LENT RISE SCHOOL
'Learn, Reach, Shine'

Pupil Attendance Policy

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Abstract: This policy lays out the school's expectations of attendance of children and the procedures for monitoring attendance and absence.

Approved by:	Mrs M Young Chair of Governors	
Approved by:	Mrs J Watson Headteacher	
Last reviewed on:		
Next review due by:		
Policy number:	LRS0032	

Aim

We recognise the intrinsic value of good school attendance and punctuality to obtaining a good education and ultimately to children's life chances and we are committed to embedding a whole-school community culture of good attendance and punctuality as we work to enable children to Learn Reach and Shine:

LEARN

REACH

SHINE

Wellbeing

Ambition

Safeguarding

Attendance

Attainment

SEND support

Attitude
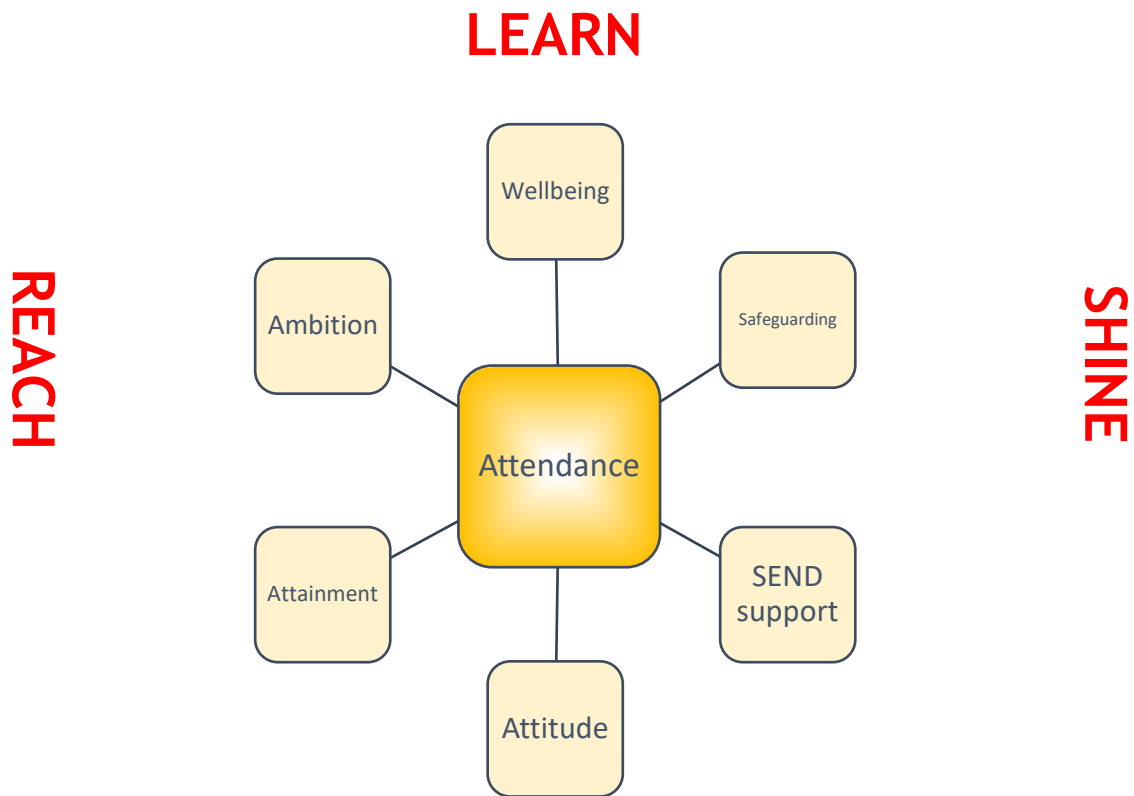
Expectations

Pupils

Attend school every day, on time.

Parents

- Ensure your child attends school every day unless they are too unwell to do so.
- Ensure your child is on time to school every day – this means they are ready in their class when the register is taken at 9.10am.
- Collect children at 3.15pm (unless they have a club) Children should not be collected early without good reason.
- Take family holidays and other leave of absences in school holiday time.
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

- Inform the school by 9am if your child will be absent that day and again on every proceeding day of absence, providing a reason for all absences and advising when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with at least two emergency contact numbers for their child.
- Be positive about school.
- Communicate openly and honestly with us. We want to support families to ensure every child can access the full-time education they are entitled to.

