

The Levett School



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Positivity | Determination | Reflection | Integrity

Attendance Policy

<i>Policy agreed by Governors on:</i>	31/01/2023
<i>Review date for Governors:</i>	8 th March 2024
<i>Allocated Group/Person to Review:</i>	Head of School
<i>Agreed frequency of Review, by allocated person:</i>	Every Two Years
<i>Last Review date:</i>	26 th January 2022

Lower School, Melton Road, Sprotbrough, Doncaster, DN5 7SB

Upper School, Lansdowne Road, Intake, Doncaster, DN2 6QN

The Legal Framework

Under The Education Act 1999, parents are responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under this Act.

The Department for Education (DFE) advice on School Attendance November 2013 and School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures January 2015 has been consulted before reviewing this policy. This school believes that good attendance is vital for all pupils if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. Every teacher will regularly check the attendance of their class and will follow up a pupil's absences with appropriate personnel in school and where necessary the school will follow up with the child's parents. We hope that parents will assist us in our work of raising attendance levels throughout the school by:

- Ensuring the regular attendance of their child
- Informing the school when their child is absent from school
- Providing a reason for the absence
- Attending any meetings about their child's attendance, where necessary.

Aims

Regular school attendance is vital for all children, but especially so for those who have struggled to engage with education in their previous school placements as they will have missed a significant amount of learning time if they have been subject to high numbers of exclusion and isolation. This point is stressed to all pupils and parents when they are first admitted to the school.

Since the children we cater for are usually behind their chronological age in the academic skills, we need them to be in school every day if we are to help them achieve their full potential and transfer successfully, where possible, to mainstream education. Regular attendance is also a good habit to acquire in school – hopefully they will become reliable employees in the world of work later.

At Levett School we firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. The aim of this guidance is to minimise the amount of time lost due to absence in order to maximise the educational potential of every pupil. This can be achieved with the support of parents by ensuring absence, including holidays, is not taken during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

At Levett School, in order for an attendance record to be deemed good, it must be 96% or above:

- 100% Excellent Attendance
- 96% Very Good Attendance
- 90% Good Attendance

Each year, a number of pupils from every year group achieve 100% attendance, emphasising that it is an achievable target. Some achieve this level of attendance year upon year. Absence during term time, for any reason, interrupts a pupil's education and risks disrupting their educational progress.

- Pupils should aim for 100% attendance, The Department for Education state good attendance is 96% or better.
- 90% attendance means a pupil is missing the equivalent of $\frac{1}{2}$ day of education every week.
- Pupils with 90% and below are classified as Persistent Absentees
- A pupil with 80% attendance all the way through secondary school is the equivalent of missing a whole year of education.

Government figures show:

- 93%+ attendance will give pupils a 73% chance of achieving 5+ 9-4 GCSEs, whatever their ability
- Below 90% attendance will give pupils only a 27% chance of achieving 5+ 9-4 GCSEs, whatever their ability
- 90% attendance sounds quite good but..... 1 day off in 10 over 5 years equals 95 days which is 19 weeks and equates to half a school year

Only the Headteacher may authorise such absences. Absences without permission from school will be registered as unauthorised (equivalent to truancy).

*** 'Exceptional Circumstances' include:**

- illness of pupil
- representative event (for example sport, music or school)
- religious observance
- family bereavement (immediate family)
- family crisis
- employer/further education/school interview

Any other 'exceptional circumstances' will be at the discretion of the Headteacher and a pupil's attendance record will be taken into account when deciding whether or not to grant permission for absence.

