



Attendance Policy

Taken from DFE guidance

Working together to improve school attendance and Keeping Children Safe in Education

Agreed by Governors: September 2016

Amended December 2020

Amended December 2022

Amended January 2023

Amended March 2023

Chair of Governors: Mrs Lynn Howard

Date: 15/03/2023

Attendance Policy

Introduction

We want our children to be the very best they can be at Lyng Primary. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and therefore, your child should be at school, on time, every day the School is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Why Regular Attendance is so important?

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class, it may cause them embarrassment, and it may make sustaining friendships difficult. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:- Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is of paramount importance to us. At Lyng Primary, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:- attendance, behaviour management, health and safety, access to the curriculum and anti-bullying. If a child has a high number of absences the Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Wellings, will be informed and safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Designated staff with responsibility for attendance

Andrew Fowler – Head Teacher

Sian Wellings – Designated Safeguarding Lead/Senior Mental Health Lead

Kerry Knight – Attendance officer

Lynn Howard – Chair Of Governors

The Governing Body

Improving attendance requires consistent focus and review and an effective whole school approach, with guidance, support and challenge from the Governing Body. It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it within the school's ethos and policies.

- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvements efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.
- Set high expectations for all leaders, staff, pupils, and parents.
- Recognise that attendance improvement does not happen in isolation and therefore ensuring it is prioritised in wider improvement strategies, such as raising attainment, behaviour, special educational needs and disabilities, wellbeing, and safeguarding.
- Ensure the schools' attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent attendance support is provided for pupils who require it most, by prioritising the staff and resources needed. This includes ensuring that the school engages and works effectively with the Local Authority (LA) School Attendance Support Team (SAST) and wider local partners and services.
- Ensure high aspirations are maintained for all pupils, but that processes and support are adapted to the individual needs of particular pupils. This includes those with long-term illnesses, special educational needs and disabilities, pupils with a social worker and pupils from cohorts with historically lower attendance such as those eligible for free school meals.
- Repeatedly evaluate the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts, to ensure they are meeting the needs of pupils as experiences and barriers to attendance evolve.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. Our staff treat all pupils and families respectfully and work to build ~~building~~ strong relationships between school and home. We will work with families to remove/resolve:

- any in school barriers.
- any barriers outside of school, where necessary engaging with external agencies to understand the barriers, and agreeing actions or interventions to address the concerns.

To help us all to focus on promoting regular attendance we have implemented 'wave 1' reward initiatives as follows:

Wave 1 – pupils with 100-95% attendance

**Postcard sent home for good attendance, Termly Popcorn and film for 98%,
Class room trophy for 100% attendance, £5 draw weekly for 100% attendance,
Teacher encouragement , PSHE, Good attendance benefits**

The Law relating to attendance Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that ‘the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise’

The Law relating to safeguarding Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoons when a child is absent for good reason, such as for:

- illness
- a medical/dental appointments which unavoidably falls in school time
- an emergency or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those absences which the school does not consider reasonable and therefore hasn't been granted. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (LA) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes reasons such as:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping trips
- looking after other children
- birthday trips
- holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Relationships and (RHE) and health education

Parents **can't** withdraw their children from relationships or health education (RHE) If children are removed from school this will be an unauthorised absence and may lead to prosecution.

Parents can withdraw their children from sex education, apart from the aspects covered by the science curriculum.

PE

Parents **can't** withdraw their children from PE. This includes:

- Swimming in KS1/KS2 is part of the National Curriculum
- Off-site PE activities arranged by the school as part of the curriculum
- Cold weather –a risk assessment to determine whether it's safe enough to carry out PE lessons in cold weather. The risk assessment should identify risks involved and any steps that can be taken to mitigate these

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school and the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and can usually make things worse.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level can cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We request to see any parent whose child's attendance falls below 90%, without good reason, or shows a sustained upward trend. We will work closely with the LA's Attendance & Prosecution Officer on matters of PA, or with those at risk of falling into this category.

Religious Education

Lyng Primary school grants requests in writing from parents to withdraw their child, wholly or partly, from:

- Receiving religious education (RE) given in the school in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- Attendance at religious worship in the school

Absence Procedures

- If your child is absent you must **contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.** You can telephone the school office or call into school and report to reception.
- We will log the reason for absence on our School Information Management System (SIMS).
- If your child is absent and you have not contacted the school, we will telephone or text you on the first day of absence. Again reasons will be logged.

