



# Lawn Primary and Nursery School

## **Attendance & Absence Policy**

### **Policy Owner**

Headteacher and Attendance Officer

### **Policy History**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| March 2019   | Updated to reflect best practise and rewording  |
| June 2021    | Updated Forms<br>Updated Layout<br>Absence request reporting amended to include Parentmail and new absence email address<br>Covid-19 Appendix 1   |
| January 2023 | Updated Introduction<br>Amendment to recognising good attendance (removal of rewards)<br>Removal of Parentmail and amendment to email contact<br>Added section on the importance of school attendance<br>Added reference to Early Help Processes<br>Advice for supporting reluctant children to attend school |
| January 2024 | Reviewed<br>Change of % attendance triggering a letter to parents P5<br>Update to one point relating to the importance of attendance P2   |
| October 2024 | Reviewed:<br>Policy re-drafted using The School Bus Template Model Policy   |

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## Statement of intent

Lawn Primary & nursery School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's Attendance Officer is Mrs Bailey and can be contacted via Absence [absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk) / 01793 522626. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the Attendance Officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

## 1. The Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2024'
- DfE (2024) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) 'Providing remote education'
- DfE (2024) 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection and Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

The governing board has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the Attendance Champion role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.
- Joint working with the Attendance Officer through fortnightly meetings

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents regarding attendance.
- Leading a compassionate approach when listening to parents and pupils regarding barriers to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Enforcing attendance through statutory interventions in cases of persistent poor attendance where other supports have not succeeded.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.
- Following any support provided by the school to improve attendance.

Parents are responsible for:

- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Notifying the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances, and in advance.
- Booking any medical appointments around school where possible.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Proactively engaging with any attendance support offered by the school and the LA.
- Following any family-based support implemented by the school to improve attendance.

### 3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

#### **Absence:**

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending the registered school for any reason

#### **Authorised absence:**

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

#### **Unauthorised absence:**

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays

- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

#### **Persistent absence (PA):**

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

#### **Missing education**

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school

### **4. Attendance Expectations**

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at 8:30am, and pupils will be in their classroom, ready to begin lessons at this time; therefore, pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8:35am.

Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- The Class Teacher will mark and save their register by 8:40am.
- Pupils arriving between 8:40am and 9:00am will sign in via the main office and receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- The morning register will be closed at 9:00am by the Attendance Officer. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- The afternoon register will be marked by and closed at:
  - 12:30 for Reception
  - 12:50 for Year 1 & 2
  - 13:10pm for Year 3, 4, 5 & 6.
- Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not on site at the time of registration, they will be required to sign in at the Main Office.

Parents will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

### **5. Absence Procedure**

Parents will be required to contact the school office via email; [absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk) or telephone 01793 522626 before 8:15am on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide a detailed explanation for the absence. Absences are required to be reported daily unless the Attendance Officer has stated otherwise.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent by either text, email or telephone call as soon as is practicable on the first day that they do not attend school.

The school will always follow up any unreported absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.

- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

If a reason has not been given by the parent within 5 days, then an unauthorised absent code will be assigned.

A pupil is classed as persistently absent (PA) if their attendance drops below 90%.

In the case of PA, attendance below 90%, arrangements may be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Officer and Headteacher or Attendance Champion and an Attendance Plan may be recommended. If a pupil has received 10 unauthorised session marks, within a 10-week rolling period, the LA may be contacted, and a penalty notice may be issued.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register, if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

## 6. Attendance Register

The school uses SIMS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational provision, or educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

### Code Reason

#### Attending the school

|    |  |
|----|--|
| /\ | Present at the school                      |
| /  | Morning session                            |
| \  | Afternoon session                          |
| L  | Late arrival before the register is closed |

#### Attending a place other than the school

|   |   |
|---|---|
| K | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority |
| V | Attending an educational visit or trip                        |
| P | Participating in a sporting activity                          |
| W | Attending work experience                                     |
| B | Attending any other approved educational activity             |
| D | Dual registered at another school                             |

| Code | Reason |
|------|--------|
|------|--------|

**Absent - leave of absence**

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>C1</b> | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.      |
| <b>M</b>  | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment   |
| <b>J1</b> | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution |
| <b>S</b>  | Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination   |
| <b>X</b>  | Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school   |
| <b>C2</b> | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable   |
| <b>C</b>  | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance   |

**Absent - other authorised reasons**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>T</b> | Parent travelling for occupational purposes                         |
| <b>R</b> | Religious observance  |
| <b>I</b> | Illness (not medical or dental appointment)                         |
| <b>E</b> | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made |

**Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause**

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| <b>Q</b>  | Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements    |
| <b>Y1</b> | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available |
| <b>Y2</b> | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel                 |
| <b>Y3</b> | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed        |
| <b>Y4</b> | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed |
| <b>Y5</b> | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention              |
| <b>Y6</b> | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law       |
| <b>Y7</b> | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause                 |

**Absent - unauthorised absence**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>G</b> | Holiday not granted by the school           |
| <b>N</b> | Reason for absence not yet established      |
| <b>O</b> | Absent in other or unknown circumstances    |
| <b>U</b> | Arrived in school after registration closed |

**Administrative codes**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>Z</b> | Prospective pupil not on admission register |
| <b>#</b> | Planned whole school closure                |

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years from the date the data was entered.

