



ATTENDANCE POLICY 2022-2023

Research supports common sense and shows there is a strong link between good attendance and good attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school:

- make better progress both socially and academically.
- Better adapt to routines, school work and friendship groups.

As a consequence those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and will more likely have a more successful school experience and improved future educational and work opportunities.

Landscape Primary School will work in partnership with parents and agencies to actively promote, encourage and support every child (wherever possible) in attending regularly and in line with School rules. Our School expects our pupils to attend every day that the school is open to them.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies we are able to ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality (appropriate to the child's age and development).
- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils in a timely manner.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Awarding certificates to classes and pupils whose attendance / punctuality is much improved or high.
- Robust Procedures for managing attendance concerns through communicating concerns and working with parents/carers.
- Holding regular attendance meetings between the Head and the senior administrator to monitor and analyse pupil attendance.
- Parents of pupils whose attendance falls below an acceptable level may be invited in to school by the Head teacher to discuss strategies to improve their child's attendance.
- Liaising with the school's Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those pupils whose attendance / punctuality is a source of concern. The Government and Local Authority are particularly keen to improve the attendance of Persistent Absentees (those with less than 90%).
- Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% will be automatically referred to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and the Local Authority.
- Following Department for Education (DfE) and Local Authority Guidance and advice in relation to promoting and improving pupil attendance.

Parents and School Attendance

Parents/Carers should:

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the **Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996** and **Section 36 of the Children Act 1989**. In short, the pupil should attend school every day that the school is open to them (unless the absence is unavoidable).
- Understand their safeguarding responsibility to keep the School up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details. This is required by the Children Missing Education requirements and is in line with the **Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance (2018)**.
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend (or the absence is unavoidable).
- Establish effective communication with the School and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school, so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Contact School (before 09:30) on every day of absence to inform the school of the reason for absence and when the child is expected to return, keeping the school informed if the absence is likely to continue. This allows the school and partner agencies to consider any amendments or alternatives to the curriculum that can be made to support learning.
- Provide the School with any medical appointment cards and where possible, make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, parents should ensure that children attend school prior to and/or following their appointment.
- Attend any meetings called by the School and partner agencies to discuss attendance.

Registration periods for Lanscore Primary School

School gate/classroom opens at 8:45am. Your child must arrive at school between 8:45am-8:55am and will remain the responsibility of the parent until they enter the school gate.

Morning Registers will be taken at 9:00am. Morning Registers close at 9:30am.

Afternoon Registers will be taken at 1:20pm. Afternoon Registers close at 1:30pm.

Any pupils arriving after these times should report to reception so that they can be signed in. By law, School Governors need to set a time as to when the school will 'close' their registers. Any pupils arriving after this time will be registered with a 'U' code. This is an unauthorised absence and school will ensure the number of minutes late are recorded (to measure the impact of lost education due to the late arrival). These unauthorised absences could lead to the consideration of Parental Responsibility Measures (potential legal proceedings) by the Local Authority.

Punctuality is a critical factor in the smooth running of a school, not only because arriving late for class has a disruptive effect for both staff and students, but also installing an ethos of good timekeeping is important for pupils later in life, especially when embarking on the employment ladder

Absences

Parents are expected to inform the school of any absence (and the reason) as soon as possible on the day. The School will then make a decision as to whether the absence can be authorised or not. Only the Head Teacher can authorise an absence. The Head Teacher will make this decision based on the evidence/information available to them. Parents are encouraged to provide as much

evidence/information as possible, such as appointment cards, prescriptions or medication to help the School authorise appropriately.

If parents do not let the school know why their child was absent, then the school has no choice but to unauthorise the absence.

All parents have a legal duty to make sure their child attends school regularly in accordance with the school rules. The School expectation is that pupils attend every day that the school is open to them (unless there is an evidenced and unavoidable reason for any absence).

We understand that some children have medical conditions that make regular attendance more difficult. In these cases it is important that the school and the parents co-operate fully so that attendance and learning can be supported as far as possible. Parents should seek to provide the School with suitable medical evidence that supports the level of absence as being unavoidable. This can also help attract greater support if appropriate and needed.

We also recognise, that we all get poorly every now and again. However, if over time these absences are deemed excessive, the school may decide to contact parents and advise that future absences will not automatically be authorised without medical information supporting that the absence was unavoidable.

Schools also have a safeguarding duty, under **Section 175 of the Education Act (2002)**, to investigate any unexplained absences

Request for leave of absence in term time

Our School has adopted the Local Authority Code of Conduct (September 2019) in respect of leave of absence in term time. All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form (S2). This can be obtained from the Office or the Website.

