

Attendance Policy

School Attendance Policy September 2026 Next Planned Review: September 2027 or sooner should guidance change.

Our attendance as a whole school September 2025 – July 2026 was 96.7%.

Philosophy

Lilleshall Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a school we encourage maximum attendance for all pupils. Any issues that may impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as rapidly as possible. Our attendance team, which includes the Headteacher, our Family Support Worker, Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and Governors all play a significant role in supporting parents in getting children to school on time and every day. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement.

Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school actively encourages 100 % attendance for all our pupils. Our school gives a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern regarding attendance. If there are concerns regarding a pupil's attendance, we will work with parents and pupils to resolve the issues as quickly and efficiently as possible. We adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance as soon as possible.

Principles

The school will:

- Dedicate a SLT champion for attendance who ensures there is a whole school culture that promotes the benefit of high attendance.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law,
- Complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,
- EWO will complete late checks to work with parents to get pupils to school on time,
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting the school office staff early on the first day of absence,
- Reward good and improved attendance of all pupils
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils who come in late or who are returning after absence,
- Consult with all members of the school community and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the whole-school attendance policy,
- Ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers working with the EWO to review attendance to understand patterns of attendance, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is required,
- Evaluate impact of systems put in place to support pupils and families

- Provide a termly report to governors outlining attendance and persistent absentee figures,
- Send regular newsletters to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally update school website with any attendance related issues,
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed,
- Have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.
- Utilise attendance incentives that are personalised to the targeted pupils,

It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set during the Autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the governing body. The governing body must approve the school target for attendance to be set for the following academic year. In compiling an Action Plan, the school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process. When evaluating success, the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced
- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Life Learning lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons

Practice

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages
- A signed copy of any correspondence is retained by the school
- Sharing daily attendance with the government
- Provide the LA with the names and addresses of any ill pupils who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days.

Ofsted

Ofsted guidance makes it clear that 'grey exclusions' are illegal. "Where a pupil is sent home for disciplinary reasons for a part of the school lunchtimes, fixed term suspension is the only legal method of removal. Informal or unofficial exclusions are illegal, regardless of whether they are carried out with the agreement of parent or carers'.

School Times

The classroom doors are open at:

Key Stage 1

8.45am, registration is taken at 8.50am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in class at this time. Pupils who arrive to school after 9.10am will receive an unauthorised absence.

Key Stage 2

9.00am, registration is taken at 9.05. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in class at this time. Pupils who arrive at 9.20 will receive an unauthorised absence.

Appointments

Parents are encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school office. If the appointment is during the day the pupils are expected to attend school before and after the appointment where possible.

Religious Observance

The school will take advice from the attendance team within Telford & Wrekin Council to establish the appropriate number of days absence required for religious festivals. Parent/Carer will be required to complete a request for absence during term time form.

Request for absence during term time

The DfE guidance about holiday in term time makes the following points:

- Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis
- Even in exceptional circumstances it is expected that Headteachers will use their discretion sparingly.
- Headteachers should not apply policies (for example, blanket bans) which might suggest that each application has not been considered on its individual merits

As a general guide any activity, holiday or event that can be arranged during the annual 13 weeks holiday time should not be authorised during the school term. School will confirm in writing our decision whether to authorise any leave in term time or not following any

requests for leave in term time. This provides parents/carers with written information about the possible consequences of taking leave that has not been authorised.

Absence Procedures

Our expectation is for parents/carers to call the school office on 01952 388430 before 8.45am if their child is absent. If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence, we will:

- Follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone,
- Request the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to conduct a home visit if no response is received after 3 days of absence (this could be sooner depending on circumstance) and consider a referral to the local authority attendance team or contact 'Family Connect', after 5 days.
- If a child is absent for 10 days, school will initiate the Absent from Education Protocol as advised by Telford and Wrekin Council.
- Invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM) after a maximum of 10 days absence, unless other action is planned. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, parent, pupil and the EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to build relationships with families, identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. Discussions will be mindful of pupils absent due to mental or physical health or the SEND needs in order to provide additional support. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance,
- Help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then an Individual Reintegration Programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all relevant members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible,
- Contact Family Connect 01952 385385 for further guidance on available support.
- Adhere to the National Fines Framework
- From September 2024 schools have a duty to inform the LA of any child who is recorded with code I and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness within an academic year.

