



# Attendance policy

Long Crendon School

<b>Approved by:</b>	Gareth Owens	<b>Date:</b> September 2024
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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

As outlined in the Department for Education's Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024, p10), and in line with Buckinghamshire Council, our Local Authority, Long Crendon School's approach to attendance can be summarised as:

"Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively in partnership with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

- **Expect:** Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
- **Monitor:** Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
- **Listen and Understand:** When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- **Facilitate Support:** Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
- **Formalise Support:** Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances, this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
- **Enforce:** Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education"

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
  - The importance of good attendance
  - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
  - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
  - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Making fixed-penalty notices to the Local Authority where necessary, and/or authorising the Deputy Headteacher to be able to do so in his absence
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:

- Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
- Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### 3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader (also known as the 'senior attendance champion'), supported by the wider attendance team, is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is the Deputy Headteacher and can be contacted via the school office at 01844 208225 or [office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk).

### 3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Local Authority when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is the Headteacher and can be contacted via the school office at 01844 208225 or [office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk).

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the school office when registers close.

### 3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the Pastoral Support Officer or Key Stage Leaders where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

### 3.7 Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or Local Authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 08:30am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or Local Authority
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting the Pastoral Support Officer or Key Stage Leader, who can be contacted via the school office at 01844 208225 or [office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk).

### 3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not (compulsory school age starts in the term following a child's fifth birthday)
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 08:45am and ends at 03:15pm. School doors will be open from 08:30am to allow pupils to have a soft start to the school day.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:45am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:50am and will be kept open until 09:25am. Children arriving after 08:55am but before 09:25am will receive an L mark, denoting late before the register closed. Arrivals after this time will receive a U mark, denoting late after the register closed. A U mark is considered an unauthorised absence.

The register for the second session will be taken at 01:00pm for Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 01:15pm for Key Stage 2, and will be kept open until 01:45pm. Again, the U mark will be used for children arriving after this time.

## 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:30am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff, who can be contacted via 01844 208225 or [office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk). When calling to report an absence, please press 1 to leave an absence voicemail which the office will add to the register during morning attendance checks.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for 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.

## 4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment, which can be done by emailing the school office at [office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:office@longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk). We ask that all planned absences are alerted to the school office as soon as you are aware of them to ensure the accuracy of the registers. Please note that, if we are notified of a planned absence after it occurs, it may not be authorised.

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.

For other types of term time absence, the pupil's parent must apply as far in advance as possible of the requested absence: other than in rare exceptional circumstances, the school will not authorise any leave of absence (other than medical or dental) unless at least three weeks' notice is provided. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the L code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the U code

Punctuality issues are identified by the attendance team and, where this is becoming a concern, will be addressed which is similar to our persistent absence approach: we **expect** all parents to ensure that children are in school by 08:45am, ready to learn and **monitor** punctuality data on at least a half-termly basis. Where this does not meet our expectations, we **listen** to parents and **understand** the situation, ensuring that we **facilitate support** to improve punctuality over time. Where necessary, we **formalise support** to ensure that children are accessing education as they are entitled to.

L codes will be managed through this punctuality procedure, whilst U codes will be treated as unauthorised absences.

#### 4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact external agencies, including but not limited to the police, the Children Missing Education (CME) team at the local authority or First Response (the Local Authority safeguarding team)
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the pupil was absent
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving local authority support
- Where relevant, report the unexplained absence to the pupil's youth offending team officer
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: the school may refer to the Local Authority to issue an notice to improve, a fixed penalty notice or other legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate.

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will regularly inform parents (see definition of 'parent', as used in this policy, in section 3.7 above) about their child's attendance and absence levels through termly reports emailed directly to parents via Insight. Parents can request further information about attendance from the school attendance team via the office.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

In line with Buckinghamshire Council guidance, we define 'exceptional circumstances' as:

- Rare
- Unavoidable
- Significant
- Short

In order to be considered exceptional circumstances, reasons for absence must satisfy **all** four of these criteria.

