

Attendance Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
September 2027	September 2028	Laura Oakes	Governing Body

Policy status

This policy has been revised to reflect the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance, updated 9 July 2026, and the Wiltshire Attendance Strategy 2026-2028. It should be read alongside the school safeguarding, behaviour, SEND, supporting pupils with medical conditions and children missing education procedures.

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1. Rationale and principles

Longleaze Primary School understands that regular attendance is central to pupils making the most of their educational opportunities, developing confidence and resilience, building positive relationships and preparing for adult life. We are committed to providing high-quality education in a welcoming, safe and inclusive environment where every pupil is valued and knows that their presence matters.

For pupils to gain the greatest benefit from education, they should attend school regularly, punctually and ready to learn. Parents and carers, pupils, staff, governors, the local authority and partner agencies share responsibility for promoting and securing excellent attendance.

The school recognises that absence is often a symptom of wider circumstances. Our approach is therefore supportive, respectful and centred on understanding barriers, facilitating help and working in partnership with families. Formal or legal intervention will be considered where support has not been successful, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate.

Our commitment

Attendance is everyone's business. We will combine high expectations with early help, reasonable adjustments and timely, proportionate action.

2. Aims

- Ensure pupils make the best use of their educational opportunities by attending regularly, punctually and in a state of readiness for learning.
- Develop and maintain a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance and a strong sense of belonging.
- Set clear, consistently applied expectations and procedures for pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors.
- Identify concerning patterns early, listen to pupils and families, understand barriers and put effective support in place.
- Give particular attention to pupils and cohorts who may face additional barriers, including pupils with SEND, physical or mental ill health, young carers, disadvantaged pupils and children known to social care.
- Maintain accurate admission and attendance registers using the national codes.
- Work collaboratively with Wiltshire Council and other partners where absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Fulfil all statutory duties relating to school attendance and safeguarding.
- Recognise and promote good and improving attendance in ways that are inclusive and do not penalise pupils whose absence relates to disability, ill health or other significant barriers.

3. Legal and statutory framework

This policy is informed by the Education Act 1996, the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended, the Equality Act 2010, the Children Act 1989, current safeguarding guidance and the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026).

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents must ensure that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Where a child is registered at school, parents have a legal responsibility to secure regular attendance. Failure to do so may result in statutory or legal intervention.

The school must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, at the same time for all registered pupils. The appropriate national code must be recorded for every pupil. Registers are legal records and will be retained and amended in accordance with statutory requirements.

4. Attendance expectations

Longleaze Primary School aspires to excellent attendance for every pupil. Many pupils will achieve 100% attendance. In line with Wiltshire's local strategic ambition, the school regards 97% or above as regular attendance and will use attendance below 97% as a prompt for early review and, where appropriate, supportive contact with the family.

Attendance percentages are indicators, not automatic judgements. The school will consider the individual pupil's circumstances, reasons for absence, patterns over time, emerging barriers, vulnerability and any reasonable adjustments required. Decisions will not be based on a percentage alone.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Governing Board

- Promote the importance of attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties and that the attendance policy is implemented consistently.
- Review attendance data regularly, challenge trends and focus improvement on pupils and cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training.
- Nominate a governor with responsibility for attendance.

5.2 Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Leader

The Headteacher, Mrs Laura Oakes, is the school's Senior Attendance Champion and Attendance Leader. She provides strategic leadership for attendance and is responsible for:

- setting a clear vision and high expectations for attendance and punctuality;

- ensuring effective systems for registration, first-day response, analysis, support and escalation;
- monitoring whole-school, cohort and individual attendance;
- overseeing attendance support plans, meetings and liaison with Wiltshire Council;
- ensuring attendance practice reflects safeguarding, equality, SEND and medical needs duties;
- reporting to governors and arranging appropriate staff training.

5.3 Deputy Headteacher and other leaders

The Deputy Headteacher supports the Senior Attendance Champion, including monitoring attendance for disadvantaged pupils and coordinating pastoral or curriculum support. The SENCO advises on SEND-related barriers, reasonable adjustments and partnership with families and professionals.

5.4 Class teachers

- Complete registers accurately and promptly using agreed procedures.
- Report concerns, patterns or unexplained absence to the office or Attendance Leader.
- Promote a welcoming classroom culture and notice pupils' return after absence.
- Contribute to agreed support plans and communication with families.

5.5 Administrative staff

- Operate first-day and subsequent-day contact procedures.
- Record reasons for absence accurately and update code N within the statutory timeframe.
- Escalate unexplained absence and safeguarding concerns promptly.
- Maintain attendance records and support data reporting.

5.6 Parents and carers

- Make sure their child attends every day the school is open, arrives on time, is appropriately dressed and is ready to learn.
- Notify the school of absence before 9.00am on the first and every subsequent day, using ParentMail or by telephoning 01793 849251 and selecting Option 1.
- Give the reason for absence and, where known, the expected date of return.
- Keep the school informed during ongoing absence and work in partnership to remove barriers.
- Arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Request any leave of absence in advance and provide the information needed for an individual decision.
- Tell the school promptly about changes of address, telephone number, emergency contacts or other circumstances affecting attendance.

5.7 Pupils

- Attend every day and arrive on time, ready to learn.
- Talk to a trusted adult if something is making attendance difficult.
- Engage with agreed support and contribute their views to attendance planning.

6. Attendance support framework

The school follows a graduated approach. The intensity of the response will depend on the pupil's circumstances, pattern of absence and level of need.

Stage	What Longleaze will do
1. Expect	Set clear expectations, communicate routines and create a calm, safe, supportive school environment.
2. Monitor	Use accurate daily registers and regular analysis to identify patterns, broken weeks, lateness and pupils or cohorts at risk.
3. Listen and understand	Speak with the pupil and family to identify the reasons for absence and any underlying barriers.
4. Facilitate support	Agree practical school-based actions and involve other services where helpful and appropriate.
5. Formalise support	Use a written attendance support plan or attendance contract, clear actions, review dates and responsibilities where voluntary support needs greater structure.
6. Enforce	Consider statutory or legal intervention only where support has not worked, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate.

7. Supporting pupils facing additional barriers

The school recognises that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance. Particular consideration will be given to pupils with SEND, physical or mental ill health, long-term medical conditions, young carers, children with a social worker or Youth Offending Team worker, disadvantaged pupils and pupils experiencing family, housing or financial difficulty.

The school will work with the pupil, parents or carers and relevant professionals to understand need, consider reasonable adjustments and agree support. This may include:

- an individual attendance or reintegration plan;
- pastoral, SEND or medical support;
- reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010;
- Early Help or multi-agency involvement;
- a time-limited phased return in very exceptional circumstances, with regular review and a clear plan to return to full-time education;
- liaison with health, social care, Wiltshire Council or other services;
- remote education only as a last resort, after reasonable adjustments have been considered, and as part of a wider reintegration plan.

A part-time timetable is not a long-term solution and will only be used exceptionally where it is in the pupil's best interests, agreed with the parent with whom the pupil normally lives, time-limited, recorded and reviewed. Registration will still take place at the same time for all pupils.

8. Attendance and admission registers

8.1 Taking the register

The attendance register is taken electronically at 8.50am and once during the afternoon session at 1.00pm. It is taken at the same designated time for all pupils. Each register remains open for 10 minutes, which is within the statutory maximum of 30 minutes.

On each occasion, the school records whether every registered pupil is present or, if not, the reason for absence using the appropriate national attendance or absence code. Pupils must not be recorded as present if they are not in school at registration unless the relevant code records attendance at an approved place other than the school.

8.2 Retention and amendment

Attendance and admission registers are legal records. Every entry will be preserved for six years from the date it was made. Where an entry is amended, the register will retain the original entry, the amended entry, the reason, the date and the name of the person making the amendment. Code N will be corrected as soon as the reason is established and no later than five school days after the session; if no reason is established it will be changed to code O.

8.3 Admission register or school roll

The admission register contains the prescribed information for every pupil. A pupil's name will only be deleted where one of the statutory grounds in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 applies. The school will make reasonable enquiries, share required information with the local authority and follow children missing education procedures before deletion where applicable.

9. Punctuality and late arrival

Pupils should be in class by 8.50am. A pupil arriving after the register starts but before it closes will be recorded with code L. A pupil arriving after the register closes will be recorded with code U unless another absence code more accurately reflects the reason. Code U is an unauthorised absence for that session.

The school will monitor patterns of lateness, seek an explanation, discuss concerns with parents or carers and agree support. Repeated late arrival after registration may contribute to consideration of formal attendance action.

10. Reporting and following up absence

Parents and carers must notify the school before 9.00am on the first and every subsequent day of absence by ParentMail or by telephoning 01793 849251 and selecting Option 1. The reason and expected duration should be given.

Where absence has not been notified, the school office will begin first-day contact within 30 minutes of the register closing. If direct contact cannot be made, the school may contact nominated emergency contacts. Staff will consider the pupil's vulnerability, known risks and any safeguarding information when deciding further action.

If a child has not been seen and no contact has been made after three days of absence, the school will consider a home visit by appropriate staff to establish the child's safety and wellbeing and the reason for absence. Earlier action may be taken where risk or vulnerability indicates that it is necessary.

Where a pupil is absent without explanation for 10 consecutive school days, the school will notify Wiltshire Council and follow children missing education and safeguarding procedures. This does not prevent referral or joint working at an earlier stage.