'Exceptional Circumstances' DO NOT include:

- looking after siblings
- birthday or other celebrations
- shopping
- attendance at local events e.g. The Great Yorkshire Show

School Responsibilities

The school will:

- Contact parents on the first day if there is unexplained absence.
- Consult parents if it is felt that absence is affecting progress.
- Encourage punctuality and good attendance as part of safeguarding practice.
- Discuss with parents any problems with attendance and punctuality.
- Liaise with the Local Authority (LA) over specific attendance issues where necessary.
- Develop clear procedures to enable pupils to come to school.
- Support families to improve their child's attendance where necessary.
- Refer pupils with poor attendance to the Local Authority for additional support.
- Ensure that all pupils and parents understand the issues and procedures for attendance.
- Ensure that all staff including administrative, support and non-teaching staff as well as Governors understand the issues and procedures for registration and attendance.
- Determine the correct absence code following Department for Education guidelines.
- Closely monitor pupils on personalised timetables based on individual needs.

Attendance records are also used when writing references for future employers, colleges or universities.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and Senior Leaders with responsibility for personal development, behaviour and wellbeing are the key people in our school who motivate and lead the whole staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

- Ensuring regular celebrations of good attendance take place.
- Providing regular reports to the Governing Body about attendance.
- Ensuring the monitoring and implementation of the agreed policy and procedures.
- Being available, if appropriate, for parents who may wish to discuss specific problems or in-school difficulties which their child is experiencing.
- Ensuring that appropriate training is provided as required on attendance.
- Ensuring the governors are provided with key information regarding whole school and pupil cohort's attendance by providing data, analysis and commentary.

The Governors

The Governing Body of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance by supporting and encouraging pupils and teachers in their work. The Governing Body will ensure that a governor is available to meet with parents where appropriate.

The Governing body will be provided with attendance information as an indicator of overall school performance.

Representatives of the Governing body will access appropriate training to help them to understand the duty of the school to promote regular attendance.

The Governors will ratify the school attendance policy.

The Role of Class Teachers/Key Workers

Class Teachers/Key Workers are ideally placed because of their regular contact with pupils to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence are reasonable, or if the child is at an early stage in developing a pattern of absence.

In our school we recognise that building a good relationship with pupils is vital in promoting good attendance by:

- Ensuring that an accurate and timely register is taken mornings and afternoon, using lesson monitor.
- Publicly praising those pupils who attend well, or make an effort to improve their attendance.
- Using the school registration system accurately to record absences with 'N' code for the Attendance Officer inputting the correct code when evidence is obtained that authorises the absence or is coded as unauthorised.
- Referring unexplained absences or patterns to absence to the Pupil Attendance Officer.
- Welcoming children back after they have been absent because of illness.
- Taking specific steps to assist children returning to school when they have been absent.
- Meet with pupils after an absence to discuss the reasons for the absence and any extra support they may require.
- Providing a positive role model through their own attendance and punctuality.

The Role of the Pupil Attendance Officer

- Passing information received from parents at the school to the class teachers/key workers regularly and consistently.
- Begin first day contact by 9:30am each day to establish where a pupil is if not in school as expected each day
- Attempt 2nd and 3rd contact for absent pupils, where 1st contact is unsuccessful
- Work closely with safeguarding to ensure all persistent absentees are seen by a professional on a regular basis
- Producing the school's good attendance certificates.
- Producing and implementing attendance incentives for both pupils and parents.
- Producing engaging and informative attendance displays for both primary and secondary sites
- Keeping an accurate register on SIMS, chase missing marks/incomplete registers.
- Analysing attendance data for trends and to identify pupils at risk.
- Making routine phone calls to parents and sending out standard letters to parents about their child's attendance.
- Working alongside Levett School's designated Education Welfare Officer to identify pupils who may proceed through the stages of the legal process for irregular school attendance, or need to improve their attendance to school as appropriate.
- Meeting with parents/carers alongside the Head of School to discuss pupil attendance and support them to increase pupil's school attendance.

This school believes that its pupils are able to achieve success when:

- School and family work in partnership.
- Parents take an active interest in their child's work.
- Parents ensure that their child attends school regularly and do not allow time off from school for trivial or unnecessary reasons.
- Parents contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am and provide the reason for absence and intended return date.
- Parents avoid taking their children on holiday during term time. If this is unavoidable a holiday request form must be completed and authorised by the school *prior* to the holiday.
- Parents ensure that, so far as possible, any work that has been missed because of absence is completed, checking with the staff at school if necessary.
- Parents attend any necessary meetings and respond as quickly as possible to any letters and information about their child's attendance.

Parental Responsibilities

By law parents have a duty to educate their children by ensuring regular attendance at school or otherwise. In order to facilitate this process, parents with children at Levett School are expected to:

- Inform school by telephone (01302 390761, option 1 for Lower School or option 2 for Upper School) on the first morning of any absence before 9.00am
- Inform the school of the anticipated return date due to absence and continue to contact school if this changes
- Ensure that their child gets to school on time
- Ensure that their child catches up on missed work to avoid 'gaps' in their knowledge.
- Not take family holidays during term time (see further guidance below)
- Attend review meetings linked to personalised timetables, attendance and any changes as appropriate

What will happen if my child does not attend school regularly?

- The school will contact you if they are concerned about your child's attendance to offer any support that may be required. An Education Penalty Notice could be requested if attendance continues to be a concern.
- Doncaster Council will use legislation to enforce attendance at school where parents do not fulfil their duty to ensure their children attend school regularly. This could mean a parent or carer enters into the Local Authority Enforcement Procedure which may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court. A parent or carer could receive a Parenting Order, a Community Order, a Curfew Order and/or a fine up to £2500.
- A parent or carer can also be issued with an Education Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence including taking an unauthorised holiday in term time.

- Remember school gives your child a wide range of opportunities and experiences both academic and social allowing them to develop their interests and achieve their full potential. Failure to attend school regularly will limit a pupil's access to this.

The Role of Pupils

This school believes that all pupils should attend regularly if they are to succeed and reach their full potential.

Pupils should:

- Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine illness.
- Arrive at school in time for registration at 08:45 am.
- To attend for afternoon registration at 12:30pm
- If they arrive late but before 9.30 am, they will be awarded a late mark.
- Pupils on a personalised timetable that includes attendance to offsite and alternative providers must ensure they attend regularly in line with their timetable

Holidays in Term Time

In line with the Governments new legislation effective from 1st September 2013 no requests for holidays can be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. For the school to consider exceptional circumstances a leave of absence form must be submitted at least four weeks before the proposed start of the holiday and booking the holiday. For the School to consider exceptional circumstances the request must be put in writing together with any supporting evidence. A meeting or phone call will then take place to discuss the request. All holidays will be classed as unauthorised, unless you receive confirmation in writing from the School that the holiday has been authorised. There are no exceptions. All holidays that are unauthorised will be referred to the Local Authority to issue an Education Penalty Notice. When an Education Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 28 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the school. Please note that a separate Education Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Every school day counts towards your child's future. Days off school add up to lost learning. In total there are 175 non-school days a year. This gives families the opportunity to:

- spend time together
- go on family visits
- go on holiday
- go on days out
- attend routine appointments

The law says that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time except in exceptional circumstances. If you take your child on holiday during term-time without the schools authorisation this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may result in parents being issued with an Education Penalty Notice.

Why shouldn't I take my child on holiday during term time?

Many parents and carers think it is okay to go on holiday during term time; this has a negative effect on their children's learning and ability to achieve.

If your child goes on holiday during term time, they are absent:

- 10 days absence = 95% attendance
- 19 days absence = 90% attendance
- 29 days absence = 85% attendance
- 38 days absence = 80% attendance
- 47 days absence = 75% attendance

Children with over 90% attendance are more likely to gain five or more 9-4 GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

How do I request leave of absence for a family holiday?

All requests should be made on an Application for Leave of Absence for Annual Holiday which is available from the school office. You should also submit any evidence to support your exceptional circumstances (see below). This should be submitted no later than 21 days before the start of the holiday.

Will the school authorise taking my child away during term-time?

The Legislation for authorising absence in term time states that holiday's will not be authorised 'except in exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will consider your request and respond to your request.

What happens if the head teacher does not agree my request?

Your child's absence will be marked as unauthorised absence and you will be informed of this. If you take your child on holiday your child's school may request the Local Authority issue an Education Penalty Notice.

The Penalty is £60 per parent per pupil and if not paid within 21 days this will increase to £120, failure to pay the full amount within 28 days will result in a summons to appear in the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Contact:

Email: welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk

Tel: 01302 736504

Appendices

1 – Stage 1 absence letter

2 – Stage 2 absence letter

3 – Late letter

4 – DMBC – Education Penalty Notice Information

5 – Leave of absence/holiday request form

9 – DMBC - Code of Conduct for Education Penalty Notices – Please see separate document

Appendix 1**Stage 1 Absence Letter**

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Address

Dear

Regarding Your Child's Attendance**Name:****DOB:**

At The Levett School, we are committed to providing high quality education and improving outcomes for all of our pupils. In order for a child to reach their full potential, we expect a high level of attendance, so they are able to maximize their learning and achievement.

It has been noted that * has not been attending school regularly. I enclose a copy of his/her attendance certificate for your reference, which shows an attendance of *%.

**100% = Excellent 96% = National average 92% = Poor 90% = Very poor
85% and below = Serious concerns**

If * is off school, you must inform school on the first morning of their absence by 9:00 a.m, giving the reason for the absence. It is appreciated that young people sometimes become unwell, but it is important to remain aware of your child's attendance levels as frequent absence can have a serious effect on both educational progress and a pupil's attitude towards school.

I will continue to monitor * attendance and, with your co-operation, I would anticipate an improvement. **I need to remind you that you have a legal responsibility to ensure that * attends school regularly and on time.**

If you wish to discuss the matter further, or are experiencing any difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to your support in this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Miss F Mooney
Attendance & Business Support

Appendix 2**Stage 2 Absence Letter**

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Address

Dear Parent/Guardian Name

(Student Name & DOB)

You may recall my letter dated * expressing our concerns with * current level of attendance. Since that letter, we have not seen the anticipated improvement in their attendance levels and therefore we would like to invite you to a meeting in school to look at the issues causing irregular school attendance and allow us put in place appropriate support to help you with this. The meeting will take place on (date and time).

I enclose a copy of your child's registration certificate, which will form part of the discussion during the meeting.

I must advise you that due to continued irregular school attendance, we will require medical confirmation to support any future absences.

As a school we will endeavor to support you but you must be aware that we have a statutory responsibility to ensure regular attendance is maintained, so may need to follow Local Authority Enforcement Procedures, should improvements not be seen.

I look forward to meeting with you to discuss how we can work together to improve * attendance.

If you are unable to attend the above appointment, please contact me as soon as possible so that an alternative date can be arranged.

Yours sincerely

Mrs C Whitehead
Head of School

Miss F Mooney
Attendance & Business Support

Appendix 3

Late Letter

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Address

Dear

Regarding Your Child's Attendance

Name:

DOB:

It has recently been noted that * has been arriving to school late on a regular basis and as such is being monitored closely.

So far this year * has been late * times, resulting in * missed minutes of education. Frequent lateness can have a serious effect on both educational progress and a pupil's attitude to school.

I need to remind you that you have a legal responsibility to ensure that * attends school regularly and on time.

If you have any queries regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Yours sincerely

Miss F Mooney

Attendance & Business Support

Appendix 4 DMBC – Education Penalty Notice Information



Doncaster
Council

Information for Parents

What is an Education Penalty Notice?

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced Legislation that made provision for a Local Authority to issue Education Penalty Notices. These notices require a fine to be paid by parents/carers of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school during term-time.

An Education Penalty Notice (EPN) can be issued in three situations:-

1. If a Holiday or other leave of absence is taken during term-time without the authorisation of the Headteacher.
2. If a Pupil has a period of unauthorised absence from School following an EPN warning letter, and the attendance does not improve within 15 days. *(If you do receive a warning letter from your child's school about their attendance you should get in touch with the school as soon as possible.)*
3. If a pupil is excluded and is found in a public place during school hours.

