# Laycock Primary School



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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| **Approved by :** | Interim Executive Board |
| **Last Reviewed on:** | December 2025 |
| **Next review due by:** | December 2026 |

**Summary of Changes – September 2024**
This policy template has been revised to reflect changes in national guidance and legislation that came into force on 19th August 2024.

**Policy Consultation & Review**
This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office. We also inform parent/carers about this policy when their children join our school and regularly thereafter through our school newsletter and other relevant opportunities.

We recognise the expertise of our staff in managing school attendance daily and therefore staff are encouraged to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

**The Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school - is:**
**Name:** Fred Hall **Phone:** 0207 226 2927 **Email address:** office@laycock.islington.sch.uk

**The school staff member pupils and parent/carers should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis (including first day calling) is:**
Name: Hayley Paddock **Phone:** 0207 226 2927 **Email address:** office@laycock.islington.sch.uk

**The school staff member pupils and parent/carers should contact for more individual support with attendance is:**
Name: Hayley Paddock Role*: Attendance Lead
Phone: 0207 226 2927 Email address: office@laycock.islington.sch.uk

**The name of our linked Interim Executive Board (IEB) member with responsibility for monitoring attendance is:**
Name: Janine Killough Email address: office@laycock.islington.sch.uk

**Introduction and Rationale**
Laycock Primary recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance and punctuality are essential for pupils to get the most of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. Therefore, the aim of this policy is to enable the school to provide consistent practice that encourages and facilitates regular attendance and punctuality at school to ensure steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning for all pupils.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly, on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

At Laycock Primary we take a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and punctuality and see it as the collective responsibility of parents/carers, pupils, and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance and/or punctuality are given the right attention and appropriate support.

Our policy outlines the school's commitment to attendance and punctuality and aims to provide clear guidance to all staff, parents/carers, pupils and the Interim Executive Board (IEB) about the responsibilities and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance. It underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.
- Work with families to identify any reasons for poor attendance and resolve potential difficulties at the earliest opportunity.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called *"Working Together to Improve School Attendance"* and it includes a *National Framework* in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. This policy therefore reflects the requirements and principles of this guidance. In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance and punctuality by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Ensuring that attendance and punctuality are monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable (exceptional circumstances). **Please note it is only the headteacher, not the parent, who can determine exceptional circumstances and authorise any absence.**

**Promoting Regular Attendance**

At Laycock Primary, we believe in developing positive patterns of attendance and setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day-to-day life and as such, we recognise strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is a shared responsibility across the school community. To help us all to focus on this, we will:

1. Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
2. Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
3. Give parents/carers details on attendance through our website and newsletters.
4. Promote the benefits of high attendance.
5. Accurately complete admission and, except for schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day-to-day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
6. Celebrate excellent attendance and punctuality by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements.
7. Reward good or improving attendance and punctuality through a range of means such as certificates, bands, stickers, pencils, badges, medals and treats.
8. Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and punctuality and the impact on their progress.
9. Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target.

**School Attendance and the Law**

*The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024* sets out the statutory requirements for schools and has introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (*Education Act 1996*). Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

*The Education Act 1996* states that:

The parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable —

1. to their age, ability and aptitude, and
2. to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age —

- when they attain the age of five, if they attain that age on a prescribed day, and
- otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following their attaining that age.

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age at the end of the day which is the school leaving date for any calendar year —

- if they attain the age of 16 after that day but before the beginning of the school year next following,
- if they attain that age on that day, or
- (unless paragraph (a) applies) if that day is the school leaving date next following their attaining that age.

Parents may be recognised differently under education law, as opposed to family law. *Section 576 of the Education Act 1996* states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

**National Framework for Penalty Notices**

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period**. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O, N and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a penalty notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second penalty notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child (with no reduction). If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

**There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours.** In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school." All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed from *The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances."