To help us all to focus on supporting pupils whose attendance is falling below expectations, we have implemented 'waves' of support as follows:

Wave 2 – pupils with attendance between 95%—85%

Home visit from Welfare Officer, letter from School highlighting concerns with attendance , call from Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL), meeting with DSL and Attendance Officer, offer any family support required, deliver interventions by Attendance Officer with child , letter sent by school to parents /carers, offer Early Help Assessment , support from School Attendance Support Team

School Attendance Support Team (SAST)

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the SAST from the LA. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and

unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the LA. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the SAST themselves to ask for help or information. They are an independent body and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the School Office or by contacting the LA.

Wave 3 - pupils with attendance between 85% - 70%

Parents/Carers meeting with Welfare officer, Attendance Officer, Designated safeguarding lead (DSL), Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) involvement, Pastoral Team, DSL Home visit, Parent attendance contract, Support from SAST, offer Early Help Assessment. DSL seek advice from LA Sandwell Children's Trust

Lyng Primary School, and all who work to support children and their families to improve attendance, will continuously review if progress is being made. If it is felt that sufficient progress isn't being made, a review of the concern will be compiled. Leading on from these concerns, a referral to Sandwell Children's Trust will be completed as a result of 'Educational Neglect'. (*Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2022*)

Wave 4 - Safeguarding concerns

Children whose attendance is below 50 %

DSL assessment and referral to Sandwell Children's Trust for Educational Neglect

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they miss key time with the class teacher, miss work and miss out on vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils disrupt lessons and this can be embarrassing for the child, which can also encourage further absence.

How we manage lateness:

The school day starting times are listed below and we expect your child to be in class at these times:

Year Group	Start time
Rec	8.30am
Y1	8.45am
Y2	9.00am
Y3	8.30am
Y4	8.45am
Y5	9.00am
Y6	9.00am

- Registers are taken within 5 minutes of the start times and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- By 9.30am the all registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.
- If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher and/or APO to resolve the problem, but you can approach the school at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Contacting Other Setting/Schools

As part of our procedures, our staff will contact other settings/schools where our pupils' siblings attend to complete checks, and to make sure that we are doing all we can to remove barriers for attendance.

Pupils with Medical Conditions

Those children with medical Conditions or Special Educational Needs are entitled to education like any other child. Therefore, procedures will be the same. However, staff will be mindful of the barriers these children face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access full time education.

Holidays in Term Time

There is no automatic entitlement in law to have time off in school time to go on holiday.

There have recently been some changes to Government regulations regarding school attendance which the School has adopted. The latest amendments to these regulations have meant that as of 1

September 2013, Head Teachers 'may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances'.

'Exceptional circumstances do not include family holidays, visiting relatives or friends, attending sporting or other events, looking after family members who are unwell, babysitting younger family members, birthdays or shopping, etc'. 'Where parents decide to take children out of school during term - time without authorised leave of absence being granted, the absence must be recorded as 'unauthorised' on the attendance register.' If parents/carers consider that a 'request for leave of absence' during term time is for 'exceptional circumstances' then a written request should be made to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher may well seek the advice of the Governing body before deciding whether the application meets the criteria for exceptional circumstances. 'Parents/carers who fail to ensure their child's regular attendance can be fined £60 (per parent, per child). If the payment to the LA is not made within 21 days, the penalty will rise to £120 (per parent, per child).'

Following discussion, we will make a referral to the Attendance & Prosecution Service for pupils who take unauthorised leave of 10 days or more. Such a referral may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

All applications for leave must be made in writing in advance and at the discretion of the school, a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision, the school may invite parents into school to discuss the matter. A School Governor may also be present. The school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and sanctions may follow. This could include taking the child off the school roll or a Penalty Notice being applied. We will follow LA guidance in this instance.

Attendance targets

The minimum level of attendance for each pupil is 95%. The school will keep parents updated regularly about pupil progress and how your child's attendance compares to that target.

