Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Always our best for God, each other and ourselves.

This policy has been impact assessed in the light of all other school policies and the Equality Act 2010.

Written / Reviewed by	Date	New Policy	Changes	Next review date
Sarah Taylor	September 2026	No	Yes	September 2027

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Mission Statement
3. Statutory Duties
4. Aims and Objectives
5. Definitions
6. Expectations
7. Registration
8. Lateness
9. Term time absence
10. Addressing Attendance Concerns.
11. National Framework for Penalty Notices.
12. Encouraging Attendance through good Practice and Rewards.
13. Procedures for Monitoring and Responding to Non-attendance.
14. School Organisation.

Appendix A – Penalty Request Form (Derbyshire County Council)

Langley Mill Church of England Infant School & Nursery
Attendance Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority. Parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's regular attendance and failure to do so is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from punctuality and regular school attendance.

There are legal obligations on parents/carers to secure education for their children who are of compulsory school age. This involves sending them to school and collecting them on time and regularly once they are on the register. It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and to deal with any problems, which may lead to non-attendance.

To this end the school will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils arrive and leave school at the correct time and achieve the maximum possible attendance.

3. STATUTORY DUTIES

The school uses a rounded community approach and our attendance policy should not be viewed in isolation:

- The Education Act 1996
- The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education (Students' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Social Inclusion: Student Support, DfES Circular 10/99
- The Ofsted Framework for Inspections 2021
- Derbyshire County Council Guidance on attendance issued September 2021

In Langley Mill Church of England (Controlled) Infant School and Nursery, the following procedures have been developed to fulfil the responsibilities set out in the above legislation:

- Attendance records are in accordance with current LA guidelines.

- A computer database of registration information (Arbor) is kept enabling the school to collate statistics and monitor attendance.
- Registration will take place at the start of each morning and afternoon session. Once registers have officially been closed (20 minutes after the start of each session) a child is considered to be absent from that session.
- The class teacher will inform the Headteacher of any concerns regarding a pupil's attendance pattern.
- Attendance registers will be monitored on a daily, weekly, 6 weekly, termly and annual basis to highlight pupils with poor attendance/punctuality.
- Absences will be deemed as authorised or unauthorised by reference to 'Categorisation of Absence'.
- There will be an annual revision and review of attendance monitoring procedures.

4. AIMS and OBJECTIVES

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

Through this policy it is recognised that:

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure attendance at school, as required by law.
- Many parents/carers may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations beyond the control of parents/carers may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of them, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

5. DEFINITIONS

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate unavoidable 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 Headteacher can decide on whether an absence is authorised or not. Sometimes, even if absence is supported by parent, an absence will be unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school even if the absence is supported by the parent.

6. EXPECTATIONS

Our policies and procedures underline the importance of regular and punctual attendance at school. They show our commitment to providing a quality education for all pupils. We believe that pupils can only benefit from the education in our school through regular school attendance. We will, therefore, strive to achieve the maximum possible attendance for all pupils and we will make sure that any problems are identified and resolved quickly. Wherever possible, we will make contact with parents/carers where a pupil is absent from school without good reason.

We expect the following from parents/carers:

- To ensure their children attend school regularly.
- To ensure their children arrive and are collected on time.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is absent, giving details of the reason or the absence and the length of time the child will be away.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day, to check that they have done their home learning where applicable and have everything they need for the day ahead.
- To attend parents/carer consultations to discuss progress or problems and talk to the staff if there are problems or changes in family circumstances which may affect the child.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever problems arise which may keep their child away from school, and may affect their child's performance, so that the school can help.
- To avoid term time absences as this seriously affect the progress of their child.

Parents/carers and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parents/carers (main contact) when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason. Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any contact from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff check all of the registers each morning to identify those pupils who are absent without explanation and, as a safeguarding requirement, make contact with the parents of these children by message, email and/or a telephone call.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to them.
- Recognition and reward for good attendance.
- A quality education.

