents using the emergency contact numbers provided by the parents. If after one hour it has not been possible to contact parents/carers then the local Police will be informed of the situation. The Principal will also contact the Referral Team at Social Services to inform them of a possible problem.

REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS

All absences both authorised and unauthorised and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the year within their child's report. Parents will also be able to access their daily attendance through the use of the app My Child at School.

ATTENDANCE PROMOTION

We aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum
- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and promoting the school's expectation is of 96% or above attendance.
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absence are recorded promptly and consistently

REMOVING A PUPIL FROM ROLL

As per The Education Regulations Act 2006 Section 8, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove the student from academy roll due to continued serious absence.

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy within 10 school days, immediately following an authorised leave of absence, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if

unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. ([Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#))

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy for 20 school days or more and absence is unauthorised, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. ([Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#))

EDUCATION FOR HEALTH NEEDS INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH

- **[DFE: Education for children with health needs who cannot attend ...](#)**

This guidance relates to local authorities statutory duties under section 19 of the Education Act 1996. The section 19(1) duty states that [local authorities](#) are responsible for arranging suitable and (normally) full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

This means that where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, [the local authority](#) is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

Where possible, the child's health needs should be managed by the home school so that they can continue to be educated there with support, and without the need for the intervention of the local authority. However, as soon as it is clear that the home school can no longer support the child's health needs and provide suitable education, the school should speak to the [local authority](#) about putting alternative provision in place.

There is no absolute legal deadline by which [local authorities](#) must start to arrange education for children with additional health needs. However, as soon as it is clear that a child will be away from school for 15 days or more because of their health needs, the [local authority](#) should arrange suitable alternative provision. The 15 days may be consecutive or over the course of a school year.

Where full-time education would not be in a child's best interests for reasons relating to their physical or mental health, [local authorities](#) must arrange part-time education on whatever basis they consider to be in the child's best interests.

Statutory guidance sets out that [local authorities](#) should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 school days or

more during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative. While the section 19 duty sits with the local authority, schools should work closely with them and any relevant medical professionals to ensure that children with health needs are fully supported at school, including putting in place individual healthcare (IHC) plans if appropriate. This may involve, for example, programmes of study that rely on a flexible approach which include agreed periods of remote education.

Local authorities should be aware that under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, a school can only remove the name of a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from its register in certain circumstances. These include where:

- the pupil has been certified by the appropriate member of school staff as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.

ATTENDANCE CODES

The following codes will be used to indicate the reason for absence:

- L late- between 9am and 9.15am or after 9.15am if authorised
- U Late- Late after 9.15am- unauthorised absence for whole of morning session
- M Medical- hospital admission, dental, optician, hospital or doctor's appointment
- C Other authorised absence- bereavement, family reasons, child performance
- G Unauthorised holiday absence
- I - Illness
- O - Unauthorised absence
- E - Exclusion
- V - Authorised visits to other schools
- P - Authorised visits for sporting events

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Attendance data will be analysed to establish patterns of irregular attendance.

This will include children with:

- Incomplete weeks
- Monday and Friday absences
- Lateness

- Periods of extended absence
- Periods of unauthorised absence
- Children with attendance below 90%
- This data will be discussed with the Attendance Practitioner as part of the regular meetings held at school.

The Head of School and Attendance Practitioner will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually.

Systems and Structures Around Attendance

| <u>When attendance is at the national benchmark or better</u> | |
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| 100% | Termly Attendance Certificate <u>End of year prize incentive for winning class overall</u> |
| 99% - 96% | Weekly reward for class and Attendance Ted for EYFS/KS1 and KS2 Golden ticket raffle if attended 5 days per week. Raffle with prizes drawn at the end of each term. |
| On first day of absence | First day calling will take place by the Primary Office or parents can phone the office to inform them. |
| Stage 1a: If attendance dips below 96% | |
| 95% - 93% | 1. Letter sent home highlighting concerning attendance and notification of next step. |
| Stage 1b: If attendance remains between 93% - 95% | |
| 95% - 93% | 1. If attendance has dropped but remains within 93%-95% - trigger letter is sent again 2. If attendance plateaus or increases but remains within 93% - 95% - no letter is sent |
| Stage 2: If attendance dips to between 91% - 93% | |
| 93% - 91% | 1. Formal letter sent home informing parents of severity of poor attendance and next steps in the process. 2. <u>Attendance meeting with the Principal</u> and the Attendance officer. 3. <u>Attendance Plan in place to improve.</u> 4. <u>Medical Evidence</u> is required to authorise absence due to illness. |
| Stage 3: If attendance continues to fall and is below 90% | |
| 90% and below | 1. Referral is made by school to Medway Council Attendance and Advisory Service for Schools and Academies (AASSA) 2. <u>Any further meetings will be held with Principal and AAP.</u> |
| <p><u>Fixed Penalty Notice</u> (https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200164/school_information/358/school_attendance/5)</p> | |

You can track your child's attendance on the MCAS app.