Children attending alternative provision or managed move

For a reason in which a child is to attend an alternative provision, for example, a Pupil Referral Unit or a child attending another educational setting; (although dual registered) the child will continue to be registered at Lyng Primary School. Therefore, the Attendance Officer will communicate daily with the setting to make sure the child is in attendance. If there are any concerns, the Safeguarding Leads at Lyng Primary School and the alternative educational setting will make contact. Safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

Child on a Part Time TimeTable

When a decision made by the Head Teacher, for a child to be placed on a part time timetable, the parent/carer will be notified during a meeting with Head Teacher and a member of the Pastoral Team. The child will continue to be on roll at Lyng Primary School and external agencies will be notified. The child will be seen by a member of the Pastoral Team at the family home. The Pastoral Team will make sure that the child's wellbeing is closely monitored and that the child accesses the curriculum.

Communication between School and home will continue and safeguarding procedures will be in place. The class teacher will also provide learning for the child while they are at home. Equipment will be provided by school for the child's education to continue during the part time timetable arrangement.

A Part time timetable is a short-term intervention and steps will be made to allow the child back into school full time, with external agency support.

Parenting contracts

A parenting contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school or LA to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. A contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement, with support, where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. A parenting contract is not a punitive tool it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter a contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

Education Supervision Order (ESO)

Where all interventions have been put in place and an Early Help Assessment has not been successful, an ESO for formal legal intervention will be discussed and maybe applied for.

ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the LA a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance, are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the LA under the ESO.

If it is decided to progress with an ESO, the LA should notify parents in writing of the intention to consider an ESO and set up a meeting to discuss with the parent (including the pupil if they are old enough to understand). Following the conversation, the LA should make its decision and inform the

parent and pupil of whether the case will be taken forward to court or not. Where the decision is to proceed, this can be combined with the service of an application notice

Children who have a Social Worker or Family Support Worker

Any child who has a Social Worker or a Family Support Worker and are absent from school, the school will inform the Social Worker or Family Support Worker that the child is absent. The school's Safeguarding Lead or Welfare Officer may conduct a home visit.

Children in Care

Lyng Primary School will work closely with a child's Social Worker and Virtual Heads to make sure that children in care who are registered at Lyng Primary School, attend school regularly and that interventions are put into place to make sure that children have consistency.

Multi Agency Working

Where attendance for family or pupils are complex, the school's Attendance Team will work with external agencies, such as the LA, and any other services who can support the family to address concerns. A 'Team Around the Family' will work together to remove barriers and set targets for families to improve the child's attendance.

Lyng Primary School Attendance



Wave 1 pupils with 100-95%

Postcard sent home notifications for good attendance, Termly Popcorn and film 98% , Class room trophy for 100% attendance, £5 draw weekly for 100% attendance ,Teacher encouragement , PSHE , Good attendance benefits

Wave 2 Pupils with attendance between 95%—85%

Home visit from welfare officer, Letter from school highlighting concerns with attendance , Call from Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL), Meeting with Welfare officer and Attendance officer, Offer of any family support required , Deliver Interventions by Attendance officer with child , Letter sent by school to parents /carers Early help assessment Offer, SENCO, Support from School Attendance Support Team

Wave 3 Pupils with attendance between 85% - 70%

Parents/carers meeting with Welfare officer, Attendance officer, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), SMHL involvement, SENCO, Pastoral Team, DSL Home visit , Support from SAST attendance support team, Offer Early Help Assessment. DSL seek advise from Local authority Sandwell Children's Trust

Wave 4

Safeguarding

Children whos attendance is 50 % below DSL assess and referral to Sandwell children's Trust for Educational Neglect

Appendix B

Wave 2-3



Headteacher: Mr A Fowler

Horton Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands, B70 7SQ.

Telephone: 0121 553 1480 - Email: lyng.admin@lyng.sandwell.sch.uk - Website: www.lyng.sandwell.sch.uk

Lyng Primary School ,

DATE

Horton Street,

West Bromwich,

West Midlands,

B70 7SQ.

Tel: 0121 553 1480

Email: Sian.wellings@lyng.sandwell.sch.uk

Parent/carers address

School Attendance Concern – Pupil Name: XX

Our routine monitoring of the school register has identified a decline in your child's attendance which is causing us concern. **Your child has had amount of xxxxxx days absent from school so far**

since September. Poor attendance will significantly impact on your child's education, friendships and potential to achieve.

