



## 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.

At Lea Endowed CE Primary School, the Senior Leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school is Mrs C M Seagrave (Headteacher).

**In order for your child to flourish and 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 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 Mrs Ruston, school bursar, on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return. The number to ring is 01772 729880.
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks. Parents may be asked to provide evidence of appointments, if they are to be taken during school hours.
- 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 Pupil Attendance Support Worker 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
- 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.
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved Holidays

## **Punctuality**

- Morning registration is at 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 between 8:45 and 8:59am. 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 after 9.00 am 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 9.30 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. Regular late collection of children may be seen as a Safeguarding concern.

### **How we promote attendance at Lea Endowed:**

Senior Leaders meet with all children and their adults dropping off each morning, at the school gates. SLT encourage punctuality on a daily basis.  
Regular reminders about the importance of punctuality and attendance are given on class and headteacher's newsletters.  
Classes are incentivised through half termly rewards for the overall class with best attendance.  
100% Attendance Trophies are given out to reward full attendance.

### **School's Strategy for Using Data to Improve Attendance**

- Through the use of SIMS' data, C Seagrave and L Ruston track and monitor children's attendance.
- Children who are at risk of becoming persistent absentees (below 90%) are tracked daily and parents/carers contacted for explanation of child's absence.
- If attendance becomes a real cause for concern, C Seagrave arranges intervention and support through LCC PAST (Pupil Attendance Support Team).
- Parents and Carers may be asked to sign an Attendance Contract to ensure accountability for their child's attendance.
- Parents and Carers may be invited into school to attend meetings to promote and support improved attendance.
- Wider services may be signposted eg Children and Family wellbeing Service if appropriate.
- C Seagrave (Headteacher) reports comparative Attendance data to the Governing Body termly.
- Parents are given children's attendance data on annual school reports

### **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 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

**Please note:** Our Governing Body approved the use of penalty notice for unauthorised holidays on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

A penalty notice (PN2) can be issued in cases of unauthorised holiday leave from school when:

- A pupil must have had a minimum of 5 school days (10 sessions) lost to unauthorised absence during the current term or 7 school days (14 sessions) in 2 consecutive terms (but within an approximate 3 month timeframe) and the majority of the absences must be marked as code G (unauthorised holiday)

## 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.

Staff will be aware a child going missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and, as such, these children are increasingly at risk of being victims of harm, sexual and criminal exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation or radicalisation. Staff will monitor pupils that go missing from the school, particularly on repeat occasions, and report them to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures, in accordance with the Attendance Policy. The school will inform the LA of any pupil who fails to attend regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Where reasonably possible schools and colleges **will hold more than one emergency contact number for their pupils and students.**

## **Keeping Children Safe in Education Sept 2022**

### **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

We know that different forms of harm often overlap, and that perpetrators may subject children and young people to multiple forms of abuse, such as criminal exploitation (including county lines) and sexual exploitation.

Some of the following can be indicators of both child criminal and sexual exploitation where children:

- suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

Children who have been exploited will need additional support to help maintain them in education.

#### **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.

Updated: Sept 2022

Review: Sept 2023 or earlier as required

Approved by Chair of Governors: Dave Seddon