

# Lacey Green Primary Academy

## Attendance Policy



**Policy Reviewed and Agreed: September 2023**

Lacey Green Primary Academy is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will work consistently towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Academy attendance is subject to various Education laws and this academy attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. Each year the Academy will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both National and Cheshire East attendance targets. The Academy will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

### Academy Aims

Support for Pupils – To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum that provides children with the best possible learning opportunities and experiences

Ethos – To provide a welcoming, safe and caring environment in which each pupil is valued and supported

Partnership – To build and maintain effective partnerships between the academy and its parental body, external support agencies and the wider community

### The Academy's Expectations

From pupils:

- They will attend the academy regularly
- They will arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day

From parents:

- They ensure their children attend the academy everyday possible
- They contact the office between 8.15 & 9:00am whenever their child is unable to attend
- They ensure their child is appropriately dressed, taking account of the academy uniform policy
- They ensure their child arrives in the academy well prepared for the academy day with homework completed

Pupils and parents can expect the following from the Academy:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance and time keeping
- Contact with parents when there is no apparent good reason for absence and there is a pattern of absences, or an excessive number of absences or lateness
- Immediate action on any problem notified to us, in confidence if necessary

### Positive Measures to encourage excellent attendance

- Registers will be completed accurately twice daily
- Daily monitoring of registers – raising concerns where appropriate
- Parent Liaison Teacher – who contacts families and visits when required.
- Regular termly monitoring by the Principal on attendance and punctuality
- Discussion with the Principal where attendance falls below 90% or if there is any other cause for concern.

## Procedures

### Absence

Any child who is absent from the Academy at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of the academy]. Only the Principal or a member of staff acting on the Principal's behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence, we will:

- contact the parent by telephone
- email, telephone or message via Arbor the parent/carer requesting that they advise the academy of the reason for absence if no note is received upon the child's return to academy
- send follow-up letters until the reason for the absence is established
- invite the parents into the academy when attendance becomes a concern, unless other action is planned to identify and resolve the difficulties, which are preventing the pupil from attending the academy
- make parents/carers aware of the legal requirements regarding academy attendance
- help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to the academy after an absence of longer than six weeks.

### Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the class teachers to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the academy will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. If this is unsuccessful the academy will refer the case to the Educational Welfare Officer.

### Absence Notes

Notes, app messages, emails or telephone calls received from parents explaining absence are logged on the school's computer system Arbor.

## Parental Requests for Holidays During Term-Time

Principals no longer have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for family holiday or to agree to extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin. Permission for family holidays in term time will not be granted except in **exceptional** circumstances. If granted, absence should not exceed ten days per year. This leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday. There is no right to take a holiday in term time and you are **STRONGLY** advised not to book a holiday before discussing your exceptional circumstances with the Principal. If your child is absent from school because of a holiday or another reason which has not been agreed, this will be classified as unauthorised and you may be fined or legal action taken against you. Absence will not be authorised at critical periods in our academy calendar e.g. at the start of the academy year, during SAT periods, any test periods and in Year 6.

Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances may be requested by completing a Leave of Absence (LOA) form. The form can be downloaded from the school website or from the school office. You will then receive a copy of the form back informing you of the academy's decision. Following a request for leave parents may be called for interview with the Principal at her discretion.

Parents should be aware that leave of absence will not be authorised retrospectively.

Each request for holiday absence will be considered individually. When making the decision the following factors will be considered:

- The amount of time requested

- Age of the pupil
- The pupil's general absence/attendance record – it must be 95% and over
- Proximity to SATs, Phonics screening and any other examinations
- Length of the proposed leave
- Pupil's educational needs
- General welfare of the pupil
- Circumstances and reason for the request
- Frequency of the activity, and
- When the request was made

When leave of absence has been granted the absence will be recorded as authorised, using the appropriate register symbol.

If parents take a child out of school during term time without permission, or fail to apply for permission in advance of a holiday, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised using the appropriate register symbol.

If the pupil is kept away for a period in excess of the time agreed with the academy the extra time will be treated as 'unauthorised' absence.

When a pupil is withdrawn during term time there is disruption to the learning process that can result in the pupil falling behind his/her group and can also affect relationships with friends.

**Parents cannot expect work to be provided by the academy during their absence.**

A child can be withdrawn from roll if they have been granted leave of absence in excess of ten academy days and fail to attend the academy within the ten academy days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted, and the Principal is not satisfied that the pupil is unable to attend the academy because of sickness or any unavoidable cause.

### **Extended trips Overseas during Term-Time**

Extended leave of absence will be granted in exceptional circumstances only and each individual case will be considered on its merits.

### **Failure to return on the agreed date**

When granting leave of absence for an extended trip overseas, we will ensure that we have a date when the pupil will return to the academy. See above for details of in what circumstances pupils may be removed from roll if they do not return by the agreed date.

### **Fixed Penalty Notices**

**Please refer to the Cheshire East Council Code of Conduct on Fixed Penalty Notices. ([Click Here](#))**

### **Rationale**

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that: "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable ... to his/her age, ability and aptitude, and ... to any special educational needs s/he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

2.2 Therefore, regular and punctual attendance at school or alternative provision is a legal requirement, as well as being essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainments and opportunities.

2.3 Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, makes it a criminal offence for a parent\* to fail to secure their child's attendance at the school at which they are registered, where that absence is not authorised by the school.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost due to unauthorised absence in any 2 consecutive half terms,
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to holidays in term time or delayed return from extended holidays
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in any 2 consecutive half terms. "Persistent" means at least 10 instances of late arrival

In such cases, the academy will:

- decide if a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued. If the school decide that a Fixed Penalty Notice is to be issued a letter will be sent from the academy advising that it has referred the matter to the Local Authority and that a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.
- The academy will request the Local Authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices, relating to unauthorised leave of absence and will provide all the relevant paperwork.
- A Fixed Penalty Notice will be sent to the parents/carers accompanied by an explanatory letter; the Notice gives opportunity to pay a penalty fine instead of being prosecuted in the criminal courts

### **Notices may be issued to each parent liable for the offence.**

Penalties are paid to the Local Authority and are as follows:

The penalty is £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per child per parent if paid within the first 28 days.

Payments will not be accepted after 28 days

Payments cannot be paid in part or by instalments

If no payment is received the Local Authority will prosecute the parents/carers in the Magistrates' Court

If you prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court and convicted it will result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £1000

There is no right of appeal against the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice

### **Children in Care**

Penalty Notices will not be issues in respect of children in Local Authority Care, as other interventions will be used.

### **Punctuality and Lateness**

We lay a great deal of importance on the need to be punctual and to arrive in the academy on time. Not only does it make for a good start to the day, but it shows consideration for everyone else in the class and avoids repetition of instructions and teaching. All children who arrive in the academy after the register is called are to be marked as late.

### **Lateness**

**Registers open and morning registration takes place at the start of academy at 8.35am.**

**The attendance register is collected electronically using the Arbor Attendance Manager program. Doors will remain open until 8:45am; any pupils arriving after registers close at 8:50am will be marked as 'late (L)'.**

**Pupils arriving after 9.00am will be required to report to the school office to sign in and will be marked as having an 'unauthorised late' absence. Please note that each unauthorised late will count towards the 10 sessions and once this threshold is reached the Academy will refer them to the Educational Welfare Officer.**

This policy will be reviewed and updated when any new guidelines and legislation are issued by any relevant bodies.