



Attendance Policy
September 2014

Introduction:

At the heart of everything we do at Lakenham Primary School is children's learning, but children cannot learn if they are absent. We therefore aim to ensure that our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils. We have therefore adopted the following policy and procedures in consultation with parents, children, staff, governors and school attendance officer. This policy relates to all pupils of statutory school age.

Aims:

- **To improve attendance and punctuality at Lakenham Primary School**
- **To reduce the percentage of unauthorised absence**
- **To create a culture in which good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school**
- **Develop and maintain effective communication regarding attendance between home and school**

Pupil Registration

The school is required to maintain two registers:

- An admission register (known as the school roll)
The admission register shall contain a list of all pupils at the school.
- An attendance register (unless all pupils are boarders).
The school ensures that an attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register must be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent, the register must say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence?

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence.

All other absences must be treated as **unauthorised**.

Responsibilities of Parents

The Education Act of 1996 states that parents and carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that registered pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly. If a child does not attend regularly, parents should work closely with the school, the Pastoral Support Worker(s) (PSW) and the LA attendance officer to resolve the problem.

Parents found guilty of school attendance offences could be subject to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a period of imprisonment for up to three months, or alternatively the Authority could seek a parenting order. At Lakenham Primary School we encourage a good working relationship with parents by regularly publicising the arrangements for notifying absence and the school's policy towards authorised absence in the home-school agreement.

A DfES leaflet School Attendance: Information for Parents (**DfES Publications**) is available. It is published in English and eleven community languages.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on her behalf can authorise absence.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school, 8:50 am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes. This means that if a child arrives late between 9.00am and 9.10am then they are recorded in the register as “L”. This will count as the child being present in school. If the child arrives after 9.10am the absence is recorded as an unauthorised absence and recorded as “U”. This will count as an unauthorised absence and may trigger Attendance Officer involvement.

The afternoon registration will be at 1:30 pm registers will close at 1:40 pm.

Children who arrive late without an authorised reason after the register has closed are marked absent for that session. Reasons given for lateness are recorded in the school office. Where children are regularly late for school, the school will write to parents informing them of the schools concerns and offering support and help to rectify the situation. A meeting with the Pastoral Support Worker will draw up a plan with the parents to improve punctuality and this will be reviewed. If lateness is consistent and parents have not responded to support from the school then a referral will be made to the Attendance Improvement Officer.

First Day Absence

Parents are expected to contact the school on first day of absence. In the case of identified children the school will make first day absence telephone contact. Class teachers and the Pastoral Support Worker (PSW) are initially responsible for ensuring that the office is made aware when identified children are absent. The PSW or Admin staff will then call the family and check on reasons for absence. This information will then be recorded and where necessary passed on to the relevant professional.

Fifth Day Absence

If a child has been absent for 5 consecutive days without explanation or authorisation then the school will contact the family to check and establish the reason for the child's absence.

Tenth Day Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days, 20% unauthorised absence will be referred to the Attendance Officer. **THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT.** The school will include details of action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of everyone in the school community to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s:

- Parents/carers will be invited to a school support meeting to identify reasons for absences and offer support and advice where necessary to try to ensure their child's attendance improves.

- If this is unsuccessful, and the problem appears to be a medical one, the school will refer to School Health and parents are required to provide school with supporting medical evidence to authorise ongoing medical absences (see Appendix A). In other cases the school will discuss the problem with the school's Attendance Improvement Officer at monthly attendance monitoring meetings.
- A School Attendance meeting will then be held for parents to meet with school staff, and any other relevant professionals. A plan to improve attendance is agreed and monitored through further Attendance meetings.
- If this is unsuccessful at improving attendance a referral will be made to the school Attendance Improvement Officer (See Appendix B). The school, with the Attendance Improvement Officer will hold a Fast Track Attendance Panel. This involves parents/carers, school staff, the Attendance Improvement Officer and a School Governor. If attendance targets are not met, the Attendance Improvement Officer will recommend that the Local Education Authority proceed with legal action and the matter will be placed before the courts. A support plan, attendance targets for the child and provisional court dates for the parents are arranged (See Appendix C).