Staff

- Log attendance in the register accurately
- Monitor attendance to identify families in need of additional support
- Act quickly to identify individual barriers to attendance and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school without tolerating further poor punctuality or low attendance
- Apply attendance rules fairly and consistently in line with the school's policy on equal opportunities.

Roles and responsibilities in school

Parents wishing to discuss attendance and punctuality including leave of absence requests should in the first instance contact Office Manager Mrs Louise Barnard on 01628 662913 or by emailing office@lrschoool.co.uk.

The governing body has responsibility 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
- 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 has responsibility for:

- Ensuring the policy is implemented at all levels in 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 School Attendance Champion, Rachael Small, has responsibility 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
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

Rachael Small can be contacted on dsl@lrschool.col.uk.

School office staff share the role of attendance officer

School office staff are responsible for:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Process and record requests for leave of absence
- Monitoring and 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 to the School Attendance Champion.
- Working with the Attendance Champion and education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The school office staff are Louise Barnard and Hannah Slade and they can be contacted via office@lrschool.co.uk or 01628662913

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the registers systems.

Class teacher are responsible for sharing any concerns they have with the Attendance Champion.

Daily routines

The school gate opens at 8.55am.

- The register for the morning session is taken at 9.10am.
- The register closes at 9.30am.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed at 9.30am will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed at 9.30am will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

The register for the afternoon session is taken at 12.45pm for YR and KS1

The register for the afternoon session is taken at 1.30pm for KS2

Recording attendance

Attendance register

- We will keep an admissions register, and place all pupils on roll 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:
  - o Present
  - o Attending an approved off-site educational activity
  - o Absent
  - o The appropriate code to describe their attendance or absence in line with DfE attendance code descriptions.
  - o A comment to provide further information about absences where required
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
  - o The amended entry
  - o The reason for the amendment
  - o The date on which the amendment was made
  - o 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible using the Parentmail app or by calling the school office on 01628 662913. Parents / carers should provide the name, class and reason for absence including the nature of any illness. Office staff will follow up where the information provided has not been detailed enough to provide an accurate record of the absence.

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

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide 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.

We understand that children with mild illness such as a cough or cold may still be well enough to attend school and this should be considered where possible. The NHS provides guidance on parents as to when they should keep their child home with specific illnesses or symptoms:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1070910/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my-child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

 A good general rule for parents is 'if I had the same thing would I go to work?'

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.

Parents should request leave through the school office.

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.

Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time in '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.

The school may request evidence to support leave of absence requests.

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 four weeks before the absence. Parents can obtain a leave of absence from the school office or download a form from the school website www.lrschool.co.uk. The school will send a letter via the parentmail app to confirm if the leave of absence will be authorised.

Parents who would like to discuss a leave of absence request in more detail should speak to Mrs Barnard, Office Manager by emailing office@lrschool.co.uk or by telephoning 01628 662913.

Lateness and punctuality

Persistent lateness is determined as 3 or more lates within a half term period. Persistent lateness can often be an indicator of future issues with attendance. It also impacts significantly on pupil's causing them to miss the vital start to lessons

or in some cases entire sessions. Arriving late can single children out, cause the embarrassment and anxiety, as well as disruption to the rest of the class.

Persistent lateness will be identified in monitoring using the same process as absence (detailed later in this policy) and the school will work with families to identify the barriers to attending on time.

Following up unexplained absence

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

- Text the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This will be followed up by a telephone call if no response has been received by 12pm to all numbers including emergency contacts if necessary. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may use emergency measures, e.g. contact local children's services or contact Police. This is particularly important where a child has previously been identified as vulnerable. A list of children who fall into this category is provided by the DSL and kept securely in the school office. See appendix ii for the absence monitoring process for vulnerable children.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised.
- 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. The absence will be risk assessed and staff may take additional measures such as a home-visit or contact the Police or Social Care for a welfare check.
- Staff should complete a Child Missing Education referral to the child's home local authority where a child is absent for 10 days or more without a reason.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels, highlighting cause for concern and monitoring arrangements. Attendance will be documented in each school report and discussed at each parent consultation evening.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (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

Legal sanctions

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

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- 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.