The request should only be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides. Requests must be made in advance.

For a request to be authorised, it must evidence that the request meets the criteria of Exceptional Circumstances. The Law does not grant parents/carers a right to take their children out of school during term time. The Law only allows Heads to authorise the request when they have evidence of the Exceptional Circumstances. The Government is very clear that a family holiday is NOT an Exceptional Circumstance.

If the request is refused and parents/carers proceed with the leave of absence, Lanscore Primary School will have no choice but to refer the absence to the Local Authority. The Local Authority could then (in line with the DCC Code of Conduct) issue a Penalty Notice to both parents/carers for each family child who is absent. Failing to pay a Penalty Notice can lead to a Court Summons.

Also, if parents/carers advise that a pupil is unavoidably absent (example, Sick) and then the school reasonably believes that the reason for the absence was misrepresented and the absence was for a Term Time Absence (example, Holiday), Schools should still refer to the Local Authority.

Medical Appointments

We encourage parents to make Doctors or Dentist appointments outside of school hours, however we do appreciate that sometimes this is not possible and you must inform the school as soon as

possible when you have an appointment booked. In these situations it is expected that the pupil will attend school before and/or after the appointment. Time away from school should be kept to the minimum. Appointment cards should be made available to the school so that they can authorise the absence.

Landscape procedure for following up absence/attendance concerns

1. Teachers, having the daily contact with the children and registers, make note of absences with a code showing the reason for absence. If a parent / carer has not provided a reason, the teacher will notify the School Office.
2. All unexplained absences are followed up by telephone contact with the parents/carers to establish reasons for absence. This is done before 11:00am on the morning of the absence.
3. If a child is late (after 9:00am but before 9:30am), this is marked appropriately in the register (L Code). Arriving after registers close will accrue an Unauthorised Late Code (U Code).
4. Every effort will be made to make contact with parents in the event of an unexplained absence. If an explanation for an absence cannot be established, this information will be recorded on CPOMS. A letter may be sent out, by post, to the parent/carers requesting that they come into school to discuss their child's absence. If there is a welfare concern, additional actions may be taken, including contacting 101 to carry out a welfare check.
5. After a reasonable time, if the school is unable to establish the reason for the absence, the absence will be unauthorised.

School has a duty to keep you informed if at any time we start to become concerned of absences. School has a statutory responsibility to share absence data with the Local Authority.

The Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The role of the EWS is to investigate pupil absence and support/challenge parents as appropriate. It is the EWS who refer cases to the Local Authority for consideration of legal proceedings. We may contact the Education Welfare Service to support you and the school in managing and promoting regular attendance of your child. All pupils who have hit the Persistent Absentee threshold are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Consideration is always given to any medical or educational needs of the child. This will be explored with you during the attendance processes. We must stress that our aim will always be to support you and your child in improving attendance. However we understand that sometimes this does not work and in line with Statutory Guidance, the school must then inform the EWS and share concerns over absence.

Last Resort – Local Authority Parental Responsibility Measures

When all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, the Local Authority may apply to the Courts to apply Parental Responsibility Measures.

These Parental Responsibility Measures can include;

- Issuing Penalty Notices to each parent/carers.
- Issuing a Magistrates Court Summons to each parent/carers.
- Applying to the Family Courts for an Education Supervision Order.

For further information see the Devon County Website details on Parental Responsibility Measures and School Attendance.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Attendance Policy has a direct link to the Safeguarding policy; the Behaviour policy; Anti-bullying strategies and the Health and Safety Policy. The School has also adopted the Local Authority Policies on Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education. The School also follow Local Authority guidance in relation to coding absence for families who travel as part of their culture.

All these policies have been endorsed by our Governing body, which support the School in all attempts to improve Pupil Attendance and Safeguarding.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Head teacher

The Head teacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Authorising any children needing to be sent home
- Making referrals to the EWO (Education Welfare Officer) service
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's EWO
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Referring to Early Help for support
- Referring to other Agencies (as appropriate)
- Referring cases of Unauthorised Term Time absence to the Local Authority for Legal Challenge
- Safeguarding Pupils
- Leading and managing the School Attendance Process

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on SIMS twice daily
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance
- Informing the Senior Leadership Team where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted in the register
- Discussing attendance issues at parents' evenings where necessary

Administration staff

Staff in the School Office are responsible for:

- Collating attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Ensuring the Absence/Late Book is completed
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.

- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Headteacher
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance