



Langmoor Primary School

Attendance Policy

Adopted: February 2022 – updated October 2022 in line with new DFE Guidance
'Working together to improve school attendance'

Review date: Last reviewed Sept 2023

1. Aim

The aim of Langmoor's attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

Langmoor takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

This document is supported by our policies on **safeguarding**, **bullying**, **behaviour** and **inclusive learning**.

2. Legal framework

The Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
- (b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age —

- (a) when he attains the age of five, if he attains that age on a prescribed day, and
- (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.

Prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year (the last Friday in June) —

- (a) if he attains the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- (b) if he attains that age on that day, or
- (c) (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following his attaining that age.



Langmoor is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this document accordingly.

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Academy Trust board in conjunction with our Local Governing Body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Academy Trust board will:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discussing and challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvements on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

Expectations of school

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school will:

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence
- Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.
- Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

Expectations of the Local Authority

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Local Authority will:

- Rigorously track local attendance data
- Have a School Attendance Support Team
- Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker

Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- ensure that their children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and with the necessary equipment
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (**see section 4**), and include an expected date for return



- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance
- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the headteacher (**see section 4.5**)
- inform the school in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren) along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.

Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- be aware of the school's attendance rules, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents and the school timetable
- speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance
- attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable
- bring a note of explanation from their parents or carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late (**see section 4.8**). Pupils are held responsible for this and it is made clear to all pupils what this procedure is by their class teachers. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation

4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents or carers.

4.1 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day of absence at least. If the child is expected to be absent for a long time, then a follow up email would be expected.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.



4.2 Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

4.3 Authorised absences

There may be some exceptional instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement.

4.4 Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The head teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

4.5 Family holidays and extended leave

Parents should make every effort to ensure that family holidays and extended leave are arranged outside of school term time. Parents may request a leave of absence during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays due to Covid restrictions being in place are not exceptional circumstances. Requests will not be considered if attendance is already below at least 95%. Requests for leave of this type must be made in writing to the headteacher at least one week in advance of the leave being taken. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, such as a family bereavement that requires the child to travel to another country, this will be taken into consideration.

Retrospective applications will not be considered, and this time taken will be processed as unauthorised absence. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. **A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.**

All requests for authorised absence will be responded to in writing and will outline the details of when the child is expected to return to school. Parents should contact the school immediately if there will be a cause for delay from the stated date of return.

If permission is not granted, but the child is still absent, the absence is classed as unauthorised and parents may be subject to further action by the school or prosecution by the local authority.

4.6 Religious observance

Langmoor recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times.

Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

4.7 Late arrival

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. Children should arrive as close to 8.45am as possible. The register closes at 9am and if no reason has been provided for a child's absence by 9.30am the office will ring the parents/guardians to check to see where the child is.

Pupils who arrive after the registration period has ended should go straight to the school office to sign in and give a reason for their lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action being taken against the pupil and/or criminal action being taken against the parents.

4.8 Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

If a pupil tests positive for coronavirus, their absence will be recorded as illness.



5. School action: following up absences

Class registers are sent to the school office at the end of the registration period. Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents or carers. The register closes at 9am and if no reason has been provided for a child's absence by 9.30am the office will ring the parents/guardians to check to see where the child is. If there is no answer a message is left and a follow up email sent. If no reason is received for the absence then this will go down as unauthorised. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the headteacher will contact the parent or carer to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help.

Parents/carers will be contacted if a pupil gives a reason for an unauthorised absence and there is doubt about the truth of the excuse.

Where pupils have been away for either short or long term, the school will support that child when they re-enter school to help them catch up on any work that they have missed.

Where a child has been continuously absent from school for a period of 20 school days or more, and where the absence was unauthorised and both the school and LA have been unable to establish the whereabouts of the child after jointly making reasonable enquiries, the school seek advice from the Local Authority before seeking to remove the child from the school roll. The school will notify the local authority when such action is taken.

The school may take disciplinary action against any pupils who are discovered to be persistently truanting and parents or carers will be contacted to discuss possible reasons and school support systems that could help. The school may take further action against the parents, including [the issuing of fixed penalty notices and/or] referral to the local authority to begin criminal proceedings against the parents.

6. Persistent Absence

If a child is absent for more than 10% of school, schools and local authorities will work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. Reasons for absence will be sensitively considered, and conversations with parents held to establish support where possible.

Particular focus will be given to those pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (missing 50% or more of school). A concerted effort is needed across all relevant services to prioritise these pupils. This may include specific support with attendance or a whole family plan.

Where voluntary support has not been effective or not been engaged with, more formal support in the form of a parenting contract may be considered alongside support from the Local Authority.

In all cases please refer to the 'Working together to improve school attendance' document, published May 2022, Applies from September 2022.
