



Attendance Policy

The Corporation of Oundle School includes both Oundle School, a boarding and day School for pupils aged 11 – 18 and Laxton Junior School, a day School for pupils aged 4 - 11. This policy applies solely to Laxton Junior School.

Aims and Introduction

Laxton Junior School aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also support parents and carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when School is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. It is our belief that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is a positive attitude towards school. With this in mind, we strive to ensure Laxton Junior School is a happy, safe and rewarding experience for all children.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- 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 amendments 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

It also refers to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The Governing Body delegates responsibility for the monitoring of attendance to the Head.

Attendance links to safeguarding and, as such, the governor with responsibility for safeguarding is informed of any individual concerns.

The Laxton Junior School Committee of The Governing Body are responsible for:

- Holding the Head to account for the implementation of this policy
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Ensuring school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

The Head

The Head is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the LJS Committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individuals as appropriate
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

The Deputy Head

The Deputy Head is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Monitoring and evaluating attendance data at the school and at individual pupil level
- Having an oversight of attendance data analysis
- Monitoring and evaluating expectations and processes
- Liaising with Form Teachers and the School Administrators in identifying concerns and building a picture of understanding about individual children's attendance
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the Head
- Building relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and parents
- Working with external agency partners to tackle persistent absence

Form Teachers

Form Teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance daily, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school offices via iSAMS
- Following up absences in the appropriate way (with the School Office or Deputy Head)
- Discussing lateness and attendance with parents/carers in the first instances
- Reporting any concern about a child's absence or welfare to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Office Staff

Office Staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system
- Providing daily attendance updates to the Deputy Head
- Providing termly attendance reports to the Deputy Head
- Recording any late pupils coming through the Front Office and to seek clarification from parents for their reason for being late

School Procedures

Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils on this register.

The attendance register will be taken during Form Time in the morning and after lunch. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Attending a medical appointment
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

An electronic registration system is used through our data management system, iSAMS.

Morning registration takes place during morning Form Time. The afternoon register will be taken during the first 15 minutes of Period 6.

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register is preserved. Attendance data is not deleted or archived.

Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.

Pupils who arrive after 8.30am must enter via the main entrance. Office staff will register the child and accompany them to their classroom where appropriate. It will be the parent/carer's responsibility to explain the reasons for lateness.

Repeated lateness at the beginning of the school day could be a safeguarding concern and will be monitored by the Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Pursuing Lateness:

- Office staff will have responsibility for collating lists of pupils arriving late
- Lateness is monitored daily and reviewed weekly
- If a child has regular lateness parents/carers will be contacted via the Form Tutor
- If punctuality does not improve, parents/carers will be contacted by the Deputy Head to explore how the parents will improve the situation and, if necessary, what support the School can provide in facilitating this
- On the rare occasion that punctuality still does not improve, parents will be invited to a meeting with the Head and Deputy Head
- If after extensive support from the school, the parents do not ensure that punctuality is at an acceptable standard, a referral will be made to the Local Authority Educational Inclusion Manager

Unplanned Absence

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of any unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health.

Absences due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents/carers to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate forms 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/carers will be notified.

Unexplained Absences

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will follow their Child Missing Education Policy.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Calling and/or emailing the pupil's parents on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- Calling and/or emailing the pupil's emergency contacts
- Initiating a home visit
- Referring to external agencies, including police
- Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an external agencies.

Medical or Dental Appointments

Medical and dental appointments are recorded as authorised absences; advance notice is required for these absences, which should be submitted to the Head, either directly or via the School office or Form Teacher.

We advise that medical and dental appointments are taken outside of school hours but understand that this is not always possible. Pupils should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for Other Absences

Applications for other types of absence in term time, including long term absences, must be made in advance. Information relating to whether we can authorise such absences can be found below. Any request for absence should be made to the Head, either directly or via the School office or Form Teacher. The Head will then decide whether to authorise the absence.

Reporting to Parents

Attendance is reported to parents bi-annually through the written reports.

