



Attendance Policy for Laurus Trust Primary Schools

Written by: Joe Maguire

Last reviewed: September 2024

Next review by: September 2026

The Laurus Trust recognises the importance of good attendance and the significance of attendance on achievement and attainment.

We aim to achieve good attendance by operating an Attendance Policy within which pupils, staff, parent/carers, the local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. Each school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. All staff will encourage good attendance.

The Attendance Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Aims

- 96% attendance or above and for persistent absence not to exceed 8%
- To improve the quality of school life
- To create a culture in which good attendance is a 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent/carers and staff that each school in the Laurus Trust values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To be consistent in implementation
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive
- To promote good attendance through the prospectus and weekly newsletter

Objectives

- To involve pupils in recognising the importance of their attendance
- To improve communication with parent/carers about regular school attendance
- To ensure parent/carers appreciate good attendance is an integral part of the home/school agreements
- For all school staff to continue to take responsibility with pupils and parent/carers for pupils' attendance
- To recognise the important role of teachers and administration staff in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- To work in partnership with Local Authority colleagues
- To ensure all partners are aware of their roles and responsibilities in monitoring good attendance

Targets

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To set targets that meet or exceed statutory guidance
- To agree specific targets for individuals, groups, years and the whole school
- To keep parent/carers, pupils and governors informed of policy, practice and targets at least annually
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for vulnerable groups

The School Day

Timings for the school day in each of our schools can be found on the 'Term Dates' page of respective websites.

Responsibilities of Parent/carers and Pupils

- Parent/carers should ensure that children arrive at school on time to ensure a good start to the day. Registers will reflect if a child is late.
- If a child is not well enough to come to school, parent/carers should notify the school office as soon as possible giving the reason for absence, on each day of absence. An out of hours telephone message service is available.
- If a child is absent for any other reason, parent/carers must contact the school giving reasons for their child's absence and/or lateness on each day of absence.
- Whenever possible please arrange for medical appointment to take place out of school time. If this is not possible, please email the Head of School prior to the appointment, requesting leave of absence for the child and provide a copy of the appointment card or letter.
- If parent/carers wish to withdraw their child for a planned event, they must seek permission in advance from the school by sending a letter or email to the Head of School. If the child has a sibling attending another school, the Head of School may contact the other school to enquire whether they have also received a request for term time absence. A decision will then be made and a written response will be given to parent/carers to confirm whether or not permission is given. The Head of School will also decide how many days the child can be away from school if the absence is granted.
- Holidays during term time are strongly discouraged because of the negative impact it can have on a child's emotional wellbeing and academic progress. Since September 2013, Head Teachers have not been allowed to authorise holidays during term time. Absences can only be authorised by the Head of School in exceptional circumstances. To assist parent/carers, details of school holidays are circulated at least annually and are available at all times on each school's website.
- The 2024 regulations set out the procedures for issuing fixed penalty notices (fines) as follows (taken from [School attendance and absence](#)):
 - *Your local council can give each parent a fine of £80, rising to £160 if you do not pay within 21 days.*
 - *From the 2024 to 2025 school year, each parent will only get up to 2 fines for the same child in a 3-year period.*

- *If you get a second fine in 3 years it will be £160. If you do not pay the fine in 28 days you may be taken to court for keeping your child out of school.*
- *If your child is off school 3 or more times within the 3 years you will not be fined but may be taken to court.*
- If a child leaves the school, parent/carers/carers need to provide a forwarding address, name of the new school the child will be attending and a contact email address.

Procedure for Managing Pupil Attendance

- Registers must be taken at the beginning of each session in accordance with LA legislation and the DfE statutory guidance contained with [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- Registers are checked by a member of staff on a daily basis.
- The absence line is regularly monitored for notification of children's absence.
- In accordance with DfE guidance, we request that parent/carers/carers notify their child's school on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. DfE guidance states, that "Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt or if the period of absence exceeds 12 days, schools can request parent/carers to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parent/carers of their intention. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes".
- If children arrive in class after the register has been taken, they will be given an 'L' code representing a late arrival. If children arrive after the registers close at 9.30am, they will be given a 'U' code.
- If a child is absent and the parent/carers have not notified the school of the reason for absence, school will make every effort to contact them to ascertain why. If parent/carers are unavailable, in the best interests of the child, school will make every effort to find the whereabouts of the child by contacting other family and friends.
- Attendance is monitored and any concerns about a child's safety and well-being are shared with the Head of School. This includes persistent illness, late or non-arrivals.

- If a child is absent for ten consecutive school days, they will be considered missing from education. An urgent referral on the eleventh day will be made to the Local Authority and a CME (Children Missing in Education) form will be completed. After reasonable enquiries and if the child does not return to school after a further five days, the child may be removed from the school roll.
- Regular 'newsletter' reminders will be issued outlining the importance of punctuality and daily attendance and the school's expectations will also be outlined at Parent/Carer Information Evenings.
- Dates of statutory test times will be given well in advance to relevant year groups. Permission for any absence, not caused by ill health, will not be authorised during this period.
- Information on attendance will be included on the school website.
- Children's attendance records will be included with the annual Pupil Reports.
- Pupils with irregular absence patterns will be highlighted as part of the class handover arrangements on transfer to their new class/school.
- The following procedure will be taken by the school in the event of concern over a child's attendance:

Stage one: Parent/carers/carers will be contacted by telephone/letter to discuss attendance concern and to explore how school can support the family in improving attendance. A follow-up email will be sent summarising the conversation and providing notification of next steps if no improvement.

Stage two: If there is no improvement, a standard letter will be sent inviting parent/carers to come in to meet with a member of staff to discuss how home and school can work together to improve attendance and/or punctuality. An attendance contract may be discussed at this stage.

Stage three: If attendance does not improve, a second letter will be sent asking parent/carers to meet with the Head of School and indicating that the Local Authority will be contacted if there is no response. An attendance contract will be discussed at this stage.

Stage four: Head of School send a third letter asking to meet with parent/carers. Failure to attend this meeting (or attending the meeting but not resulting in agreed improvements in attendance) will result in a referral to the Local Authority.

If attendance issues persist then the school has a duty to alert the Local Authority and parent/carers/carers will be informed. A record of all correspondence regarding attendance will be kept on file by the school.

Equality Impact Statement

<p>Names and titles of people involved with this assessment</p> <p>Title of Policy – Attendance Policy</p>	<p>Dr Mark Sackville-Ford</p> <p>Trust Director of Inclusion</p>														
<p>Impact assessment carried out with regard to identified characteristics</p>	<table> <tr> <td>Race</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disability</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sex</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Age</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religious belief</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual orientation</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gender Reassignment</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religious belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<p>Summary of any issues/proposed changes</p>	<p>n/a</p>														
<p>Date</p>	<p>September 2024</p>														
<p>Date of next review</p>	<p>September 2026</p>														