



Attendance Policy

School Policy

Rev Nov 2024

Date	Revisions
Nov 2019	New policy instigated
Nov 2020	Review no changes
May 2023	Pg. 4 – Appendix 3.1 – Registration Pg. 5 – Appendix 3.2 – Lateness & Punctuality Pg.9 – Attendance Monitoring Pg. 14 – Appendix 3 – Pupil Absence Request Form Pg.15 – Appendix 4 – Kent Referral Flow Chart
Jan 2024	Pg. 2 - Contents Pg. 4 – Registration Pg. 5 - Lateness & Punctuality Pg. 8 - Strategies for promoting attendance Pg. 9 – Attendance Monitoring Pg. 11 – Contact Details
Nov 24	Pg. 4 – Legislation and guidance Pg. 8 – Legal Sanctions Pg. 9 – Attendance Monitoring Pg. 13-15 – Attendance Codes

Agreed By:	Governing body	Date: November 2024
Next Review:	Nov 2025	



VISION FOR LANGAFEL CE PRIMARY

We believe in the potential of every child regardless of background or individual needs as expressed in Luke 15, The Parable of the Lost Sheep. We are committed to providing an emotionally supportive environment, where pupils flourish, growing both spiritually and academically; securing foundations for each child to understand who they are and the unique qualities they bring to the world.

Contents

1. Aims
 2. Legislation and guidance
 3. School procedures
 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence
 5. Strategies for promoting attendance
 6. Attendance monitoring
 7. Roles and responsibilities
 8. Monitoring arrangements
 9. Links with other policies
 10. Contact details
- Appendix 1: attendance codes
Appendix 2: Absence letters
Appendix 3 Leave of absence request letter
Appendix 4 Attendance Referral Flowchart



RATIONALE

- Poor attendance disadvantages children and creates gaps in learning.
- We aim to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available.
- Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all of our pupils.
- Children whose attendance is good will be rewarded regularly.
- Improved attendance and time keeping will be recognised.
- Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (section 444) to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the education authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.
- Attendance is a key whole-school improvement issue: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of students and the standards thereby achieved by the school.

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, especially persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Making attendance a priority for all those associated with the school including parents, pupils, teachers and governors.

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age have good attendance (96% of school days or above) and will promote and support punctuality in attending school.

Good attendance is anything above 96% (this equates 8 days absence across a school year).

If absence is below 90% (20 days absence across the year) then your child is deemed to be persistently absent from education.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)



- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Our Kent School Liaison Officer is: Simone Lane Tel: 03000 413944 Email: Simone.Lane@kent.gov.uk

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Registration

The Key Stage 2 gate opens at 8.30am and closes at 8.40am. The Key Stage 1 doors open at the same time. This time period (10 minutes) is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Teaching staff are required to mark the registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.

This is a legal requirement. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.00am and by 1.20pm. (Attendance code / and \ for pupils who are present).

The registers should where possible be recorded onto our "SIMs" software however if this is not possible for any reason (e.g. supply teacher, no internet access) then paper copies should be completed and returned to the Office by the above times.

All attendance records are documented using "SIMs" software, which is supported by the Local Authority.

Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.



3.2 Lateness and punctuality

Once the gate/doors are closed at 8.40am the only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way will be marked as late in the attendance record. Parents of children who are late must sign in using our electronic signing system giving a reason for their lateness. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the SIMs software for each pupil (Attendance code L with the reason). Any child who arrives for school later than 9.25am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning. (Attendance code U).

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve. Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

3.3 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 08.30 or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. The Attendance Officer checks all of the registers from 9.00am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then we send a letter requesting these details to parents/carers to complete. If this letter is not completed and returned by the specified date then the absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O).

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.



3.4 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence (Attendance code M); advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Please send a note to your class teacher or contact the office at least 1 day before the appointment.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

3.5 Extended Absence/ Repeated Absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

3.6 Reporting Attendance

Parents will be made aware of the attendance of their children on regular occasions via our Termly Report Cards. This has a section that clearly shows the child's absence for the year so far and if they are below 90% (they are persistently absent) this is red. Teachers will also discuss attendance of all children both positive, poor and improving during parent consultations (twice a year). A final attendance report will be given in the end of year report and this will show attendance for the whole year and how the absences were recorded.

4 Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.



- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

4.2 Request For Authorising for term-time absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. This means Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

All leave of absence requests will be unauthorised unless the circumstances are exceptional.

A parent/carers should complete an absence request form (available from the school office) and submit this to the school at least six weeks prior to the date required.

School will respond to the request within two weeks. If school is aware of any language difficulties that may preclude a request form being completed appropriate support will be offered to the parent/carers.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Funeral of a close family member although this may not be suitable for younger children – one day.
- Marriage or re-marriage ceremony (not honeymoon) of a parent or older sibling only – normally one to two days. This is for the wedding and the travel and will not cover a family vacation.
- Graduation of a parent or older sibling only – one day normally granted.

These reasons will probably not be authorised and be recorded as Unauthorised absence:

- Birthdays, anniversaries or associated celebrations for a child or family member. Celebrations can take place at a weekend.
- Holiday plans resulting from restricted parental leave entitlement, separated family arrangements, transport issues/flight restrictions.



- Domestic and childcare issues (e.g. installation work, deliveries, car failures, illness or appointments of family members).

