

Attendance Policy

2024-2025



Leigh Academy

Paddock Wood

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1. Introductory statement

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils and to enable them to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Leigh Academy Paddock Wood ethos encourages children to feel that their presence in school is important and that they are missed when they are absent or late. The Academy will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of

the Policy.

At Leigh Academy Paddock Wood we take seriously our responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all our pupils. We acknowledge that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school. All children have the right to an education.

Parents and carers have a vital role, as well as a legal responsibility, to ensure good attendance and punctuality. As an Academy, developing effective links with parents is a high priority and we are committed to regularly conveying to parents, carers and pupils the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality. It is an offense in law to permit absence without good reason and may result in prosecution under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Leigh Academy Paddock Wood adheres to the principles and guidance as set out in the DfE publication, “Working together to improve school attendance.” August 2024. The Senior Leaders responsible for the strategic approach to attendance are Thomas Moore and Charlotte Gunning.

[Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Academy will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Registration procedures and receive appropriate professional development with regard to these.
- Complete Roll Call accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Stress to parents / carers the importance of contacting the Academy on each day of absence, and provide effective mechanisms for them to make contact with the Academy.
- Promote the importance that full attendance and punctuality play in achieving the best possible educational outcomes.
- Promote race, disability and gender equality within all practices and procedures related to attendance and punctuality.
- Through consultation days and reporting systems, ensure that parents, carers and pupils are made aware of the attendance pattern and provide an opportunity to discuss how it may affect learning and offer supportive strategies to improve attendance.
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued.
- Support pupils who have difficulty accessing education through the work of the Academy support, Local Authority, Early Help, Schools Liaison Officer/Attendance service.
- Actively promote, encourage and celebrate 100% attendance.

2.2 Parents / Carers will:

- Actively promote and encourage 100% attendance.
- Contact the school whenever the pupil is absent on the first day and on each subsequent day of absence.

- Provide proof of medical appointments and medical treatment if requested to do so by the Academy.
- Avoid removing their child during the Academy day.
- Attend attendance meetings with members of staff from the Academy when requested in order to put in place strategies to improve attendance.
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2.3 Pupils will:

- Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

3. Attendance Procedures

3.1 Registration

- The statutory recording of attendance and absence at the start of each session (am / pm) is known as Roll Call. This is undertaken within the first 30 minutes of the morning and afternoon sessions. Wherever possible this Roll Call is taken 'electronically' by register calling.
- Designated staff will be reminded of their legal duty to complete and submit Roll Call at the appropriate time, and use the correct registration codes (Appendix 1).
- Registers for Roll Call will officially close 10 minutes after the start of the am and pm sessions.

After this time a pupil will be registered as late. Therefore, pupils who arrive late, after 8:50am, will be marked as an unauthorised absence for the morning session. Afternoon registration takes place following lunch break, this is at staggered intervals for each year group.

3.2 Informing the Academy of Absence

If a child is absent Parents or Carers must:

- Please contact the school each day either by email info@paddockwood.latrust.org.uk
- via text **07860 054510**
- via school office **01892 833654** - Absence line option 1.
- or via **MCAS** messages
- Please ensure this is before 9.15am on the day. Please also ensure you include your child's name, class and reason for absence. Parents or carers should continue to inform the Academy on each subsequent day of absence
- Evidence to support an absence must be provided for attendance to be authorised if your child's attendance is below 90%. The Academy will not chase up this supporting evidence as this is a parental responsibility to provide. Wherever possible, all medical appointments should be taken outside of school time. Supporting evidence can be an attached photo, or photocopy, of:
 - a. letter from medical professional,
 - b. appointment card with name date and time,
 - c. copy of prescription note,
 - d. copy of prescribed medication sticker on side of medicine packaging
- Request a discussion/meeting with the Family Liaison Officer to discuss extended absence due to

illness or if there are any other concerns affecting school attendance.

If the Academy is not informed of an absence, it will take the following action:

Day 1: Absence without reason, attendance officer will contact parent/carer straight away and leave a message to contact school with a reason for absence.



Day 2: Absence without reason and no contact from parent/carer still. Attendance Officer will contact parent/carer and alert FLO and DSL who will also attempt contact via phone and email.



Day 3: Absence without response and no contact from parent/carer still. Attendance officer will attempt phone contact and if no response then FLO and DSL will carry out a home visit to child's address. If no one is at home, a letter will be posted to ask parent/carer to make contact immediately with reason for absence.



