

Ling Bob J I & N School

Leading, Inspiring, Nurturing, Guiding — Bringing Out the Best

Attendance Policy

Review and ownership

The Attendance Policy has been written by the school Pastoral Team Leader..

The school Attendance policy has been agreed by the senior leadership team and approved by governors.

The Attendance policy will be reviewed every two years or when any significant changes occur.

Title	Ling Bob JI&N School Attendance Policy
Version	1.2
Date	December 2017
Author	Pastoral Team Leader (JBo)
Approved by headteacher	
Approved by governing body	
Next review date	December 2019

Modification history			
Version	Date	Description	Revision author
1.0	Oct 13	Oct 13 update	Pastoral Team Leader (JBo)
1.1	24 Sept 15	Sept 15 update	Pastoral Team Leader (JBo)
1.2	Dec 17	Dec 17 update	Pastoral Team Leader (JBo)

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Ling Bob Primary School and Nursery fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head teacher and Governors at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Education Welfare Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.

- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

School Registers

The Junior doors open at 8.45 (KS2) until 8.50am and 8.50 (KS1) am until 9.00 am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.10 (KS2) and 9.15 (KS1) am and by 1.20pm.

All attendance records are documented using SIMs software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Prints of the Attendance Registers should be made each month. Attendance Registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

As our Attendance Registers are computerised the Governing Body must register with the Information Commissioner's Office.

If a pupil is to be taken off the register because a child is moving to another area or school, staff should first find out the name and address of the new school and when the pupil is expected to start. After it is has been confirmed with the receiving school that the child has started and has transferred the pupils' records to the new school, and then school may deleted the child from the register.

School staff should be concerned if:

- The parents do not name the receiving school: or
- A pupil has 'disappeared' from the area without explanation: or
- A pupil has not returned to school after a family holiday in term –time and has had 4 weeks continuous absence: or
- A pupil has not returned from extended leave of absence within ten days of the agreed return date.

If any of the above occurs then Pastoral staff to follow CME procedures.

School can only remove a pupil from school roll if:

- the pupil has died;
- the pupil has been permanently excluded from the school.

Children Missing in Education (CME)

The Pastoral Team Leader will inform the Local Authority CME Co-ordinator (Tel: 01422 266126) and a CME form will need to be completed if a child has gone missing from education as this could be an indicator of abuse or neglect. The MAST team should also be contacted (Tel: 01422 393336)

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer of that child. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones/texts the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Persistent Absences

- Children whose attendance falls below 90% are classed as PA (persistent absence). Absence at this level causes considerable damage to a child's education and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. If a child continues to be a PA pupil then school will continue to liaise with the Education Welfare Service and they may issue a Penalty Notice or Prosecute at the Magistrates Court.

Excessive amounts of authorised absence can seriously disrupt continuity of learning and encourage disaffection. School staff should, therefore watch for emerging patterns of authorised absence by individual pupils or groups of pupils and draw them to the attention of the Pastoral Team or Deputy Head for further investigation and any necessary action.

Absence procedures

Parent/carers should contact school before 9.30am if their child is absent from school. If school have not received a reason for absence, then the following procedure will be followed:

1. A text will be sent to the first name on the contact list asking for a call to school to notify and confirm the reason for absence.
2. If there is no response from the texts school will telephone the first name on the contact list.

3. If no response school will ring the numbers on the contact list, until a reply is received.
4. If school have had no response, school will send a second text and a home visit will be made if possible, by either school staff or other agencies working with the family.
5. School may contact the Police if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absence of the child.

We need to ensure all children are accounted for, and if we are unable to make contact and we are concerned for the welfare of the child or family then the Police will be informed and a welfare check will be required.

Illness, Medical And Dental Appointments

If School is satisfied that a pupil is absent as a result of illness the absence will be treated as authorised.

School staff may authorise absence for medical or dental appointments where confirmation has been received from the parent or if the pupil shows an appointment card.

If a pupil is present for Registration but then has to attend an appointment, the school need take no action beyond recording the fact, by signing the 'Signing In - Out Book' that (for purpose of emergency evacuation) the pupil, although registered, is no longer physically present. Similarly, School must note the presence of a pupil who was not there when the Register was taken but returns later from an appointment.

Medical Treatment

Sometimes, pupils may miss Registration because they are receiving medical or other specialist attention on school premises. They are in attendance on site and should be recorded as "present".

Equivalent attention given off site should be recorded as authorised absence.

If the frequency or duration of absence attributed to illness is a cause for concern, Pastoral staff should involve the Education Welfare Service and / or Health Services at an early stage. Frequent or prolonged illness may be attributed to social or environmental factors affecting the pupil and their family, which have wider implications in relation to pupil welfare and child protection.

If your child is unable to attend school

If your child is going to be absent from school for a period of time due an injury or medical condition, parent/carers should inform the school as soon as possible, with evidence of the illness or injury. Pastoral staff will inform the Education Welfare Service and will provide support to make sure their education doesn't suffer.

The local authority role

If your child's going to be away for a long time, the local council will make sure they get as normal an education as possible. This could include arranging:

The local council must make sure your child continues to get a full time education - unless part time is better for their health needs.

Lateness

School Staff should actively discourage late arrival. A pupil arriving late may seriously disrupt not only his or her continuity of learning but also that of others. Lateness may also lead to full absence if not challenged. In recognition of local circumstances (such as very bad weather or occasional public transport difficulties), registers will be kept open for a reasonable period to cater for late arrivals and special circumstances. (Keeping Registers open all morning or afternoon is unacceptable. Registers will be closed at 9.00am)

A firm line must be taken on late arrivals. Where pupils miss Registration and fail to provide an adequate explanation, they should be marked as unauthorised absence (late) for that session, even though they arrived later. To do otherwise undermines the whole purpose of registration and may serve to encourage other pupils to arrive late.

Particular attention will be paid to emerging patterns of late arrival. A 'Late Arrival Book' held at the Main Entrance will be kept to record the attendance of pupils who are late. The Pastoral Team & Administrative Staff will ensure that the book is completed and inform classteachers and the Chef, if necessary, of the increased attendance for purposes of emergency evacuation. The 'Late Arrival Book' will record the reason for lateness, the date and time of arrival to provide evidence for further action as necessary. The Pastoral Team will monitor the 'Late Arrival Book' on a daily basis taking action accordingly where patterns of lateness are evident.

In some cases it will be clear that the late arrival stems from difficulties at home or other genuinely unavoidable circumstances, e.g. Public Transport, Taxi etc. Where there is no valid excuse, Ling Bob School will consider taking disciplinary action against pupils who persistently fail to arrive on time. An early meeting or contact with parents/carers may be appropriate.

Exclusion will not be used as an appropriate response to lateness or other forms of irregular attendance.

Young Carers

In a genuine crisis, Ling Bob School will approve absence for a child to care for a relative until other arrangements can be made. School will set a time limit for the absence and set some school work so the pupil does not fall far behind while at home. Referral to outside agencies will be done sensitively, recognizing that a child may fear being "put into care" if the parents are seen as unable to cope.

The identified staff member for Young Carers (The Pastoral Team Manager) will act as a link with support services and promote awareness of the needs of carers within the school community.

Further guidance to schools is contained in the Policy Document "Supporting Young Carers in Calderdale".

Special Occasions

The Headteacher will decide whether an absence in this category should be authorised or not. Much will clearly depend on the circumstances of the particular case. Generally, the rule should be that only truly exceptional occasions should be sanctioned through authorised absence.

In deciding individual cases, Ling Bob School will consider:

- the nature of the event;
- its frequency, i.e. is it a "one-off" or likely to become a regular event;
- whether advance notification was given - as should be the case;
- the overall attendance pattern of the child.

Parents will be asked to complete a "Absence Request Form" which will be submitted to the Headteacher for approval or not.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday in Term Time

The Department of Education has from the 1st September 2013 announced that parents have no entitlement to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time.

Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances by completing an application for leave of absence form at least 2 weeks before the expected absence. Forms can be obtained from the school office.

The Head teacher and Pastoral Team Leader will meet to discuss any application and decide if it warrants exceptional circumstances.

Parents can be fined by means of Penalty Notices or Prosecutions in the Magistrates Court by the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

Nursery

Children attending Nursery will only be granted holidays in term time in accordance with Appendix 2 of the Service Level Agreement for Early Years Provision. Therefore this can be recorded on the register as an authorised holiday.

Public Performances

If a child has a Local Authority Licence to take part in a public performance (e.g. Pantomime), and School has given leave of absence, this should be recorded as authorised absence.

Family Bereavements

School staff should respond sensitively to requests for leave of absence to attend funerals or associated events. They have discretion to authorise such absences. If a pupil is absent for more than the agreed period, School will contact the family and, where appropriate, the EWS.

