



Lambourn CofE Primary School

Attendance

Policy

Date of approval	October 2020
Approved by	Principal
Review date	October 2023

Registered Office: Excalibur Academies Trust, Granham Hill, Marlborough SN8 4AX
Registered in England and Wales
Company number: 8146633

The Governors at Lambourn CofE Primary School actively promote the aims of the school, and recognise that children must attend school regularly if they are to make the best of the opportunities they have, to learn and make the best progress. West Berkshire discourages parents from taking their children out of school for family holidays.

Parents also have a duty to ensure that their children receive an appropriate education.



Parents who have chosen to send their children to Lambourn are asked to sign a Home School Agreement, indicating they will do their best to ensure their children attend school regularly. They are given information in the Prospectus as to how they can make their child's time in school happy and safe.

Staff do their best to encourage children to attend school daily, following up unexplained absences and requesting reasons from parents for these.

Children are expected to attend school each day unless they are unwell. The expected level of attendance is a minimum of 95%. This allows for the occasional day or two of absence through illness, without a child falling behind with their work. Parents are given feedback on the level of their child's attendance on their Annual report, or earlier should there be a concern.

LATENESS

The school day begins at 8:40am, with registration at 8:45am. A bell rings at this time, and external doors are closed. Children who arrive after 8:45am are late (and be marked as a 'late' in the register) and must come into school through the main entrance into the office. If parents are with them, they must provide a reason for lateness. Continued lateness may lead to the Education Welfare Officer contacting you to discuss the reasons for this. If children arrive after 9am they will be marked as an 'unauthorised absence' for the morning. Children receive two registration marks each day totalling ten in a week. For an explanation of West Berkshire Councils expectations please follow this link:

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=27791>

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement or a religious observance. We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Explaining Absence

Parents have a legal duty to explain their children's absences. Acceptable ways of telling the school are:

- in person at the School Office;
- by telephone message 01488 71479;
- by email to office@lambourn.w-berks.sch.uk

What should I do if my child is unwell?

Children should not come to school if they are obviously unwell. You **must telephone** the school as soon as you know your child will not be attending that day. The voicemail operates out of hours. You are expected to give the reason for absence, and indicate if it is likely your child will be absent longer than one day.

How long should my child stay home if they are ill?



We have regularly updated detailed information from the Health Authority regarding absence periods related to illnesses. This gives information about the length of time children should remain home once symptoms are clearing. Should your child be ill with a 'named' illness and you would like to know when they may return to school, please do ring the school and we shall be able to tell you.

****If children have vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they must stay home from school for 48 hours after the last episode.*** This is to ensure children are free from infection, and are well enough to attend school.

I need to take my child to the dentist/doctor. What do I do about them coming to school?

Most routine appointments can be made outside of school hours. Sometimes you need to see a doctor more urgently, so be guided by what they say as to whether your child comes to school afterwards. If your child is absent due to attending a medical or dental appointment, please provide documentation regarding the appointment.

Challenging Poor Attendance and Punctuality

The school challenges all pupils' attendance and punctuality, in close co-operation with West Berkshire Council's Education Welfare Service (EWS). Where children's attendance is considered to be unsatisfactory, the school and the EWS may consider the use of a range of measures, appropriate to the level and frequency of absences;

- Informal communication with parents;
- Individual attendance targets for children and their families;
- Warning letters from the Principal;
- Home visits by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO);
- Warning letters from the EWO;
- Attendance Panels;
- Fast track;
- Statutory Fixed Penalty Notices;
- Prosecution in court, with penalties which may include fines and/or imprisonment.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law.

Only the Principal can authorise absence. To do this, they need to know that the reason the child was away is actually a legitimate reason not to come to school. Illness, for example, or attending family funeral, are legitimate reasons for a child to be absent, and are authorised absences. Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved holidays

What happens if my child has several unauthorised absences?

Regular unauthorised absences are brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer, who may contact you to discuss the reasons for these absences and explore any help that could be given to ensure your child attends school regularly. Continued



unauthorised absence will lead to a penalty warning notice being sent. You may be asked to attend at the school with the Head Teacher, EWO and a Governor for you to explain the reasons for your child's continued unauthorised absences and to discuss the impact this has had on your child's education. This is a formal meeting which is minuted. These minutes are sent to the Principle Education Welfare Officer who decides whether to pass them to the legal department. It is the Legal Departments decision whether to issue a financial penalty for the unlawful absence from school.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time children miss as a result of family holidays. **There is no entitlement to time off in term time.** Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the Principal in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the board of governors.

- The Principal will **not** authorise term time absence except in **exceptional circumstances.**
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence need to email the Principal via the school office, well in advance. The Principal will consider your request and advise you of the decision.
- If the school does not authorise the absence and you take your child out of school, the absence will be unauthorised and you may be liable for a Fixed Penalty Fine.
- Fixed penalty fines will be imposed for any child who has 10 or more half days of unauthorised absence during any 10 week period of school time.
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and the Local Authority. The Education Welfare Service aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.