Following Up Absences

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend school, or stops attending, we will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by the School Administrator phoning the parent/carer and following up via email if required.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether an absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to use

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised Absence

The Head will grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances.' A leave of absence is granted at the Head's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

'Exceptional circumstances' may include, but are not limited to:

- Illness and medical/dentist appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.
- A parent returning from a tour of duty
- The death of a relative
- Attending the wedding or funeral of a close relative

The Head considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Including:

- the time of year for the proposed absence
- if the absence is close to any assessment or exam dates
- the child's overall attendance record
- any holidays already taken in the school year
- the age and stage of education of the child
- the ability of the child to catch up the learning that they have missed
- the reason why parents are taking the time off during term-time

While absence may be granted for absence during term-time, it is entirely the Head's decision and is not a parental right. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent/carer.

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

Requesting Approval for Term-Time Absence

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are exceptional circumstances where a parent/carer may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event.

Term time absence requests should be made in writing (via email or letter) to the Head.

Monitoring Attendance

Attendance Data

The school will:

- Monitor pupil attendance on a daily, half-termly, termly and annual basis, at an individual and pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause for concern

Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide attendance reports to Form Teachers / Educational Support to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Pupil-level attendance data is used for internal purposes for example:

- To track the attendance of individual pupils
- To identify cause for concerns
- To monitor and evaluate pupils being identified as being in need of intervention and support
- To ensure the welfare of the child is paramount

Repeated Unauthorised and/or Unexplained Absences

The school will contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised/unexplained absence, including if attendance drops below 95%. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised and/or unexplained absences, the parents or carers will be asked to meet with the Head and/or Deputy and discuss the problem.

If after extensive support from the school, the parents do not ensure that attendance improves to an acceptable standard, the school may seek the support of the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team. Attendance can be a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be followed in accordance to our Safeguarding Policy.

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.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- To track the attendance of individual pupils

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The school will work alongside parents/carers and pupils to improve individual attendance. To promote attendance across the school we:

- Have high expectations and a clear vision for attendance underpinned by our Values and Mission
- Ensure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe
- Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes

- Ensure Governors have an accurate view of school attendance
- Build relationships with staff, pupils and families in order to secure trust and engagement and make sure that the School is a welcoming and positive setting
- Communicate openly and honestly with staff, pupils and families about their expectations of school life
- Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance
- Model respectful relationships and appropriate communication
- Use clear and consistently applied systems and processes to review attendance
- Make sure escalation procedures to address absences are initiated proactively
- Ensure every member of staff knows and understands their responsibilities linked to attendance
- Have robust school systems to provide useful data at cohort, group and individual pupil level to give an accurate view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns amongst groups
- Deliver intervention in a targeted way
- Monitor and analyse attendance data regularly
- Use Pastoral and Educational Support staff who are skilled in supporting pupils and their families to identify and overcome barriers to attendance
- Create wellbeing action plans in partnership with families and other agencies that may be supporting families
- Monitor the impact of any intervention, making adjustments where necessary

Linked Policies

Linked policies include:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Missing from Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Reviewer	SMC
Post of Reviewer	Deputy Head
Review Date	Michaelmas 2023
Reviewed and filed with both Schools	Michaelmas 2023
Next Review (max 3 years)	Michaelmas 2025

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings

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	Educated Off Site	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual Registration	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

Authorised Absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Family holiday (Agreed)	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
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
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
!	Covid self-isolating	Pupil is self-isolating due to being a close contact, awaiting PCR test, travel requirement etc
>	Covid related illness	Pupil has tested positive for Covid-19
T	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	Music Activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised music activity approved by the school
F	On Site Activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised activity approved by the school on site
Other		
X	Non-Compulsory School Age Absence	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Exceptional Circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
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
£	Pupil Not Yet On Roll	A pupil is not yet on roll at the school
A	Late Return/Early Departure	Not Relevant for LJS
K	CA Activity	Not Relevant for LJS
Z	CCF Activity	Not Relevant for LJS
L	Leave Out	Not Relevant for LJS
Q	Pupil Withdrawn from Normal Lesson	Pupil has been withdrawn from lessons for another purpose eg: additional English lesson