Lymington CE Infant School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Name of School:	**Lymington CE (Aided) Infant School**
Name of Headteacher:	**Julia Morris**
Date Policy approved and adopted:	**November 2026**

Vision and Ethos

At Lymington Church of England Infant School, we believe that every child is unique, valued and loved by God. Guided by our Christian vision of **Learning Together** and our core values of **Love, Courage and Respect**, we are committed to ensuring that every child flourishes both academically and personally.

Regular attendance is fundamental to children's learning, wellbeing, friendships, personal development and future success. We believe that children learn best when they attend school every day, arrive on time, feel safe, experience belonging and participate fully in all aspects of school life.

We recognise that barriers to attendance can affect any family. Our approach is based upon partnership, understanding and early support. We will work collaboratively with parents, carers, Hampshire County Council and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance wherever possible.

We are committed to ensuring that attendance remains everyone's responsibility and that support is considered before enforcement, in line with Department for Education guidance

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality for all pupils.
- Ensure every child receives their legal entitlement to a full-time education.
- Create a culture in which attendance is valued and celebrated.
- Identify attendance concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Provide support for children and families experiencing barriers to attendance.
- Fulfil all statutory attendance responsibilities.
- Safeguard children through effective attendance monitoring.
- Reduce persistent and severe absence.
- Strengthen partnership working between school and families.
- Ensure consistency, fairness and transparency in attendance procedures.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy operates in accordance with:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Children Missing Education Statutory Guidance
- Equality Act 2010
- Hampshire County Council Attendance Guidance
- Hampshire County Council Code of Conduct for Issuing Penalty Notices (August 2024)

Principles of Attendance

We believe:

- Every school day matters.
- Good attendance promotes achievement and wellbeing.
- Excellent attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- All attendance concerns should be addressed early.
- Support should be offered before enforcement wherever possible.
- Strong relationships with families are key to good attendance.
- Attendance difficulties should be viewed through a safeguarding lens.
- Children with additional needs may require tailored attendance support.

Role and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Promote a culture of excellent attendance.
- Ensure attendance remains a strategic priority.
- Review attendance data at least termly.
- Hold school leaders to account.
- Ensure statutory duties are fulfilled.
- Monitor attendance for vulnerable groups.
- Review this policy annually.

The Headteacher (Attendance Champion) will:

- Lead attendance improvement across the school.
- Establish a positive attendance culture.
- Ensure attendance is monitored accurately.
- Analyse attendance patterns.
- Identify pupils requiring support.
- Meet with families where concerns arise.
- Authorise or refuse leave of absence requests.
- Work with Hampshire Attendance Services where necessary.
- Report attendance trends to governors.

Teaching staff will:

- Complete attendance registers accurately.
- Promote attendance positively.
- Identify attendance concerns promptly.
- Report concerns to senior leaders.

- Support reintegration following absence.
- Foster strong relationships with pupils and families.

Parents and carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly.
Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day unless genuinely unwell.
- Ensure punctual arrival.
- Notify school before 9.15am on the first day of absence.
- Maintain communication throughout prolonged absences.
- Avoid unnecessary absence.
- Attend meetings arranged to discuss attendance.
- Work collaboratively with the school where support is required.
- Request leave of absence in advance and only in exceptional circumstances.

Pupils are encouraged to:

- Attend school every day.
- Arrive punctually.
- Engage positively with learning.
- Speak to trusted adults about any worries affecting attendance.

Promoting Good Attendance

The school will promote attendance through:

- Positive relationships with children and families.
- Celebration assemblies.
- Class attendance recognition.
- Attendance information for parents.
- Home-school communication.
- Early support for emerging concerns.
- Recognition of improved attendance.
- The school will celebrate progress and improvement rather than focusing solely on perfect attendance.

Attendance Expectations

The Department for Education and Hampshire County Council identify attendance below 90% as Persistent Absence and attendance below 50% as Severe Absence.

Attendance	Days Missed Per Year
100%	0
98%	4
96%	8
95%	10
90%	19
85%	29
80%	38

Attendance categories:

Category	Attendance
Excellent	98-100%
Good	96-97.9%
Monitoring Required	90-95.9%
Persistent Absence	Below 90%
Severe Absence	Below 50%

Attendance will be reviewed regularly throughout the academic year.

Registration Procedures

The school is legally required to maintain an attendance register.

Registers will be taken twice daily:

Morning Session: 8.45am
Afternoon Session: 1.00pm

Attendance records are legal documents and may be used in court proceedings.

Punctuality

Punctuality forms an important part of attendance.

Children arriving:

- before 8.45am will be recorded present;
- between 8.45am and 9.00am will receive a Late Code (L);
- after 9.00am will receive an Unauthorised Late Code (U), unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Repeated lateness:

- disrupts learning;
- affects children's emotional wellbeing;
- contributes to lost learning time.

Where lateness becomes a concern:

1. Parents will be contacted.
2. Attendance monitoring will commence.
3. Support strategies will be discussed.
4. Formal intervention may be considered where appropriate.

Reporting Absence

Parents should notify the school before 9.15am on the first day of absence.

- by telephone on 01590 673355

- by email at admin@lymington-inf.hants.sch.uk
- in person at the school office

The reason for absence must always be provided.

A child who is absent without explanation will be subject to first-day procedures.

