LEA ENDOWED CE PRIMARY SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE POLICY

Information for Parents

OUR VISION

'LET EVERYONE SHINE'

At Lea Endowed Church of England School we provide an excellent education for our children. We follow God's example, by loving Him, and each other, in all that we do. Our whole school family is encouraged to achieve their full, God given potential and shine in their own special way.

"Let your light shine."

Matthew 5:16

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain an attendance rate of a ***minimum*** of 96%
- Maintain parents' and pupils' awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

In order for your child to achieve their full potential, they need to be in school every day. We would like to emphasise the important role you play in your child's education. In order to feel confident and secure your child needs to see the relationship between home and school. Good communication between families and school helps to ensure a smooth transition and also enables the teacher to learn about each child from the adult that knows them best.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school

As a parent you can help us by:

- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness

We shall:

- Follow up unexplained absences by phone calls and letters as soon as possible
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, the school brochure and the Home-School agreement
- Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report
- Let you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters,

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are ***rare*** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are ***not*** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved Holidays
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.

Punctuality

- Morning registration is BETWEEN 8.55 am AND 9.00 am. This is the time your child must be in the classroom, so you need to ensure your child is coming through the school gate by 8.50am. There is always a member of staff on duty in the playground and at our 'drop off' area every morning from 8.45am.
- Children arriving between 9.00 AM and 9.05AM will be marked as late.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.
- Arrival after the close of registration AT 9.05 am may be marked as unauthorised absence in line with the DCFS guidance.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if not collected or the school contacted by school closing time.

What we at Lea Endowed expect from our families:

It is vital that your child attends school regularly.
Your child is on time every day.
If your child is absent for any reason you MUST contact school straight away to explain why your child will be absent. This can be done via telephone, text, or email. If not, we will contact you.
Pick your child your child up on time at the end of the day.
Avoid leave in term time.

There are many figures published by the DfE (Department for Education) relating to attendance figures. Here are some of them:

- If a school can improve their attendance by 1%, they will see a 5-6% improvement in attainment.
- You may think that managing 90% attendance is a good thing!! However, if your child does only attend school 90% of the time, this is still well below the National requirements – and 90% attendance actually means missing one half of a school day every week...Or all of February in one school year!
- If you take 10 days out of school for a family holiday – this automatically lowers your child's attendance to 94.7% for the year without any sickness absences.
- If for whatever reason, your child missed an average of only one day a week for their whole time in school...this would actually add up to missing the equivalent of two years' schooling. That would be the equivalent of them not starting school until they were 7 or leaving school at 14.

Term Time Leave of Absence

We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the head teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the board of governors
It is our policy:

- That only in **exceptional** circumstances will holidays be allowed.
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays need to fill in an application form well in advance and before booking the holiday. Please ask the school office for a form; the head teacher will consider your request and advise you of his/her decision, (possibly asking to meet with you to discuss) further time than allowed will be unauthorised and you risk *your* child being taken off the school roll.
- If the school does not agree and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A ***good*** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom

Leavers
If your child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6 to go to High School, parents are asked to

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving.
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records be transferred
- Let us know when you move

Children Missing Education
When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education.** This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services (formerly Social Services) the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

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

The Department for Education has determined that from **September 2015 a pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance falls below 90%.** When attendance nears this level children have already missed significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is at risk. We need parents' full support in ensuring that attendance does not reach this level. Parents may be asked to attend an Attendance Panel meeting to discuss their child's attendance.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

Review: Sept 2020

Approved by Chair of Governors: Dave Seddon