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, **at least 2 weeks in advance**, on the prescribed form

provided by the school. The headteacher may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

When deciding whether to authorise a term-time absence, the headteacher may take the following into account:

- The child's previous attendance history
- How close the time is to statutory examinations such as the KS2 SATs
- The purpose of the leave

The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the *National Framework* and *Penalty Notice Code of Conduct*, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

If a leave of absence is authorised, the school will not necessarily provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Interim Executive Board

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the Interim Executive Board (IEB) will:

- Set high expectations of all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents so that children attend school every day and are safeguarded from harm.
- Identify a member of the IEB to lead on attendance matters and ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties by rigorously evaluating the effectiveness of the school's attendance procedures so that consistent attendance support is provided for all pupils.
- Ensure the school engages and works effectively with the Local Authority Attendance Team and wider local partners and services to address barriers to school attendance.
- Regularly review attendance and punctuality data, discussing, challenging trends, and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure high aspirations are maintained for all pupils and processes for support are adapted to the individual needs of pupils including those with long term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker or youth justice worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Ensure all staff receive adequate training on attendance and that relevant staff have access to opportunities to share and learn from good practice in other schools/academies.
- Ensure that attendance data is shared with the Local Authority or DfE as required and on time.
- Review the Attendance and Punctuality Policy on at least an annual basis, ensuring that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.

### The Senior Management Team (including Senior Attendance Champion)

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the senior management team, including the Senior Attendance Champion will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality to all pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole-school approach which reinforces good attendance and punctuality; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend school on time and to achieve.

- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with.
- Ensure that there is a named Senior Attendance Champion to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resources.
- Return attendance data to the Local Authority and the DfE as required and on time.
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Report attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the IEB and on a half-termly basis to the Lead IEB member for attendance.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated.
- Set out how Pupil Premium funding will be used to support pupils with irregular attendance.

**Teaching and support staff**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, all staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance and punctuality to all pupils and their parents.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Contribute to a whole-school approach which reinforces good attendance and punctuality; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend school on time and to achieve.
- Comply with attendance regulations and other relevant legislation.
- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance and punctuality of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that registers are recorded accurately and in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the evaluation of strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and punctuality and support pupils and their families.

The member of staff responsible for daily attendance (first day calling, coding registers etc) will work to further develop relationships with families to bring about improved attendance and/or punctuality. This may involve seeking multi-agency support. They will support good attendance and punctuality, respond to concerns, and promote improvement in attendance by:

- Monitoring and analysing pupil attendance and punctuality data.
- Undertaking weekly attendance meetings with the Senior Attendance Champion, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO, and other relevant staff members.
- Implementing the identified strategies for promoting excellent whole attendance and punctuality.
- Implementing the identified strategies for tackling unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality.
- Managing individual pupil casework files.
- Coordinating individual action plans for pupils causing concern including the instigation of an early help assessment and plan and/or the implementation of an attendance contract.
- Ensuring first day calling procedures are adhered to if a child is absent without contact from parents/carers.
- Taking an active lead in delivering whole-school initiatives such as awards assemblies and reward schemes.
- Making referrals to appropriate external agencies.

**Thresholds for Intervention**

| Threshold | Intervention | By Whom |
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| **100-96%** | ● Regular reminders of the importance of good attendance, through the school newsletter, website, etc.<br>● Rewards (including for improved attendance) are given out termly.<br>● Termly attendance letters sent out to all parents giving attendance percentages | ● Class teacher records and monitors this.<br>● Attendance tracked through Arbor<br>● Attendance officer monitors individual, group and whole-school attendance to identify any concerns |
| **96-92%** | ● Attendance is monitored more closely.<br>● Reminder letter sent home and parents/carers invited to discuss any concerns if they wish to do so<br>● First warning letter issued<br>● Possible referral to external agencies that can address the individual needs of the pupil/family as required such as:<br>○ Bright Futures Early help<br>○ Child Adult and Mental Health Services-CAMHS | ● Attendance tracked through Arbor<br>● Attendance Lead does **weekly** checks on the pupil's data |
| **92-90%** | ● Children at risk of becoming PA<br>● Second warning letter issued<br>● Parents requested to attend a meeting in school to discuss attendance with the Attendance Lead.<br>● An attendance plan might be initiated- support offered in line with this plan | ● Attendance tracked through Arbor<br>● Attendance Lead does **weekly** checks on the pupil's data<br>● Attendance Lead/Child Family Support Worker meets with parents |
| **90-85%** | ● PA threshold – Attendance Lead and Senior Attendance Champion meet with parents<br>● Third warning letter issued<br>● Individual attendance plan reviewed<br>● During the attendance plan review, those involved will identify whether any further additional support could be offered by the school or partner agencies | ● Attendance tracked through Arbor<br>● Attendance Lead does **daily** checks on the pupil's data<br>● Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Lead meet with parents |
| **Below 85%** | Depending on the reason for the absence, the school may decide to request statutory action. | Referral made by Attendance Lead to Islington's Access and Engagement Service |

**Parents and carers**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents/carers:

- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life so that we can offer support at the earliest opportunity.
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.