A meeting has now been arranged to discuss the above matter.

The meeting will be held at: **Lyng primary School**

on:

at:

The aim of this meeting is to establish reasons for absence and offer advice and support if necessary.

It is therefore very important that you attend this meeting. If for any reason you are unable to attend, please contact the (school office/attendance officer) on the following telephone number:
0121 553 1480

Failure to hear from you, or your non- attendance at the above meeting, may result in a referral to the Attendance & Prosecution Service.

Please note that the Education Act 1996 makes it the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that their child regularly attends the school to which they are on roll. Failure to do so may result in legal action against you – Please see overleaf for important information regarding this.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Wellings

Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Senior Mental Health Lead

Legal Action

Information for Parents

Section 23(1) Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2007:

Penalty Notices may be issued to the parent of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school. The amount of the penalty is £60.

- If this is not paid within 21 days, the amount rises to £120.
- If not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may prosecute under Section 444(1) unless it comes to our attention that the penalty notice had been issued in error.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996:

“If you are the parent of a child of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly, you are guilty of an offence.”

- The court can fine each parent up to £1,000 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.

Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996:

“If in the above circumstances you, the parent, know that your child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fail without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend, you are guilty of an offence.”

- The court can fine you up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Please note that:

- Penalties and prosecutions are in respect of each parent for each child.
- “Parent” includes any person who is not a parent but who has parental responsibility for the child or who has care of him/her.

Schools Attendance Support Service
Parent / Carer Contract

Name of Student	Date of Birth: / /
Name of Parent/Carer(s) (1):	
Name of Parent/Carer(s) (2):	
Address:	
School:	

Appendix C

Parent contact completed due to continued concerns relating to attendance of _____
 with the aim of providing parent / carer(s) the opportunity to improve their attendance.

Parent contract completed at face to face meeting with _____

Has your child been prevented from attending school on medical grounds? **No** **Yes**

Consent obtained from parent for referral to school nursing service: **No** **Yes**

Parent / carer(s) view on parent contract – what type of support they think would be helpful to secure
 's regular attendance:

Student's view on parent contract (if appropriate) – what type of support they think would be helpful to
 secure their regular attendance:

Unauthorised Absences %	Attendance %	Authorised Absence	Temporary Exclusions		Out of School (Permanent Exclusions)	
			No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
%	%					
Late attendances:		Minutes lost to lateness:				

Reason for Parent / Carer contract and underlying issues raised

-
-
-
-
-
-

Agreed Actions for Parent / Carer(s)

1. (parent/carer) to ensure (child) attends school every day it is open and arrive on time (am). Hand over to (designated person) if appropriate.

2. (parent/carer) will telephone (school/designated person) before am to advise them for the reason for absence and the likely return date if is unable to attend for any reason.

3. to seek medical advice if is unwell and provide the school with or evidence, for example, a doctor's note, appointment card, hospital letter, medication prescribed by a GP any other evidence that enables the Head Teacher to consider authorising the absence as illness or medical appointment.

4. (parent/carer) to attend any meetings requested by School, or Schools Attendance Support Service.

5.

6.

Support currently provided:

Name	Agency	Contact No.	Reason and how this will support improvement	Parent / Carer Aware	
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Further support agreed:

Name	Agency	Contact No.	Reason and how this will support improvement	Parent / Carer Aware	
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
				Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Any other information

Improvement target: _____

Timescale: (during the next half term): from: to:

Review date: / /

If school attendance does not improve because of the actions agreed not being adhered to then this contract can be used as court evidence.

Consent by parent/carer(s)

I/We have agreed to this Parenting Contract and will

- a) Work with the school (and any other agencies) as detailed above, to improve my/our child's school attendance, and
- b) Carry out what we have agreed to do.

I/We also agree to information being shared with other professionals and agencies as required to help us.

I/We also understand that if my child has any unauthorised absences from school in the next

(e.g. half term) _____ a Penalty Notice or prosecution may follow without further warning. This agreement may be given as part of the evidence.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: / /

Parent/Carer Signature: _____ Date: / /

Student present at meeting **No** **Yes**

Form completed by: _____ who has agreed to provide support to the parents/carers for the purpose of complying with the contract.

Agency: _____

Location: _____

Telephone No. _____

Date: / /

Signature: _____