



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

The terms Trust and Schools (and levels within e.g. governors and trustees) are interchangeable and apply to all schools within the Trust

The Every Child Matters Academy Trust (The Trust) is committed to promoting a culture of high expectation, achievement and excellence. Good attendance is crucial if students are to take advantage of the opportunities available to them and complete a successful journey through their time at the Trust’s schools and as they move on into higher education or the world of work.

All the Trust’s stakeholders (including parents, staff, Governors and Trustees) need to work in partnership to ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities in our aim to promote high standards of attendance and punctuality.

The overall aim for all children should be for 100% attendance therefore any absence should only be for unavoidable and genuine reasons.

School Details

School Name;	Laithes Primary
School contact details;	01226 281255
Headteacher;	Georgina Fletcher
Chair of Governors;	Ian Hague Brown
Member of Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for attendance;	Hayley Gunn
Attendance officer;	Stacey Jones
Parent Support Advisor;	Stacey Jones
Education Welfare Officer;	Julie Marsh

Why Regular Attendance is important

Any absence, including family holidays, negatively affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect learning and achievement. It can also have a de-motivating effect if they are unable to access parts of the curriculum following absences. Every school day matters.

Our schools will seek to build on partnerships with parents/carers by informing them about attendance and punctuality concerns at an early stage.

The school's Attendance Officer and Office Staff are responsible for making daily calls with regard to children's non-attendance to parents and carers. Part of this role is also to record absence correctly on the attendance system (SIMS) for our school.

Good attendance and punctuality is recognised and rewarded in school in various ways.



Parent/Carer Responsibility

All Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children receive an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude either by regular attendance at school or through other suitable arrangements (section 7 Education Act 1996).

Any absence from school without a valid or significant reason may be seen as an offence and persistent absence can result in legal action.

Parents and Carers can request at any time a copy of their child's registration certificate showing their attendance to date. **Your child's attendance will be shared at Parent/Carer consultations in the Autumn and Spring term. A copy of your child's registration certificate will also be included in their end of year report.**

Make sure your child has good attendance -

- From starting at nursery, your child should know the importance of good attendance and getting to school on time every day.
- Show an interest and ask about what they are doing at school.
- Encourage them to take part in school activities.
- Inform their teacher or Headteacher about anything of concern.
- Think about whether time off school for minor ailments be avoided, particularly those which would not stop you from going to work.
- Where possible, make appointments after school, at weekends, or during school holidays.
- Take family holidays outside of term time and speak with school if this is not possible.

The definition of a persistently absent (PA) pupil as set by the DFE is a pupil with 10% or more absence (90% or less attendance). If a pupil has attended less than 50% of the time, they will be classed as severely absent.

The school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will work alongside the Attendance Officer to address pupil related issues that may be affecting their attendance at school. If a child is referred to the EWO under the Local Authority guidelines and the Education Act 1996, the EWO will work with the parents/carers and school to address the issues.

Registration

It is a legal requirement that a register has to be taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, this enables school to:

- Monitor attendance on a regular basis
- Evaluate information and set targets/tackle areas of concern as early as possible
- Target absence, punctuality and truancy and communicate with pupils and parents/carers about expectations
- Have the ability to publicise the above data
- Have the ability to give a clear and accurate picture to parents, carers and guardians
- Have the ability to encourage and reward good attendance

At Laithes Primary School, registers are taken at gam each morning.

Punctuality / Lateness

It is important that all children arrive at school in good time, as it is disruptive for the child and the whole class if they arrive late. Reading, Writing and Maths takes place at the beginning of each school day. Regular lateness can mean that these important lessons are missed.

It is recognised that on occasions there may be genuine reasons for late arrival such as public transport difficulties. If there is a particular reason for your child being late, Parents/Carers should discuss this with the Attendance Officer who may be able to assist with any difficulties.

If your child arrives at school after registers are taken, they will receive a late mark. If they arrive more than 30 minutes after the registers are taken, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

If your child needs to be collected earlier than the end of the school day or you may be late collecting your child, please inform the School Office regarding these exceptional circumstances.

Medical Appointments

We appreciate that children may be required to attend medical appointments during the school day, however please note the following –

- Appointments should be made outside school hours, wherever possible.
- If your child attends an appointment during the school day and, wherever possible, please bring your child back to school for the remainder of the school day.
- Siblings are expected to attend school and their attendance should not be affected by other family member's appointments.
- School should be informed of this appointment prior to the absence where possible.
- If the appointment is during school time then medical evidence should be provided e.g. an appointment card, letter or text message from the relevant organisation. If we do not receive a copy of the medical evidence this may be recorded as an unauthorised absence and we may seek EWO's advice as required.

Leave of Absence Requests

A parent/carer should complete an absence request form (available from the school office) and submit this to the school at least two weeks prior to the first date of absence.

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. This is decided on a case by case basis.

School will respond to the request and it is possible that a Penalty Notice may be issued.

If the school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed, appropriate support will be offered to the parent/carer.

School Attendance and Punctuality Procedures

EXPECT

We aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and aim for all pupils to be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance.

MONITOR

We rigorously monitor attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve issues quickly.