- Ensure their child has regular attendance and punctuality.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return, following this with a note wherever possible.
- Avoid unnecessary absences; for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours whenever possible.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance and/or punctuality.
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance and punctuality.
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance and/or punctuality issues.
- Sign a home-school agreement (See Appendix A)

**Pupils**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- Be aware of the school's attendance and punctuality policy and when and where they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them by staff, parents/carers and through the school timetable.
- Speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance and/or punctuality.
- Attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class.
- Bring a note of explanation from their parent/carer to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen.
- Follow the procedures if they arrive late. This will help to monitor attendance and/or punctuality and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance and/or punctuality. This is also vital for health and safety in the event of an evacuation.
- Sign a home-school agreement (See Appendix A)

**Understanding Types of Absence**

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the **school** (not the parent/carer), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session.' Absence will not be authorised unless parent/carers have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the headteacher.

**Authorised absences** are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

**Pupils attending Alternative Provision (AP)** should remain **dual-registered** at the school which has commissioned the AP throughout the period of attendance. Schools **continue to be responsible for the safeguarding of pupils attending an AP** and should obtain written confirmation from the provider that appropriate safeguarding checks have been carried out on individuals working at the establishment, i.e. those checks that the school would otherwise perform in respect of its own staff.

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school do not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

While not an exhaustive list, unauthorised absence includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school after the close of registration and are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, it is counted as an absence for the session.
- Shopping trips.
- Looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- Their own or family birthdays.
- Holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- Day trips.
- Other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

**Persistent (PA) and Severe Absence (SA)**

A pupil is defined by the Government as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents/carers to resolve this. **All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.**

**A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as 'severely absent.'** Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

The attendance of all pupils is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

**Absence Procedures**

We monitor and review all pupils' absences, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

**The school staff member pupils and parent/carers should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis (including first day calling) is:**

Name: Hayley Paddock Phone: 0207 226 2927 Email address: office@laycock.islington.sch.uk

**If a child is absent from school the parent/carer must follow these procedures:**

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before **9:00am**
- The school has an answering machine **(Option 1)** to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call, or you may call into the school personally and speak to the office staff. Please be aware that if you leave a voicemail to report your child's absence, you may receive a call back from the **school** so that we may discuss the absence before deciding whether the absence is to be recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before **9:00am**
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons. When determining

whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents/carers and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS guidance:- https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

**If your child is absent, we will:**

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us.
- If we are unable to contact parents/carers by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding.
- We will also inform a pupil's social worker and/or youth offending team worker if there are unexplained absences from school in line with statutory requirements.
- A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be considered "missing from education." Islington's local protocol requires schools to notify the LA of any pupil who has been absent for 10 consecutive school days without permission using the Missing Pupil Alert. Pupils must not be deleted from the admission register until authorised by the LA.

**If absence continues, we will:**

- Contact you if your child's attendance is below 96%, and/or where punctuality is a concern.
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Champion or Attendance Lead.
- Create a personalised action/support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate.
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

**Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Arriving on time builds and promotes important life skills that will support pupils as they progress through their education and eventually employment.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

**The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at Laycock Primary are:**

- Gates open: **8:40am for a soft start**
  We advise all parents/carers to ensure their child(ren) are on site prior to registration.
- Registration starts: **8:45am**
- Registration closes: **9:10am**
- End of the school day: **3:15pm**

**How we manage lateness:**

- The school day starts at **8:40am** when children can begin to come into school.
- Morning registers are taken between **8:45am-9:05am**; afternoon registers are taken at **1:00pm** for EYFS and KS1 and **1:30pm** for KS2.
- Children arriving after **8:55am** are required to come into school via the school office. The office will sign them into our 'Late Book.'
- The school register will officially close at **9:30am**. In accordance with the *Regulations*, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site – 'U', but this will not count as a present mark, and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence.
- Please note: L or U codes will be used if a pupil arrives after the close of the afternoon register for the PM session.
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns.

- From time to time a senior member of staff may undertake a 'Late Door' check, greeting late arrivals in the reception area.