Day 4: Absence without response and no contact from parent/carer still. Another home visit will be made to child's address and there will be a safeguarding discussion in regards to thresholds being met for a referral for support via the Front Door.

3.3 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised Absences lead to a referral to the Local Authority and / or a prosecution or instant fine under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Absence will be deemed unauthorised where:

- Parents or carers do not provide medical evidence to support absence due to ill health
- Parents or carers remove pupils from school for holidays or trips (leave of absence) during term time
- Pupils arrive at the Academy after the registration period has ended unless there are agreed arrangements in place
- Parents or carers keep children from the Academy unnecessarily
- Parents or carers do not communicate the reason for absence to the Academy
- A pupil truant - where they are absent without the parents' or carers' knowledge

Holidays in Term time will never be authorised. The Academy is closed for 14 weeks a year when parents can take holidays and travel abroad. Where there is an exceptional and immediate circumstance where a pupil will need to be absent during term time, a request can be made to the Principal in writing or via email who

will then consider the application and respond in writing. The Principal's decision is final.

3.4 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. Pupils arriving late cannot start the day effectively, disrupt lessons, and encourage absence or poor punctuality in others. Where pupils are late to the Academy with no valid reason the following punctuality protocols will be followed:

The Academy day starts at **8.45am** and we expect pupils to be in class and settled by this time.

At **8.55am** registers close. Any pupil arriving after **8.55am** will need to be accompanied to the school office to be registered. If a pupil walks to school unaccompanied and arrives late, their parents/carers will be called by the school office as we need to ensure that parents are aware their children are late attending school. If a pupil has not been registered via the front office by 8.55am then they will be marked with an unauthorised absence unless there has been communication of a valid reason for absence.

Persistent lateness can lead to a meeting with the FLO/DSL and/or Senior Leader/Principal and where necessary a Local Authority referral being processed.

Poor punctuality is classed as irregular Academy attendance and is dealt with accordingly. This may mean that parents or carers could face the possibility of legal action.

If you know your child is going to be late for a specific reason please call the Academy before **8:15am** following the same procedures for absence.

Late pick up

The Academy day finishes at **3.15pm** (KS1) and **3.20pm** (KS2) - parents/carers are expected to collect their children at these times. If a parent is running late, they need to make sure that this has been communicated to the Academy. Wherever possible we ask that you make arrangements for your child/ren to be picked up by a suitable adult (notifying them of the password). Any child not collected by 3:30 will be sent to the After School Club where the parent/carer will then be charged £6 for a session. The Academy will allow one late collection per academic year before sessions are charged. Should this debt not be paid then a meeting with the Principal will be scheduled to organise a payment plan.

Extra Curricular Activities and clubs procedures

The Academy provides a considerable amount of after school activities and clubs for the children. These are both run voluntarily by the teaching staff and by external providers. We have considerable waiting lists for the clubs we offer. Once your child has signed up for a club there is an expectation for them to attend every session unless unwell or have an appointment (of which we must be notified at the soonest opportunity possible). We keep registers of these clubs for safeguarding purposes so if a child is not attending please ensure the Academy office is informed. If a child decides they no longer wish to continue with a club the parent must give the Academy Office one week's notice to enable us to offer the place to another child on the waiting list. If 2 consecutive sessions are missed in a term without fair warning of illness or absence then your child will be removed from the club for the remainder of the term and the club place will be reallocated.

Illness during the school day

If a child becomes ill in school the following procedures will be followed:

If a child informs a member of staff that they feel unwell the member of staff will monitor the child and rule out any common reasons by ensuring that they have been to the toilet, that they are hydrated and that they are warm/cool enough. The member of staff will check that there is nothing worrying the child. Staff will also check that there is no known condition on medical lists for this child.

Following initial checks, the member of staff will then decide whether symptoms may require a call home. If this is the case they will contact the office and a call will be made home. If symptoms suggest that they do not require a call home then the teacher will continue to monitor in class or request that they are monitored (as they feel sick) by admin in the pastoral zone. The child will be monitored and should the symptoms worsen a call home will be made. If in any doubt a call will be made to parents to discuss the pupil, sometimes parents will be asked to attend the school to administer pain relief or cough mixture. If the child improves and/or feels better they will return to class.