Any absence which does not meet the criteria of being 'an exceptional circumstance' will be marked as unauthorised absence and as such you may be at risk of receiving an Education Penalty Notice. Please be aware that BOTH parents are at risk of receiving an Education Penalty Notice for EACH child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school in line with Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

What are the Penalties?

If an Education Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is **£60 per parent per child** when the payment is made within **21 days**. If payment is not made within **21 days** the penalty amount will double to **£120 per parent per child** and must be paid by the **28th day of issue**.

Failure to pay within **28 days** will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at School. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a Fine of up to **£1000**.

What must I do?

If you are having difficulties in ensuring your child attends school regularly, you should contact your child's school in the first instance. If you receive a warning letter from your school or Doncaster Council about your child attendance you should get in touch with the school as soon as possible, to discuss the reason for your child's absence from school.

You should avoid taking your child out of school for a holiday unless there are exceptional circumstances as you may receive an Education Penalty Notice.

Can I get help if my child is not attending school regularly?

The Local Authority supports schools, parents and pupils so that high levels of attendance can be achieved. In the first instance you should contact your child's school who will offer advice and support. You can also seek advice from the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service on 01302 736504.

Every school in Doncaster is supporting the message that school attendance is a high priority. We hope that parents will help us to ensure that all Doncaster children achieve the very highest levels of attendance at school.

Appendix 5

Leave of absence/holiday request form



Application for Leave of Absence 2021 - 2022

(Please read the notes overleaf before completing this form)

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended September 2013) state that Headteacher's may not grant any leave of absence during term-time

Child's Details			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
Address (inc Post Code):			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
Address (inc Post Code):			
Parent/Guardian Details			
Parent 1 Name (inc title):		Date of Birth:	
Relationship to Pupil:			
Address (inc Post Code):			
Parent 2 Name (inc title):		Date of Birth:	
Relationship to Pupil:			
Address (inc Post Code):			
Reason for the Request:			
Other School Age Children in the Household:			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
School Attending:		Relationship:	
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
School Attending:		Relationship:	
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
School Attending:		Relationship:	
First Day of Leave:		Last Day of Leave:	
Date to return to School:			
Adult accompanying Pupil:			
Signature of Parent:		Date:	

Headteachers Decision and reason for Decision:			
Signature of Headteacher:		Date:	

Notes for Parents
Application for Leave of Absence 2021-22

Please complete the Form overleaf and return it to the Headteacher for any application for leave of absence for the Academic year commencing 2nd September 2021 – 28th July 2022. The decision will be based on the *Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006 (Amended September 2013)*. Headteacher's should determine the number of School days a child can be away from School *IF* leave is granted and may make the decision following advice from the Local Authority.

Any absence which does not meet the criteria of being '*an exceptional circumstance*' will be marked as unauthorised absence and as such you may be at risk of receiving a Education Penalty Notice. Please be aware that *BOTH* parents are at risk of receiving a Education Penalty Notice for *EACH* child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school in line with *Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003*.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is **£60 per Parent per Child** when the payment is made within **21 days**. If payment is made after **21 days** but within **28 days** this will increase to **£120 per Parent per Child**. Failure to pay within **28 days** will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at School. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a Fine of up to **£1000**.

The 2013 change to Legislation states that it is really important that every child attends school for as many of the 380 half day sessions of the school year as possible. It is the responsibility of Parents to ensure that their Children do not take unnecessary time off school.

Any absence taken during term-time destroys the continuity of the child's education and reduces chances of success. Absence in the weeks prior to SATS tests or GCSE's will also disrupt revision and omit the reassurance that school staff can provide during the preparation period.

Absence taken during years 6,7,10 and 11 and at the beginning of the academic year can also have a negative impact on transition and assessments.