Unauthorised lateness could result in a referral to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the **Attendance Lead** and the **Senior Attendance Champion**, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents/carers and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

**Understanding Barriers to Attendance**

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. At Laycock Primary, we recognise that poor attendance and/or punctuality can sometimes be an indication of difficulties in a family's life or in school and therefore encourage parents to inform us of any difficulties or changes in circumstances. This will help us identify any additional support that may be required. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family (TAF) meeting to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance and/or punctuality. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child. High expectations of attendance and punctuality remain in place for these pupils; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improvement. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

**Absence due to mental or physical health or special needs and/or disabilities**

Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendship, school work, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly – in many instances attendance may help with the underlying issue, as being away from the issue might exacerbate it and prolong a period of absence.

School staff play a critical role in communicating these expectations to parents. They should also work alongside families to ensure such circumstances do not act as a barrier to regular attendance by mitigating anxious feelings in school as much as possible. Schools may also find it helpful to refer to the DfE's non-statutory guidance *Mental Health Issues Affecting a Pupil's Attendance: Guidance for Schools (Feb 23)*.

Some pupils face more complex barriers to attendance, this can include pupils who have long-term physical or mental health conditions or who have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition should be the same as it is for any other pupil, but additional support may be needed and provided.

In developing this support, the usual processes relevant to any attendance case apply:

- Understand the individual needs of the pupil and family.
- Work in partnership with a pupil and family to put support in place and where appropriate work with other agencies.
- Regularly review and update the support approach to make sure it continues to meet individual needs.

In cases of both long term physical or mental ill health, school staff are not expected to diagnose or treat physical or mental health conditions, but they are expected to work together with families and other agencies with the aim of ensuring regular attendance for every pupil. They should:

- Facilitate any relevant pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance as much as possible whist supporting the underlying health issue.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustment should be agreed by and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time limited phased return to the school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance.
- Make a sickness return to the local authority if a pupil is recorded in the attendance register as absent using code I and there are reasonable grounds to believe the pupil will have to miss 15 consecutive school days or more for illness.

For pupils with special educational needs and disabilities schools are expected to:

- Work in partnership with parents to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND including where applicable to ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's Education, Health and Care plan is accessed.
- Work in partnership with parents to help support routines where transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage a scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.
- Establish strategies for removing barriers that SEND pupils may face including considering support or reasonable adjustments for uniform, transport, routines, access to support during lunchtime arrangements.
- Consider adjustments to practice and policies to help meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to attend school, as well as making formal reasonable adjustments under Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 where a pupil has a disability. Any adjustment should be agreed and regularly reviewed with the pupil and their parents.
- Ensure joined up pastoral care is in place and consider whether a time limited phased return to the school would be appropriate, for example for those affected by anxious feelings about school attendance
- If a pupil has an Education, Health and Care plan, schools must amend the plan to incorporate any additional or different attendance support identified

Medical evidence for recording absences should only be needed in a minority of cases (see code I). Where a pupils health need means they need reasonable adjustments or support because it is complex or long-term, academies can seek medical evidence to better understand the needs of the pupil and identify the most suitable provision in line with the statutory guidance *Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions at School (Sept 2017)* and *Education for Children with Health Needs who cannot Attend School (Dec 2023)*.

Where parents do not engage and support, schools should work with the local authority or other local partners to formalise that support and as a last resort, enforce attendance through legal intervention. Schools should ensure data is regularly monitored for pupils with long term illnesses or SEND including reporting to governors and the local authority.

**Part-Time Timetables**

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable where a pupil's individual needs indicate they cannot currently access a full-time education, and it would not be in their best interest to do so. We will not use a part-time timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour.

A part-time timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a part-time

timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer and/or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil where it is safe to do so; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

**Local Authority Attendance Support Services**

- Attendance and Engagement Officers can offer strategic advice to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance and punctuality.
- Parents/carers should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. However, if difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, we may consider providing more formal support and/or referring the child to the Local Authority.
- Parents/carers are expected to work with the school and Local Authority to address any attendance and/or punctuality concerns.
- If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