The National Fines Framework

In July 2026 the DfE reviewed and amended the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' statutory guidance. This guidance sits alongside the 'National Framework for Penalty Notices' which the Government introduced in August 2024 and 'The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024' and the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

In Telford & Wrekin it is the delegated responsibility of the Attendance Support Team to issues Penalty Notices following referrals from schools, and only they can issue Penalty Notices relating to school absence.

It is only the Headteacher (or delegated member of School Staff) who has the discretion to authorise any request for leave in term time and it is also they that decide the duration of that leave. Parents must submit a request for leave in term time to the school, allowing ample time for consideration to be given. Any circumstances that parents wish to be considered should be included in the request. Holidays should not be booked before permission is granted. The legislation does not allow for any school to adopt a blanket ban, all requests for leave in term time will be considered to determine if there are exceptional circumstances and parents must be notified of that decision.

The government introduced changes in legislation from August 2024 that parents need to be aware of:

- If your child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-school week rolling period, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. These 10 sessions may include any unauthorised absence, including leave in term time and sessions do not have to be consecutive.
- If in an individual case the local authority believes a Penalty Notice would be appropriate, they retain the discretion to issue one before the threshold is met, so for eight sessions of unauthorised absence. This might apply for example, when parent(s) are deliberately or purposefully avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold, or for repeated absence for events such as birthdays and taking their child out of school, or when there are only four pupil days in school and the fifth day is for example a PD Day or bank holiday
- Penalty Notices increased to £160 from August 2024. This can be reduced to £80 but only for the first Penalty Notice issued, if paid within 21 days – this reduction does not apply to any subsequent Penalty Notice.
- Any 2nd Penalty Notice, to the same parent for the same child, issued within three years of the date of the first Penalty Notice will be charged at a flat rate of £160
- A third Penalty Notice will not be issued within a three-year rolling period, to the same parent for the unauthorised absence of the same child, - alternative action or legal measures will be utilised for subsequent offences.
- Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. as is usually the case for an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- In some circumstances a 'Notice to Improve' may be issued – However, a Notice to Improve will only be used in cases where support is appropriate. They will not be issued in cases of unauthorised leave in term time for holidays, where information for parents is included in schools' attendance policy and on school's website, or a warning by the school that a Penalty Notice could be issued if unauthorised leave in term time is taken will suffice.

‘Parents should always apply to the Headteacher for any request for leave in term time by completing a request form available from the school. (DfE guidance states schools should not authorise leave retrospectively so any leave in term time taken without a request being submitted will be unauthorised absence)’.

In developing and publishing the National Framework, the Government renewed appeals to parents not to take their children out of school during term time. The Governors and Headteacher of this school support this initiative. The legislation does not allow for blanket bans, therefore all requests for leave in term time will be considered. However, in line with the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, DfE guidance ‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance - July 2026, National Framework for Penalty Notices 2024 and local Code of Conduct, students will only be given permission to take leave in term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE Guidance- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (amended July 2026) states that: Generally, the DfE does not consider the need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. (Paragraph 37.)

Each application for leave in term time will be considered and if it is agreed and authorised the Headteacher will determine the duration of any leave. However, if the application is not agreed and the absence occurs the dates will be unauthorised. Parents will be notified of any decision in writing. This notification may be hand delivered directly to the parent, emailed to the registered email address of the parent held on school records or posted to the parents’ home address.

As a school we are asked to inform you that in line with Telford and Wrekin Council Policy, if your child is absent for 10 school sessions within a 10-week rolling period and that absence is unauthorised, you may be subject to a Penalty Notice fine, criteria is as detailed above.

Please follow the links below for more detailed information:

Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-families/



Leave of Absence Leaflet - Sept 26 Upd