Days Of Religious Observance

The law provides that no offence is committed when the absence of a pupil of compulsory school age results from participation in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. This includes festivals. Such absences are classified as authorised absence. It is helpful if parents or pupils can give teachers advance notice of religious observance days.

Special Tuition

Where a registered pupil, for example a dyslexic child, requires special tuition off-site and the arrangement has been agreed by School, but school itself is not involved, leave of absence may be granted and the absence treated as authorised. It is for School to decide whether to agree to such an arrangement in the light of the individual circumstances, but in general one hour's off-site tuition per week might not be regarded as unreasonable (unless a statement of SEN dictates otherwise).

Excluded Pupils

A pupil excluded for a fixed period should remain on the school roll. Since the absence results from specific action by the Headteacher, i.e the decision to exclude, it should be treated as authorised absence.

The absence of a permanently excluded pupil is authorised while any review or appeal is in progress. If the permanent exclusion is then confirmed the pupil's name should be removed from the school roll. This will normally happen on the school day immediately following the Appeal Committee's confirmation of permanent exclusion, on expiry of the time allowed for appeals to be made, or if before that the pupil takes up a place elsewhere.

While the pupil remains on the school roll, teachers are responsible for setting work for the excluded pupil. In the case of a permanently excluded pupil, these responsibilities formally cease once the decision is confirmed and the pupil is removed from the school's admission register; though schools will wish to liaise with the Local Authority about the pupil's subsequent education.

As indicated earlier, irregular attendance (including persistent lateness) does not constitute grounds for exclusion.

If a child is a Child Looked After (CLA) then the Virtual School Head needs to be kept informed throughout the exclusion process. If the child is either CLA or on a Child Protection Plan the Lead Social Worker should be kept informed.

your child continues to get a full time education - unless part time is better for their health needs.

Dual Registration Involving PRU Or Special Schools

The law allows for dual registration of a pupil at both PRU or special school and another local school. This helps, for example, to ease the phased return to mainstream or special school of a pupil temporarily assigned to a PRU for whatever reason. Where such arrangements exist - and they will not be appropriate in every case - the pupil must be classified as authorised absent while he or she is attending (i.e. being marked present at) the other institution and vice-versa.

To avoid misunderstandings, arrangements of this nature need to be formalised in writing. The PRU & Ling Bob School will exchange information when the pupil fails to attend.

Temporary School Closures

Schools may close temporarily for a variety of reasons, including:

- in-service training for teachers;
- very bad weather;
- fire or other serious structural damage;
- major structural work extending into term time.
- Where staff are participating in industrial action.

No Attendance Registers are needed when School is temporarily closed in such circumstances. In very bad weather, local radio stations will be used to broadcast information as to re-opening times. Information regarding School closures can be found on the School website, local authority websites. Pastoral / office staff will use the Y code to show an enforced enclosure is marked on the registers on the first day of the School re-opening.

Home / School Liaison

Ling Bob School will encourage active participation by parents and carers in promoting positive patterns of attendance. School will provide attendance information to parents and carers via information newsletters and End of Year Report.

Our Pastoral Team has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data is accurately recorded in the SIMs attendance software. Regular meetings are held with the head teacher (cohort monitoring) to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings (Attendance Panel) arranged to discuss attendance with parents

The Pastoral Team and Deputy will monitor Attendance Registers on a weekly basis. As a follow up, they will liaise with staff and Parents as necessary, reporting patterns and concerns to the Headteacher and EWO for possible further action to be initiated.

The School's Pastoral Team will collate all attendance returns on a weekly basis. The Pastoral Team Leader will report to Governors and Head teacher with statistical analysis and feedback.

Success Criteria

Home and School will execute procedures and meet statutory requirements;

The School's level of 'Unauthorised Absence' will move towards achieving the targets set nationally in compliance with their initiatives.

Statistical analysis will be used as a basis for performance indicators. The performance indicators to be used will be:

- The number of individuals referred to the EWS;
- Levels of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence
- Number of sessions of Holidays taken during Term Time

- Late Arrival to School
- Parent Attendance to Parents Consultation Evenings
- Attendance returns;
- Patterns of exclusion
- Overall attendance
- FSM group attendance
- SEN group attendance
- Non EAL group attendance
- EAL group attendance
- Persistent Absentees