7. REGISTRATION

The school doors open at 08:50 and children are expected to be in school by 08:55 this gives plenty of time for all pupils to come into their classroom and be ready to learn when lessons start.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for marking the attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session.

All attendance records are documented using Arbor. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved in line with the relevant retention schedule.

8. LATENESS

Children who are persistently late after close of register soon fall behind with their learning.

Any pupil who comes into school after 08:55 will be marked as late. Records are kept of those pupils who are late; this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L).

Any child who arrives for school later than 09:15 will be marked as late after close of register (Attendance code U). This is an unauthorised absence for the whole session and will affect your child's overall attendance percentage and can be used to calculate absence thresholds for legal decision making.

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to school later than 09:15 will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

If your child is late you will need to complete a Late Form when arriving at school. We send lateness monitoring letters to parents/carers related to lateness (3 or more L or U marks for late arrivals) in the half term. Inviting parent/carers to a lates meeting (5 or more L or U marks for late arrivals or initiate attendance procedure if below 96% absence). A plan will be made with the parent/carer to increase punctuality, and this will be reviewed.

9. TERM TIME ABSENCES:

In August 2024, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 came into force**.** These regulations make it clear that Headteachers **should not** grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. You must have received written authorisation before your child can be absent from school.

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should leave of 5 days or more be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or where repeated incidents of leave in term time for less than 5 days occur or where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider poor attendance that meets the legal threshold. (Attendance code G).

Parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

The decision of the Headteacher is final.

10. ADDRESSING ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

The school expects attendance of at least 95%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the governors 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.

For support with your child's attendance contact the school office, class teacher/teaching assistant, family support worker, attendance officer or any member of SLT.

If a child's attendance does not improve and absences are unauthorised this may lead to consideration of parental responsibility measures which include the issue of penalty notice fines or other statutory action.

11. NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PENALTY NOTICES

The national threshold for consideration of legal action is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, including lates after close of register (Attendance code U) and unauthorised leave in term time (Attendance code G).

If your child's absence falls into this category the school will decide if further offers of support is likely to improve the situation or if a request for legal action should be submitted to the Local Authority.

12. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH GOOD PRACTICE AND REWARDS:

The school will encourage good attendance by:

- Creating a positive environment where children feel happy, safe and secure.
- Making school a lively, interesting place to be.
- Ensuring good quality play in the playground.
- Being sympathetic and supportive to pupils who experience problems in school.
- Ensuring careful monitoring of attendance data regularly takes place.
- Reminding parents/carers of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Offering help and advice to resolve any difficulties the pupil or parent may have in fulfilling these responsibilities.
- Establishing a mechanism for working with those parents/carers who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school.

<u>Specific Interventions to encourage attendance:</u>

DAILY

- Ensuring accurate completion of the electronic registers at the beginning of each session and within 5 minutes of the start of the sessions, officially closing 20 minutes after the start then marked as a U.
- Ensuring daily checking of registers with following up and recording of absences (main contact to be contacted in case of unreported absence, with follow up action taken to contact another responsible adult when a child missing education is also identified as having a welfare and/or safeguarding concern).
- Ensuring the Office staff updates each child's individual attendance record where necessary and updates the Headteacher/Family Support Worker daily on any attendance matters.

WEEKLY

- Monitoring individual pupil attendance levels across school at the end of each week.

SIX WEEKLY

- Using the Arbor reporting system to provide valuable, year group/class and pupil level attendance data to discuss at half termly attendance monitoring meetings and agree action.
- Monitoring the attendance percentage of groups, each class, Key Stage One overall and the school overall.

