

Lydgate Junior School



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their potential. Lydgate Junior School is committed to working with parents / carers and pupils to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them.

The child is dependent upon the adults in his / her life to get them to school regularly, and on time.

The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Leave of absence can be granted in exceptional circumstances only, at the Headteacher's discretion. Parents may be fined for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school.

Our school enjoys, year on year, higher attendance rates than the national average (97.5% for 2016 -17, up from 97.3% in 2015 - 16) but this still means over 2400 days of school lost per year.

We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership with parents / carers.

The Law: The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- Parents ensure that children of compulsory school age, who are registered at a school, attend regularly.
- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or elsewhere.
- The Local Authority (LA) provides school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school.
- The school completes attendance registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The school reports pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than ten days without explanation to the LA.
- The LA ensures that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

Partnership: School expects pupils to:

- Attend regularly, on time and be ready to learn.
 - Be prepared for the day with appropriate equipment e.g. P.E. kit.
 - Report to the office if they arrive after registration time.
 - Tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school.
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Partnership (continued): School expects parents / carers to:

- Fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and prepared for the day.
- Contact school on the first day their child is absent for any reason before 9.15 a.m. and to keep the school updated (contacting school again on the third day if the child is still absent).
- Arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible, and to obtain an authorised absence pass from the school if unavoidable. The school may ask parents/carers to obtain proof of appointments.
- Arrange holidays out of school time. Term time holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absence, on all but a very few occasions where there might be exceptional circumstances. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. If parents choose to take their child on holiday in term time, they may be issued with a fixed penalty notice (a fine).

Parents / carers and pupils can expect the school to:

- Provide a broad, balanced education that is dependant on regular attendance at school.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality at school.
- Make efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance.
- Take prompt action when a problem has been identified.
- Liaise with officers from the LA to assist and support families where needed.
- Regularly communicate with parents / carers.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

Attendance of all pupils is monitored and evaluated regularly in the following ways:

Registration

- Registration takes place each morning at 8.45 a.m. and each afternoon at 12.50 p.m. (Y3 & Y5) and 1.10 p.m. (Y4 & Y6).
- Class teachers use SIMS to record attendance. They enter a mark in the register for each pupil present and code N for any pupil that is absent. Any notes received will be placed in the register folder for checking by office staff.

Responding to lateness

- Pupils who arrive after 8.45 a.m. report to the office where their absent mark is amended to 'L' (late).
- Pupils who arrive after 9.15 a.m. are marked 'absent after close of register' (code U). In case of emergency the register shows the pupil is on the premises.
- Parents / carers will be contacted by school if their child is persistently late.

Responding to absence – criteria for referral to the Attendance and Inclusion Service

- Home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance.
 - Patterns of absence.
 - Poor overall attendance (e.g. below 90%).
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Children Missing from Education

The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed when a child has not attended school for 10 days and their whereabouts are not known. The CME team will pursue the matter in accordance with LA procedures.

Children in Public Care

The Headteacher is the co-ordinator who liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children Team.

Awards and Rewards

Good attendance is recognised and rewarded. Classes with 100% weekly attendance are posted on the school website. At the end of an academic year, pupils with full attendance receive a certificate.

Partnership with parents / carers

It is vital that parents / carers are involved in promoting good attendance and punctuality. Parents / carers are encouraged to make contact with school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality. Any concerns or problems raised by parents / carers will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports provided by the Headteacher and the LA via the Headteacher's report.
- Attend School Attendance Panels as necessary.

Headteacher

- Overall responsibility for attendance within the school.
- Provide advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues.
- Liaise with the LA Inclusion Officer.
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the cluster.
- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of Looked After Children.
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are missing from education.

Class teachers

- Accurately complete registers, using code 'N' if a child is absent and school has not been advised.
 - Place any notes received in the register folder for the attention of office staff.
 - Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a pupil.
 - Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school.
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Administrative Officer

- Maintain SIMS attendance database and update on a weekly basis.
- Contact parents/carers on a daily basis if not reason for absence by text.
- On a weekly basis write to parents who have not responded to 'no reason for absence' text – if no contact mark as unauthorised absence.
- Maintains an overview of attendance and manages the day to day review.
- Meets half termly with the LA Attendance Officer to discuss individual pupils whose attendance is of concern, and agree action as necessary.
- Provide reports from SIMS to Governors, Headteacher and other school staff, LA officers as requested.
- Provide relevant information to LA officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Attend attendance reviews in school.
- Updating attendance data on the school website.

