

Attendance Policy Information for Parents & Carers



September 2020

(to be reviewed September 2021)

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Overview

The government states:

‘Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.’

Therefore, children at Layton Primary School are expected to attend every day and to be on time.

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. Any child arriving after 8.55 a.m. must enter school via the school office to be signed in.

Registers are taken at 8.55am and are closed at 9am.

A pupil arriving after this time and before 9.30am, will receive a late mark.

A pupil arriving after 9.30am will be given a U mark. In some circumstances, this may be changed if appropriate evidence is provided for their absence.

Key Staff

Jonathan Clucas	Headteacher
Sarah Dunn	CP Officer with responsibility for attendance and punctuality
Lynsey Hayley – Davies	Staff member responsible for monitoring Arbor (our attendance system)
Amy Gilmour	Pupil Welfare Officer Bickerstaffe House Blackpool

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.

Layton Primary School 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.

Our expectation is that all our pupils attend school every day and on time, unless they are too unwell or there are exceptional circumstances.

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

Absences

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to ensure that their child/ren attend school every day and on time.

If your child is too unwell to attend school, the school must be notified immediately.

This can be done in two ways:

- Telephone the school – 01253 392179, choosing option1 and leaving a voice message.
- Contact the school through parent app (free of charge). Click on more on the home screen. Select report your child's absence and follow the instructions on the screen.

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**. We operate a 'first day of absence' call system and if there has been no contact from the family of an absent child, then a member of staff will telephone the parent/carer or other contacts for the child to enquire why the child is not in school.

Where a child is late for school, the child must be taken to the school office to sign in on our inventory system before entry to class. The school must ensure every child is recorded as present once on our premises, 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. This must be via the school office, not the class teacher.

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691091/Exclusion_table.pdf

Parents and carers are advised that since the beginning of September 2015, when the government reduced the persistent absence threshold from 15% to 10%, Layton Primary School does not authorise an absence due to illness for any child whose attendance rate is less than 93% (for any reason), without first obtaining medical evidence.

Truancy

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

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.

If truancy is suspected the Attendance Officer will contact the parents or carers either by telephone or by home visiting, our Pupil Welfare Officer and possibly the police if this is felt necessary.

Parents and carers are then encouraged to bring their child to school so that the reasons for the child not wanting to attend can be discussed and resolved. If there any worries or problems in school that might lead the child to not attend then these are discussed with the class teacher and any appropriate action taken.

The role of our Pupil Welfare Officer (PWO)

Our Attendance Officer meets each week with the school's PWO to review attendance, including cases involving individual children or families and to discuss any other matters concerning attendance and punctuality.

Our PWO undertakes a whole school register screen on a regular basis and liaises with our Attendance Co-ordinator about any concerns arising from this screening.

Where necessary the school works closely with the Local Authority to take action against poor attendance of pupils at Layton Primary School.

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 fill in a form from the school office to 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

As of September 2013, schools have not been able to authorise holidays in school time, except in exceptional circumstances.

If leave is requested, parents must apply to the Headteacher explaining the purpose of the trip. This can be done through our parent app or via the school office. Granting leave will be at the discretion of the Headteacher. In all but the most exceptional circumstances, leave will **not** be authorised. Parents/carers must give a return date and notify the school as soon as possible if this changes.

Children picked up late after school

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 on our inventory system detailing the reason for late collection. This will be added to the child's pupil record

Attendance Policy – Information for Parents and Carers

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. If contact with parents is not obtained, the school will contact the Pupil Welfare Service, who may temporarily take over the care of the child.

Penalty Notices

Layton Primary School will consider issuing penalty notices to address poor attendance under certain circumstances.

The Governors of the school have agreed that penalty notices will be issued to address poor attendance and holidays taken during term time.

The reason for this is because a significant proportion of children are missing valuable learning opportunities and this is impacting on their attainment, progress and in some cases, self esteem.

Children who miss 10 sessions of school due to unauthorised absence in any one full term and/or 14 sessions of school over two consecutive terms may be issued with a penalty notice. **Please note that 10 school sessions are equivalent to 5 full school days, and 14 school sessions are equivalent to 7 full school days.**

Examples of what we may consider to be unauthorised absence are:

- parentally condoned absence
- unauthorised leave
- persistent late arrival after the register has closed
- Unwarranted delayed return from authorised leave

Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority, i.e. Blackpool Council, to each person who is a parent of the child, as defined by Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This may mean that more than one penalty notice is issued in relation to each child in the family and each parent then has a responsibility to pay their own individual fine. The penalty notice currently involves a fine of £60, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the fine is not paid then you may be prosecuted.