



Attendance Policy

Date: October 2023

Review: October 2024

Approved: FGM 3.10.23

Introduction and Rationale:

Little Melton Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect national attendance targets.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets by:

- Establishing clear and effective procedures for administration, which are understood by staff, pupils and parents
- Enable other appropriate agencies to access the information they need
- Ensure pupils presenting poor levels of attendance and punctuality are noted, monitored and appropriate action taken

Registration/Lateness

The school day begins at 8:45a.m and finishes at 3:15p.m.

Pupils are expected to be at school on time each day. Punctuality is encouraged as an act of courtesy and provides children with a clear start to their day with their peers and teachers. Punctuality also ensures that teaching time is not wasted.

Morning registration will be at 8:50a.m hence the morning bell ringing at 8:43a.m. The register will close at 9:20a.m.

Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Time of arrival will be noted in the registers.

The afternoon registration will be at 1:05p.m.
The register will close at 1:15p.m.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late [L] before registers close.

If a pupil arrives late three times in a row, a member of office staff will talk to parents/carers at the beginning/end of the school day. If parents are not available at these times, then a telephone call will be made. Example letter in appendix can also be sent.

Procedure for Noting Absence

Phone calls from parents informing school of their child's absence are recorded on the register and updated weekly on the schools' management system.

If the school has not been informed of the child's whereabouts by close of registers the office will telephone home. This '1st day calling' will continue until the whereabouts of child is established.

If a pupil returns to school and no reason for absence has been provided the procedure will be:

- Liaise with parents either by phone or in person at the end of the school day, and a follow up call will be made within 24 hours.
- If no reason is forthcoming after the follow up call, Absence note A1 will be sent home.
- If no reason for absence is provided after Absence note A1, the Head Teacher will follow up with a phone call or a meeting with parents.

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Persistent Absence

It is the responsibility of the school Secretary to be aware of and bring attention to, the Class Teacher and Head Teacher of 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. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO).

The school Secretary will monitor absence levels by:

- Monitoring registers on a daily basis. Checking and signing registers on a weekly basis for coding errors.
- Provide weekly attendance levels to the Head Teacher and communicate this to parents via the weekly newsletter and the display board in the foyer.

The Headteacher will:

- Monitor attendance by a regular audit. This includes breakdown of data by individual, class, cohort and groups. It also includes details of any interventions undertaken in individual cases, and the outcome.
- The HT will also meet regularly with the 'Attendance Governor' to discuss the most recent monthly audit, and report as a standing item at each half-termly FGM.

Parents of children whose attendance is significantly below the 90% 'Persistent Absence' – category (after the first 6 weeks of academic year) -or have a concerning pattern of attendance (eg missing a particular day of the week), will be subject to the following hierarchical levels of informal and then more formal intervention.

1. 1st Meeting

An informal meeting will be arranged to discuss any issues, inform the parent of the concerns and the attendance data, re-iterate the importance of regular school attendance, and agree a way forward. The expectation will be that this will result in a subsequent increase in attendance levels. The letter outlined in the appendix could accompany this meeting.

2. 2nd Meeting

If the concerns continue, a second meeting will be arranged, at which a named copy of the attached 'information and warning letter' will be given to the parent. It will be made clear that if attendance does not improve, the case will be referred to the Attendance Improvement Officer for advice. The discussion will look at establishing the barriers to attendance and putting a support plan in place. This advice could also result in the issuing of a fast-track referral, a fixed penalty fine, or a visit from the school nurse.

3. Referral to AIO

If the concerns continue after the next 6 week period, the case will then be referred to the AIO for possible action, as outlined above. A possible letter at this stage is included in the appendix.

Term Time Holidays

Term Time holidays will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. At the start of the school year, the 'information and warning' letter will be sent out to all parents.

It states that fixed penalty notices will be considered for term time holidays of 5 consecutive days or more, if the overall context of the child's attendance is considered a concern under the statistical criteria outlined below:

Pupil attendance 85% or less or with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

A Welcome Back

On return from an absence 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.

