Lyne and Longcross C of E (Aided) Primary School with Nursery

Attendance Policy

John 10:10 helps us to understand the importance of helping children live life to its fullest. Jesus says, 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.'

Approved by:	Governors	**Date:**	1st October 2026
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Commitment to Attendance

The staff of the school are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, children, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud.

The school expects every pupil to attend school every day that the school is open and to achieve 100% attendance wherever possible. We recognise that some absence may be unavoidable due to illness or exceptional circumstances authorised by the Headteacher or designated member of staff. Every session missed has the potential to affect a pupil's learning, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Parent Responsibility and the Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable-
[a] To his/her age, ability and aptitude and
[b] To any special needs he/she may have
either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.
This policy is based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (effective from 19 August 2024), and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. It reflects the legal duties under:

- 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 (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

This policy also reflects Surrey County Council's Attendance Strategy (2024), which prioritises early intervention for vulnerable groups, consistent approaches across schools, and support for Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA).

Registers

In accordance with the Education Act 1996 and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the school must maintain electronic admission and attendance registers. The attendance register will be taken at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session.

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity (attendance out of school). Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can

authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Categorisation of Absence

Any child who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those children where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Excessive illness without medical evidence.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those children who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Most types of dual registration

Registration & Lateness

School registration at the beginning of the day with the Class Teacher is one of the most important periods in the day. Lateness to school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other students in the class. It is paramount therefore that all students arrive at school on time.

Children are expected to be in for 8.55am (the start of the school day). Our gates are open between 8.35am and 8.55am for children to go straight to their classes. The register will be taken at 8.55am. Pupils who arrive after this time will be recorded as 'late' to school and given an L code if they arrive before 9.15am.

If a pupil arrives after 9.15am (20 minutes or more after the register has closed) the lateness will be recorded as 'U' code (an unauthorised absence which will have a negative impact on their attendance level) and can be subject to prosecution by the Local Authority.

Lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by the school in the first instance and may later be referred to the Surrey Attendance Service if there is no improvement.

Afternoon registration will be taken immediately following the lunchtime period.

The School day ends at 3pm for KS1 and 3.15pm for KS2.

Being late for school impacts not only learning but also social development. Children miss the morning welcome and instructions for the day. Five minutes late each day equals three days of lost education per year; thirty minutes late each day equals nineteen days lost.

Escalation Process

If a child is absent for any reason, it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to notify the school before 9.45am on each day of absence. Where no reason has been received by this time, the school will begin its first-day absence procedures.

First and Second Day Absence

If the school has not been notified of the reason for a child's absence by 9:45am, the school will telephone the child's Priority 1 contact to establish the reason for absence and confirm the child's whereabouts.
Where contact cannot be made, a message will be left where possible and further attempts to make contact will be made.
If the school has not established the child's whereabouts by 10:15am, the school will begin contacting the child's Priority 2 contact and, where necessary, other emergency contacts held by the school.
The school will record the contact attempts made and any reason subsequently provided for the absence. The absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised in accordance with the school's attendance procedures.

Unexplained Absence and Safeguarding

Where reasonable attempts to establish a child's whereabouts have been unsuccessful, this will be brought to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).
The DSL/DDSL will consider the child's individual circumstances, known vulnerabilities and any existing safeguarding concerns when determining the appropriate next steps.
Where there is reason to believe that a child may be at immediate risk of harm, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed without delay.

Third Day Absence

Contact attempts will continue on subsequent days of unexplained absence.
By the third day of unexplained absence, where the school has been unable to establish the child's whereabouts following reasonable attempts to contact the family and emergency contacts, the school will undertake a home visit and/or seek an appropriate welfare check.
Where safeguarding information, known vulnerabilities or other circumstances indicate that earlier action is necessary, the school will not wait until the third day to escalate its response. This may include an earlier home visit, contact with Children's Services or contact with the police, as appropriate.

Ten Days Absence

Any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Surrey Attendance Service. This is a legal requirement. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Where a child is absent from school the following procedure will be followed for welcoming them back. If they have been off for up to 5 days, the class teacher will welcome them back and check that they are okay. For longer term absences a more formal reintegration will take place involving the class teacher and Head teacher/Deputy Head teacher if deemed appropriate, with a plan to catch up if possible work that has been missed.