Frequent Medical Absences

Please read the separate Medical Absence Policy 2014.

The school will discuss with the School Nurse those pupils who frequently miss days for medical reasons. Where necessary a referral will be made to school health for an evaluation of the child's health and educational needs.

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence notes

The school requires a written note from parents and carers explaining reasons for absence for every period of absence recorded by a child. Where a note is not provided, when a child returns to school, we will adopt the following procedures.

- Absence lateness slip sent out with accompanying letter asking for parents to complete reasons for absence.
- If the school receives no response to this letter, we then send out a second request for reasons for absence.

Attendance Monitoring

The school monitors the attendance of all pupils on a weekly basis. Where the school have identified that a child's attendance has fallen below the level of 90% in any six week period the school writes to the parents making them aware of our concerns and the importance of consistent and regular attendance at school. The expected level of attendance for primary age children is 95%.

If there is no subsequent improvement in a child's attendance the Pupil and Family Support Worker will invite parents and carers to a school support meeting to identify reasons for absences and offer support and advice where necessary to try to ensure their child's attendance improves.

The school meets with the Attendance Improvement Officer on a monthly basis. Children whose attendance is below 85% are referred. Action to be taken by the school or the

Attendance Improvement Officer are planned (see 'Frequent Absence').

All parents/carers are informed of the level of their child's attendance every term via the 'Traffic Light' system which indicates the level of their child's school attendance. The school will endeavor to work with and support all children and families wherever possible.

Holidays in term time

The school does not authorise any holidays during term time. However we do realise that there are events and situations that require absence from school during school term time that cannot be avoided, in these cases an Absence Request Form (see Appendix D) would need to be completed. Parents will be notified in writing if a request is not accepted (see Appendix E). It is up to the Headteacher to authorise absence or not.

Where a parent/carer chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (G code) and a referral for a Penalty Notice will be made (see Appendix F). This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice. This will be issued to each parent for each child (where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded) and is £120 per parent, per child/£60 if paid within 21 days.

All parents receive a letter explaining the school's policy on requests for their children to have absence from school at the start of the school year. All parents of children who join the school other than the start of the academic year also receive a copy of this letter (see Appendix G).

Attendance Awards

The school operates a number of awards and incentives for good attendance. Each term we present certificates to children reaching 100% attendance and an attendance cup is awarded each week for the class with the best weekly attendance. If children have 100% attendance for a school year then they are entered into a raffle with prizes awarded. We also write to parents thanking them and acknowledging their support.

Attendance Targets:

The school's attendance target last year was: 95%

This year our target is: 95%

APPENDIX: A

Lakenham Primary School

City Road Norwich NR1 2HL

Tele: 01603 877780

Headteacher: Mrs O Dalton



(Date)

(Address)

Dear (Parent/Carer)

In our weekly monitoring of attendance at Lakenham Primary School we have noticed that (name) has an attendance of only (%). His/Her attendance record was looked at during the monthly Attendance Panel meeting held with Claire Farrelly, our school Attendance Officer. **The expected attendance for primary aged children is 95%.**

(name) has had (#)days off school due to illness since (month) and has had (#) days unauthorised absences where school have not been informed as to why (name) was absent. (name) has also been late (#)times.

If you are having difficulties with morning routines or you would like some support on how to improve his/her attendance so that she attends school more regularly, then I would be only too happy meet with you, please see the office to make an appointment.

If there are medical reasons for (name's) absences causing him/her to have a lot of time off school we can make a referral to the School Health Team for advice, if you think this would be helpful. Unless clear medical evidence is provided the school will be unable to authorise absences. The Attendance Officer may then pursue legal action. (name's) attendance will be monitored daily, and we hope that we will see a significant improvement at the next Attendance Panel meeting on (date)

I am sure you can appreciate that in order for children to learn effectively and make progress in school it is essential that they attend regularly and consistently.

Yours sincerely

Ms L Roberts

Deputy Headteacher

Lakenham Primary School

City Road Norwich NR1 2HL
Headteacher: Mrs O Dalton



Tele: 01603 877780 Fax: 01603 877781
Email: office@lakenham.norfolk.sch.uk

(DATE)

(ADDRESS)

Dear

School Attendance Panel Re: (CHILDS NAME), DOB:

It has come to my notice that the attendance of your child (NAME) at Lakenham Primary School has recently been most unsatisfactory. (NAME's) attendance is only __%. The expected rate for primary children is 95%.

In order to promote an improvement (NAME's) attendance, I would like to invite you to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting at Lakenham Primary on (DATE), (TIME). Please report to the reception area at school when you arrive. The purpose of this meeting will be to formulate an Action Plan so that we can work together to ensure that attendance improves.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on all parents to ensure that their children receive an efficient, full-time education. Parents who are seen to fail in their duty can be brought before the Magistrates Court where a maximum £2500 fine and/or up to a three month prison sentence can be imposed.

The Children's Act 1989 also gives power to the Local Education Authority to consult with the Social Services Department and apply to the Court to advise, assist, befriend and give directions to the child and parents. This consultation will now take place.

I trust that we can now work together to ensure that (NAME's) attendance improves. If there is no improvement in attendance Julie Sparshott may recommend that the Local Education Authority place this matter before the Courts.

Yours sincerely

Ms L Roberts
Deputy Headteacher



APPENDIX: C

NORFOLK CHILDREN'S SERVICES/LAKENHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

FAST TRACK ATTENDANCE PANEL

NAME OF PUPIL		D.O.B	
----------------------	--	--------------	--

DATE OF FAST TRACK ATTENDANCE PANEL	
--	--

PANEL MEMBERS

SCHOOL	
GOVERNORS	
ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER	
OTHER AGENCIES	
PARENTS	DOB DOB
DETAILS OF OTHER 'PARENTS'	
PUPIL	

The attendance print-out is attached.

Comments

School Action leading up to panel (detail telephone calls made, truancy call responses, letters, meetings offered/accepted)

Attendance Improvement Officer Assessment

Response of Parents and Child – including response to ESO considerations

Governors Comments

As *****'s parent you have a responsibility in law to ensure his/her regular attendance at school, you should be aware that the only defences available in law are:

1. that the absences are with leave (ie that they have been agreed by the Headteacher)
2. that the absences are because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Parents may be asked to provide evidence to support absences due to ill-health, this can be through a copy of an appointment card or prescription or information from a medical practitioner
3. that the absences fall on days of religious observance for the religion to which parents belong
4. that the child is entitled to free transport to school and the LEA have failed to provide this.

If absences do not fall into any of these four categories or the school have not been informed of reasons for absence, absences will be marked as unauthorised.

Action Plan:

Plan to include

- resumption of regular, punctual attendance
- in school contact point
- any need for medical evidence
- specific action points for
 - parents
 - school
 - AIO
 - pupil
- Additional support requirements
- Other issues as relevant

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	Attendance Target Review Panel Date Provisional Court Date

ESO consideration	<p>Panel can recommend that the Local Education Authority apply for an Education Supervision Order either instead of or as well as a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. An application for an ESO is made in the Family Court and, if granted, would place both parent(s) and child under the direct supervision of an Attendance Improvement Officer usually for a period of 12 months. Whilst the Order is in place, both parents and child MUST comply with directions issued by the supervising officer. A failure to comply with a Direction by a parent is a criminal offence; a failure to comply by a child will lead to a full assessment by Children's Services which could involve other interventions. In addition, whilst an ESO is in force, parents lose the right to choose how and where their child is educated.</p>
Is an ESO recommended? Why/Why not?	

Signed:

School	
Governors	
Attendance Improvement Officer	
Other Agencies	
Parents	
Pupil	

APPENDIX: D

Lakenham Primary School

City Road Norwich NR1 2HL

Headteacher: Mrs O Dalton

Tele: 01603 877780 Fax: 01603 877781

Email: office@lakenham.norfolk.sch.uk



(DATE)

(ADDRESS)

Dear

Re: Request for Holiday in Term Time for (NAME), DOB:

Your request for authorisation of absence for holiday from (DATE) to (DATE) has **not** been authorised.

