



Fostering curious, compassionate and joyful children who have a passion for learning and the courage and skills to shape a humane and sustainable world.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Our school offers a human-centred approach where children can feel safe and be themselves, and where relationships are valued and nurtured in a culture of mutual respect. It plays an active role in supporting the wellbeing of every child. The school believes it is the responsibility of all members of the school community, including children, staff and parents/carers, to uphold this culture, and to work towards ensuring that we can all learn together in a safe environment free from fear.

Lewes New School encourages children to attend school regularly, and expects children to attend regularly in order to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance and/or late arrival undermine the educational process and may lead to educational disadvantage.

The school recognises the influence of the curriculum on attendance and maintains that the school ethos and organisation also have a significant impact on student attendance. It also recognises the importance of working with parents to promote attendance, and of ensuring systems are in place to facilitate regular attendance.

We believe that the goal of regular attendance should be pursued both in relation to individual children and the school as a whole.

This policy should be read in conjunction with related policies and procedures, in particular the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy and Teaching & Learning Policies.

Signature

Name Anton Simanowitz

Chair of Governors

Date

Signature

Name Linda Morris

Head Teacher

Date

1. AIMS OF THE POLICY

1. To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, and happy to come to school.
2. To encourage all children to attend school regularly.
3. To ensure all parents are aware of the importance of regular attendance and their role in promoting attendance.
4. To ensure that all staff are aware of their professional duty of care to support regular attendance, and take seriously any problems which might lead to, or arise from, non-attendance.
5. To provide a whole school framework for procedures related to attendance, ensuring clarity, support and consistency for children, staff and parents.

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

2.1 Parent's Responsibility

The *Education Act 1996* requires parents, carers or guardians to ensure their children receive "efficient, full time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".

The law requires that parents ensure that:

1. All children of compulsory school age receive "an efficient education, suitable to his or her age, ability and aptitude".
2. All children of compulsory school age receive full-time education - 5 days per week during term time.
3. All children attend regularly.

If students/parents do not adhere to this the parents are liable to prosecution.

2.2 School's Responsibility

The law requires that the School takes an attendance register twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once at the start of the afternoon session. The register shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent.

3. IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

The School will ensure that:

1. Students are registered accurately at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions each day.
2. Individual students are given individual attendance targets where appropriate and progress towards achieving these targets is reviewed regularly.
3. Parents or guardians are contacted by Office Staff by telephone on the first day of absence, when reasons for absence are unknown.
4. Parents or guardians are contacted by telephone by the Head Teacher, were

reasons for lateness or absence are unacceptable.

5. The Education Welfare Service will be involved in absences/lateness that are effecting the students education (after **10 consecutive school days** of unauthorised student absence).

Parents are expected to:

1. Inform the school by phone or email as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
2. Maintain regular contact with the school during periods of lengthy absence.
3. Complete a 'Request for Absence Form' for all periods of planned absence.

3.1 REGISTERS

Admission Register

1. The school admission register contains the personal details of every student in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.
2. The attendance register states the first day that the student will attend the school (usually the first day of the school year).
3. In the event that a student fails to attend on the agreed date the school will establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Attendance Register

1. In accordance with legislation the teacher taking the first lesson of the day and the first lesson of the afternoon marks the attendance register using the marks and absence codes indicated inside the register.
2. The register will show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.
3. Attendance registers are delivered to the reception office to be checked.

Amendments to the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include:

1. the original entry;
2. the amended entry;
3. the reason for the amendment;
4. the date on which the amendment was made;
5. the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

Preservation of the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

4. ABSENCE

4.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has given approval for a student to be away. Parents may not authorise absence, only the Head Teacher can do this on behalf of the school.

Absences may legally be authorised by the School for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Medical and Dental Appointments
3. Days of religious observance
4. Holidays in term-time (where it is judged to be important to the wellbeing and cohesion of the family, at the discretion of the Head)
5. Bereavement
6. Special occasions
7. Participation in a public performance
8. Sporting Activity

The absence of students taking part in supervised educational activities outside the school is recorded as 'approved educational activity'. The following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

1. Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas;
2. Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;

Notwithstanding the above, the regulation provides that a student may be given leave of absence, at the request of the parent/guardian with whom he/she normally resides, to go on holiday. Except in exceptional circumstances, such leave of absence may not exceed 10 school days in any school year.

4.2 Unauthorised Absence

All other absences will be regarded as unauthorised. We are required to notify the L.A. if a student attends irregularly or is absent continuously without authorisation for ten or more school days.

4.3 Punctuality

The playground is supervised from 8.30am, after which children over five years of age may be left at school. The bell for the beginning of the school day is rung at 8.55am. At this time, all children should make their way to their classrooms.

Later Years Registration is at 8.55am.

Parents of children in Nursery and Early Years may take their children in to class and remain with them until registration at 9.15am

Avoidable lateness more than 30 minutes after registration constitutes unauthorised

absence.