11. Medical and dental absence

Parents should arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, they should seek the school's agreement in advance and the pupil should be absent only for the minimum time necessary. Evidence of the appointment may be requested where reasonable.

The school will not routinely require medical evidence for occasional short-term illness and will not operate a blanket evidence rule. Reasonable evidence may be requested where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness, or where absence is prolonged or repeated and evidence will help the school understand health needs, consider reasonable adjustments or record the absence accurately.

The school will be flexible about the form of evidence and will begin with a conversation with the family and, where appropriate, the pupil. Evidence might include appointment information, prescriptions, medication records or correspondence from a health professional. The purpose is to support the pupil and ensure accurate recording, not to create unnecessary burdens.

12. Leave of absence and term-time holidays

Leave of absence may be granted only in the specific circumstances permitted by law. Requests for exceptional leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally lives, using the school form and, wherever possible, at least one week before the requested absence. Emergencies will be considered according to their circumstances.

The Headteacher will consider every request individually, taking account of the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background. The school will not apply a blanket policy that automatically grants leave for particular events. If leave is granted, the school will decide the number of days authorised.

A holiday or absence for leisure or recreation will not generally constitute an exceptional circumstance. Cost of travel is not, by itself, an exceptional circumstance. Leave cannot be granted retrospectively. Where a pupil fails to return on the agreed date, parents may be asked for reasonable evidence relating to the delay.

Unauthorised leave may result in referral to Wiltshire Council for consideration under the national penalty notice framework. The decision to issue a penalty notice rests with the local authority in accordance with the national framework and local code of conduct.

13. Monitoring and thresholds

The Attendance Leader will review registers and attendance information at least weekly. Analysis will consider overall attendance, authorised and unauthorised absence, lateness, broken weeks, reasons, trends and the experience of key cohorts. Attendance will also be considered alongside safeguarding, wellbeing, SEND, medical and attainment information where appropriate.

Indicator	Typical response
97% and above	Regular attendance in the Wiltshire strategy. Continue universal promotion and monitor patterns.
Below 97%	Early review and, where appropriate, supportive conversation to identify any emerging barrier.
Below 95%	Enhanced monitoring and consideration of a written attendance support plan.
90% or below	Persistent absence. Targeted, individual support and regular review.

Indicator	Typical response
50% or below	Severe absence. Intensive, coordinated support with the local authority and other partners as appropriate.

These indicators support professional judgement and early action. They do not replace consideration of the pupil's individual circumstances and may be applied earlier where pattern, vulnerability or safeguarding concerns require it.

14. Persistent and severe absence

A pupil is persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of possible sessions across the school year. A pupil is severely absent where they miss 50% or more. These definitions include authorised and unauthorised absence.

For pupils at risk of or experiencing persistent or severe absence, the school will:

- undertake an individual review of barriers and protective factors;
- hear and record the pupil's and family's views;
- agree clear support, responsibilities and review dates;
- consider SEND, disability, physical and mental health, caring responsibilities and safeguarding;
- work with Wiltshire Council and relevant services;
- keep provision and reasonable adjustments under review;
- consider formal support or legal intervention only in line with the graduated framework.

15. Formal support and legal intervention

Where voluntary support has not secured improvement, the school may formalise arrangements through an attendance contract or other written plan. The plan will set out the barriers, actions, who is responsible and when progress will be reviewed.

Where support is unsuccessful, is not engaged with, or is not appropriate, the school may refer the case to Wiltshire Council. Available legal interventions include a Notice to Improve, penalty notice, education supervision order, attendance prosecution and, where relevant, a parenting order. Safeguarding action may also be taken where welfare concerns arise.

15.1 National penalty notice framework

- A national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The threshold can be met through any combination of unauthorised absence, including code G and code U.
- A first penalty notice to a parent for a particular pupil is £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within a rolling three-year period is £160, payable within 28 days, with no reduced rate.

- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same pupil within three years of the first. Alternative action, often including consideration of prosecution, will be considered.

Meeting the national threshold does not mean that a penalty notice will automatically be issued. The local authority will consider the case in line with the national framework and Wiltshire's local code of conduct, including whether support is appropriate and whether a Notice to Improve should be used.

16. Children missing education and deletion from roll

The school will make prompt, reasonable enquiries where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown or where they fail to attend as expected. Information will be shared with Wiltshire Council and other agencies where necessary to safeguard the child and establish access to education.

A parent cannot unilaterally require the school to remove a compulsory-school-age pupil from the admission register unless a statutory ground for deletion applies. Where a parent says the child will be educated otherwise than at school, or that the child has moved to another school or area, the school will verify the circumstances and follow the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and Wiltshire procedures. Where parents share parental responsibility, the school will act lawfully, prioritise the child's welfare and avoid becoming involved in private disputes, seeking local authority or legal advice where needed.