**Deletion of Pupils from the Admission Register**

Under *Pupil Regulations 2006*, all schools are now legally required to notify their Local Authority of every new entry to the admission register within five days of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, the Local Authority must be notified of every deletion from the school register as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Islington's local protocol requires schools to obtain **written confirmation** of a pupil's safe arrival at their new school for any in-year transfer. Schools must then complete the **LA Notification Form** which should be submitted within **5 school days** with the supporting documentation outlined in the table below:

| Reason for deletion | Supporting Documentation |
|---|---|
| **New School** – The pupil is registered at another establishment and written confirmation has been received from the new school/academy. | ● LA Notification Form.<br>● Written confirmation from new school that the pupil is on roll.<br>● **(For pupils with an EHCP)** - Authorisation from Home LA. |
| **Elective Home Education** – The parent/carer has confirmed in writing that they are educating their child outside of the school system. | ● LA Notification Form.<br>● Written confirmation from parent that they are educating their child outside the school system.<br>● **(For pupils with an EHCP)** - Authorisation from Home LA.<br>● Attendance Certificate.<br>● Completed Elective Home Education Risk Assessment. |
| **Custody** – The pupil will be in custody for a period of *more than four months* due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period. | ● LA Notification Form.<br>● Written confirmation from Youth Offending Service (YOS) regarding final court order. |
| **Permanent Exclusion** – The pupil has been permanently excluded. They must remain on roll until the exclusion and appeal process have expired. | ● LA Notification Form. |
| **Deceased** – The pupil has died. Please notify the LA as soon as possible to | ● LA Notification Form. |

| | |
|---|---|
| ensure records are updated as a priority. | |

**Absence Data**

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance and/or punctuality needs to improve, and schools are required to submit daily pupil attendance and punctuality data to the DfE as outlined in *Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024*.

Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as we know that increased absence affects attainment.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools/academies in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- *Working Together to Improve School Attendance, DfE (August 2024)*
- *The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024*
- *School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures, DfE (January 2015)*
- *Children Missing Education, DfE (September 2016)*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE (September 2023)*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE (December 2023)*

**APPENDIX A**

**LAYCOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL'S HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT**

## As a school:

**We will do our best to:**

- Support your child's wellbeing and safety by providing a safe, supportive and caring environment.
- Help and encourage your child to reach their full potential.
- Monitor and communicate with parents and carers regularly on your child's progress.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that caters for all children, including when delivered remotely.
- Promote high standards of behaviour so we can maintain a safe environment for all children.
- Offer your child opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility, form healthy social relationships and build their self-esteem.
- Set homework that supports the delivery of the curriculum and mark it where appropriate
- Offer opportunities for parents and carers to get involved in school life.
- Communicate between home and school through dojo, the Smiler, phone calls, email and the school's website.
- Respond to communications from parents in a timely manner, following school policies.
- Encourage good attendance and address any concerns with parents or carers where necessary.

## Parents/carers:

**I will do my best to:**

- Make sure my child attends school regularly and on time. I will notify the school if my child will be absent.
- Make sure my child is dressed in the correct uniform and brings their PE kit to school where necessary Support the school to make sure my child maintains a consistently high standard of behaviour.
- Encourage my child to try their best so they can reach their full potential.
- Communicate to the school any concerns that I have about my child that may affect their behaviour in school or ability to learn.
- Make sure communication with the school is respectful, and that I make every reasonable effort to address my communications to the appropriate member of staff.
- Understand that I should communicate with staff during core school hours, and although they may at times respond outside of those hours, I can't always expect that.
- Make sure that my child completes their homework on time, and raise any issues that my child has with their teachers.
- Read and follow the school's policies.
- Treat all members of the school community with care and respect.
- Engage in parent meetings and work together with the school in order to achieve the best outcomes for my child.
- Read all communications sent home by the school and respond where necessary.
- I will ensure that digital devices at home will have the appropriate parental controls on to keep my child safe.

## Pupils:

**I will do my best to:**

- Arrive at school on time and ready to learn
- Try my best to do my work and ask for help if I need it
- Wear the correct school uniform and bring my PE kit to school when I need it
- Bring all the equipment I need each day
- Be friendly and caring towards other children and adults
- Listen to instructions from the adults at school and follow the school rules
- Do my homework and bring it back to school on time
- Look after the school equipment and be respectful of the school environment
- I will use online media appropriately and safely. If I see any material that is inappropriate, I will click on the Child Exploitation And Online Protection (CEOP) button on the school's website to register my concern.

**Signature of Parent:**.....

**Name of Child:**..... **Class:**.....

**Date:**.....