The staff of Lyne and Longcross CofE (A) Primary School and Nursery are committed, in partnership with the parents/carers, students, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the community and of which the community is proud. Lyne and Longcross has worked closely together with our partner schools in the North Runnymede Learning Partnership to ensure a consistent approach to our attendance policies.

Regular attendance is essential to educational achievement, wellbeing, safeguarding and positive outcomes for children. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

We are committed to encouraging and supporting parents in ensuring their children achieve maximum possible attendance; should any problems arise that prevent this, we aim to identify early and act on promptly.

In cases where a pupil's attendance drops below 95% or a pattern of absence begins to develop, the school will initiate the following stages. Be advised that Lyne and Longcross will attempt to support and work effectively alongside the parents at all stages to ensure an improvement in attendance.

- Stage 1 – A **standard, formal letter** will be sent by Lyne and Longcross CofE (A) Primary School to the parents/carers of a pupil where attendance has dropped below 95%. The letter will outline the school's expectation that there is an immediate improvement in attendance whilst providing an offer of support to any parent/carer who may require it. A three week period of close monitoring will take place from the day of the letter.

- Stage 2 – Where no improvement is forthcoming at the end of the three week monitoring period, a **second formal letter** will be sent by Lyne and Longcross CofE (A) Primary School to the parents/carers. This letter will register our continued concerns and inform the parents/carers that *no further absence will be authorised without appropriate evidence or discussion with staff, in line with DfE and Surrey guidance*. With immediate improvement expected, another three week monitoring period will begin.

- Stage 3 – When there remains no improvement in attendance, the school will send a **third and final formal letter** informing the parents/carers that a meeting at the school is required to discuss the continual poor attendance and to agree on an action plan. Parents/carers will be asked to contact the office and arrange a meeting with a nominated member of the staff within two weeks of receipt of the letter. Failure to do so will result in the school moving immediately to stage 5.

- Stage 4 – A **formal meeting** will take place at Lyne and Longcross CofE (A) Primary School between appropriate representatives of the school and parents/carers of the pupil. At this meeting, an action plan will be agreed and a further offer of support and help will be made. Upon an action plan being agreed, a final three week monitoring period will begin.

- Stage 5 – Following this final three week monitoring period, if attendance has not adequately improved the school will make **an immediate referral** to the Surrey Attendance Advice and Intervention Officer (AAIO) requesting their intervention.

Removing a child from the school roll

A pupil's name will only be deleted from the admission register where one of the statutory grounds in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 is fully met. The school will work with Surrey County Council, undertake all required reasonable enquiries and make the required return to the local authority.

One statutory ground may apply where a pupil has been continuously absent from school for at least 20 school days, the absence has not been authorised, the school does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the pupil is unable to attend because of sickness or another unavoidable cause, and both the school and the local authority have failed, following reasonable enquiries, to establish the pupil's whereabouts.

A pupil will not be removed from the admission register merely because of poor attendance or because their whereabouts are not immediately known. The school will notify Surrey County Council of any pupil who has been absent without explanation for 10 consecutive school days and will follow all statutory Children Missing Education procedures.

Impact of Absence

Taking a child out of school is disruptive to their learning at the time, before and after the event. Absence may also affect other pupils in the class. Children miss scheduled work and may struggle to maintain progress. Confidence and self-esteem may be impacted, and groupings may need to be changed. Absence conveys a message that other activities are more important than education, which may influence the child's attitude toward school.

Frequent Absence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is unhelpful to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Our AAIO meets with the Headteacher regularly to discuss attendance concerns.

In cases where a child begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s by:

1. Phone call to parent by Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher and issues discussed with the child within school.

2. Letter sent to parents stating concerns about attendance, inviting them into school to meet to discuss the issues.

3. Meeting at school with Headteacher and class teacher.

If this does not resolve the attendance issues, the school will refer to the Surrey Attendance Service.

Persistent Absence (PA)

A child becomes a 'persistent absentee' if their attendance falls below 90% across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is considerably damaging to a child's educational prospects and parents' fullest support and co-operation is needed to tackle this.

All absence is monitored thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately. Parents will be notified by a letter if their child becomes a persistent absentee and be invited to a meeting where a plan will be drawn up to address the issues identified.