First Day Procedures

As attendance is a safeguarding responsibility:

- School staff will contact parents where no reason for absence has been received.
- Emergency contacts may be contacted where necessary.
- Follow-up enquiries will continue until the child's whereabouts are confirmed.
- School staff may carry out a home visit
- Where concerns exist regarding a child's safety, safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately.

Attendance Monitoring and Early Intervention

Attendance data will be monitored:

- daily;
- weekly;
- half-termly;
- termly.

Interventions will be triggered where:

- attendance falls below 96%;
- concerning patterns emerge;
- repeated illness absence occurs;
- punctuality becomes problematic.

Possible interventions include:

- attendance letters;
- telephone discussions;
- parental meetings;
- attendance plans;
- referrals to support services

Graduated Attendance Support

In line with DfE expectations, support will follow a graduated response.

Universal Support
All pupils receive:

- strong attendance messages;
- attendance monitoring;
- positive attendance culture.

Targeted Support
Where concerns emerge:

- parental meetings;
- attendance reviews;
- attendance action plans;
- pastoral support;
- reasonable adjustments.

Intensive Support
For Persistent or Severe Absence:
- multi-agency involvement;
- Early Help support;
- attendance contracts;
- attendance referrals;
- Hampshire Attendance Team involvement

Children with Additional Needs

Additional support may be necessary for pupils with:
- SEND
- medical conditions
- anxiety
- trauma
- social care involvement
- emotional wellbeing needs

Support may include:
- individual attendance plans;
- adapted timetables where legally appropriate;
- pastoral support;
- SEND review meetings;
- phased reintegration.

The school recognises that attendance difficulties may indicate unmet needs.

Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)

The school acknowledges that anxiety can be a significant barrier to attendance.

Where EBSA is identified:
- concerns will be investigated promptly;
- attendance plans may be developed;
- children and families will be listened to carefully;
- reasonable adjustments may be implemented;
- external agency support may be sought.
- Support strategies may include:
- transition support;
- trusted adults;
- safe spaces;
- reduced anxiety triggers;
- phased returns.

The aim will always be successful reintegration into full-time education.

Medical Conditions and Illness

Children who are genuinely unwell should remain at home.

For prolonged absence due to illness the school may request:

- medical evidence;
- information from healthcare professionals
- attendance review meetings.

The school will work sensitively with families experiencing genuine medical difficulties.

Leave of Absence During Term Time

Headteachers may only authorise leave during term time where exceptional circumstances apply.

Exceptional circumstances are generally:

- rare;
- significant;
- unavoidable.

Family holidays will not normally be authorised.

Parents must submit a Leave of Absence Request Form before making travel arrangements. The form can be requested from the school office.

Unauthorised leave may result in penalty notices being issued

Religious Observance

Leave may be authorised for recognised religious observance where appropriate.

Parents should notify school in advance.

The school values and respects the faith traditions represented within the school community.

Medical Appointments

Appointments should be made outside school hours wherever possible.

Where unavoidable:

- advance notice should be given;
- evidence may be requested;
- pupils should attend school before and after appointments wherever possible.

Medical appointments will usually be authorised.

Children Missing Education

The school has a statutory duty to identify and support children missing education.

- Where a child's whereabouts are unknown:
- reasonable enquiries will be undertaken;
- home visits may be conducted;
- partner agencies may be contacted;
- referrals will be made to Hampshire Children's Missing Education Service where necessary.

Children Leaving School

Parents must provide:

- new address details;
- new school details;
- intended leaving date.

Failure to provide destination information may result in Children Missing Education procedures being initiated.

Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent Absence is attendance below 90

The school will:

- analyse attendance carefully;
- identify barriers;
- implement support;
- monitor progress regularly.

Severe Absence is attendance below 50%.

This will trigger:

- urgent review;
- multi-agency involvement;
- safeguarding consideration;
- intensive attendance support.

Legal Intervention

The school will always seek to work constructively with families.

However, where support has not secured improvement and unauthorised absence continues, legal action may be considered in accordance with Hampshire County Council procedures.

This may include:

- formal warnings;
- penalty notices;
- attendance prosecution;
- education supervision orders.

Fixed Penalty Notices

In accordance with Hampshire County Council guidance, the Headteacher may request the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where a pupil has:

- accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling period of 100 possible sessions; or
- taken unauthorised leave of absence during term time that meets the threshold for Fixed Penalty Notice consideration.

The decision to request a Fixed Penalty Notice will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the individual circumstances of the pupil and family, and in line with the school's attendance procedures and Hampshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Fixed Penalty Notices.

Current charges are:

Offence	Amount
First offence paid within 21 days	£80
First offence after 21 days and within 28 days	£160
Second offence within three years	£160

Further non-compliance may result in prosecution.

Equality and Inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that attendance procedures are applied fairly and consistently.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required under the Equality Act 2010.

No child or family will be disadvantaged because of:

- disability;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- family circumstances;
- social disadvantage.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Governors will receive termly reports including:

- whole school attendance;
- persistent absence rates;
- severe absence rates;
- attendance of vulnerable groups;
- punctuality data;
- effectiveness of interventions.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner should legislation change.

Related Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy
- Early Help Procedures
- Admissions Policy
- Children Missing Education Procedures
- Equality Information and Objectives

Date reviewed by Governors	November 2026
Review Date	November 2027 (Annual)
Person(s) Responsible for Implementation & Monitoring	The Governors and Head teacher have responsibility for monitoring this policy.