



La Petite Ecole Française

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. La Petite Ecole Française fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time and therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school (even those under 5 years of age) and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school and is also available on our school website.

This policy is written in line with the Education Act 1996 and 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, in addition to guidance from the Local Authority (RBKC). The policy incorporates duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018/UK GDPR, ensuring lawful monitoring, recording, and sharing of attendance information.

This policy has been updated to reflect the statutory guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* (August 2024), *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* (September 2025), and *Children Missing Education* (September 2025).

KCSIE highlights that prolonged pupil absence may indicate a variety of safeguarding concerns. Any unexplainable and/or persistent absence needs to be investigated thoroughly as it could be an indication that there is a safeguarding issue. Schools should foster a culture of high attendance across the entire school community. Maintaining precise admission and attendance registers, along with regular analysis of attendance and absence data to identify students who require support, is essential. It is important to establish strong relationships with families and collaborate with the local authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Headteacher and staff at our school work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

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Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and management in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Get the best achievements from pupils by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.
- Raise awareness with parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery aged children to promote good habits at an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.
- Ensuring that parents understand the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child's age and development.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils and staff on school attendance matters.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.

- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

Morning Registration

The school doors open at 8.45am until 9.00am. Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance in the class register. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning session. The digital attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.10 am. If a child is unexpectedly absent, the Admin Head contacts the parents before 9.30am for an explanation. The morning attendance register is completed and closed by 9.30am.

Afternoon Registration

Afternoon registration is taken by teachers as soon as students return from lunch and must be completed within **10 minutes** of their arrival. If a student is unexpectedly absent, the Admin Head will contact parents or carers within 30 minutes of the session starting to obtain an explanation. The afternoon register is then completed and officially closed within 30 minutes, ensuring that absences are promptly recorded and followed up, supporting accurate attendance monitoring and timely intervention when needed.

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

Lateness

Once the doors are closed at 9.00am the only way to get into school is via the school office.

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive an email advising them of the school's concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

If a child is sick or will be late to school, we require that parents inform us before 9am by either email, verbally by phone or by leaving a voicemail message with the school office. **It is a legal requirement in the UK for all pupils to attend school from 5 years old onwards, so any absence (even under 5s) other than illness needs to be authorised in advance by the Headteacher (headteacher@lapef.co.uk).**

Definitions

Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. Other examples of absence that can be authorised include religious observance, medical appointments, or approved educational activities.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. Examples of absences that are unauthorised include holidays during term time, shopping, birthdays, leisure activities, and persistent lateness after the register has closed.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

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- To maintain appropriate registration processes.
- To maintain appropriate attendance data.
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, parents and pupils.
- To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence.
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.
- To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.
- To work with parents to improve individual pupils' attendance and punctuality
- To refer to the Educational Welfare Service of RBKC any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.
- To report attendance statistics to the Local Authority (RBKC) and the DfE where requested. • All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Admin Head (or the Headteacher) who is responsible for monitoring attendance.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking a class register every morning and recording the reason for any absences
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers
- Informing the Admin Head where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness, if age appropriate
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary

The Headteacher is responsible for:

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- Authorising or not authorising absence requests
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

The Admin Head is responsible for:

- Being the first point of contact for attendance issues on a day-to-day basis
- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home
- Reporting concerns to the Headteacher
- Emailing parents regarding attendance issues

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence by 9am by email, over the phone or by voicemail.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time.
- Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.
- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Absences

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence by 9am. When parents/carers notify us of their child's absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences. Authorised absences are recorded in the class register. Unauthorised absences are recorded on the office computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child's absence. This information is used to

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determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. **The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.**

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence then we will contact the parent requesting an explanation.

First Day Contact

When a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. The Admin Head checks with all the teachers by 9.10am daily to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child's absence.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

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

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

With effect from September 2013 the Government abolished the right of Headteachers to authorise absence specifically for holidays of up to 10 days per year if special circumstances exist. Instead, **Headteachers will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist.**

Persistent Absence

A pupil is considered to have persistent absence if they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions in a school year, including both authorised and unauthorised absences. This means that even if some absences are due to illness or other approved reasons, frequent absence can still affect a pupil's learning and progress. Persistent absence is taken seriously by the school, and pupils identified as at risk will receive personalised support to help improve their attendance. Parents and carers will be involved in discussions, and additional support from the school or wider services may be offered if needed to remove barriers to regular attendance.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their primary school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, staff and management to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. We rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance, parents are always informed of our concerns. Initially concerns about attendance are raised with parents via emails which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent to discuss reasons for absence and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. If a child's attendance record does not improve over a period of time, then the school has a responsibility to make a referral to the Statutory school attendance Manager for RBKC. A referral with consent from the parent to the Early Help team of the Borough where the pupil lives. If a pupil has been absent for 15 days, the Local Authority has to be notified.

Data-Driven Attendance Improvement

Attendance data is monitored frequently to ensure prompt support for any pupil at risk of low attendance. This allows us to act quickly and maintain high standards of attendance across all year groups, which includes:

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- **Daily Monitoring:** Registers are checked at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Any unexplained absences are followed up the same day through phone calls or messages to parents/carers.
- **Fortnightly Review:** Attendance patterns and trends are analysed fortnightly by the Headteacher and Admin Head. This helps identify pupils or groups with emerging issues, such as repeated lateness or recurring absences.
- **Targeted Support:** Pupils identified as at risk receive personalised support, which may include meetings with parents/carers, mentoring, or additional pastoral support.
- **Regular Progress Tracking:** Interventions are monitored closely to assess their effectiveness, with adjustments made as necessary to ensure attendance improves.

Children Missing Education (CME)

We recognise that children missing education may be at risk of harm. Where a pupil's whereabouts is unknown, the school makes reasonable enquiries and works with safeguarding partners. **If a pupil has been absent for 10 consecutive school days and cannot be located, we refer to the RBKC Children Missing Education team.** Where a pupil is known to be at home but not attending, we follow our attendance and safeguarding procedures. Pupils are only removed from roll in line with statutory regulations.

Starters and Leavers

When a pupil starts or leaves the school and they are statutory school age (5 years old and over), a starters and leavers form is sent to the school attendance team of RBKC in an encrypted email (within 5 days), which includes the name of the new school. We contact the new school within 5 days where an ex-pupil has started to check that they are indeed attending the school. If this is not the case and/or the child is being home schooled, the school attendance team of RBKC is notified immediately.

Attendance codes

Code / \: Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session	Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed	Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip	Code P: Participating in a sporting activity	Code W: Attending work experience
Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity	Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination	Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable	Code D: Dual registered at another school	Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Code T: Parent travelling for	Code R: Religious observance	Code I: Illness (not medical or

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occupational purposes		dental appointment)
Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded	Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Code G: Holiday not granted by the school	Code N: Reason for absence not yet established	Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed	Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register	Code #: Planned whole school closure

Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if national guidance or school practice requires an update. Next review: March 2027.