BELOW 96%

- Scrutinising reasons for absence during attendance monitoring meetings and if deemed appropriate, sending an absence letter and report to parents/carers.
- If no improvement is seen within 20 days, sending a second letter to parents/carers inviting them to an attendance meeting. We will request medical evidence for absences due to illness. If evidence is not provided absences will be unauthorised. We will continue to monitor attendance with a further 20 days monitoring period.
- If the attendance continues to drop and there are unauthorised sessions, inviting parents/carers an Attendance Panel Meeting with the Family Support Worker (offering a home visit if necessary). An attendance improvement plan will be completed with advice, support and/or resources offered in response to family difficulties identified. Actions for improvement are detailed in the plan and agreed jointly with the parent/carer. The improvement plan can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.
- The plan will be reviewed by the Family Support Worker in consultation with the parent/carer after a four-week period. Following this review, the decision is made to close the plan due to sustained improvement or in the case of continued unauthorised absences (5 or more in the review period). The parents/carers will be informed a request is being made to DCC to issue a penalty notice. If there is a decline in attendance, but with less than 5 unauthorised absences, another review period will be set.

NURSERY

- Sending absence letters and reports to nursery parents/carers of pupils with poor attendance (less than 92% attendance from the beginning of the school year which is the cluster agreed percentage.)

INFORMING PARENTS

- Reminding parents/carers of lateness/attendance on the whole school newsletter and in other correspondence such as the School Prospectus.
- Invitation to 100% attendance event each term.

HALF TERMLY

- Attendance Analysis and Report to governors for review.

BIANNUALLY

- Discussing attendance/punctuality issues in October and February parent/carer consultations.

ANNUALLY

- Presenting prizes to pupils with 100% attendance in the school for the academic year.

- Reporting on attendance levels on each child's annual written report to parents/carers.
- Imparting attendance information to new starters.

Specific Interventions to encourage punctuality:

- Parents/carers and children to be regularly reminded about the school start and finish times.
- Late arrivals must enter through the main entrance and report to reception, signing the children in and giving reasons for lateness.
- If a child arrives late but before the close of register, this will be recorded as late **(L).**
- If a child arrives after the close of register, this will be recorded as unauthorised **(U).**
- Persistent late arrivals are followed up with a letter and parent/carers are invited to a meeting to discuss how school can support them to improve punctuality (more than 5 within the monitoring period).

Awareness raising in the Community:

Communication with parents/carers and the local community may include:

- Meetings for new parents/carers
- Attendance initiatives (both in school and the wider community)
- School newsletters
- School prospectus
- School website
- School Facebook Page

13. PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE

When a pupil does not attend, the school needs to respond effectively.

- When a pupil is absent the parent/carer has a responsibility to inform school of the reason, this may be by letter, telephone or word of mouth.
- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents/carers, the parents/carers will be contacted on the **first day of absence** by telephone or by letter if parents/carers are not on the telephone. The Family Support Worker or Office Staff will ring parents/carers after the close of register if no explanation is given. Records are kept detailing phone calls made and explanations given.
- If, on returning to school, school still has no explanation given we will request the reason for the absence. If no reason is given, the absence will be unauthorised.
- If your child is absent with no explanation, reasonable attempts will be made to contact the parents/carers via other known contacts and a home visit.
- If there are Child Protection concerns, then the Derby and Derbyshire Area Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Procedures are followed immediately.
- After ten missed school days, Child Missing Education procedures will be followed (see policy).

14. SCHOOL ORGANISATION

For the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education.

In addition, there may be specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff such as the following:

Head Teacher:

- To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.
- To oversee efficient operation of the attendance system and the collation and analysis of attendance data.
- To regularly report progress on attendance to governors, pupils and parents/carers.
- To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
- To liaise with the EWL.
- To oversee the work of administrative staff.

Class Teacher:

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To refer any unexplained absences to the Headteacher.
- To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To inform senior staff of concerns in a timely manner.

Governors:

- Ensure all governors monitor attendance and policies related to it.
- Play a valuable role through representation at school attendance panels, parent's/carer's evenings, etc.
- Reinforce school procedures and support actions of school staff in tackling attendance issues.
- Request regular attendance progress reports for Governors' Meetings.

