



# LADY BANKES

PRIMARY SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### September 2025

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## INTRODUCTION

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

The Senior Leader responsible for attendance is the Headteacher- Mrs Kate Needs.

To contact Mrs Needs with any matters relating to attendance please email

[office@ladybankes.school](mailto:office@ladybankes.school)

## WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning, attitude to school and awareness of the benefits of regular attendance. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines, so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

## PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/carers, pupils, governors and all members of school staff.

**To help us all to focus on this Lady Bankes Primary School will:**

- Aim to promote a culture and ethos that enables children to take responsibility and be aware that regular attendance at school is vital.
- Aim to foster positive attitudes to attendance and quickly identify and deal with any underlying issues that could affect attendance.
- Communicate clearly our expectations that every pupil should attend school regularly and be on time. New families to our school are given an admission pack and referred to the policies section of the school website which includes the Attendance Policy.
- Monitor attendance and absence are closely in partnership with the Local Authority Attendance Support Team. Where there is an attendance issue, the class teacher will meet with the parents/carers to discuss strategies to improve attendance. If attendance does not improve after an agreed period, the Leadership Team and Attendance Officer will then meet with the parents/carers to identify strategies, including identifying other supporting outside agencies where appropriate. In extreme cases, where there is no improvement, the Local Authority's Attendance Support Team will be called upon to support the school

and family. Statistics related to each pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on the pupil's Annual Report in the summer term.

- Classes in the younger years are awarded 'Sammy the Squirrel' to look after for the following week if their class has the best attendance.

#### Parents/Carers should:

- Ensure the regular attendance of their children and work in partnership with the school where there are difficulties.
- Ensure that their children arrive at/are collected from school on time.
- Promote a good attitude to school and learning.

If, for any reason, pupils are unable to attend school, parents/carers need to inform the school, by telephone on 01895 634180 or 01895 634318 before 9.30am, on the first day of their child's absence, email the school office email address – [absence@ladybankes.school](mailto:absence@ladybankes.school) or by sending the school a text to the numbers above.

If the school does not receive notification of absence we will keep contacting parents/carers on the day of their child's absence until we are able to make contact. This may be via text message or phone call. We will also get in touch with additional contacts if we are not able to make contact on the first day of absence. Prolonged and unexplained absences will result in the school contacting the Attendance Support Team. If you have any concerns about your child's attendance that you would like to discuss with the school you can contact Mrs Sue Smith, the Attendance Officer, via the [office@ladybankes.school](mailto:office@ladybankes.school) or by calling the school numbers to make an appointment.

Lateness can also have a detrimental effect on a child's learning, the learning of others, a child's sense of belonging and a child's behaviour. Children will receive a late mark if they arrive at school after the main gates are closed. Parents will need to bring their children into the main reception area and report to the Reception staff. Individuals who are persistently late are discussed by the Head teacher, Attendance Officer and Attendance Support Team. Lateness after 9.30 a.m. which has no valid reason will be marked as unauthorised.

When a child needs to leave the school during the day for a medical appointment, parents/carers should notify the class teacher in advance. On return, the pupil should be signed in at the main reception desk.

Parents should submit a written request in advance for any planned absences. Exceptional Leave Forms are available from school via the reception.

#### THE GOVERNING BODY

- Monitors attendance/absence/punctuality in a strategic manner as required by the Department for Education (DfE).
- Ensures clear policy and guidance is applied fairly by the Head teacher.
- Sets attendance targets.

- The Curriculum and Community Committee will take responsibility for the monitoring of behaviour and attendance.

### UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

*Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.*

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (Attendance Support Team) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- trips in term time which have not been agreed as exceptional leave by the headteacher
- excessive illness without medical evidence

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/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better 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 make things worse.

### PERFORMANCE LICENCE REQUESTS

The Headteacher will look at each individual request for a Performance Licence as we encourage children to follow the school rule of 'Be Talented' and this can be an excellent learning experience for them. With this in mind it is essential that a child's attendance is at least above 90% and they are making expected levels of progress.

### PERSISTENT ABSENCE (PA)

A child's attendance causes concern when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents/carers fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and the parents/carers will be informed of this immediately.

The Leadership Team and Attendance Officer track attendance and attainment in partnership. This strategy includes meetings with the family and measuring the impact of attendance and attainment.

The Attendance Support Team receive a report of all PA cases every month and look at the impact of the strategies that the school and family are doing to improve attendance.

### CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

Extract from the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy:

*'Attendance, absence and exclusions are closely monitored. If a child goes missing from education that may be a potential indicator of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. The DSL will monitor unauthorised absence and take appropriate action including notifying the local authority, particularly where children go missing on repeated occasions and/or are missing for periods during the school day. Staff must be alert to signs of children at risk of travelling to conflict zones, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.'*

### TELEPHONE NUMBERS

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we do not then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers. We must have, where reasonably possible, two contact numbers for each child on roll.

### THE ATTENDANCE SUPPORT TEAM

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance Support Team in the Local Authority. Every school has a named Attendance Support Officer and he/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices per parent/carer per child (currently £80 rising to £120 if unpaid after 21 days. If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice) or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A). Parents/carers that have previously been issued with Penalty Notices for their children's unauthorised absences, in the event of further unauthorized absences, may be summonsed to Court.

If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence." The school works in liaison with the Attendance Support Team at the London Borough of Hillingdon. We work with them as a point of advice for any attendance concerns the school may have.

## LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss important work. The school will always offer support and strategies to improve punctuality with families/carers.

### **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts as outlined below;

**8.30a.m-** all children can enter the school building- lessons begin

**8.40a.m- all registers are taken.** We expect your child to be in class at that time and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

After 9.30a.m. the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the class teacher/Leadership Team to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

## EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE

Taking trips in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in term time. In exceptional circumstances a written request to ask permission to take a family trip during term time can be submitted to the Head Teacher **before** the trip is booked. This should be written on the school's 'Exceptional Leave' form and should detail the reason for the exceptional leave request.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to take time off in term time for a holiday or trip.

**All Hillingdon schools are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising exceptional leave.** However exceptional leave will be considered where there is a family illness or bereavement. Any other Exceptional Leave will be considered on an individual basis following a request in writing and/or a meeting with the Headteacher.

1. The Head Teacher will consider each request for a family applying for Exceptional Leave and stress the importance of good school attendance habits and links between attendance & attainment.
2. Exceptional Leave will always be discouraged in Year 6.
3. Exceptional leave will always be refused when a student's attendance is less than 95%.
4. Exceptional leave should always be refused when requests are regular (annual) or when patterns become identifiable.
5. Exceptional leave will be authorised for specific religious observances.

6. Reasons for Exceptional Leave should be logged on the student's record and shared as part of the transfer/transition process.

The Attendance Support Team can issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised 'Exceptional Leave'. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child. Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid you will each receive a summons to Uxbridge Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the Attendance Support Team may summons each parent to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

### SCHOOL TARGETS, PROJECTS AND SPECIAL INITIATIVES

The school has targets to improve attendance and as part of the school community your family has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **95%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs Needs, Head teacher  
Mrs Smith, Attendance Officer  
Governing Body Curriculum and Community Committee  
Hillingdon Attendance Support Officers

### SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures and its attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to the Local Authority & the Department for Education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and children as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports optimising your child's achievement.