4.3 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year.
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission.
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500 or up to 3 months' imprisonment.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We believe it is important to promote good attendance at Langafel and do this through a variety of initiatives:

Verbal feedback from staff

All staff should be aware of pupils with good attendance and give them praise. Also those whose attendance is improving should receive praise for this. This will incentivise children to achieve good attendance.

10 Days:

In each class there is a ladder/ rocket or something similar. Everyday when 100% of the class are in the object will move another step up the ladder. Once the 10th step is reached the class can choose a class reward e.g. bring in toys from home, time on the trim trail on Friday.

100% for a Week:

If a class has 100% attendance for one week they will receive a trophy in Worship as well as get an extra playtime during the following week. If this happens four times they will get their own non-school uniform day or other similar reward.



6. Attendance monitoring

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve attendance and outcomes for students, we are introducing a 4 stage monitoring process, which is intended to improve attendance across our school. A Star Attendance Solutions (A Star) provide pupil attendance monitoring services to Langafel via a web-based software system to manage school attendance. The system will highlight poor attendance in pupils, create attendance reports, create letters, allow users to upload response documents into the system, record comments (for auditing purposes) regarding user actions within the system, suggest escalation actions, and create documents based on attendance data with references to pupil data and guardian contact information.

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily/weekly/monthly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school by 08:30 if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). Parents will be contacted via telephone or email if they have not provided a reason for their child's absence.

Stage 1	Students who have an attendance percentage below the school's attendance threshold. An initial concern letter will be sent to remind parent/carer of the importance of good attendance.
Stage 2	Students that continue to have an attendance percentage below the school's set attendance threshold and have further absences from school, parents will be sent an ongoing concern letter along with a parent survey requesting more information to be provided regarding school absence.
Stage 3	Students that continue to show little, or no improvement, continue to have absences from school and where attendance has not reached the school's set attendance threshold. A serious concern letter will be sent to parents/carers advising that the student will commence a 4 week monitoring period. During this period 100% attendance is required unless medical evidence can be provided.
Stage 4	Where a student has unauthorised absences during the 4 week monitoring period, they will be considered for referral to the Local Authority Attendance Team. Parent/carer will be notified of this decision.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.



7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and in some cases liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

The headteacher also must authorises/unauthorises absence requests and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Collating and recording registration information
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made
- Ensuring the Absence/Late reasons are logged electronically.
- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Sending out written letters regarding attendance
- Making referrals to our School Liaison Officer (SLO) who will become involved on the behalf of the local authority.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's SLO.
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

7.4 The phase leader

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of classes in phase attendance, noting either poor overall attendance or classes where it is good.
- Promoting good attendance in the phase in line with school initiatives and this policy.
- Discussing attendance issues phase meetings where necessary.
- If pupil attendance is 92% or below at the end of the term 2, 3,4,5, & 6 (when completing the Rainbow Tracker) arranging a meeting with parents to discuss.



- Informing the Attendance Officer/Leadership Team where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Supporting with background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register

7.5 The class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Accurately recording attendance using our Electronic Registration system (SIMS) where possible.
- Promoting good attendance in the classroom in line with school initiatives and this policy.
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register
- Discussing attendance at consultation evenings, pupil progress meetings and end of year handover meetings.
- If pupil attendance is 94% or below at the end of the term 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 arranging a meeting with parents to discuss.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance, noting either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers
- Informing the Attendance Officer/Leadership Team where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy.

10. Contact details

Headteacher: Responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.

Mrs C Maynard

Email: headteacher@langafel.kent.sch.uk



Tel: 01474 703398

Pupil Manager: Responsible for the day to day administration of attendance.

Miss H Burgess

Email: hburgess@langafel.kent.sch.uk

Tel: 01474 703398

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances



C1	Performance or Regulated Employment Abroad	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Reduced Timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual Registration	Allows a pupil to be registered at more than one school
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
J1	Interview for employment / Admission to another school	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	Alternative provision or Home Tutoring provided by the Local Authority.
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	When the Local Authority have not provided transport
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school



N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use.
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be recorded with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed.
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to



		youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	The pupil is well enough to attend (otherwise Code I would have been recorded) but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend.
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An unavoidable cause, that is not covered by one of the other 'unable to attend' codes detailed above, is preventing the pupil from attending the school.
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day



Appendix 3 Pupil Absence Request Form



PUPIL ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Pupil Name 1		Class	
Pupil Name 2		Class	
Pupil Name 3		Class	

Dates Requested	
Total Number of School Days Missed	

Reason For Requesting Absence During Term Time Please Note – Amendments to the 2006 Education Act make clear that Headteachers may not grant any level of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
Please be specific:

Name of Parent/Carer		Relationship to Child/ren	
Signed		Date	

FOR SCHOOL USE: Photocopy complete form and place copy in child's file before returning to parent/carers			
Attendance at date of request – Pupil 1	%	Authorised	%
Attendance at date of request – Pupil 2	%	Authorised	%
Attendance at date of request – Pupil 3	%	Authorised	%

Dear Parent/Carer

Consideration has been given to the above request and I confirm your request has been:

☐ Request Authorised:- from _____ to _____

☐ Denied because this is not an exceptional circumstance.

IF YOU TAKE YOUR CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL THIS WILL BE RECORDED AS UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Signed _____ Date _____

(Headteacher)



Appendix 4 Kent Referral Flowchart