In addition to persistent absence (below 90%), schools must now monitor and report severe absence (below 50%) as per DfE guidance. These pupils require targeted support and may be referred to the Surrey Attendance Service for multi-agency intervention. Severely absent pupils must be prioritised for support. This may include multi-agency involvement, consideration of EHCPs, or alternative provision.

The school's expectation is that pupils attend every day that the school is open and achieve 100% attendance wherever possible. Nationally, a pupil is considered persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of possible sessions, meaning attendance is 90% or below. For context, 90% attendance equates to missing half a day of school every week, or approximately four weeks of education over a school year.

For pupils whose absence is linked to emotional or mental health needs, the school will follow Surrey's Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA) toolkit, working collaboratively with families and other professionals to support reintegration.
Surrey's EBSNA Toolkit is available at
https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk and provides guidance for supporting emotionally based school non-attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

Where attendance support has been offered and not engaged with, or where unauthorised absence persists, the school may request that Surrey County Council consider issuing a Penalty Notice in accordance with Surrey's Code of Conduct. The first Penalty Notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular child is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second Penalty Notice within a rolling three-year period is charged at £160 with no reduced rate. A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued for the same child within a three-year period and alternative legal action may be considered.

Part-Time Timetables

Where a pupil is placed on a part-time timetable, this must be agreed in writing with the parent/carer and reviewed regularly. Part-time timetables will only be used for short-term support, particularly for pupils with SEND or health needs, and must be approved by the Headteacher in consultation with relevant professionals.

Reference: See DfE guidance on part-time timetables for SEND pupils:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-with-medical-conditions--3

Exceptional Leave of Absence

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday

Any savings that you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. It is widely known that the link between a child's attendance and attainment is irrefutable. The average hourly income of graduates is more than double of those young people who leave school with no qualifications.
In keeping with national policy, the school strongly discourages any absence for holidays during term time and is unable to authorise it. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made in advance using the school's official form, available from the school office.

"Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, as defined by the Headteacher in line with DfE guidance. Holidays during term time will not be authorised. Parents must submit requests in writing, and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis."
Where a parent wishes to request a leave of absence, a formal request must be made, in writing, to the Headteacher who will consider the application on behalf of the Governors.

If an unauthorised leave of absence is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absences

Penalty Notices

The Surrey Attendance Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and require the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

1. Pupils identified by police and Surrey Attendance Advice and Intervention Officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

2. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

   Where a child is taken out of school for 10 sessions or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 10 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage

with supportive measures proposed by the school will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

4. Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours when they are excluded from school. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent liable to a Penalty Notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted for the offence under Section 103. Alternative education provision will be made from the sixth day of any exclusion and failure to attend such provision without good reason will be treated as unauthorised absence.

   With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time (Paragraph 2 above) parents will be sent a 'Notice To Improve' their child's attendance, warning them of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

Amount Payable Under a Penalty Notice: The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024

1. If a parent/carer has not incurred a penalty notice relating to the relevant child/children since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, per parent/carer per child, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, per parent/carer per child, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, per parent

Truancy Patrol

Where a pupil is identified during a Truancy Patrol and has incurred unauthorised absence, Surrey County Council may issue a warning to parents. If attendance does not improve within the specified period, a Penalty Notice may be considered in line with Surrey County Council's current Code of Conduct and the national framework for Penalty Notices

The Attendance, Advice and Intervention Officer

The Attendance, Advice and Intervention Officer (AAIO) monitors the attendance of all children on a half termly basis. The AAIO will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by school then the school will make a referral to the Surrey Attendance Service. The AAIO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed or unauthorised absence persists, the AAIO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance, under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, could result upon conviction in a magistrate's court, to a fine not exceeding £2,500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

Roles & Responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Keep a register of attendance and raise attendance concerns with the Headteacher
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality
- Provide pastoral support to address attendance issues.

The Headteacher will

- Promote the attendance policy within the school and ensure that it is implemented effectively.
- Monitor and review attendance procedures and work with office staff to ensure reasons for absence are identified and interventions are put in place if required.
- Work with families to resolve attendance issues.
- Meet with the AAIO on a regular basis to identify and action any attendance support.
- Identify and monitor attendance of PA children.

School office staff responsible for attendance will

- Ensure morning and afternoon registers are taken and are up to date.
- Contact parents and request reasons for absence.
- Collate daily attendance records and, together with the Headteacher, put in place agreed procedures to monitor and respond to poor attendance and punctuality.

