

# St Lawrence CE Primary School



## Attendance Policy for Pupils

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Ref : STLAW.026  
Version 5.0

**Revised: November 2018**

**Consultation with staff and Governors**

**and adoption of policy: Autumn Term 2018**

**Review date: Autumn Term 2019**

## 1. Achieving our aims

All members of our school community are expected to work hard to make St Lawrence Primary School a secure and enjoyable environment for learning to take place. We should try to be courteous and polite at all times and careful and thoughtful of others in everything we do.

We feel that the ethos of doing our best and the positive atmosphere of our school makes our children happy and well motivated. This positive attitude is central to the 'St Lawrence Way'

*Listening and Learning  
Respecting and Caring  
Trusting and Forgiving  
Helping and Supporting  
Smiling and Inspiring.*

We value with a positive regard others whose ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status, or whatever their gender and gender identity and whatever their sexual identity, age or disability is different from our own and we work hard to understand what this means.

The school guiding principles are displayed around the school and in each classroom. The adults within the school discuss these rules at suitable times in acts of worship and in PSHE/ citizenship lessons. Some classes have agreed rules in addition to the school rules, but these are founded on the same principle.

### Guiding principles

Our principles grew from our framework for developing inspired individuals.

'working together to build a better world by developing inspired individuals to be the best they can possibly be'

Treating each child as a unique individual and tailoring our approach to their personal needs.

Providing a safe, welcoming and happy school where everyone is respected, valued and listened to.

Underpinning our teaching with Christian Values, ensuring our faith is present in all that we do.

Striving to be the hub of our village community and work with communities around our world.

Setting the highest standards of learning and celebrating the achievements of each individual.

Ensuring that our children learn skills that can be drawn on throughout their lives and careers.

## **Introduction**

St Lawrence is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. 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 your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

## **Why regular attendance is 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 so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

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 everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

- Attendance
- Behaviour Management
- Health and Safety
- Access to the Curriculum
- Anti- bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

## **Promoting regular attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

### **To help us all to focus on this we will:**

Give you details on attendance in our regular Home – School Bulletin;

Report to you at least half-termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;

Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;

Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.

## **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 his/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- to age, ability and aptitude
- to any special educational needs he/she may have
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

### **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, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- absences which have never been properly explained;
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark;
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

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, 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 usually make things worse.

## **2 Persistent absenteeism**

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's full 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 through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, use of circle time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Local Education Authority.

## **Absence procedure**

### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Or, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you.

### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with Head teacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Local education Authority if attendance moves below 90%.

## **Contact details**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

### 3 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### 4 How we manage lateness

The school day starts at **8.55am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked between **8.55am** and **9.00am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At **9.00am** the 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. Children who arrive after the gates are closed, are required to report to the school office and sign the Late Log.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Head teacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.



## Holidays in term time

It is important that, as with all absence, it is the Executive head teacher / Head of school and Governing body who decide whether an absence is authorised or not. Holidays in term time are not, under any circumstances, an automatic right. The LA strongly suggests that term time holidays should be discouraged wherever possible.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made 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 will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Each request for holiday absence will be considered on its merit and will take account of:

- the child's stage of education and progress to date
- the overall attendance pattern of the child
- the time of year of the proposed holiday and its nature (for instance its apparent educational benefit)
- rare and exceptional circumstances relating to
- parent's employment and leave entitlement (Armed Forces etc.)

It is important that you understand the circumstances when leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us:

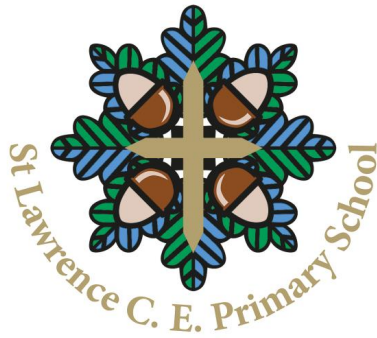
- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods (SATS).
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already below (95%) or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

### **5 Attendance targets**

Attendance targets are set by the Governing body each year and attendance is monitored by the governors. The attendance target for 2017/2018 is 97.5%.