5. FLEXI SCHOOLING

We encourage parents to send their children to school full time but respect the wishes of some parents to educate their children at home for part of the week. We believe that this flexible approach to education ensures access to a happy, stimulating and secure environment at school and home, and is compatible with some student's learning needs and with their family's circumstances, values and beliefs.

We will consider each child's circumstances individually to agree arrangements for flexi-schooling. All arrangements must be made with the head teacher in advance and there should be a written agreement in place.

At present children will not normally be approved more than one day flexi schooling per week. To minimise disruption to the group who may be engaged in collaborative project work, for students in Later Years it is usual for this day to be our 'community day' (currently Thursdays).

If parents / children follow their own education format or divert from the recommendation of staff when schooled at home then **Code C**, which states: *special circumstances not covered elsewhere*, will be used.

6. TEMPORARY REGISTRATION

From time to time the school is approached by families who are staying in the area on a temporary basis, who may usually reside elsewhere in this country or overseas.

The school will contact the child's permanent school to inform them of the temporary registration, and of their departure.

All other registration and attendance procedures apply.

7. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

7.1 IN THE CLASSROOM

Lewes New School offers a curriculum that is co-created, interdisciplinary and holistic. Children and teachers work together to devise a curriculum that:

1. Responds to the curiosity and imagination of each child.
2. Supports the child's innate desire and endless capacity to learn.
3. Emphasises wellbeing, communication, connections and learning to learn.
4. Provides learning experiences which are relevant, authentic and appropriately challenging.

The curriculum is designed to inspire an intrinsic motivation for learning, a strong sense of personal identity and emotional safety and a willingness to attend school.

Children are involved in drawing up codes of behaviour and discussing and defining what is acceptable behaviour in all areas of learning and experience, including attendance.

7.2 WORKING WITH PARENTS

The school seeks to involve parents in all aspects of school life, to ensure positive relationships and strong, ongoing communication between home and school.

Parents are encouraged to consider the impact of absenteeism not only on their own child's education, but also on the group who may be involved in ongoing collaborative work.

The school takes practical steps to ensure parents are aware of this policy, understand the school's expectations of attendance and know what to do if they have a problem, including publicising the policy on the school website and including a summary in the Parent's Handbook.

8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL

8.1 THE GOVERNING BODY

1. Monitors attendance records on a termly basis.
2. Liaises with the Head Teacher about the attendance policy, and is made aware of specific situations where appropriate.
3. Discusses, reviews and endorses agreed strategies, and discusses the Head Teacher's report on the working of this policy.

8.2 THE HEAD TEACHER

1. Monitors all requests for planned absence and decides whether absence is authorised or unauthorised, in accordance with this policy.
2. Ensures proper record keeping and monitors all class registers on an ongoing basis.
3. Addresses persistent or serious absenteeism referred by staff.
4. Reports to the governing body.
5. Liaises with external agencies where necessary.

8.3 STAFF

1. Familiarise themselves with this and related policies and procedure.
2. Ensure the day-to-day management and implementation of the policy and procedure.
3. Take steps to promote a culture of care, kindness and respect within the school, where children feel safe and happy to attend school.
4. Provide opportunities for all children to reflect on the impact of lateness and absenteeism on their community

5. Ensure the curriculum is engaging, inspiring and appropriate, so children are motivated to attend school.
6. Liaise with the Head Teacher over all incidents involving persistent or unacceptable lateness or absenteeism involving children in their care.
7. Keep clear registers of attendance twice each day, with appropriate codes to explain reasons for absence where known.

8.4 CHILDREN

1. Are encouraged to take responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality, subject to age and ability.
2. Participate in relevant opportunities for developing reflective self awareness and awareness of others (through eg Circle Time, assemblies and one-to-one time with staff). More information can be found in our SMSC Policy.

8.5 PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

1. Familiarise themselves with this policy and related procedures (information available in the Parent Handbook and on the website).
2. Take steps to promote punctuality and good attendance of their children at school.
3. Refer all requests for planned absenteeism to the head teacher for authorisation.
4. Consider carefully the impact of planned absenteeism on their children and the class, and ensure requests are of positive educational value.

9 INFORMATION

9.1 USEFUL CONTACTS

ESCC Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service

Phone: 01273 481967 Email Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service

9.2 INFORMING OUR POLICY

Education Act 1996 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>

School Attendance: Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice (August 2013)

<http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/a/advice%20on%20school%20attendance%202013.pdf>

9.3 MONITORING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE POLICY

The Head Teacher and Team Leaders will consider all serious incidents involving persistent or unauthorised lateness and absenteeism and determine whether the strategies used were appropriate and whether they can be improved.

A report of the effectiveness of policy and practice will be reviewed by the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Governing Body on a termly basis.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.

9.4 PUBLICISING OUR POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Lewes New School makes its policies and procedures available to all parents of children and of prospective children on the school's website and in the school office.

On completion or review, all policies and procedures are communicated to all staff (teaching and support staff) and are linked to the induction of all new staff.