

Attendance and Absence Policy

Reviewed and updated on 09/07/2025

INTRODUCTION

Good teachers and the best curriculum are of little consequence if pupils do not attend school on a regular basis. Time lost from the classroom is essentially irretrievable. Establishing good attendance habits early will better equip young people toward being productive members of society. At L'École Bilingue London ("LEB" or the "School"), regular attendance is critical for our pupils' educational success and personal development. The School considers that classroom attendance is an integral part of pupils' course of study. This policy outlines expectations and procedures for attendance and absence, ensuring compliance with the Department for Education (DfE) and local authority guidelines.

Attendance fosters:

- Academic achievement
- Social and life skills
- Cultural awareness
- Career opportunities

Poor attendance and punctuality can also be an indicator of a safeguarding issue. Monitoring attendance is a statutory responsibility and part of the safeguarding procedures for our School and we track attendance and punctuality very closely.

The School works collaboratively with families to ensure high attendance levels while fulfilling its duty to safeguard children.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND THE LAW

This policy follows the [Working Together To Improve School Attendance \(2024\)](#) **statutory guidance**

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes, the current version of which can be found in School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Regular student attendance is expected.

1. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Recording Attendance and Absences

In order to maintain good attendance, we are monitoring the school registers on a regular basis. If your child is flagged up as having a low attendance rate, or is late on a regular basis, we will contact you and ask you to explain why. You will also be expected to demonstrate that your child's attendance and punctuality will improve with immediate effect.

Senior Leadership is responsible for monitoring and checking:

1. **Admission Register:** A list of all enrolled pupils.
2. **Attendance Register:** Daily records of attendance, marked through attendance registers (one per class).

Attendance checks are conducted by teachers:

- at the start of morning sessions
- and at the start of afternoon sessions

Absences are categorised as indicated:

- Present => / or \
- Authorised absence => O, with a code from the front page of the attendance register => Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Unauthorised absence => O empty

Parents will be contacted promptly for unexplained absences.

2. LATENESS, AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

2.1 Lateness (L): Punctuality is essential. It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions. If your child misses this short but vital session, their whole day might be affected. Late arrivals are disrespectful to the teachers, disruptive to the class and affect your child's well-being.

2.2 Authorised Absences: These include:

- Illness (with parental notification) → A doctor's note / medical evidence will be requested for contagious illnesses, accidents, and extended or frequent school absences of a medical nature (3 days +).
- Medical or dental appointments (advance notice required) → Any medical appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible. If the child has to attend an urgent hospital or therapy appointment, evidence must be provided.
- Religious observances → the School treats absences due to religious observance as authorised but must be notified in advance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- Family bereavement

- Family weddings
- Exceptional athletic or artistic events
- Under unusual and exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may grant a leave of absence. A formal request must be made in writing in advance and addressed to the Headteacher. All such requests should be received as early as possible, a month in advance and no later than a week before the pupil is due to be absent in cases where the absence is foreseeable. These requests may be followed up by a meeting with the Head.

2.3 Unauthorised Absences:

Absences will be regarded as unauthorised in the following circumstances:

- Where a pupil is absent without prior notification and no explanation is provided for absence.
- Where the explanation is unsatisfactory and the absence could have been avoided.
- Where the school has reason to doubt the validity of parental explanations.
- Where a child is off for medical or sickness reasons immediately prior or after a school holiday for 3+ days, and no evidence is provided.
- Holidays abroad in term time will be unauthorised.
- Leave taken during term time which is not deemed exceptional.
- Where there is a pattern of poor attendance, broken weeks and no medical evidence has been provided

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.1 The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

3.2 Parents are responsible for:

Parents and carers must ensure that they support the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a large impact on their child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents and carers, together with our school staff have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.

- **Ensuring Regular Attendance:** Parents must ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Parents/carers should assist the School in maintaining records, by providing the School with multiple emergency contacts for the child, and keeping the School updated of any changes.
- **Notification of Absences:** In case of unexpected absence, parents must inform the School (admin@lecolebilingue.com) promptly and no later than 8:30 am on the first day of absence. School Senior Attendance Champions to contact = Laurence Hoffmann / Veronique Ferreira.
- To ensure that **prolonged periods of absence are avoided**. This includes any trips during term time.

- Only in **exceptional cases**, where leave of absence is required, a parent can make a **request in writing** to the Headteacher a month in advance and no later than a week in advance. Such a request may be followed up by a meeting with the Head.
- To **avoid medical and dental appointments** during the school day
- **Absence of Parents:** Parents leaving London must inform the School of a responsible adult's contact information during their absence.

