



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

*Learning Together, Learning
for Life*

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Policy: November 2017

Reviewed: March 2023

Approved: March 2023

Date of Next Review: March 2026

Policy to be authorised if changed by: SLT

Signature:

At Lady Boswell's, Christ is at the centre of our school. We value every member of our community as a unique child of God and seek to demonstrate his love through our words and actions. These values underpin the practice and procedures outlined in this policy.

Lady Boswell's school is committed to an inclusive Christian ethos based on respect for, and celebration of, all children and stakeholders regardless of gender, disability, faith and racial diversity.

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR LADY BOSWELL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Statement of Intent

- Lady Boswell's School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all of our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.
- One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role and legal responsibility to ensure good attendance. We will work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and other agencies to identify, investigate and resolve attendance problems.

Parental Responsibility

The responsibility for ensuring children attends school regularly and punctually rests with parents. The fullest possible attendance is important for the all round development of the child and children should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school whenever the child is absent, on the first day of absence. This is a safeguarding issue so that all parties know that your child is safe.

At Lady Boswell's School pupils are expected to be in class for register by 8.50 am (the gates open at 8.40 am). All pupils arriving after this time should report to the school office where the lateness will be recorded.

The Role of the School Staff

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for attendance.

Class Teachers should complete a register at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. Teachers mark pupils as being present or absent, where the office will complete the outstanding absence with the appropriate attendance code. The Office Administrator (Attendance Officer) should identify any unexplained absences and bring them to the attention of the Headteacher as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence
- Where there has been no communication, letters are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence before the absence is authorised
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (National Attendance Codes)
- Parents are informed termly if their child's on-going attendance figure falls below 90%
- If no improvement is made the parent/carer is invited to a meeting with the Headteacher or DSL

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence for approved reasons. Where there is doubt, the Headteacher, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. The absence must be unavoidable. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation and if the absence is not authorised, parents will be notified.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent and school. The school can request medical evidence regarding a child's absence through illness.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent non-specific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip

Timeline of School Action for Low Attendance

- 95 - 100% attendance - class teacher to investigate and notify Headteacher of concerns
- 90 - 95% attendance – attendance letter sent to parents/carers to advised, and monitored within school through monthly attendance meetings
- Below 90% - Advise PRU, Inclusion & Attendance Service (PIAS) of child's attendance and consider referral to PIAS or Penalty Notice where the absences have not been authorised.

Children Missing Education

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and PIAS. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance should be followed.

Lateness

At Lady Boswell's School the register is taken at 8.50 am and 1.20 pm. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and their parent/carer report to reception where their child's name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed (Code 'L').

The register will close at 9.00 am and 1.30 pm. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late after registration (Code 'U'), unless there is a valid reason, and this will count as an unauthorised absence.

Frequent lateness will be discussed with parents at open evenings and may be referred to the School Liaison Officer (SLO). It can provide grounds for the imposition of a Penalty Notice in accordance with the procedure set out below, or in extreme cases prosecution at the instigation of the PIAS.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

- 10 incidents in a term of late arrival after the registers have closed which qualifies as unauthorised absence, may lead to a referral to the PIAS for a Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue, AS may instigate court proceedings

Local Authority Action

If a pupil's attendance drops below 85% and where there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance and/or there is at least 10 sessions (5 days) unauthorised absence in a term the SLO will pick this up and would consider the issue of a Penalty Notice.

School Liaison Officer Actions

This may include:

- Home visits
- Attendance improvement meetings
- Liaison with supportive agencies e.g. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Social Services and Family Group Conference Service.
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance

- Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Attendance Service Code of Conduct.
- PIAS issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Penalty Notices will be issued in the following circumstances:

- Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed
- Being present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of any fixed term or permanent exclusion.

Where Penalty Notices are imposed, the regulations state that from 1 September 2013 a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school will be issued. Penalty notices are issued to each parent of each child. Failure to pay the penalty in full by the end of the 28 day period will result in prosecution by the Local Authority.

Leave of absence

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted:

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

Applications for Leave of Absence MUST be made, if possible, at least 4 weeks in advance of the requested date in writing to the Headteacher outlining exceptional circumstances.

Agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits in line with the criteria outlined above. The Headteacher's decision is final and once the decision to not authorise the leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

If the absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway and it equates to 5 days consecutive in any one term, the case will be referred to the PIAS who will issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

For reference please look at the KELSI website.

Days off school add up to lost learning

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR		➔				175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments.	
190 SCHOOL DAYS IN EACH YEAR 190 days for your child's education EXCELLENT	10 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence Half a term missed	38 days absence	47 days absence	180 DAYS OF EDUCATION	171 DAYS OF EDUCATION
	152 DAYS OF EDUCATION	143 DAYS OF EDUCATION	80%	75%	SERIOUS CONCERN Not fair on your child. Court action		
97-100%	Less than 95%	90%	85%	80%		75%	
Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start (95-96% GOOD)	SCHOOL MONITORS Less than expected level of attendance	WORRYING Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress					

Being late also adds up to a loss of learning

- If you are 5 minutes late every day that adds up to over 3 days lost over each year.
- 15 minutes late is the same as being absent for 2 weeks each year.