At Lakenham Primary School we consider all requests for taking holidays in term time and will only authorise such requests in exceptional circumstances.

We do not authorise holidays in term time as it is widely recognised that the educational outcomes and future life chances of children can be significantly impacted upon by periods of absence. Absences in term time are damaging to the pupil's continuity of learning.

The Local Authority has introduced a system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% or less with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period or 10 consecutive sessions unauthorised absence will meet the criteria for legal intervention which could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent, per child which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. If unpaid a further invoice for £60 per parent, per child is issued, both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28 days.

If you would like to book an appointment to discuss this matter then please phone the school office who will arrange a time for you to meet with me.

Yours sincerely

Ms L Roberts
Deputy Headteacher



CONFIDENTIAL					
CHILDREN'S SERVICES APPLICATION FOR FIXED PENALTY NOTICE					
Child's details:					
Full name:					
DOB:		M/F		NCYG:	
Address:					
Postcode:					
School:					
Ethnicity:					
Parent's details:					
Parent 1					
Full name:					
Address(if different to above):					
Telephone number:					
Parent 2					
Full name:					
Address(if different to above):					
Telephone number:					
Please add any additional parent details with information as detailed above:					
Reason for referral:	Please tick				
10 consecutive sessions absence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15% unauthorised absence over 6 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Please specify 6 week period in question	Date from		to		
Please attach:					

-Child's attendance record - Whole school warning letter (dated) - request for leave (if made) - reply to request for leave of absence	
---	--

If you are applying for a 15% unauthorised absence over 6 week Fixed Penalty Notice, please provide further information regarding background and any action taken to address attendance issue including whether a statutory defence may apply.

Referred by: [CLICK & TYPE NAME] **Role:** "[CLICK & TYPE JOB TITLE]"
Signature:..... **Date referred:** "[CLICK & TYPE DATE]"

Court Officer to complete:
Application approved:
Application declined:
Reasons:
Signed:
Date:

For Court Officer Business Support:

Date Penalty Invoice Sent	
Invoice Number	
Customer Number	
21 Days later Date	
Date Paid (if app)	
Extension agreed	
Date 2 nd Penalty Invoice Sent	
28 Days later Date	
Date passed to Court	
Latest date summons can be lodged	

Date Penalty Invoice Sent	
Invoice Number	
Customer Number	

21 Days later Date	
Date Paid (if app)	
Extension agreed	
Date 2 nd Penalty Invoice Sent	
28 Days later Date	
Date passed to Court	
Latest date summons can be lodged	

Date Penalty Invoice Sent	
Invoice Number	
Customer Number	
21 Days later Date	
Date Paid (if app)	
Extension agreed	
Date 2 nd Penalty Invoice Sent	
28 Days later Date	
Date passed to Court	
Latest date summons can be lodged	

Lakenham Primary School

City Road Norwich NR1 2HL

Headteacher: Mrs O Dalton

Tele: 01603 877780 Fax: 01603 877781

Email: office@lakenham.norfolk.sch.uk



8 September 2014

Dear Parents/Carers

Attendance at School and Legal Intervention

You will be aware that the law requires all parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Research has shown that children often do not catch up on work missed, which can have serious consequences for their learning and progress. The Government is very clear that all schools must aim to have the highest attendance possible for all of their pupils in order for them to achieve their maximum potential.

The Local Authority has introduced a system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% or less with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period or 10 consecutive sessions unauthorised absence will meet the criteria for legal intervention which could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Starting from 7th January 2014 any pupil in Lakenham Primary School who meets either criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent, per child which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. If unpaid a further invoice for £60 per parent, per child is issued, both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28 days.

Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

Our aim is to ensure that our pupils receive the most from their education and I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Oriana Dalton
Headteacher