If a child has sickness or diarrhoea in school they will be sent home immediately. The child will be made comfortable while they wait to be collected. If contact cannot be made with parents then staff will contact the emergency contacts provided by the parents on the admissions form. If parents/emergency contacts cannot be reached the child will be made comfortable and monitored and staff will continue to try to make contact. If necessary a first aider will be consulted for advice on an illness.

In the case of an emergency when the child's health is at risk an ambulance will be called and a member of staff will accompany the child to hospital. Parents/authorised adults will be contacted. As soon as possible a senior member of staff will be informed.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of attendance takes place on a daily basis. It is systematic and rigorous to ensure there is a strategic approach to improving a pupil's attendance where it is below expected and impacting on their progress:

- Academy attendance data will be published for consideration at every Academy board meeting. It may also be submitted to the Trust Academies Standards Committee as required.
- Attendance Data will be produced regularly and distributed to the Senior Leadership Team to enable interventions to occur.
- A Designated Principal/Senior Leader has overall responsibility for the publication and monitoring of the attendance data for the whole Academy.
- Attendance data will be collected via the DfE Census three times per academic year.

5. Strategies for Improving Attendance and Punctuality

- The person responsible for leading attendance will meet regularly with relevant staff and make them aware of significant attendance trends and patterns and seek their support to address any issues with pupils, parents / carers and other stakeholders.

- Attendance, punctuality and its impact on learning and progress will be a key area for discussion between teachers, leaders and parents / carers during consultation days.
- A range of positive strategies will be used to reward individual pupils and groups for outstanding and/or improved attendance.
- Regular attendance meetings will be held
 - Pupil attendance data may be shared with Parents/Carers, Local Authority, Early Help, School Liaison Officer/Attendance Service , Children's Social Services, Police, relevant LEA's, Ofsted and the DfE.

Systems and Structures Around Attendance

Action	Attendance	% of Attendance Covered	Purpose of Letter for Parents
No action	Green Band	96% and above	To celebrate your child having great attendance throughout the Academic year which will be celebrated and rewarded.
Teacher contact	Orange Band	95%	To alert parent/carer that child's attendance has dropped below our expected 96%
Stage 1 letter	Orange Band	90% or below	To inform parents/carers that their child is a persistent absentee - Attendance has dropped below 95%
Stage 2 Letter	Orange Band	Further decline since Letter 1	To inform parents/carers of the Meeting with Charlotte Gunning where an Attendance Contract will be drawn up
Stage 3 Letter	Red Band	Further decline	To inform parents/carers of the Critical Attendance Review meeting with Thomas Moore.

Stage 4 Letter	Red Band	Further decline	Notice to improve issued
Referral to KCC	Red Band	Further decline	Referral for PN or Pathway 5

System for Punctuality

On the fourth instance of lateness (4 times in the late book as code L, Late before the register close)	'Lateness Concerns' letter is sent to parents reminding them of the importance of punctuality, school timings.
Following 3 more instances as a Code L, Late before the register closes.	'Attendance Meeting' letter is sent out stating that the parent must come into school for a meeting with the Principal and Community Liaison Officer to address concerns.
If punctuality does not improve	Further lateness may result in you being served with a Penalty Notice or a referral to the KCC attendance service or furthermore a court summons. Parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

6. Absence of Leave during Term Time

The Academy may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in writing to the Principal of the Academy. The Principal of the Academy will make the final decision of acceptance or refusal. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'. If absence is not authorised and a leave of absence is taken, ten unauthorised sessions of absence (including Holiday (G) / Unauthorised Absence (O) / Unauthorised Late (U)) may result in a request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution through the Magistrates Court.

7. Persistent Absence Referrals

A pupil is deemed to be a PA (Persistent Absentee) if their attendance falls below 90%. The Academy will consider pupils below 96% at risk. Pupils who fall into either of these categories will be monitored by the Academy

Analysis of attendance by micro population will identify strengths and areas for intervention to further improve attendance. Use of external data including Data dashboard will be analysed and further information on groups made available. A referral may be made to the local authority attendance service should attendance remain poor after Academy and Trust Interventions.

The following flow chart outlines the procedure taken by the Academy if attendance falls below 95%:

 Attendance Flowchart 2025

8. Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance at school/alternative provision is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. [Section 444A of the Education Act 1996](#) empowers designated local authority officers, Headteachers (and deputy and assistant Headteachers authorised by them) and the police to issue penalty notices.

