



Layton Primary School

Attendance Policy Information for Parents & Carers

updated September 2016

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Contents

1. Attendance Targets and Key Staff..... 3

2. Why is school attendance and punctuality important? 3

3. Equal opportunities 3

4. What is the role of parents and carers?..... 4

Appendix A - Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence 7

Appendix B - Information for Parents Regarding Punctuality 8

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

1. Attendance Targets and Key Staff

Targets

The Education (School Attendance) (England) Regulations 2005 require all maintained schools to set an annual target to reduce absences. Layton Primary's target must be agreed by Local Authority and the DfES .

Layton Primary's attendance target is 96%+.

Key Staff

Jonathan Clucas	Headteacher
Lindsay Langfield	Learning Mentor with responsibility for attendance and punctuality
Claire Duerden	Pupil Welfare Officer Whitegate Manor Whitegate Drive Blackpool

2. Why is school attendance and punctuality important?

Regular school attendance is a key factor in raising attainment and reducing social exclusion. Good attendance and punctuality are fundamental to the learning process and the development of a balanced educational experience. If children miss out on school – even the first five minutes of the day – they not only miss out on the learning during that time, but they also find it much more difficult to make progress when they do come to school. In addition, missing time at school can affect their relationships with other children. Reliable attendance and punctuality are good life skills which children must develop at primary school.

Poor attendance has an effect not only on the children who miss school, but on the continuity of learning for the rest of their class. Layton Primary will rigorously pursue improvement and the maintenance of regular attendance by all possible means.

3. Equal opportunities

For children to have equal opportunity to succeed at school, they must have equal access to the curriculum. Unless they are at school they cannot hope to achieve this access, so attendance and punctuality is at the heart of equal opportunity issues.

Layton Primary is committed to providing all children with a suitable and effective education in a safe and happy environment. Each child is welcomed, valued, and encouraged to respect themselves and others.

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Our expectation is that all children will attend school every day and on time unless they are unwell or there are exceptional circumstances i.e. Social, Cultural, Religious, Special Needs.

Families for whom English is an additional language

The school will endeavour to provide an interpreter at meetings with parents and carers whose first language is not English.

Attendance of Travellers

A Traveller child must attend school for 200 days each year. The school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling and absence is recorded as authorised.

Attendance of Looked After Children

The school has a designated teacher responsible for overseeing the education of children in public care. This role will include the monitoring of attendance rates which are reported to the Pupil Welfare Service. Any concerns should be notified as soon as possible to the carer, social worker and Pupil Attendance Officer for vulnerable children. The Pupil Attendance Officer can ask Headteachers to sign and agree a list of Looked After Children in their school to ensure that records are kept up to date. The school must ensure that all children in Public Care have in place a Personal Education Plan, which is reviewed regularly.

4. What is the role of parents and carers?

Layton Primary School is an inclusive school working in partnership with parents to achieve good school attendance. The minimum target attendance for all children registered at this school is **96%+ (national)**.

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly and punctually. We have an expectation that all children, especially Year 3 and below, are accompanied both to and from school by a parent or other responsible adult to ensure their safety. For safeguarding purposes, we expect children in Foundation Stage and Year 1 and 2 to be handed over to an adult at the appropriate school entrance. Parents and carers should also ensure that their children are properly equipped and fit for the learning environment.

Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996).

Regular attendance includes children being punctual. School will be open from 8.40 a.m. External gates and classroom doors will be closed at 8.55 a.m. Registers will be taken between 8.55 and 9.00 a.m. prompt. Any child arriving after 8.55 a.m. must enter school via the school office to be signed in.

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Parents/carers should take all reasonable steps to notify the school of the reason for a child's absence **on the first day of absence**. Notification should be by parental note, telephone call, email or personal contact with the school front office.

Where a child is late for school, late passes will be obtained from the school office before entry to class as the school must ensure every child is recorded in case of emergency evacuation.

When an appointment has been made for medical reasons (and these should be made outside school time when possible) the appointment card should be shown in advance to the school office.

A reason for absence must be validated by a child's parent- it is not enough to take a reason given by a child.

Parentally condoned, unjustified absence is equally as damaging as truancy. If in the opinion of the school, an explanation offered by a parent/carer for absence is unacceptable (or where no explanation is given) the absence will be treated as unauthorised.

School refers to guidance from the Health Protection Agency to advise parents on recommended periods of absence for specific illnesses and infections.

Change of address

For Health and Safety reasons, parents/carers must inform school immediately if they have a change of address or contact telephone number. In case of emergency we must be able to contact the parents or a named person. This information is provided when a child is first registered and updated annually. If there is any change with regard to contact telephone numbers or the address at which the child lives, school must be informed immediately.

Moving to another school

Parents/carers must notify the school immediately if they are removing their child to start at another school. The parents must provide the name of the new school. If a family are moving to a new address, which requires the child to attend a new school but the child is not yet registered then parents/carers must provide school with their new address.

Leave during term time

Under The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted during term time. The Headteacher of Layton Primary will consider very carefully any applications made at least 4 weeks in advance. Only in exceptional circumstances, like a family bereavement or family illness, will leave be authorised. In line with DEF's policy, holidays taken during term-time will not be authorised by the school.

If leave is requested, parents must apply to the Headteacher explaining the purpose of the trip and whether this is likely to occur again during the child's school career. Granting leave will be at the discretion of the Headteacher taking into consideration the child's attendance

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

pattern and the impact on the child's education. In all but the most exceptional circumstances, leave will not be authorised. Forms requesting leave can be collected from and returned to the school office.

Parents/carers must give a return date and notify the school as soon as possible if this changes.

The Headteacher will not authorise any holidays at times when children are scheduled to take public examinations. Parents/carers will be notified as soon as these dates are known.

Children picked up late after school

Such incidents can cause distress to children who are keen to see their parents and carers at the end of the school day and should be avoided at all cost.

Parents/carers must telephone the school office if they are running late and advise on the time of their arrival in school. On arrival, the school office will ask parents/carers to fill in a brief form detailing the reason for late collection. This will be kept in the child's pupil record

Children not picked up after school

The school will make all reasonable effort to contact parents/carers who fail to collect their child after school. From 4.00pm the school will contact the Pupil Welfare Service who will temporarily take over the care of the child.

5. Appendices

- A. Categorisation of unauthorised absence
- B. Information to Parents regarding Punctuality

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Appendix A - Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an acceptable reason:

- illness
- emergency medical appointments
- religious observance
- other unavoidable cause

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes:

- Unauthorised holidays in term time
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Getting up late
- Shopping
- Looking after other family members or the house
- Birthdays
- Interpreting for parents/carers
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive too late to get a mark

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Appendix B - Information for Parents Regarding Punctuality

Why is punctuality such a good thing?

Being on time:

- Gets your child's day off to a good start and puts your child in a positive frame of mind, so that he/she can make the most of his/her learning;
- Sets positive patterns for the future;
- Leads to good attendance;
- Leads to better achievement;
- Leads to understanding that school is important and education is valuable;
- Helps your child develop a sense of responsibility for him/herself and towards others;
- Helps you child make friends and keep friends;
- Reaps rewards; it leads to success and self-confidence.

Why is lateness such a bad thing?

Being late:

- Gets your child's day off to a bad start;
- Can be embarrassing for your child;
- Will be noticed by other children who might make negative comments;
- May lead to your child losing confidence;
- May lead to your child feeling confused all day! He/She will have missed out on vital instructions, information and bits of news at the start of the day;
- Disrupts the lesson for everyone;
- Can cause your child to fall behind with his or her work;
- Creates a bad habit that can be hard to break at secondary school and in the workplace;
- Can lead to poor attendance – if your child thinks it is okay to be late for school they can soon start to think it is okay not to go to school at all.

Remember ... things to help your child get to school on time:

- Making sure you have everything ready the night before e.g. PE kit, reading books etc
- Getting to know your child's timetable
- Making sure you allow plenty of time in leaving home for arrival at school on time
- Making sure your child does homework the previous night
- Establishing a good bedtime routine – this pays dividends
- Making sure your child gets plenty of rest and is not prevented from sleep by watching TV, computer, playstation etc
- Buying an alarm clock
- Making your life easier by getting into a good routine from an early age – prevent problems later