Leave of Absence in Term Time

The procedure to request exceptional leave of absence is:

- You will need to fill in a 'Leave of Absence' form and submit it **with** supporting evidence. This form is available from the school office or it can be downloaded from the school website.
- Please send us the completed form and the supporting documents as soon as you can, but at least two weeks before you wish your child to be granted leave of absence.
- The form will be returned to you within five working days stating whether the request has been granted or not. The school will keep a copy.
- Authorised absence can only be granted in 'exceptional' circumstances. See DFE 2013 amendments to 2006 Education Regulations Act.

Promoting Attendance

Excellent attendance is positively promoted in the following ways:

- Weekly celebration assembly
- To parents via the weekly newsletter
- Annual Outstanding attendance certificates

Attendance Data & Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year.

The Attendance target for 2023-24 is 96.5%

The PA target for 2023-24 is 4%

Last year (2022-23) attendance was above national average at: 95.34%

Register Security

The registers must be safely stored. Registers will be kept in the school office after registration.

The Registration System

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Electronic back-ups will be made.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.

All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Flexi-Schooling

In light of DfE guidance (February 2013), we accept flexi-schooled children at the discretion of the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will accept the child if the parent can demonstrate a genuine commitment to the process, both in terms of providing good quality education to the child outside of school, and regular ongoing communication with the class teacher.

In addition a written and signed agreement must be formulated between the school and parent in order to make expectations clear for all concerned.

This will include:

- The normal expected pattern of attendance at school.
- The length of time the agreement is to run before review by the school. Typically this may be one term.
- What flexibility there will be regarding special events which fall outside the normal arrangement such as but not limited to assemblies, trips, productions or performances, sports events, visitors to the school.
- How the register will be marked.
- That the parents must contact the school if the child is absent from a session that they would normally be present at school or at approved educational activity.
- That the school will follow up any unexpected or unexplained

absence as it would for other children.

- What the arrangement will be at times of children's assessment.
- That if a parent chooses to employ at his or her own expense another person to educate the child at home, he or she will be responsible for ensuring that person is suitable to have access to children.
- Any perceived special educational needs and associated provision.
- Recommended regular planning meetings between parent and school to ensure the child achieves his or her potential and to promote good home-school relationships.
- That the school will notify the Administrator for Elective Home Education at the LA of the flexi-schooling arrangement.
- Under what circumstances and with what notice either party can withdraw from the arrangement.
- How any disputes will be resolved.

When a Child is Flexi-Schooled

5.1 He or she will already be registered at the school.

5.2 On days when he or she attends school, the National Curriculum must be followed as if the child were attending full-time. An academy may vary its education provision from the National Curriculum; references to the National Curriculum should be read as the academy curriculum.

5.3 The requirement to follow the National Curriculum will apply to all children except:

Temporarily, due to exceptional circumstances such as prolonged absence from school on health grounds or family crisis.

As a part of a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

With the permission of the Secretary of State to allow curriculum development and experiment to take place, for an agreed period.

5.4 On days when he or she does not attend school, the child need not follow the National Curriculum.

6 Marking the Attendance Register

6.1 Following the Department for education 2011 Summer School Census - Readiness Bulletin No. 3 (LAs), item 6.2, children should be recorded as absent when not in school.

Schools may record the sessions when the child is not in school as 'authorised absences' (Code C).

6.2 These sessions will be included in the number of possible sessions and the absence and attendance figures in the Attainment and Achievement table

The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present

\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

2 Register and Admission Roll Keeping

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

(See also 2013 Amendments to above) - DfE

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

Following are copies of absence, lateness and persistent absence letters.

Letter: Unexplained absence (If cannot contact by phone)



School Lane
Little Melton
Norwich
NR9 3AD

Tel: 01603 811446
E-mail office@littlemelton.norfolk.sch.uk
Website www.littlemeltonprimaryschool.co.uk

Dear

Re: **Absence**

Our records show that was absent from school on..... To date we do not appear to have received a reason for this absence.