Leave of absence will not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours.

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 3 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school website: <https://www.longcrendon.bucks.sch.uk/leave-forms/>. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence. If a pupil is under compulsory school age (e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage up to and including the term of the child's fifth birthday), leave can be requested or agreed by a parent the child normally live with.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 5.2 Consequences

Our school will make use of the full range of potential consequences – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

### Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school, Buckinghamshire Council:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-attendance-and-supporting-children-in-education/pay-your-childs-penalty-fine-for-missing-school/code-of-conduct-for-issuing-penalty-notices-for-unauthorised-absence-from-school/notices-to-improve/>.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## 6. Strategies for promoting attendance

To improve attendance at our school we have a display in the reception area which shows both parents/carers and children the importance of attending school and the impact of missing time at school. We also have Parent Information Sessions at the beginning of the academic year in which we speak directly to parents about the importance of regular attendance.

## 7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

### 7.1 Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

When supporting children with complex barriers to attendance, we follow Buckinghamshire Council's Emotion-Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) procedures. This involves identifying barriers to attendance early and putting interventions into place to reduce the risk of non-attendance. Where a child has reached a point of non-attendance, we work alongside the local authority to facilitate reintegration and return to school.

EBSNA guidance for parents and carers can be found here:

<https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/improving-your-childs-school-attendance/emotionally-based-school-avoidance-ebnsa/ebnsa-guidance-for-parents-and-carers/>

EBSNA guidance for professionals can be found here: <https://schoolsweb.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/send-and-inclusion/send-and-inclusion-toolkits/emotionally-based-school-non-attendance-ebnsa-toolkit/>

## 7.2 Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

Our approach with SEND is to ensure we work with parents/carers to understand any barriers and put things in place to help the child, making adjustments and giving additional support where needed. In such cases, the SENDCo works alongside the school's attendance team to ensure a collaborative and effective approach.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

## 7.3 Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

In supporting pupils to reintegrate into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence, we provide a bespoke reintegration programme based on the needs of the child and parent and may include some or all of the following elements:

- Child-led strategies with positive reinforcement from parents and school
- Focus on any barriers to reintegration
- Small steps that are comfortable and manageable to the child
- Promoting anxiety management techniques
- Where necessary and appropriate, implementing reasonable adjustments

## 8. Attendance monitoring

Every week, the attendance officer reviews and analyses attendance data on the whole school, class, group and individual level. For individuals, attendance below or equal to 90% is monitored and escalated to either the senior leader responsible for attendance or the pastoral support officer depending on the level of response required. For groups and classes, the attendance team discuss and implement strategies to specifically promote attendance for these children.

Every half term, the headteacher additionally monitors all children's attendance that has dropped below 95%. For children whose absence is below 95% but above 90%, the member of SLT responsible for attendance will speak to class teachers to elicit any reason which may explain this absence. At this point, CPOMS and SIMS will be consulted to look for recent trends and patterns of absence, as well as historic attendance over the last three years.

Should there be adequate reason for a drop, these conversations will be recorded on CPOMS and the child's attendance will be tracked until it returns above 95%. If the child's attendance does not return above 95%, a "nearing persistent absence" letter will be sent to parents offering a phone call to discuss how the school can support. If a satisfactory explanation is not evident, even on the first attendance review, the "nearing persistent absence" letter will be sent to parents and the child's Key Stage Leader will phone the parents to offer support.

For those whose attendance is below 90%, the headteacher will monitor and analyse reasons for absence and, where there are concerns, escalate this to either the Pastoral Support Officer or Deputy Headteacher to offer support. If the reason given for absence does not allay concerns or if attendance continues to worsen, a persistent absence letter, known as letter 1A, will be sent to parents and they will be called by their child's Key Stage Leader to discuss ways in which the school can support improving attendance. This is sent at the point at which the attendance officer escalates the child to the senior leader responsible for attendance. Should the child's attendance raise above 90%, monitoring will cease and, when it rises above 95%, an acknowledgement letter will be sent to parents, thanking them for engaging with the school to improve

attendance, known as letter 1B. If the attendance does not improve in the subsequent five weeks, the school attendance team will discuss referring the matter to external agencies such as the County Attendance Team, safeguarding or social services. If attendance drops to or below 50%, a severe absence letter will be sent and the County Attendance Team will be notified.