17. Collection at the end of the day

School finishes at 3.05pm. Parents and carers must arrange prompt collection and tell the school in good time about any authorised alternative. The school will not release a child to an unexpected adult unless satisfactory arrangements have been confirmed.

If nobody collects a child, staff will make every reasonable effort to contact parents, carers and authorised emergency contacts. If a child remains uncollected after an hour, or earlier where circumstances cause concern, the school will follow safeguarding procedures and may contact children's social care. Repeated late collection will be discussed with the family and may lead to further safeguarding or support action.

18. Promoting attendance

Longleaze will promote attendance through positive relationships, welcoming routines, regular communication, assemblies, curriculum messages and recognition of good or improving attendance. Any recognition will be inclusive, proportionate and sensitive to pupils whose attendance is affected by disability, medical needs, bereavement or other circumstances beyond their control.

Attendance information may be included in reports to parents and discussed in meetings. The school will explain how absence can affect learning while avoiding language that shames pupils or families.

19. Monitoring, evaluation and communication

The Governing Board and school leaders will review attendance information and the implementation of this policy regularly. The policy will be reviewed annually and earlier if statutory guidance, regulations or local authority arrangements change.

The policy will be published on the school website, provided to new families and made known to staff, governors and supply staff through induction and training. Accessible formats and translations will be considered on request.

This policy should be read alongside the school's safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour policy, SEND policy and information report, supporting pupils with medical conditions policy, children missing education procedures, home-school agreement and relevant Wiltshire Council procedures.

Appendix 1. National attendance and absence codes

The school must use the national codes in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. The table below is a concise operational summary. Staff must consult current DfE guidance where there is uncertainty and record the primary reason for absence.

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
/ or \	Present at school	Attending
L	Late before register closes	Attending
K	Education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
B	Other approved educational activity	Approved educational activity
C1	Regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment with leave	Authorised absence
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
S	Study leave for a public examination	Authorised absence

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
X	Non-compulsory-school-age pupil not required to attend	Not a possible attendance
C2	Compulsory-school-age pupil on an agreed temporary part-time timetable	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another school	Not a possible attendance
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	Illness, including physical or mental ill health	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
Q	Unable to attend because of lack of access arrangements	Not a possible attendance
Y1	Transport normally provided is unavailable	Not a possible attendance
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Not a possible attendance
Y3	Part of the school premises is closed	Not a possible attendance

Code	Meaning	Statistical category
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Not a possible attendance
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Not a possible attendance
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not a possible attendance
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Not a possible attendance
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
Z	Prospective pupil not yet on admission register	Administrative
#	Planned whole-school closure	Administrative

Important operational notes:

- Code N must be replaced by the correct code within five school days. If the reason cannot be established, use code O.
- Code U applies after the register has closed unless another authorised absence code more accurately reflects why the pupil could not attend on time.
- Remote education does not count as attendance at school; the most appropriate absence code must still be used.
- Approved educational activity codes require the relevant statutory conditions, including suitable supervision and arrangements for the provider to report absence.

- Code C is for exceptional circumstances considered individually. It is not a general holiday code.

Appendix 2. Attendance response framework

Level	Possible indicator	Core response
Universal	All pupils	Welcoming culture; clear routines; accurate registration; attendance messages; inclusive recognition.
Early support	Attendance below 97%, repeated lateness, broken weeks or an emerging pattern	Review data; contact family where appropriate; listen and understand; agree proportionate actions.
Targeted support	Attendance below 95%, recurring illness or continuing barriers	Written support plan; pupil voice; SENCO/pastoral input; reasonable adjustments; agency support as needed.
Persistent absence	90% or below	Regular review; coordinated plan; Wiltshire Council involvement; consider formal support.
Severe absence	50% or below	Intensive multi-agency response; safeguarding review; local authority partnership; frequent review.
Enforcement	Support unsuccessful, not engaged with or not appropriate	Consider Notice to Improve, penalty notice referral or other statutory action in line with law and local arrangements.

Appendix 3. Key contacts and reference documents

Contact	Details
School office	01793 849251, Option 1 for absence

Email	admin@longleaze.wilts.sch.uk
Senior Attendance Champion	Mrs Laura Oakes, Headteacher
Deputy Headteacher	Mr Martin Yeo
SENCO	Mrs Bev Thompson

Reference documents

- Department for Education: Working together to improve school attendance, statutory guidance, July 2026.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended.
- Wiltshire Attendance Strategy 2026-2028.
- Wiltshire Council attendance and children missing education procedures and local penalty notice code of conduct.

Document note

This policy was prepared from the school's previous policy text and updated against the July 2026 DfE statutory attendance guidance and the Wiltshire Attendance Strategy 2026-2028. Before approval, the Governing Board should complete the approval date and confirm that named roles, school timings and Wiltshire operational procedures remain current.