

Langley Primary School

PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

- **Name:** Peter Higgins
- **Email address or contact details:** peter.higgins@langleyprimary.com

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

- **Name:** School Office
- **Email address or contact details:** 0121 552 1744

The name and contact details of the school staff member pupils and parents should contact for more individual support with attendance (Attendance Officer/Pastoral Support Worker/Head of Year etc):

- **Name:** Ms S. Savage
- **Email address or contact details:** susan.savage@langleyprimary.com

The name of our linked Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance is:

- **Chair of the Governing Body** – details can be requested on 0121 552 1744

Ratified by the Governing Body: September 2026

Review Date: Annual review 01/09/2027

Introduction and Background

Langley Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "*Working together to improve school attendance*" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school;
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It has been developed in consultation with school governors, teachers, local Headteacher Associations, the Local Authority and parents and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued;
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality;
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is a rule of this school that pupils must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and it is the Headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise the absence.

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Langley Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day-to-day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Senior Attendance Champion: Peter Higgins (peter.higgins@langleyprimary.com)

Linked Governor: Chair of LGB Siobhan Francis (0121 552 1744)

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department for Education, in line with statutory legal expectations
- Ensure registers are taken at the same time for all registered pupils in both sessions;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters;
- Promote the benefits of high attendance;
- Accurately complete admission attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow up absence as required by law;
- Systematically monitor attendance data to identify cohorts needing targeted support, including young carers, pupils with SEND, and those with mental health needs;
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance;
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress;
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however is counted as an absence for the session;
- shopping trips;
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments;
- their own or family birthdays;
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends;
- day trips;
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

- **Persistent Absentee (PA):** A pupil missing 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason (authorised or unauthorised). All pupils with attendance levels of 90% or below are considered persistent absentees.
- **Severely Absent (SA):** A pupil missing 50% or more schooling. Pupils within this cohort face major barriers to regular attendance and receive intensive, targeted support prior to formal enforcement measures.

Absence Procedures

Day-to-day attendance contact: School Office (0121 552 1744)

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If a child is absent, parents must:

1. Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9:00 am.
2. Call every further day of absence before 9:00 am.
3. Ensure the child returns as soon as possible. Medical evidence will not be requested as a routine/blanket requirement. It may only be requested where a pupil has complex, long-term, or frequently recurring health needs, or where there is genuine doubt regarding authenticity, to help inform appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone on the first and subsequent days if contact has not been made.
- Email emergency contacts, send letters, or conduct home visits for safeguarding purposes if unable to make contact.

If absence continues, we will:

- Contact parents if attendance causes concern or falls below the target.
- Arrange a meeting with our Senior Attendance Champion, Peter Higgins.
- Create a personalised attendance support plan.
- Signpost to external agencies or support services.
- Refer to the Local Authority for formal legal sanctions if attendance fails to improve following targeted support.

Lateness

The start and close of the school day for all pupils at Langley Primary School:

- **Gates open (KS2):** 8:30 am
- **Registration starts:** 8:50 am (taken simultaneously for all registered pupils)
- **Registration closes:** 9:00 am
- **End of the school day:** 3:15 pm

Managing Lateness:

- Children arriving after 8:55 am must enter via the school office and be signed in by a parent/carer.
- Registers close at 9:20 am. Arrival after 9:20 am is marked as 'U' (unauthorised absence for the session).
- Persistent lateness may result in a meeting with Peter Higgins and/or Ms Savage, or referral to the Local Authority.

Understanding Barriers to Attendance & Equality Duties

Where pupils face barriers due to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), long-term medical conditions, or mental health needs, high attendance expectations remain, but reasonable adjustments will be actively made.

- **Support-First Approach:** In line with statutory guidelines, absence is recognized as a potential symptom of underlying issues. The school works collaboratively with families, Mental Health Support Teams, and external services before applying legal sanctions.
- **Remote Education:** Used strictly as a last resort for absent pupils, where reasonable adjustments have been explored, and solely as part of a formal, time-limited reintegration plan. Pupils receiving remote education remain coded as absent on the attendance register.
- **Sickness Returns:** The school submits a sickness return to the Local Authority for any pupil missing or expected to miss 15 or more cumulative/consecutive school days for medical reasons.

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National Framework for Penalty Notices

Under statutory guidance, a single consistent national threshold applies across England for considering penalty notices: **10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school-week period.**

- **First Penalty Notice:** £160 per parent, per child (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days).
- **Second Penalty Notice (within 3 years):** £160 per parent, per child (no reduction).
- **Third Offence:** Referral to the Local Authority for consideration of prosecution in the Magistrates Court (fines up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment).

Leave of Absence in Term Time:

Leave of absence during term time will **not** be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances determined by the headteacher. Each application is considered on its individual merits; blanket policies for granting or refusing leave are strictly prohibited. Applications must be made in writing in advance.

Contact Information for Support

- **Individual/Pastoral Support:** Ms S. Savage (susan.savage@langleyprimary.com)
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- **Strategic Lead / Senior Attendance Champion:** Peter Higgins
(peter.higgins@langleyprimary.com)
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- **Annexes & Codes of Conduct:** Available via the school office or [Sandwell Local Authority Support Services](#).
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