## **7. Authorising parental absence requests**

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence at least 7 days in advance. All requests for absence other than medical appointments will be handled by the Headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the Headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil



and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The Headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will be sympathetic to requests for absence by parents, and will not deny any request without good reason.

### **Leave of absence**

The school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to complete Request for Absence form **prior** to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Where the absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school. The school **will not** grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods
- When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

### **Illness and healthcare appointments**

Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment.

### **Performances and activities, including paid work**

The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the LA which authorises the school's absence(s).

Additional arrangements will be made by the school for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education – this may involve private teaching. These arrangements will be approved by the LA who will ensure that the arrangements are suitable for the pupil.

The pupil will receive education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by the LA issuing the licence. This requirement will be met by ensuring a pupil receives an education:

- For not less than six hours a week; and
- During each complete period of four weeks (or if there is a period of less than four weeks, then during that period), for periods of time not less than three hours a day; and
- On days where the pupil would be required to attend school if they were attending a school maintained by the LA; and

- For not more than five hours on any such day.

Where a licence has been granted by the LA and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates, and it has been approved by the LA, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The Headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance would fall below 96 percent. Where a licence has not been obtained, the Headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.

### **Religious observance**

Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance in advance. The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.

The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

### **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

## **8. SEND – and health-related absences**

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and Medical Needs Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Safeguarding and Child Protection and Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with the schools pastoral approach.

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the LA with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.

- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement. To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.
- Identifying pupils' unmet needs through Early Help.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Small group work or on-to-one lessons.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

## **9. Absent pupils**

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

- The member of staff who has noticed the absent pupil will inform the Headteacher immediately
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search, ensuring that all exits are controlled.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the Headteacher
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the pupil has not been found then the parents of the pupil will be notified
- The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided
- If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted.
- The adult will log the incident on CPOMS, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing
- If the absent pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed
- When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well
- Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located

The Headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy.

## **10. Attendance interventions**

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Attendance Officer, supported by the SLT, will:

- Follow the LA graduated response
- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Sending letters to parents.
- Engaging with LA attendance teams.
- Using penalty notices.
- Working with families to improve attendance.

The school will use attendance data, in line with the monitoring and analysing absence section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

## **11. Working with parents to improve attendance**

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure, when possible, that there are two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the Headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the Attendance Officer will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the Attendance Officer will work with the Headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the Attendance Officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

The school follows Swindon Borough Councils Attendance Graduated Response.

<https://hubforeducation.swindon.gov.uk/Pages/Download/0f85b530-28d8-4d5d-b828-8064cdbb7cd1/PageSectionDocuments>

## **12. Persistent absence (PA)**

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- CLA
- Young Carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who are GRT
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with parents to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

If a pupil is severely absent, below 50%, then an EWO referral form will be submitted if all other strategies have been exhausted, following the graduated response.

Where a pupil at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

## **13. Penalty notices and legal intervention**

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after one term, the Attendance Officer will consider holding a formal meeting with parents and the school's Headteacher and or Attendance Champion.

Where the above measures are not effective, the Headteacher may issue a notice to improve as a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is considered.

Where a pupil reaches the national threshold of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks, the school will consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate. Each case will be considered individually to determine whether a penalty notice, or another tool or legal intervention should be used to improve attendance.

A penalty notice will be issued in line with the LA's code of conduct and the DfE's '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' guidance.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absences will be charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

A penalty notice of £120 may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. This will be reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

Parents will only get up to two fines for the same child in a three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Where attendance still does not improve following a penalty notice, the school will work with the LA to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort.

Parents who are prosecuted and attend court because their child has not been attending school may be fined up to £2,500.

### **Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)**

Where interventions have not been successful, an ESO can be an alternative to provide formal legal intervention without criminal prosecution. ESOs are made through the Family or High Court and give the LA a formal role in supporting the pupil and parents to improve their attendance. LAs will issue parents with a notice of the intention to consider an ESO, set up a meeting to discuss with the parent and pupil, and decide whether the case will be taken forward.

