



# Lady Boswell's C.E. (Aided) Primary School

Learning Together  Learning For Life

Co- Headteachers: Mrs Hannah Pullen BA Hons, PGCE (NPQH) and Mrs Sharon Saunders B.Ed Hons (NPQH)

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Dear Parents and Carers,

## Term dates for the next academic year and attendance

Lady Boswell's School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement for all our pupils, and good attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. We write to parents each year to set out the details of our Attendance Policy. Please also find, at the end of this letter, the term dates for the 2025-2026 academic year.

### Attendance

The government expects parents to uphold their legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means that their child **must attend every day that the school is open**, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. At Lady Boswell's we place a high value on the educational opportunities that we provide and research tells us that absence from school can seriously disrupt a child's learning and wellbeing, not only do they miss out on teaching while they are away, but they are less prepared for future lessons when they return. Patterns of future good attendance, both at secondary school and in the workplace beyond, are heavily influenced by the foundations laid in their primary school education.

Parents can check their child's current attendance via their Arbor app. Our school target for attendance is 97%.

95% attendance = 10 days missed – two weeks of learning time lost each year

90% attendance = 19 days missed - a month of lost learning per academic year

85% attendance = 29 days missed – a whole year of lost learning over the child's time at primary school

The government defines attendance below 90% as 'persistent absence' and we are required to monitor closely any attendance below 95%, which we do in accordance with our policy.

Children are required to attend school on 190 days per year. This means that there are 175 days available to parents for holidays, trips, visits and attend non-urgent appointments. Therefore, other than in a small number of specific circumstances, absence other than illness will not be authorised. Lady Boswell's is committed to the continued development of all of our pupils and regular attendance at school ensures that they have the opportunity to benefit from the fantastic educational, social, emotional and enrichment opportunities available here.

## **Tackling low attendance**

The school is duty bound to address low attendance with parents, in accordance with our Attendance Policy. We know that for many of our parents, discussing your child's attendance can be an emotive subject and, for many, a dip in attendance is often related to a specific incident or illness. Our Attendance Policy, available via the school website, sets out how the school will tackle low attendance. We will write to parents of children who fall within the 'persistent absence' category this term to provide them with an update and inform them of the next steps, where appropriate.

## **Illness**

We know that most children will experience common childhood illnesses over their time at Lady Boswell's and that during the winter months these are much more prevalent. The NHS provides schools and parents with comprehensive guidance on whether children should be kept home from school and we signpost parents again to this advice here: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> . To prevent the spread of more serious infectious conditions, we ask that parents respect the '48-hour rule' as detailed in the NHS guidance. We often hear from parents that they are not sure whether to send their child in if they are feeling 'under the weather' but please be reassured that your child will be loved and cared for whilst at school by our fantastic staff who are well practiced in providing the children the comfort that they may need to keep them going in school! We will always telephone parents and carers if we feel that your child is too poorly to be with us.

It is a parent's responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent due to illness. This is a safeguarding requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. You can report a child's absence by emailing the School Office or by calling the school absence line, please give your child's name, class, reason for absence and nature of illness if applicable.

## **Lateness**

Registration is at 8.50am and we open the gates at 8.40 to enable all pupils time to be in class promptly. Late arrivals at school can have a significant effect, not just on your child, but on their whole class. If a child arrives later than 8.50am, they must be accompanied to the School Office by a parent or carer, and signed into the school to be put on the registers for the day. Our registers close at 9am and so, for any arrival after this time, we are required to record an absence. Advice from the Government has been updated to reflect that these types of absences now contribute towards the cumulative unauthorised absence total for penalty notice purposes. Persistent lateness will trigger intervention from the school leadership team in line with our policy.

## **Leave of Absence**

Headteachers are not permitted to authorise any type of leave during term time, except in exceptional circumstances, which are defined as:

- For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time, provided the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupils' education
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

We, therefore, politely request that you arrange your family holiday in school holiday time rather than term time. [Request for absences should be made on a Leave of Absence Request Form](#) (lodged on the website) and should be delivered to the School Office, for the attention of the Co-Headteachers, at least 4 weeks in advance; parents will be notified of the outcome of the requests. It is not acceptable to notify the school of an extended period of absence via the classroom contact book.

### **Penalty Notices**

For unauthorised absence of more than 5 days (10 sessions) in any one academic year, the School can request Kent County Council to issue a 'Penalty Notice'. The first penalty notice, which will be issued to each parent for each child the absence relates to, will be charged at £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between days 22 and 28.

### **How the school can support with attendance**

The school aims to take a practical, reasonable but robust approach to ensuring our pupils attend school regularly and benefit from all Lady Boswell's has to offer. We are committed to working in partnership with parents to resolve any attendance difficulties and we would be happy to provide you with any support, signposting or guidance that you might need. Therefore, if you would like to discuss, in confidence, any issues regarding your child's attendance please contact Miss Inwood, Attendance Officer, who will be able to signpost you or Miss Pullen, our Family Support Worker, for pastoral support enquiries.

Yours sincerely

The image shows two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The first signature, on the left, is 'H Pullen' and the second, on the right, is 'S Saunders'. Both are written in a cursive style.

Hannah Pullen and Sharon Saunders  
Co-Headteacher