Attendance monitoring

98-100%	• Excellent - child is acessing all opportunities to Learn, Reach and Shine
96-97%	• Good - very few opportunities to Learn, Reach and Shine are missed
94-95%	• Risk of underachievement - up to 10 days absent across the school year
92-93%	• High risk of underachievement - up to 15 days absent across the school year
90-91%	• Severe risk of underachievement - up to 19 days absent across the school year
<90%	• Extrem risk of underachievement - upwards of 22 days absent across the school year

The school will:

- Monitor half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and every three weeks at an individual pupil level
- Identify if there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern including:
  - Pupils whose attendance falls below 90% without understandable reason (e.g. hospital stay, approved family holiday, bereavement)
    - Pupils with patterns of absence e.g. high level of absence on a particular day
    - Pupils with more than 3 lates in a half term

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 body.

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
- The school will focus specific groups who may have struggled in the past to achieve high attendance including children with SEND and children eligible for Free School Meals.

Strategies for improving attendance

The school will take a three pronged approach to improving attendance:

Analysing attendence data at a group level and taking a deep dive to understand trends, barriers and creating effective group targeted strategies

Promoting a culture of positive attitudes to attendance in school through rewards and celebration

Monitoring individual pupil attendance and working closely with families to build relationships and support attendance on case by case basis.

Every day at school matters!

Celebrating positive attendance

- The school celebrates class attendance weekly during SLT assemblies to promote positive attendance. The class in each phase with the highest attendance receives a whole class award with each individual class member receiving an award.
- Children who have an increase in attendance are celebrated with a postcard to their home address.
- Children with an attendance support plan who have achieved 100% attendance in a week will receive an improvement attendance reward.
- The school celebrates termly and end of year 100% attendance with certificates and an attendance reward.
- Children who have significantly improved and sustained good attendance with also receive certificates at the end of the year.
- The half-termly newsletter celebrates the classes who have the highest attendance and the biggest improvement in attendance, as well as offering advice on staying positive about school and encouraging good attendance.
- An attractive permanent display in the board celebrates our class attendance champions.

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide monthly attendance reports to SLT to analyse trends, attendance issues and identify groups in need to targeted support.
- The school will consider a variety of options to support group attendance based on the specific needs of the group. The Headteacher will work with the local school liaison group to share best practice.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Use FFT Aspire Attendance tracker to benchmark and compare data to national trends.

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.

Pupil identified as requiring monitoring: Persistent absence, severe absence, persistent lateness

Letter sent to parent identifying issues (persistent absence, lateness) and informing that they will be monitored for 3 weeks and improvement expected

After 3 weeks monitoring Pupil attendance / punctuality has improved Communicate positively to parents and pupil and continue to monitor for a further 3 weeks

After 3 weeks monitoring pupil attendance / punctuality has not improved or has deteriorated write to parents inviting them to parent support meeting. No further absences to be authorised without supporting evidence

Attendance / punctuality improvement continues for second monitoring period no further action

Attendance / punctuality deteriorates in second monitoring period

Hold support meeting to identify barriers to attendance / punctuality – agree individual target for child

Parent refuses to engage or does not attend support meeting:

Discuss with DSL consider: Monitoring for further 6 weeks if parent has promised improvement

Alternative ways to engage with parent e.g. Early Help, School Nursing Team

Referral to EW for formalised support if meets threshold

MARF if concerns are present

After 3 weeks monitoring Pupil attendance / punctuality has improved Communicate positively to parents and pupil and continue to monitor for a further 3 weeks

If after 3 weeks target has not been met look at pupil level detail – discuss with DSL consider:

Monitoring for further 6 weeks if parent has promised improvement / acceptable reason for not achieving target

Alternative ways to engage with parent e.g. Early Help, School Nursing team

Referral to EW for formalised support if meets threshold

MARF if concerns are present

Understanding barriers to good attendance and punctuality

Open communication without bias or judgement is key to understanding the barriers that families face to achieving good attendance and punctuality. These should be explored on an individual level through Attendance Support Meetings.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 2 years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance, 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

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2

Proceedure for vulnerable children with unexplained absence

| Teachers take the register | → | Hannah Slade logs late children from InVentry to SIMs | → | Hannah Slade checks the vulnerable list against who is not yet in school. She then checks the ParentMail and Voicemail for any parent communication from those parents/carers | → | Hannah Slade updates Rachael Small (DSL) via email with any names of children from the vulnerable list who are not in school – giving reason or stating no contact from parents/carers |

| Hannah Slade emails all parents/carers of children who are absent who have not yet given a reason as to why | ← | Hannah Slade logs all absence reasons from parents/carers to SIMs from ParentMail or Voicemail | ← | Hannah Slade will follow up with any requests from Rachael Small i.e. calling parents/carers |