Once an ESO is secured, a supervisor from the local authority will decide any actions or requirements. These may include:

- Requiring the parents to attend support meetings.
- Requiring the parents to attend a parenting programme.
- Requiring the parents to access support services.
- Requiring an assessment by an Educational Psychologist.
- Review meetings involving all parties to be held every 3 months.

Failing to comply with an ESO will result in a fine and decisions will be made about whether further action is required.

## **14. Monitoring and analysing absence**

The Attendance Officer will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, PA and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, CLA and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of PA.

The Attendance Officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a regular basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The Attendance Officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The Attendance Officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local-, regional- and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

## **15. Training of staff**

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils.

The Headteacher will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy. Staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The Headteacher will ensure dedicated and enhanced attendance training is provided to the Attendance Officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

## **16. Deletions of names from the admission register**

The school will ensure that it only deletes names from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance Regulations. A pupil's name will never be removed for any other reason and the school is aware that doing so could constitute off-rolling.

The school will make returns to the LA when pupils' names are deleted from the admission register. This will be with the exception of pupils whose name has been deleted from the register at or after the end of

the last term of the school year when they are in the most senior year group, unless the LA has requested this information.

When the school is notifying the LA that a pupil's name is being deleted from the admission register, the following information about the pupil will be provided:

- Full name
- Address
- The full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with
- At least one telephone number by which any parent the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency
- If applicable, the pupil's future address, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with and the date the pupil will start living there
- If applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school
- The reason under which the pupil's name has been deleted from the admission register

Names will never be retrospectively deleted from the admission or attendance register – these registers will remain an accurate record of who is a registered pupil and their attendance at any given time. Pupils' attendance will be recorded up until the date that their name is deleted from the admission register.

## **17. Monitoring and review**

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's attendance target is 96%, full details of the school's absence levels can be found on the school website.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher, any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.





Lawn Primary  
and Nursery School

## APPENDIX 1

Tel: 01793 522626

Email: [absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk)

### REQUEST FOR PARTIAL ABSENCE – Less than 1 Day

Please fully complete form and return to the Office

I would like to take :

| Name | Class | Name | Class |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      |       |
|      |       |      |       |

Out of school from :

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Returning to school on :

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Number of  
hours  
absent:

|   |    |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|----|---|
| M | Tu | W | TH | F |
|---|----|---|----|---|

(Circle/Tick)

\_\_\_\_\_ Time

|   |    |   |    |   |
|---|----|---|----|---|
| M | Tu | W | TH | F |
|---|----|---|----|---|

(Circle/Tick)

\_\_\_\_\_ Time

Please state in full the reason for this absence including any letters to support your request:

#### Notes: HOLIDAYS WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED

Children should not take time off during term time unless it is an emergency. Parents **do not have a right** to take their children away during term time. Permission must be sought in writing from the Head Teacher **in advance** of any journey being undertaken. Head Teachers can only authorise absences in **exceptional circumstances**.

Absences from school will not be authorised unless there are clearly communicated factors that the school regards as exceptional. Appointments should be booked outside of school hours where possible. A build up of unauthorised marks can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority, £160 per child per parent. Please see guidance from the DFE overleaf.

I have read and understood the information contained in this form and I am aware that I may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if my child's absence from school is considered excessive.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Carer) Print: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### OFFICE USE ONLY

I acknowledge the above request for absence on the date(s) specified. The absence will be recorded as follows:

Hours authorised  Hours unauthorised  No of previous unauthorised sessions

Notes :

Headteacher /  
Attendance Officer :

Date:

Current  
Attendance :

Absence History:

Response letter sent

Do unauthorised sessions exceed 10 with a 10 week period

Yes

No

FPN

Yes

No

## CHANGES TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - PENALTY NOTICES FROM 19 AUGUST 2024

The Department for Education (DfE) has introduced some new guidance for schools and local councils for managing school attendance. They have also introduced a new national framework for penalty notices (fines) in relation to school non-attendance and have amended the law. These changes come into effect from the 19 August 2024 and all schools and councils across the country will be expected to follow the new statutory guidance.

### WHAT IS A PENALTY NOTICE?

A penalty notice allows parents to discharge an offence in relation to school non-attendance, by paying a one-off penalty without the matter being referred to court where they could receive fines of hundreds of pounds and a criminal record.

### WHEN CAN A PENALTY NOTICE BE USED?

A school should consider next steps once 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence happens in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Unauthorised absence means any absence from school which has not been agreed by the school or when parents have **not** provided any explanation. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session and can be across school terms or academic years. This can be any form of unauthorised absence including arriving late after closure of the register and days of unauthorised absence which add up to 10 half days or 5 full days within a 10-week period.