Attendance and Inclusion Service - LA Attendance Officer

- Liaise with the Headteacher, school staff and officers of the Local Authority to promote good attendance and punctuality within school Support the Headteacher and Inclusion Manager to produce, review and action the school's Attendance Plan and Attendance Policy, along with producing a Parent Policy for clear guidance and information.
- Support the school to develop whole school strategies relating to attendance and inclusion, offering advice, analysis and monitoring of attendance issues.
- Work closely with school staff regarding the pupil concerns list, discuss and agree appropriate courses of action when necessary, including prosecution procedures as appropriate.
- Attend appropriate meetings e.g., half termly reviews, meetings with parents
- Take an active part in attendance assemblies and other initiatives aimed at promoting attendance and punctuality.
- Maintain, review and analyse attendance information, statistics and reports. Provide reports to appropriate bodies e.g. Governors and LA.
- Make contact with parents / carers where concern is raised regarding a pupil's attendance.
- Discuss issues affecting attendance and punctuality with parents / carers and clearly outline legal responsibilities and requirements.

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher may authorise absence.

- Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the school will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.
 - Requests for exceptional leave must be made at least 20 school days in advance of any arrangement been made. The request will be made in writing (letter or email) by parent/carer using Appendix 2: Request for Exceptional Leave form. Requests for leave of absence must include specific start and end dates, as this will formally constitute the leave period. Where no specific dates are provided, then the leave cannot be considered or granted.
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- The Headteacher's decision is final.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is too ill to attend school.
- The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs.
- The school is not within walking distance and no suitable arrangements have been made by the LA (unless the parents / carers have chosen to send their child to this school when it is not within walking distance from home).
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
- There is a close family bereavement.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence.

Absence will not be authorised if:

- No explanation is offered by the parent/carer.
- The Headteacher is not satisfied with an explanation offered.
- The pupil is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home.
- The pupil is absent on a family holiday not agreed by the Headteacher.
- The pupil is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut.

If an unauthorised leave is taken consideration will be given to issuing a Penalty Notice (see Appendix 1). The Attendance and Inclusion Service will, after consulting with school, consider each case, taking into consideration any mitigating circumstances and make a decision. The LA will inform the school of the outcome and carry out any necessary action.

Process for removing a child's details from the school roll if the child has failed to attend school for over 10 days unauthorised:

A child's name can only be removed from school roll if one of the conditions prescribed in the Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) (England) 2006; Section 8(1) is satisfied. Section 8(1)(f)5 would apply if the child has failed to attend school within 10 school days immediately following the expiry of the period for which leave was granted ('authorised absence'). Section 8(1)(h)6 would apply if the child had been continuously absent from school for a period not less than 20 school days and at no time was that period authorised by the school (unauthorised absence).

In addition to the above 8(1) f/h, the school and CYPF must also demonstrate that they have satisfied the following two conditions:

- That the Headteacher does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the child is unable to attend the school by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause; and
 - That both the Headteacher and the local authority have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to ascertain where the pupil is.
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School will not wait for the expiry of the periods specified above, prior to making enquiries. Enquiries should start on the first day of absence or first day immediately commencing the period for which the child was expected to return to school.

School will forward a completed Children Missing from Education (CME) Checklist (Appendix 6) and Pupil Deregistration Request (Appendix 7) to the CME team for all children, who they feel meet one of the legal requirements for deregistration.

The CME team will provide written confirmation (within 10 school days) to the school confirming the date the child can be removed. If a child cannot be removed the CME team will provide the school with an explanation.

The responsibility for the child transfers from the school to the CME Team from the date of the deregistration letter.

Schools must send an electronic Common Transfer File (CTF) to the School to Schools website for all children who have left their school. The electronic transfer of data is a legal requirement under the Education (Pupil Information) Regulations 2005, as amended.

An exception to the normal rules regarding deregistration include:

- Children who are detained as part of a Court Order who cannot be removed if the period of the Order is less than 4 months.

Parents/carers of a child who has legally been removed from the school register will be required to reapply for a school place. There is no guarantee that a child will be able to secure a place at the school from which they have been removed.

Responsibility for maintaining policy: Headteacher

Reviewed: September 2017

Appendix 1

Penalty Notice Holiday Fine

If parents/carers take their children on holiday during term time and this is not authorised by the School, they may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice (Holiday Fine) of £60 (if paid in 21 days) or £120 (if paid between 21 and 28 days).

Each parent/carer can be issued with a notice one per family.