We are required to provide an accurate reason for every absence. Please would you complete and return the reply slip below to the school office.

Yours sincerely

Alex Pritchard
Head Teacher

✂
.....

Reason for Absence Reply Slip

..... was absent from school on

because

Signed Date

Please return to the school office

Letter for persistent lateness



ol Lane
Little Melton
Norwich
NR9 3AD

Tel: 01603 811446
E-mail office@littlemelton.norfolk.sch.uk
Website www.littlemeltonprimaryschool.co.uk

Date

Dear

Re: Lateness

Our records show that arrived late to school on..... To date we do not appear to have received a reason for this lateness.

In order to gain the most from school your child needs to be punctual every day. The school bell is rung at 8:42a.m to enable registration at 8:45a.m.

We are required to provide an accurate reason for every late arrival. Please would you complete and return the reply slip below to the school office.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Pritchard
Head Teacher

✂
.....

Reason for Lateness Reply Slip

..... was late to school on

because.....

Signed Date

Please return to the school office

Letter to accompany formal meeting (step 2)



School Lane
Little Melton
Norwich
NR9 3AD

Tel: 01603 811446
E-mail office@littlemelton.norfolk.sch.uk
Website www.littlemeltonprimaryschool.co.uk

Date

Dear

Little Melton Primary School monitors all children's attendance levels regularly. Regular absence will be monitored closely and will be subject to monitoring from the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Where there is regular absence from school children will miss out on areas of learning and this can lead to a decline in academic attainment.

It is understood that most absences cannot be avoided and where attendance falls below 90% attendance will be closely monitored.

Your child's current attendance is %

Where children's attendance has reached 90% and below this means that they are now in Persistent Absence status as set by the Department of Education.

It is important that any barriers that are impacting a child's attendance are brought to the attention of the Head Teacher so an attendance support plan can be put in place. We would like therefore to request a formal meeting to discuss the situation, and will be in contact with you to arrange a suitable date.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Pritchard
Head Teacher

Example letter for formal meeting- after intervention 2



Little Melton
Norwich
NR9 3AD

Tel: 01603 811446
E-mail office@littlemelton.norfolk.sch.uk
Website www.littlemeltonprimaryschool.co.uk

Date

Dear

As part of attendance and punctuality monitoring at the school it has come to my attention that there are a number of absences in your child attendance registration herringbone.

These absences include both authorised and unauthorised absences.

Where there are significant concerns around unauthorised absences a referral to the Attendance Improvement officer will be considered where further intervention will come into effect.

I am inviting you into school on (date & time) to discuss your child/ren's attendance for an Attendance Support meeting.

At this meeting there will further opportunity to discuss any issues and anything that school need to be made aware of that may be impacting XXXXXXXXX attendance and punctuality at school.

Please find attached your child's attendance registration herringbone.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Pritchard
Head Teacher

The following 'information and warning' letter is sent to all parents at the beginning of each academic year.



School Lane
Little Melton
Norwich
NR9 3AD

Tel: 01603 811446
E-mail office@littlemelton.norfolk.sch.uk
Website www.littlemeltonprimaryschool.co.uk

Dear Parents,

Attendance at School and Legal Intervention - Update

You will be aware that the law requires all parents to ensure their child attends school regularly. Research has shown 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 their pupils in order for them to achieve their maximum potential.

The Local Authority has introduced a system for legal intervention which could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. The level where we can report to county for action to be considered is where:

- pupil attendance of 85% or less or with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period and/or where children have 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence (5 days)

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 can result in legal action being taken.

Our aim of course is to ensure the children in our care receive the most from their education and I know we can count on your support in this matter. However, if you still decide to take your children on holiday during term time, a Pupil Leave of Absence form must still be completed.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Pritchard
Head Teacher