Buckinghamshire Council attendance procedures:

Buchinghamshire Attendance Monitoring Procedure:

School will notify parent of the child's irregular school attendance and offer them the opportunity and support to improve.
<p>If you receive a letter informing you of concerns regarding your child's attendance you should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak with your child to see if there are any reasons why they are reluctant to attend</li> <li>• Contact the school to discuss any difficulties you or your child may be experiencing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure your child attends school regularly</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
If there is no improvement and the parent has not provided a good reason for the absence, the school may refer to the County Attendance Team
<p>Whilst your involvement in a Parenting Contract is voluntary, if you fail to engage with the support offered and your child's attendance remains irregular, the County Attendance team may issue a Penalty Notice or begin legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court.</p> <p>If you are issued with a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent/carer, per child this must be paid in full within 21 days otherwise the Penalty will increase to £120 per parent/carer, per child. If you fail to pay the Penalty by the 28<sup>th</sup> day, the County Attendance Team may instigate legal proceedings against you.</p> <p>If you are found guilty of this offence you can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months.</p>
A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between you and the Local Authority aimed at supporting you in improving your child's school attendance.
The County Attendance Team will invite you to attend a Parenting Contract Meeting and may issue a Warning of a Penalty Notice.

## 8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly and annually across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request. The school has granted the DfE access to its management information system so the data can be accessed regularly and securely.

Data will be 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.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board termly.

## 8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of weekly, half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## 8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

## 8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection policy
- Behaviour policy

## 11. Summary of Changes

Below is a summary of changes made to this policy after its initial publication in September 2024:

No	Date	Change	Reason
01	20/06/25	Added DfE (2014) approach to working together to improve attendance	Clarify the school's approach in line with national and Local Authority policy
02	20/06/25	One additional headteacher responsibility added to section 3.2 (final bullet point with 3 subpoints)	To reflect changes in the national and Local Authority attendance guidance
03	20/06/25	Added "supported by the attendance team" to section 3.3	To reflect that attendance is the responsibility of the attendance team, under the leadership of the headteacher
04	20/06/25	Changed time for notification of unplanned absences to 08:30am in section 3.7	Change to procedure following lessons learnt in 2024-25 academic year.
05	20/06/25	Clarified meaning of compulsory school age in section 4.1	To ensure clarity in the policy
06	20/06/25	Added soft start to school day from 08:30am before registers open and moved registration time from 08:55 to 08:50 in section 4.1	In line with introduction of soft start in the mornings for the 2025/26 academic year.
07	20/06/25	Moved expected arrival time from 08:55am to 08:45am in section 4.1	In line with actual timings of the school day

No	Date	Change	Reason
08	20/06/25	U and L mark usage clarified and times adapted in section 4.1	Additional clarity regarding code usage and classification of U code as unauthorised absence, and times adapted to reflect current practice
09	20/06/25	Added attendance voicemail option for reporting unplanned absence in section 4.2	Updated to reflect new practices
10	20/06/25	Added requirement for 3 weeks notice to planned leave of absence requests other than medical and dental in section 4.3	Changed to be in line with LA policy
11	20/06/25	Clarified approach to punctuality in section 4.4	Changed to be in line with LA policy
12	20/06/25	Updated reporting arrangements in section 4.6	Changed to reflect school practice
13	20/06/25	Changed length of notice for leave requests to three weeks in section 5.1	Changed to be in line with LA policy
14	20/06/25	Added links to EBSNA guidance for parents and professionals to section 7.1	Added to ensure that resources can be easily sourced when referring to policy
15	20/06/25	Added role of the SENDCO to section 7.2	Changed to reflect school practice
16	20/06/25	Removed outdated graphic in section 8 and updated description of attendance procedures	Changed to reflect school practice
17	20/06/25	Added statement that school has granted DfE access to attendance data in section 8.1	Changed to reflect school practice
18	20/06/25	Headteacher added as reviewer and review frequency set to annual in section 9	Changed to reflect school practice