3.3 The School is responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Communicating clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintaining accurate registers twice daily and to monitor attendance regularly
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Completing official returns on pupil attendance
- Recording individual children's absences on their school report.
- Informing parents if their child's attendance rate falls below 95% (concern/ unsatisfactory attendance), and 90% (Persistent Absence or PA). Please note: **Ongoing poor attendance can indicate a safeguarding concern/neglect and will prompt the school to follow its safeguarding procedures including a referral to Social Services.**
- Working to support families and pupils with difficulties affecting regular school attendance
- Following up continual pupil absences, patterns of absence or lateness with parents
- Following up unexplained absences by emails or phone calls as soon as possible
- Providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- Educating our children through assemblies, and in the classroom in relation to the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality as a crucial part of becoming successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens

With the recent publication of the DfE's **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** guidance, all schools are now required to submit admissions and attendance returns to the local authority.

4 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- **New Pupil & Deletion Returns:** Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the admission register outside of standard transition times.
- **Attendance Returns:** Providing the local authority with the names and addresses of all pupils of compulsory school age who fail to attend school regularly or have been absent for a continuous period of ten school days where their absence has been recorded with one or more of the codes statistically classified as unauthorised.
- **Persistent Absence:** Where pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year).
- **Severe Absence:** Pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school).

- **Sickness Returns:** Providing the local authority with the full name and address of all pupils of compulsory school age who have been recorded with code I (illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

- **Health Needs Notification:** Where a long term health condition impacts on education [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)
- **Child Missing Education:** The whereabouts and circumstances of a child is unclear or unknown for a continuous period of 20 school days [Children Missing Education](#)
- **Elective Home Education:** When a parent or carer elects for their child to receive suitable and sufficient education otherwise than at school [Elective Home Education](#)
- **Pupil Exclusions:** Where a pupil's name is deleted from the school admissions register because of a permanent exclusion [School suspensions and permanent exclusions](#)

The School monitors and analyses attendance data to identify any potential underlying issues and improve attendance.

5 CHILDREN WHO ARE ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation. The department's statutory guidance on school attendance [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#) which sets out how schools must work with local authority children's services where school absence indicates safeguarding concerns.

Information regarding schools' duties regarding children missing education, including information schools must provide to the local authority when removing a child from the school roll at standard and non-standard transition points, can be found in the department's statutory guidance: [Children Missing Education](#).

6 SUPPORTING PUPILS WHO ARE ABSENT OR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

The reasons for which a student is persistently absent are complex and often unique. We will work with parents and where possible, students themselves, to support students who are absent or returning to school following a period of mental or physical ill health, or who are returning after a lengthy period of absence.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY FOR NURSERY AGE CHILDREN

Children must attend school full-time from the term after their fifth birthday. However, regular attendance is extremely important for your child's well-being and progress in our Petite Section and Moyenne Section classes, where children are below the statutory school age.

Sometimes it can be difficult to make a judgement on whether your child should come to school. Below are some general guidelines:

- If your child has a cold and/or a cough but no temperature, and are well in themselves, they can come to school. Please do not give analgesic and antipyretic medicine (i.e. Calpol) before coming to nursery as this can mask a temperature.
- If your child has had sickness or/and diarrhoea, please keep them at home for 48 hours following the last bout. This is very important to prevent infections from spreading.
- Children who have had chicken pox can return to school as soon as the spots have dried up. Please also refer to Appendix 1 and the parents' guide on child illnesses on our Parents' Padlet.

National guidelines are that all children should aim for 97% attendance. This may be more difficult to maintain for nursery age children, but we aim for an attendance level of at least 90%. If your child's attendance falls below 90%, we will be writing to let you know. If their attendance is significantly lower, we may contact you to arrange a meeting. If there are any factors affecting your child's attendance, please let us know as soon as possible.

Review and Compliance

This policy is reviewed annually and complies with statutory guidance, including:

- DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025)
- DfE statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (2024)

Appendix 1

Sometimes, it can be difficult to make a judgement on whether your child should come to school if they are unwell. Below are some general guidelines:

Do I need to keep my child off school?



Chicken Pox Until all spots have crusted over	Conjunctivitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Diarrhoea & Vomiting 48 hours from last episode	Glandular Fever No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Hand, foot & mouth No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Impetigo Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
Measles or German Measles 4 days from onset of rash	Mumps 5 days from onset of swelling	Scabies Until after first treatment	Scarlet Fever 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	Slapped Cheek No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Whooping Cough 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
	Flu Until recovered	Head Lice No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Threadworms No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	Tonsillitis No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	

The NHS have a very useful guide [here](#) to common childhood illnesses and advice on when to keep children home from school if they are ill and for how long.