A Penalty Notice may be requested for:

- Overt truancy (including pupils caught on truancy sweeps)
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Unauthorised leave for the purpose of a family holiday in term-time
- Delayed return from leave of absence without prior school agreement
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the school register has closed)
- Where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours during the first five days of exclusion.

Exclusion:

A penalty notice can only be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours of days 1-5 of any fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each child and the amount of the penalty will be £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the penalty in full at the end of the 28 day period may result in prosecution through the Magistrates Court.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f1b048133c22b8eecd38f7/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance_applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

Education for Health Needs including Mental Health

Where possible, a pupil's health needs - including mental health, will be managed by the Academy. If needs are unable to be met, a referral will be made under *Section 19 of The Education Act 1996*, where the Local Authority will start to arrange education. If a pupil is away from school for 15 days or more because of their health needs, the Local Authority should arrange suitable alternative provision. *DfE - Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs*

Whilst the duty of care for the pupil's education will sit with the Local Authority, the Academy will work closely with all medical professionals to ensure that health needs are fully supported and educational needs are being met

9. Removing a Pupil from the Academy Roll

School Transfer

If parents/carers decide to transfer their child to another school or Academy, they should advise the school office as a matter of priority, providing all necessary details, including any new address (if relevant) and the school or Academy the child is transferring to. When in the process of a school or Academy transfer the child must continue to attend Paddock Wood Primary Academy until a start date has been agreed with the new school or Academy. If the Academy does not receive this information and a child stops attending, he or she becomes a 'Child Missing Education' (CME). Any child in this category is reported to the Child Missing Education Officer at the Local Authority, who will follow up the matter under safeguarding legislation as per The School Attendance (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2024 - Section 9, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove the student from the academy roll due to continued serious absence.

- The pupil has not attended the school within the ten school days immediately after the end of the period of leave and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances. If unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts the academy will remove from roll.
- The pupil has been continuously absent from the school for at least twenty school days and the proprietor does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or an unavoidable cause; and the proprietor and the local authority have jointly made reasonable efforts to find out the pupil's location and circumstances. If unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts the academy will remove from roll.
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2024/208/regulation/9/made>
- We will only enter pupils on the admission register where we have received written confirmation that the person with control of the pupil's attendance has accepted the school place.
- Where the local authority has offered a place at the school but no written confirmation of acceptance has been received from the person with control of the pupil's attendance, we will write to the local authority requesting evidence in writing and will not enter the pupil onto the admission register until this has been received. If written confirmation is not received within 10 school days, the offer of a place will be withdrawn and offered to another pupil in accordance with our

Admissions Policy.

- We will enter pupils' names on the admission register on the first day that the school and a person with control of the pupil's attendance have agreed that the pupil will attend the school. If no date has been agreed or notified, the pupil's name will be entered on the first day they attend the school. Names must be added before, or at the beginning of the first session on that day.
- Where a pupil does not attend on the agreed date, we will send a letter to the person with control of the pupil's attendance asking them to confirm in writing within 10 school days that they wish to take up the place. If written confirmation is not received within 10 school days, the pupil's name will be removed from the admission register and the place offered to another pupil in accordance with the admission policy.

Elective Home Education (EHE)

If parents or carers take the decision to educate a child at home, they must tell the Academy of this in writing – this letter or email should be addressed to the Principal and include the date of decision to home educate and a brief explanation of the reasons for EHE. Once this letter is received, the Academy will remove the pupil from the Academy roll and advise the Elective Home Education Officer of the Local Authority, who will make contact with parents or carers. If an EHE request letter or email is not received, the pupil remains on the Academy roll and action may be undertaken following irregular or non-Academy attendance procedures and could lead to prosecution or an instant fine under the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003 and under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Appendix 1 CODE DESCRIPTION

/ Present (AM) \ Present (PM)

B Educated off site (NOT at an alternative provision)

C Other Authorised Circumstances

C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.

C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable

D Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)

E Excluded (no alternative provision made)

G Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)

I Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)

J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution

K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority (section 19)

L Late (before registers closed)

M Medical/Dental appointments

N No reason yet provided for absence

O Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)

P Approved sporting activity

Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements (travel pass delays via local authority)

R Religious observance

S Study leave

T Traveller absence

U Late (after registers closed)

V Educational visit or trip

W Work experience

X Non-compulsory school age absence

Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available

Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed

Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed

Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention

Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law

Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Z Student not yet on roll

School closed to students