**APPENDIX 1**



St Lawrence CE Primary School  
Preston on the Weald Moors  
Telford  
Shropshire  
TF6 6DH  
Tel: 01952 387780  
Fax: 01952 387782  
Email: a3091@telford.gov.uk  
Executive Headteacher:  
Miss H.L.Osterfield

**St Lawrence Attendance Policy for Pupils**

I have read and understood the attendance policy at St Lawrence.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Telford & Wrekin Model School Attendance Policy**

#### **Guidance for School in Developing a Framework for a Whole-School Attendance Policy**

**Telford & Wrekin Council recommend that every school should have a framework for a whole-school attendance policy. The policy should promote regular attendance and improve standards. This is an example for your consideration.**

#### **A Framework for a Whole-School Attendance Policy**

The framework for a whole-school attendance policy is based on the 5 'Ps' - namely, Philosophy, Principles, Procedures, Performance & Practice.

##### **Philosophy**

St Lawrence CE Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial.

As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### **Principles**

The school will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law,
- complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,
- stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence,
- reward good and improved attendance of all pupils, by sending "Good News" postcards to parents,
- promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence,
- consult with all members of the school community and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the whole-school attendance policy,
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors,
- send newsletters each term to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally update school website with any attendance related issues,
- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed,
- have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.

## **Procedures**

### ***If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will:***

- follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone/text message, or if the parent is unavailable send a standard letter requesting information,
- consider sending a second letter if an explanation has still not been received after three days of unexplained absence or send a School Attendance Letter (SAL),
- refer to the school's nominated attendance person (NAP) or Education Welfare Officer (EWO), to follow up absence if no response is received after 5 days of absence and consider a referral to the '*Children & Family Locality Services*' or contact '*Family Connect*' if no contact can be made with the parent,
- invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM) after a maximum of 10 days absence, unless other action is planned. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, parent, pupil and the NAP/EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance,
- Help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then an Individual Reintegration Programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible
- Contact ***Family Connect 01952 385385*** for further guidance on available support.

**In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.**

## **Performance**

***It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set during the Autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the governing body. The governing body must approve the school target for attendance to be set for the following academic year. The target should be sent to the Group Manager, Admissions, Attendance and School Organisation by the end of the Autumn term at the latest. In compiling an Action Plan, the school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.***

***When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:***

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal and Social Education (PHSE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons

## **Practice**

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's NAP/EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages
- A signed copy of any correspondence is retained by the school
- A referral is made to AST (the Attendance Support Team) for intervention

**Revised April 2013**

### Approval Information - Governors

Position	Chair of Governors/Parent Governor
Name	Mr Paul Evans
Signature	
Date	

Position	LA Governor
Name	Mrs Helen Ashby
Signature	
Date	

Position	Foundation Governor
Name	Rev H Morby
Signature	
Date	

Position	Foundation Governor
Name	Mrs P Jones
Signature	
Date	

Position	Co-opted Governor
Name	Mrs Alison Moore
Signature	
Date	

Position	Co-opted Governor
Name	Mrs Rachel Voiculescu
Signature	

Position	Staff Governor
Name	Mr Laith Al-Asmar
Signature	

### Approval Information - School

Position	Executive Head Teacher
Name	Miss Helen Osterfield
Signature	
Date	

Position	Head of School / Class 1 Teacher
Name	Mrs Alison Moore
Signature	
Date	



## Attendance Policy for Pupils

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Position	Class 2 Teacher
Name	Mr Laith Al-Asmar
Signature	
Date	

Position	Class 3 Teacher
Name	Mrs Claire Standish
Signature	
Date	

Position	Class 1 & 3 Teacher
Name	Mrs Emily Barker
Signature	
Date	