Parents/carers:

- Contact school on first day of absence.
- Provide reasons for all absences.
- Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.
- Ensure contact details are kept up-to-date.

Education Welfare Service:

If persistent absence/ lateness continues the attendance leads will contact the EWS with a view to legal action.

Family Resource Worker:

The Family Support Worker, supported by the office staff plays a vital role in supporting the school's attendance and absence management strategies:

- Checking registers daily
- Updating individual records regarding absence and lateness (i.e. telephone slips, letters, phone calls, reasons for absence, etc)

- Maintaining a system for supporting/improving attendance and punctuality
- Producing updates from weekly registers

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The General Data Protection Regulations places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard for the requirements of the Regulations. Each school has Privacy Notices for Pupils and Staff which details the circumstances under which data is collected, stored and processed. Nothing in the legislation prevents a school sharing information with the police or social services where it is believed that a child or young person under the age of 18 is at risk of harm or needs safeguarding.

DERBYSHIRE County Council

Request to LA for formal commencement of statutory parental responsibility measures/legal action in relation to school attendance.

(One request form per child)

The following information must be provided before the Attendance Team can consider serving a Penalty Notice/prosecution. Should the case forwarded for prosecution this information will be used as evidence, in court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Name of School

DCC USE ONLY:

LI

Sch. Code:

PRN:

Parent 1 ref:

Parent 2 Ref:

Pupil information

Forename | Surname | DOB

Address including postcode

Check the address is correct before submitting to the LA. If incorrect the school will be named as the data breach

Dates that the pupil was absent from school

(e.g. 16/05/2011 to 25/05/2011 inclusive.)

Parent 1* for whom Penalty Notice is being requested

Title | Forename | Surname

Address including postcode, if different from pupil Parents

Check the address is correct before submitting to the LA. If incorrect the school will be named as the data breach

Parent 1 Email

DERBYSHIRE County Council

Parent 2* for whom Penalty Notice is being requested

Title	Forename	Surname

Address including postcode, if different from pupil

	Check the address is correct before submitting to the LA. If incorrect the school will be named as the data breach

Parent 2 Email

PLEASE COMPLETE THE RELEVANT SECTION BELOW FOR EITHER UNAUTHORISED LEAVE IN TERM TIME OR UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A copy is required of each of the following documents:

Please tick appropriate box to indicate copy is attached to this form.

- Leave of Absence Request Form completed by parent/carer. ☐
- Letter from school to each parent indicating that leave would not be authorised or a challenge letter. ☐
- Attendance report (herringbone) for the current academic year showing 10 sessions of absence (5 days) marked as absence code G. ☐
- Copy of statement in school prospectus/newsletter warning of consequences of taking leave In term time that has not been authorised. ☐

Requests must be submitted within 4 weeks of the end of the period of unauthorised leave.

CONTROLLED

DERBYSHIRE County Council

UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

A copy is required of each of the following documents:
Please tick appropriate box to indicate copy is attached to this form.

- Copy of the parental responsibility letter ☐
- A full chronology of support provided to parents(s) over the last 6 months ☐
- Copy of attendance printout for the last 12 months showing 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in the previous 10-week period. ☐
- An explanation for the use of any registration codes other than /\ and O: ☐

Requests must be submitted as soon as the threshold has been reached.

Head Teacher's signature_____Date_____

Please send all this information within 4 weeks of the end of the unauthorised leave taken in term time or within 10 days of the end of the monitoring period via perspective lite to EWS_830school 4 digit DFE No: pnholchild initials & date backwards or EWS_830school 4 digit DFE No:pnattchild initials & date backwards

example: -EWS_8301000pnattjb20240514 or EWS_8301000pnholjb20240514

If you have any queries regarding Penalty Notices, please do not hesitate to contact the Attendance Process Team on 01629 532157 or email CS.AttendanceProcessTeam@derbyshire.gov.uk

CONTROLLED