Appendix 2

Request for Exceptional Term Time Leave

Name of Pupil(s) Class(es) Siblings other schools (name, dob, name of school)	Name of Parents or Carers Telephone number Email	
Dates of exceptional leave request. From _____ to _____ (inclusive)		
Why are you requesting an exceptional leave of absence during term time? 		
What steps have you taken to minimise the impact of the leave on your child's learning? 		
Where will you be staying during the leave period? Please provide the full address and emergency contact details (UK and Abroad) 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I confirm that the information on this form is true</i> • <i>I agree to keep the school informed of any changes to my travel arrangements or if my child is unable to return to school on to due date</i> • <i>I am aware that if my child does not return to school by the date provided that he/she is at risk of losing their place at this school</i> • <i>I am aware that I may be fined and/or prosecuted for any time which my child is absent from school that has not been authorised by the Headteacher.</i> 		
Signed by parent/carer	Print name & relationship to child	Date
Headteacher's signature		Date



Appendix 3

School decision letter

To the Parent/Carer of

On the X you requested that the school consider term time leave for your child. You said that you wanted to go to X. You said that you would be away from school X. This equates to X school days.

The Headteacher has considered your request and has reached the following decision:

School days will be **authorised** by the school

School days will **not be authorised** by the school. N.B. for safeguarding purposes, we are aware that your child will not be in school during this time.

The reasons for the Headteacher's decision are given below.

We expect your child to return to school on X. If your child is unable to return on this date please let us know, as failure to do so may result in your child losing their place at this school. This will mean you will have to re-apply for a place at this school. You may also risk being fined or prosecuted by Sheffield City Council if your child is absent from school without the Headteacher's permission.



Appendix 4

School letter to parent, informing parent/carer of possible risk of losing school place (template)

NAME OF SCHOOL

Date:

Name:

Address:

Reference:

To the Parent/Carer of

Your child was due to return to school on(date). We have made enquiries and have been unable to confirm that your child is absent because of sickness or other another unavoidable circumstances.

As we are unable to confirm where your child is or a return date, I am writing to let you know that I will be requesting that your child is removed from the school roll. I will be informing the Children Missing from Education Team who may make enquiries with the Police, Social Care and Child Benefits.

It is important that you contact (name) the School (telephone number) as soon as you receive this letter. I will continue to make enquiries to find out where your child is.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Cc: CME Team, Howden House, Floor 3, Sheffield, S1 2SH

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Appendix 5

School letter to parent informing them of loss of school place (template)

NAME OF SCHOOL

Date:

Name:

Address:

Reference:

To the Parent/Carer of

I am writing to let you know that (child's name) has been removed from the register of this school on (date). If you would like your child to attend this school you will have to re-apply for a place.

Please contact the Children Missing Education (CME) team on 0114 2736462, who will be able to help you find a school place.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Cc: CME Team, Howden House, Floor 3, Sheffield, S1 2SH



Appendix 6

School Checklist to Locate Missing/Lost Pupils

Please complete fully and include 'no response' where appropriate, as this form will be required if a Child Protection investigation is undertaken

Name of Child:

DOB:

School:

School Action	Details	Outcome including date completed
Telephone calls made to parent/carers	Mobile: Landline:	
Telephone calls to emergency contact numbers	Name & tel number	
Email to parent	Email address:	
Letters sent to last known address		
Enquiries made with school which siblings attend	Sibling name & School	
Has the child has moved to another part of the UK and address is known, please contact CME team (0114 2736462) and request ' <i>safe and well visit</i> '	Date requested:	Date response received: Outcome:
Enquiries made with agencies with known involvement		
Home visited completed <small>(Min of 3 non-contact visits to be made). Schools may request this from their local MAST team</small>		
Enquiry made with neighbours		
Any other enquiries undertaken		

**All completed checklists need to be accompanied with a 'Request to Remove Child from School Roll' and sent to the CME team to enable deregistration to occur
CME Team, Howden House, Floor 3, Sheffield, S1 2SH**

Appendix 7

Request To Remove Child From School Roll

Information provided may be shared with fellow professionals under Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998

Details of Pupil to be removed?

First name		Surname	
Date of birth		UPN	
Current Address		GP name & address	

Brief description of why you feel this child should be removed?

Do you have any concerns or worries about this child's safety or believe this child is at risk of significant or immediate harm? Please explain:

Have you informed anyone about your concerns or worries, If so who?

Where do you think this child is now living?

Is a current FCAF Available? YES / NO Date of last attendance at school?

Who else is involved with the child or family? Name, Agency, contact details

Details of Family members

Name of siblings	DOB	School attending
Parent/carer name & DOB		
Details of Emergency contacts		

I believe that the child is missing and cannot be found after making reasonable enquires. I am therefore requesting that the child name is removed from the school roll.

Signed school:

Date:

Return the above to: Children Missing from Education Team, Floor 3 Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield S1 2SH Tel: 0114 2736462 Fax: 0114 2735470. You will receive a confirmation letter relating to the request of deregistration within 10 school days