The Governing Body will

- Monitor and review the attendance policy on an annual basis.
- Agree appropriate absence targets on an annual basis.
- Play an active role in ensuring targets are met by monitoring attendance data on a termly basis.

Data Sharing

The school shares attendance data daily/regularly with the local authority and Department for Education, in line with statutory requirements for near-live data collection.

Attendance data must be shared daily with the DfE and Surrey County Council in line with statutory near-live data collection requirements.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Codes

All students must be given a registration mark each day. There are two sessions that require a registration mark. Registration will be taken by class teachers during the first part of the school day (morning registration) and straight after lunch (afternoon registration).

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Code	Meaning	Type
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Approved educational activity	Present
C	Leave of absence (exceptional circumstances)	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave for regulated performance/employment abroad	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave for part-time timetable (compulsory age pupil)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school	Not counted
E	Suspended or excluded, no provision	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Interview for job or education	Authorised Absence
K	Education provision by LA	Present
L	Late before register closes	Present
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason not yet established	Unauthorised Absence
O	Other/unknown absence	Unauthorised Absence
P	Sporting activity	Present
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence

Code	Meaning	Type
S	Studying for public exam	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for work	Authorised Absence
U	Late after register closes	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit/trip	Present
W	Work experience	Present
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil	Not expected to attend
Y1	Transport not available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Widespread travel disruption	Not expected to attend
Y3	Part of school closed	Not expected to attend
Y4	Whole school closed	Not expected to attend
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Not expected to attend
Y6	Public health guidance/law	Not expected to attend
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Not expected to attend
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend
#	Planned whole school closure (e.g. INSET, holidays)	Not expected to attend

Present Codes

Code	Meaning	Explanation
/	Present (AM)	Pupil is present during morning registration.
\	Present (PM)	Pupil is present during afternoon registration.
L	Late (before register closes)	Pupil arrives after registration starts but before it closes (usually within 30 minutes).

Approved Educational Activity (Present but off-site)

Code	Meaning	Explanation
B	Approved educational activity (not sport/work experience)	E.g. college taster days, interviews, or tuition. Must be supervised and approved.

Code	Meaning	Explanation
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a school-approved sporting event.
V	Educational visit or trip	Pupil is on a school-organised trip supervised by staff.
W	Work experience	Pupil is attending a work placement approved by the school.
K	Education arranged by LA	Off-site education provided by the local authority (e.g. medical tuition).

Authorised Absence

Code	Meaning	Explanation
C	Leave of absence	Approved by the school for exceptional reasons (e.g. bereavement).
C1	Regulated performance/employment abroad	Leave for licensed performance or employment abroad.
C2	Temporary part-time timetable	Used when a pupil is on a short-term part-time schedule for health or reintegration reasons.
I	Illness	Absence due to physical or mental illness. No medical evidence required unless concerns arise.
E	Excluded (no provision)	Pupil is suspended or excluded and no alternative education is arranged.
R	Religious observance	Absence for religious events or holidays.
S	Study leave	Usually for Year 11 pupils during exam periods.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Used when a mobile child is absent because their parent is travelling for occupational purposes and the circumstances meet the statutory requirements for this code.

Unauthorised Absence

Code	Meaning	Explanation
G	Holiday not agreed	Family holiday taken without school approval.
N	Reason not yet provided	No reason given for absence at time of register. Must be updated later.

Code	Meaning	Explanation
O	Other unauthorised absence	Absence not approved and not covered by other codes.
U	Late (after register closes)	Pupil arrives after the register has closed. Counts as unauthorised absence.

Exceptional Circumstances (Unable to Attend)

Code	Meaning	Explanation
Y1 to Y7	Various unavoidable causes	Includes transport failure, school closure, criminal justice detention, etc.
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend because the local authority has not made legally required access or home-to-school travel arrangements, or another circumstance specified within the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies.
X	Non-compulsory school age	Pupil not required to attend (e.g. nursery-aged child).

Other Codes

Code	Meaning	Explanation
D	Dual registration	Pupil is registered at two schools and attending the other one.
Z	Prospective pupil	Child not yet on the admission register.
#	Planned school closure	E.g. INSET days, holidays. Not counted in attendance statistics.