Once the threshold has been met the school will consider whether support may be appropriate to help your child to attend school. We would like to encourage all parents to continue to work with schools if attendance is becoming a concern. However, when schools and councils believe that they have exhausted all offers of support, and a parent/carer is not engaging with the attempt to improve their child's attendance at school a penalty notice may be issued.

### CAN I HAVE A HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME?

Pupils should not be taken out of school during term time unless it is unavoidable. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. The guidance is clear that headteachers should not be considering a holiday as an exceptional circumstance.

If a request for leave for the purposes of a holiday is declined and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to notify Swindon Borough Council. We will issue a penalty notice with no requirement for any support to be offered as specified in the statutory guidance. In every case, the notification for the penalty notice comes in from the school to Swindon Borough Council for the process to be completed. Penalty notices can also be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave(holiday) in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold.

### WHO CAN RECEIVE A PENALTY NOTICE?

Penalty notices are issued to parents/carers of statutory school age children only. They can be issued to each parent or carer who is deemed liable for the child's absence from school. This may include parents who do not live with the child. Please note that in education law this responsibility can extend to step-parents or other adults who live in the same place as the child.

Penalty notices will be issued to **each** parent for **each** child of statutory school age. So, for example two parents of two children will receive four penalty notices.

### IS THERE A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF PENALTY NOTICES I MIGHT GET?

In all circumstances, the maximum number of penalty notices that can be issued will be **two** penalty notices **per parent per child in a rolling three-year period**.

The new regulations come into force on 19 August 2024 and will apply to unauthorised absence from the beginning of the autumn term 2024.

Any penalty notices that might be issued in the future which relate to unauthorised absence taken during the academic year 2023/2024 will **not** be counted as part of the two penalty notices within three years regulation.

### HOW MUCH WILL THE PENALTY NOTICE BE?

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>FIRST OFFENCE PENALTY NOTICE</b><br><b>£160 per parent per child</b><br><b>Reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days of the notice being issued</b>   | <b>SECOND OFFENCE PENALTY NOTICE (within 3 years)</b><br><b>£160 per parent per child payable within 28 days of the notice being issued</b> |
| <b>THIRD OFFENCE PENALTY NOTICE</b><br><b>The third or subsequent time an offence is committed for unauthorised absence, Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court.</b> |   |

Swindon Borough Council will be publishing its updated code of conduct for penalty notices and all the necessary updated information on the Swindon Borough Council website in time for the start of the new term in September 2024.

For more information please go to the gov.uk web page below:

Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))



Lawn Primary  
and Nursery School

## APPENDIX 2

Tel: 01793 522626

Email: [absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:absence@lawn-pri.swindon.sch.uk)

# REQUEST FOR ABSENCE

This form is for absences of one day or more  
Please fully complete form and return to the office

I would like to take :

| Name | Class | Name | Class |
|------|-------|------|-------|
|      |       |      |       |
|      |       |      |       |

Out of school from :

|   |    |   |    |   |  |
|---|----|---|----|---|--|
| M | Tu | W | TH | F |  |
|---|----|---|----|---|--|

(Circle/Tick) Date

Returning to school on :

|   |    |   |    |   |  |
|---|----|---|----|---|--|
| M | Tu | W | TH | F |  |
|---|----|---|----|---|--|

(Circle/Tick) Date

Number of  
school days  
absent:

Please state in full the reason for this absence:

**Notes: HOLIDAYS WILL NOT BE AUTHORISED**

Children should not take time off during term time unless it is an emergency. Parents **do not have a right**, to take their children away during term time. Permission must be sought in writing from the Head Teacher **in advance** of any journey being undertaken. Head Teachers can only authorise absences in **exceptional circumstances**.

Absences from school will not be authorised unless there are clearly communicated factors that the school regards as exceptional. Families of children who take absences from school not authorised as exceptional are liable to a fine of up to £160 per child per parent. Please see guidance from the DFE overleaf.

I have read and understood the information contained in this form and I am aware that I may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if my child's absence from school is considered excessive.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Carer) Print: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### OFFICE USE ONLY

I acknowledge the above request for absence on the date(s) specified. The absence will be recorded as follows:

|                 |  |                   |  |     |     |    |
|-----------------|--|-------------------|--|-----|-----|----|
| Days authorised |  | Days unauthorised |  | FPN |     |    |
|                 |  |                   |  |     | Yes | No |

Notes :

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|

|                                       |  |       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------|--|
| Headteacher /<br>Attendance Officer : |  | Date: |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------|--|

|                         |  |                  |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|--|
| Current<br>Attendance : |  | Absence History: |  |
|-------------------------|--|------------------|--|

|                      |  |                     |  |
|----------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| Response letter sent |  | FPN Submitted to LA |  |
|----------------------|--|---------------------|--|

## CHANGES TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE - PENALTY NOTICES FROM 19 AUGUST 2024

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