



Lake Haven School

Attendance Policy 2026/27

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Headteacher	Imogen Warwick
DSL	Sarah Hill
Nominated person responsible for this policy	Lindsay Taylor
Approved by	Alexandra Marshall
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Introductory Statement

'Lake Haven School caters for KS2 to KS4 aged pupils with a range of Special Educational Needs.

Lake Haven School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full time education, which maximises opportunities for each pupil to achieve his/her full potential, taking into account their Special Educational Needs.

All staff understand why the children have arrived here at Lake Haven and therefore will be working incredibly hard to ensure that the children gain as much from their experiences with us and our curriculum that we provide. Therefore, removing some of their barriers to learning in a positive manner.

Lake Haven School will work together with families, carers and pupils and other agencies to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly.

Lake Haven School will maintain an established system of record keeping and communication with regard to attendance matters.

Aims

- To support pupils in improving their attendance percentage at Lake Haven School and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential.
- To provide guidance, advice and support to parents and carers in relation to attendance matters.
- To maintain clear and effective records relating to attendance matters.
- To work in partnership with parents and families to help with attendance.
- To recognise the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities of each

individual pupil and to ensure that any issues related to attendance are dealt with within the Annual and Termly reviews of needs.

- To liaise with the Local Authority where there are issues related to ineffectiveness of transport systems, which result in re-occurrence of lateness of transport arrival at School, consequently shortening Lake Haven School day for each pupil.
- To ensure that there is clarity of responsibilities for those working within Lake Haven School.
- To increase pupils' attendance from their mainstream setting.

Practices and Procedures

1. On-line registers are legal documents that may be required in a court of law and as such should be maintained in good and accurate order. They are also a mechanism for the monitoring of pupils' attendance. All staff are to be made aware of this on an annual basis and **by** regular training.

2. Lake Haven School maintains an Admissions Register and online Attendance Registers and must notify the Local Authority where a pupil has failed to arrive within **5** working days.

3. The above online registers will be available for inspection during School hours by any of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and those persons designated by the Local Education Authority.

4. The online registers are completed by 9.30am and 1.30pm. It is the responsibility of **Lake Haven School office** to advise classroom staff of any message regarding pupil absence (i.e. telephone call from Parents/Carers) and it is the responsibility of classroom staff to ensure that Lake Haven

School office is informed of absence notes logged in Home/School books/ verbal or other written messages.

a) Any telephone calls regarding attendance should be noted by the school office on the MIS.

b) Letters or notes regarding attendance in the home/school book etc. from Parents/Carers must be passed to the school office for logging.

c) Office staff should indicate present or absent marks using the DfE guidelines in the online register if a child is present or absent or the appropriate code entered.

d) When Lake Haven School is closed for any reason, the school office will mark the online register accordingly.

e) Where pupils arrive late due to Local Authority transport problems, office staff will mark the on-line register accordingly. Comments regarding lateness of buses or taxis will be added to the notes section on the MIS and the relevant transport provider advised of the issue if it is ongoing in nature. Any concerns about punctuality will be raised with Special Services in charge of transport.

f) Where pupils continually arrive late if brought to school by parents - those children identified will be logged by the attendance administrator and followed up by communication with Sarah Hill, our Family Support Lead. Failure to improve will approach the appropriate Local Authority Attendance teams for advice and support.

g) Persistent lateness can generate a penalty notice being issued by the Local Authority.

h) We will make it clear in our intake of pupils that if a pupil is not in school for any reason, we will expect a phone call by 9:30. We will explain, as follows, what will happen should we not be able to ensure that the child is safe. If a reason is not provided for the absence of the pupil,

- The office staff will in the first instance call the family to see if they can find a reason.
- If there is no response, the office team will try half an hour later.
- If still no response, they will then move on to the other contacts registered on our MIS.
- If by 12pm, there is still no response, an email will be sent.
- We will continually try to locate a member of the family to find out why the child had not attended school.
- Mrs Hill, our Family Support Lead, is always available to talk with families if the need arises that there is an issue. Together with Miss Warwick the Headteacher, we welcome families to talk with us if there are any struggles in attending Lake Haven.

i) Families who are known to have an on-going problem will be followed up by the Education Welfare Advisory & Support Service via the Headteacher and the Family Support Lead.

j) When a pupil goes home during Lake Haven School day they must be signed out by the office

5. On-line Registers will be coded using the following DfE Guidelines:

https://help.junipereducation.org/hc/en-gb/articles/21456283067165-MIS-What-are-the-different-attendance-absence-codes#h_01JDKWW8FBTHPE50P

6. If Parents/Carers wish, under exceptional circumstances, to take their child out of school during Term time, parents must complete the online form, requested from the office in advance of taking the pupil out of school. Parents/Carers are required to identify the exceptional reason, together with the dates of the absence. The Headteacher may then organise a mutually agreeable time to meet to discuss the request. Following this discussion Parents/Carers will be notified in writing in the form of an email, as to whether the absence will be authorised or unauthorised. This is in line with guidance from Warwickshire County Council. Please see their statement below:

Leave of absence

Leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

The Supreme Court clarified has clarified the law on unauthorised leave, including holidays, during term time (Platt v Isle of Wright 2017). The Supreme Court has made clear that attending school 'regularly' means that the children must attend school on every day that they are required to do so. As such, the parents of any child who is absent from school without authorisation for any length of time are likely to be considered as committing an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996.

The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.

When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.

It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.

The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Where a leave of absence is requested, but additional days taken either prior to or after the request may be considered as part of the leave of absence.

Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.

All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service, part of Warwickshire County Council.

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.

The law relating to Penalty Notices is due to change with effect from 1 September 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absences taken after this date

will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

First Leave of Absence offence: *The Penalty Notice amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.*

Second Leave of Absence offence *within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.*

Payment plans will not be offered and/or payments received outside of the 28 day period will not be accepted. Where a penalty notice expires unpaid the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider criminal prosecution.

Third Leave of Absence offence *within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice) A penalty notices will be not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.*

7.Children Missing Education

All schools must inform their Local authority of any pupil who has failed to attend school for ten days where there is no justifiable cause.

When a child is moving home, the new address must be provided to Lake Haven School to avoid the school reporting the child as missing to the Local Authority.

In cases where extended leave of absence has not been approved by the Headteacher, the parent or carer may be subject to a penalty notice fine and may be reported as missing education to the Local Authority.

8. Lake Haven School by law can request up-to-date medical evidence at any time in order that absences can continue to be authorised.

9. Religious Observance

In accordance with the Redbridge Attendance Strategy leave due to a religious festival will be subject to a maximum of 3 days per academic year unless a letter is provided from the faith leader to confirm that the family is particularly observant in an additional festival.