## 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>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment

<b>S</b>	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open

<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays

## Appendix 2: Letter 1A



LETTER 1A

To the parent(s) of: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear parent(s),

By law parents are responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. I am writing to you as your child's attendance at school is currently irregular and therefore a cause for concern.

Their attendance has been monitored over the last half term and is currently only \_\_\_\_%. We expect attendance at Long Crendon School to remain above 95%.

We would like to work together to raise your child's attendance back above 90% and so your child's Key Stage Leader will be in touch to discuss ways in which the school can support this improvement.

Only the Head teacher is able to authorise absence; further absences may not be authorised without supporting evidence that your child was unable to attend school with good reason.

The legislation under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered. Under section 444(1A) EA 1996, a parent commits a further offence where the circumstances in section 444(1) apply and the parent knows that the child fails to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause the child to attend. The penalty for failing to ensure attendance is a fine of up to £1000.

If you knowingly fail to send your child to school, you may be prosecuted for the more serious offence under Section 444(1A) the penalty for this offence is a fine up to level 4 on the standard scale and or imprisonment of up to three months.

This means that parents/carers may be subject to a Penalty Notice of £60.00, per parent/carer, per child, if paid within 21 days; rising to £120.00 per parent/carer, per child, if paid between 21 and 28 days, if their child is absent from school without a valid reason (i.e. the school does not approve the reason given for the absence). The Penalty Notice is issued as a means of avoiding prosecution and there is no right automatic right to appeal for a Penalty Notice.

Should your child's attendance remain irregular during this time I will have no choice but to refer the matter to the County Attendance Team for further action.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Aziz

Acting Deputy  
Headteacher

SLT member responsible  
for Attendance

Key Stage Leader

Class teacher

### Appendix 3: Below 90% Letter



To the parent(s) of: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear parent(s),

At our half-termly monitoring, your child's attendance to date is at \_\_\_\_\_%. At Long Crendon School, we expect children's attendance to remain above 95%.

Although this is not currently a cause for concern, we wanted to make contact to see if there was anything the school could do to support you in bringing this back above 95% in the coming half term. As a values-based community school, working in partnership with families is a core aspect of our identity and ethos.

Please contact either your child's class teacher or Mr Aziz to discuss ways in which we can support if you feel this is necessary.

Please be aware that, should their attendance drop below 90% or an abnormal pattern of absences emerges, this will be considered persistent absence and is something we take seriously. Please refer to our attendance policy for more information about how this would progress, although we hope that this route will not be necessary.

Many thanks,

Mr Aziz  
Acting Deputy  
Headteacher  
SLT member responsible  
for Attendance

Key Stage Leader

Class teacher

## Appendix 4: Thank you Letter



LONG CRENDON SCHOOL

*the place to grow*

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**LETTER 1B**

To the parent(s) of: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear parent(s),

Further to the letter dated \_\_\_\_\_, we are pleased to inform you that, following the monitoring period, your child's attendance has improved significantly. We would like to thank you for your efforts to improve this over the last half term.

Given that your child's attendance has improved, we will not be taking any further action at this time.

We will continue to monitor attendance for the next half term and contact you if we have any concerns. We would expect to see this improved attendance pattern continue for the remainder of the year.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher, Key Stage Leader or myself should you have any questions.

Many thanks,

Mr Aziz

Acting Deputy

Headteacher

SLT member responsible  
for Attendance

Key Stage Leader

Class teacher