



Policy: Attendance

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Contents

	Page no.
Aims	3
Legislation and Guidance	3
Roles and Responsibilities	3
The Governing Body	3
The Head teacher	4
Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance	4
Attendance Officer	4
Class teachers	5
School admin staff	5
Parents/carers	5
Pupils	5
Recording Attendance	6
Attendance register	6
Unplanned absence	6
Planned Absence	7
Lateness and Punctuality	7
Following up unexplained Absence	7
Reporting to parents/carers	8
Authorised and Unauthorised Absence	8
Approval for long term absence	8
Legal sanctions	9
Notices to improve	11
Strategies for Promoting Attendance	11
Monitoring Attendance	12
Analysing Attendance	12
Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence	12
Setting work for children who are absent from school	13
Links to other Policies	13
Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes	14
Appendix 2 – Flow chart to address persistent and severe absence	18

Date of Full Governing Board Approval:

17th September 2025



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Table of changes

When policy documents are updated, changes can be made to punctuation, grammar and readability.

If changes are made which affect the aims, purpose and outcomes of the policy, they are detailed below:

Date	Page	Changes
2024		Full update to reflect Government Legislation
September 2025	5	Definition of parent/carer, parent/carers to keep to any attendance contracts they make and to seek support, where necessary.
	6	Attendance registers kept for 6 years not 3. Addition of end of school time.
	8	Additional points added to follow up unexplained absence
	9	Addition of other reasons school may allow a pupil to be absent from school site
	10	More information re penalty notices being issued
	11	Notices to improve section expanded
	14	Appendix 1 updated to include all the codes now used.



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the designated senior leader responsible for attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) (applies from 19 August 2024) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance
- The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Home School Liaison Manager (HSLM) and can be contacted via the school office by phone or email.

The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Senior Admin Assistant (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- The attendance officer is the HSLM and can be contacted via the school office by phone or email.



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for accurately recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 8:50am in the morning and within 10 minutes of the start of the afternoon session.

School administrative staff

School administrative staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system using the relevant attendance code (see appendix 1)
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the HSLM in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance when appropriate

Parents/carers

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.40am on the day of the and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Home School Liaison Manager via the school office.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Recording Attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day. The school day ends at 3.10pm.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.40am and will be kept open until 8.50am. The register for the second session will be taken after lunchtime.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.40am or as soon as practically possible. This can be done either on the Arbor App, by emailing adminoffice@losjunior.co.uk or by calling the school absence line 02392 550551 choosing option 1.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Where the absence is longer than 2 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- Punctuality will be monitored by the school office and class teachers and any concerns reported to the Attendance officer (HSLM).
- Leave of absence request forms are available from the school office on request.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Message (email via Arbor) the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence requesting they contact the school to notify them of the reason.
- If the school does not receive notification following the message, a call is made to the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason for the absence.
- If they cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact appropriate agencies where appropriate.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with issue a notice to improve, penalty notice or other legal intervention (see sanctions section below), as appropriate.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels formally at least two times per year or more regularly depending on absence level (see appendix 2).

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Where the school and the junior school share families, schools will consult with one another before a decision is made.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least one day before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible on request from the school office. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Flexi-schooling requests
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

A Penalty Notice is a fine which may be issued as an alternative to prosecution. If it is paid it does not require a court appearance and does not result in a criminal conviction.

Section 444A of the Act gives powers to the local authority, and headteachers to issue Penalty Notices in circumstances where it is believed that a person has committed an offence under Section 444(1); that is, where a child fails to attend regularly at their registered school.

Once you have registered your child at a school it is your responsibility to make sure your child attends regularly and punctually. If you fail to do so the Local Authority has a statutory duty to consider legal action to enforce school attendance.

There are a number of legal measures that the Local Authority can pursue, these include:

- An Attendance contract
- Being included in the fast track system which means you will be expected to improve your child's attendance within a given period of time
- Receiving a penalty notice



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

- Being prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. This means you could receive a community order, a fine of up to £2,500 per parent/carer, a custodial sentence or an Education Supervision Order

If a child is seen in a public place in the first five days of a fixed term or permanent suspension, a Penalty Notice may be issued and is £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid between 22-28 days.

Where absence warrants the issuing of a Penalty Notice, anyone with Parental Responsibility, or having day to day care of the child (this can include step-parents) can be issued with one Penalty Notice for each of the children with unauthorised absence. If two parents have two children this may result in four Penalty Notices, 2 Penalty Notices per parent.

Penalty notices (fines) are issued when a pupil has had 10 or more half-day sessions (equivalent to five school days) of unauthorised absence, in the last 10 week school period or where a parent/carer is deliberately avoiding the national threshold.

Unauthorised absence is coded as one of the following:

- O - Unauthorised absence
- U - Late after registers close
- G - Non attendance – unauthorised holiday

If issued with a penalty notice (fine), each parent/carers must pay:

- First penalty notice - £80.00 if paid within 21 days or £160.00 if paid within 22 - 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- Second Penalty Notice – a second Penalty Notice may be issued if a Penalty Notice has previously been issued in the preceding three-year period in respect of the same child. A second Penalty Notice is £160.00 if paid within 21 days with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.00. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.
- A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.
- There is no statutory right of appeal. Once a Penalty Notice has been issued, it can only be withdrawn if it can be shown that it ought not to have been issued or was issued in error.

Notices to improve

If your child has an ongoing pattern of unauthorised absence, then you will normally receive a written warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued or a Notice to Improve letter. This warning or Notice to Improve letter will advise you about the extent of your child's absence and warn you that if your child's attendance does not show a significant improvement and if this improvement is not maintained thereafter, a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning.

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

Strategies for promoting attendance

We regularly promote the impact of the impact of regular attendance with parents if a child's attendance falls below 90% (see appendix 2). We have an Attendance page on our website with information and resources on attendance.



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Attendance monitoring

Attendance is monitored daily as part of the daily routine in the school office and acted on appropriately.

Half termly attendance data from Arbor is monitored by a Senior Admin Assistant and the HSLM. The half termly data is shared with class teachers and used when discussing pupil progress. Any actions needed in respect of the attendance data are followed up by the HSLM or class teacher, whoever is more appropriate.

The SLT and HSLM meet bi-weekly to discuss attendance and safeguarding.

Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns – see appendix 2
- Use data to provide regular attendance reports to class teacher and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.



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The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Use a flow chart (appendix 2) to address persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings/conversations with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section, above)

Setting work for children who are absent from school

The school will not set work for children who are absent from school unless there are exceptional circumstances due to a medical condition or a suspension is in place where it will follow its statutory obligations.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour for Learning policy



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)



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E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law



Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School Policy

Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

Appendix 2 – Flow Chart to Address Persistent and Severe Attendance

