



Loxwood Primary School Attendance & Removal from Roll Policy

Policy adopted by the Pupil, Personnel & Community Committee Autumn 2014, reviewed Sept 17

Review September 2020

Aim

To ensure that children receive their full entitlement to teaching and learning opportunities at Loxwood Primary School by punctual and the maximum possible attendance.

Context

The government expectation for attendance is 95%. 95%+ is deemed to be the level of attendance that gives pupils the greatest opportunity to achieve to the best of their potential in school both academically and socially. Anything less than this gives governors at Loxwood Primary School cause for concern. The Family Support Worker, Education Welfare Officer or Headteacher will contact parents where there are concerns over attendance and punctuality. Where no satisfactory outcome has been achieved after consulting with parents, the school recognises the need for a multi agency approach to support the attendance and welfare of some pupils and also recognises the need to find varied and differing means of support in the interests of social inclusion.

The School and Local Authority, through the Education Welfare Service, monitor attendance of children with less than 80%:

- Where there are no firm medical reasons for absence.
- When absence is unauthorised.
- When absence or lateness gives cause for concern.

Parents are contacted either by letter, home visit or by invitation to an attendance meeting involving all relevant agencies, when strategies for improvement are put in place.

In the event of persistent unauthorised absence from school, when strategies set up for improvement have failed, the Education Welfare Service will send formal letters warning of prosecution and prepare and present prosecution files to court for non-attendance.

Daily attendance for all school age children on the roll is a legal requirement therefore Loxwood Primary School fully endorses the Government and Local Authority requirements for attendance and registration.

Informing parents of a concern with attendance

- A standard letter is sent to parents when attendance falls below 90%, regardless of the reason for absence. Where there is a specific reason (hospital, bereavement) discretion may be used in not sending a letter, but contact should be made via a telephone call to ensure parents are aware and to establish any support strategies that can be agreed.
- A standard letter is sent to parents when the number of 'lates' to school reaches 10.
- If attendance falls below 85% a second letter is sent to families requesting that they contact the school to discuss their child's attendance.
- Where letters have been sent, and an improvement in the child's attendance is not evident, a further letter will be sent offering reasonable support/advice in improving attendance. This may also involve discussion with the child and possibly referral to Education Welfare if appropriate.
- A referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice may be made (by County) where there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence. This may include unauthorised holidays taken.

Registration

The registration period for children from Reception to Year 6 begins at 8.45am for the start of the day for all children. Children should be on the playground at this time ready to come into school. Children can arrive in the playground from 8.30am as a member of staff will be on duty.

The legal status of school registers is regularly stressed to all school staff and meticulous effort is made to ensure they are accurately kept. New Staff are provided with training in both the detail of accurate register marking, and methods and strategies for encouraging pupils to be punctual and regular in their attendance.

School Staff are reminded that the authorisation of absence is at the Headteacher's discretion not the parents. A list of examples of absence that may be treated as authorised can be made available from the Headteacher on request.

Reports

- Individual attendance and punctuality data is recorded on pupil's reports.
- The Headteacher will report on attendance as part of their termly report to governors.
- The Headteacher will also send attendance statistics on a termly basis to the DCSF.

Removal from Roll

In the event of school transfer or a pupil moving to another area, a pupil will normally remain on roll until notification is received from a receiving school. Should no notification be received the school will make every effort to locate the pupil in conjunction with the Education Welfare Service. If unsuccessful, a missing person form must be completed and sent to the Local Authority and the pupil removed from roll after four weeks.

If a pupil fails to return to school within 10 days of the agreed return date following a holiday they also may be removed from roll.

Late Arrival at School

Parents are informed and regularly reminded of the school dates and times in a number of different ways during the year. It is pointed out to parents that poor punctuality gives the pupil who is late a difficult and negative start to their day and disrupts the teaching and learning of the whole class. The importance of the registration time in school as a time for greetings, sharing news and preparing the class ready for the business of learning, is stressed to parents.

All pupils who arrive late have to sign in at reception on arrival and an accurate log of their time of arrival is made. This log can be used as prosecution evidence in court proceedings in the event of persistent lateness.

Parents

The importance placed on regular attendance and punctuality is explained to parents when they first enrol their child in the school. The school website also details school attendance issues. At different times through the school year attendance issues are also reiterated in School Newsletters.

Governors and staff at Loxwood Primary School believe that the involvement of parents is a key factor in addressing attendance issues and will ensure that all school parents and carers are made aware of their responsibilities with regard to attendance.

Parents are regularly informed that should their child be unavoidably absent they should telephone the office on the first day of absence and make sure that the absence is explained. Parents who leave a message on the school answerphone should ensure that a reason for absence is given, the preferred method is to email the school; absence@loxwoodschool.com . If the school refuse to authorise an absence, parents would be informed. Contact from the parent is essential for the authorisation of absence. Should no contact be forthcoming, the school will contact the parents by telephone or by letter.

It is the aim and expectation that all parents will understand that, 'In addition to securing regular attendance they also have a responsibility to ensure that their children arrive on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn.' (*Government Guidelines*).

Holidays

Governors recognise that pupil absence during term time can seriously disrupt a pupil's continuity of learning. Parents are therefore informed to avoid booking a family holiday in term time. Only under exceptional circumstances will the Headteacher grant leave of absence. Following West Sussex guidelines the exceptional circumstances may include;

- a death in the family or funeral
- a doctor, dentist or hospital appointment