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When there is a problem, we listen to pupils and parents to help us understand barriers to attendance and agree how we can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

We aim to help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school.

FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, we will explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond.

ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

MONITOR;

Attendance and punctuality checks take place daily by the Office Staff and Attendance Officer.

The School operates a 'First Day Contact' procedure and expects parents/carers to communicate the reasons for a child's absence or lateness;

- The school has a dedicated phone line so that you can leave a message with details of your child, class and their reason for absence or lateness. Where possible, please give an indication of the likely date of return.
- If no communication has been received, Parents/Carers will be contacted by school. If no reason can be determined for the absence it will be recorded as unauthorised (O).
- Home visits will be carried out to check on the well-being of children who continue to be absent from school. These visits will take place on day 3 of absence and will continue if absence persists. If deemed appropriate, the Education Welfare Officer may make the home visit.

When a child's attendance and/or punctuality is a falling;

- Parents/carers will be contacted to remind them of expectations and to check if any support is needed. This contact is crucial in raising the attendance profile of our school and enables school to communicate quickly and effectively with Parents and Carers.
- When a child's attendance drops to 92%, they are at greater risk of becoming a persistent absentee. A letter will be sent out to parents to highlight the concerns.

If a child's attendance falls below 90%;

- The child will now be categorised as a persistent absentee. A letter will be sent to parents outlining the concerns and need for attendance to improve rapidly.
- Contact will be made with parents daily when the child is absent from school, this may include daily home visits.
- Parent/carers will be invited to an Internal School Attendance Panel (ISAP) meeting to discuss the reasons for absence in more detail and identify where support is needed. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is likely to be present at this meeting. During the meeting, an agreement will be drawn up between the school and parent/carer, outlining what needs to happen for the child's attendance to improve. This agreement will take into consideration the individual needs of the child and family.
- We will discuss the child's attendance with the EWO on a regular basis. The EWO may contact the parent/carer and make home visits to monitor absence.
- School may suggest an Early Help Assessment or referral to other agencies who may be able to offer appropriate support.
- Please also see the sections below titled facilitating support, formalising support and Enforce which may be relevant to persistent absentees.

	Total number of possible days attendance from start of year to end of this half term;	Total number of days absence from start of academic year that would cause child to be 90% or below (PA)
Autumn 1	35	3.5
Autumn 2	70	7
Spring 1	99	10
Spring 2	128	13
Summer 1	156	16
Summer 2	190	19

If a child's absence falls below 50%, they would be categorised as severely absent. Please see the sections below titled facilitating support, formalising support and Enforce which would likely be relevant in the case of a child having attendance at such a concerning level.

All contact with home is recorded and monitored by the Attendance Officer and the Safeguarding Team.

We understand that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and we will work closely with parents/carers to improve attendance and put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

LISTEN & UNDERSTAND;

The school team are here to support children and families with all aspects of attendance. We understand that there are many factors that can contribute to difficulties in attending school. We are here to listen to concerns and will endeavour to find solutions and offer support wherever this is possible.

If a parent/carer would like to discuss concerns about their child's attendance, they should contact the schools Attendance officer in the first instance. These contact details are shared on page 1 of this policy.

FACILITATE SUPPORT;

In some cases, it may be identified that children and families require support additional to that which can be offered by school. In these cases school will work with the parent/carer to agree other avenues of support.

An Early Help Assessment may be offered to facilitate further discussion around the support that is required.

School may refer for the support of other agencies, such as the 0-19 Public Health Nursing Service (School Nurse) or Early Help Targeted Support (Family Support Worker).

Further information about Early Help is available here;

[Early help for families \(barnsley.gov.uk\)](https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/early-help-for-families)

FORMALISE SUPPORT;

Where absence persists and the support in place is not working or parents/carers are choosing not to engage, we will work with the local authority to formalise support.

This may include;

- A parenting contract or an education supervision order.
- A fixed penalty notice
- Children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).

Further information can be found on the local authority website;

[School attendance and absence \(barnsley.gov.uk\)](https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence)

We will explain the consequences of any actions clearly and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond.

ENFORCE;

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will work with the local authority to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Unauthorised absence may also result in a Penalty Notice being issued through the Local Authority. This penalty will be £60 per child, if paid within 21 days; payment after this time, but within 28 days, is £120.

Persistent unauthorised absence and/or failure to pay a fixed Penalty Notice may render you liable to criminal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Further information can be found on the local authority website;

[School attendance and absence \(barnsley.gov.uk\)](https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/school-attendance-and-absence)

The Governing Body work alongside the Headteacher, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Attendance Officer to ensure that the Attendance Systems are effective.

Attendance data and the overall effectiveness of school attendance procedures are provided to the Governing Body and the Trust at their termly meetings to support the monitoring of this across school/Trust.

The Governing Body with support from the Trust’s Board;


- Ensures that the legal requirements for registration are complied with
- Reviews the school Attendance Policy on an annual basis
- Have input into the school attendance targets
- Receive reports and statistics
- Support the need for good attendance
- Ensures the Policy is in line with BMBC Penalty Notice Code of Conduct – September 2019

Approved by:	The Board of Trustees
Date:	
Next review due by:	Summer term 2023

Signed:



Chair



CEO: