

## Attendance and Absence Policy for L'École Bilingue London

Reviewed and updated on 13 December 2024

### Introduction

At L'École Bilingue London ("LEB" or the "School"), regular attendance is critical for our students' educational success and personal development. 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

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

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### 1. Recording Attendance and Absences

The Headteacher is responsible for maintaining:

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:

- 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.

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## **2. Lateness, Authorised and Unauthorised Absences**

**2.1 Lateness (L):** Punctuality is essential. Persistent lateness will result in disciplinary measures.

**2.2 Authorised Absences:** These include:

- Illness (with parental notification)
- Medical or dental appointments (advance notice required)
- Religious observances
- Family bereavement
- Exceptional athletic or artistic events
- Exceptional early departure (flights...)

**2.3 Unauthorised Absences:** Holidays during term time and unexplained absences will be marked as unauthorised.

### **2.4 Procedure for Returning to School After Absence:**

Pupils must be escorted to class if returning during the school day.

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## **3. Parent Responsibilities**

**3.1 Ensuring Regular Attendance:** Parents must ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.

**3.2 Notification of Absences:** Parents must inform the School ([admin@lecolebilingue.com](mailto:admin@lecolebilingue.com)) of absences promptly.

School Senior Attendance Champions to contact = Laurence Hoffmann / Veronique Ferreira

For planned absences, 24-hour notice is required. Long absences (over a week) require a doctor's note.

**3.3 Absence of Parents:** Parents leaving London must inform the School of a responsible adult's contact information during their absence. => see PUPIL RECORD form

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## **4. School Responsibilities**

The School monitors attendance, follows up on unexplained absences, and collaborates with families to address attendance concerns. Excessive absences may be reported to local authorities.

**Children Missing from Education:** The Designated Safeguarding Lead will report prolonged absences (10 consecutive days or more) without justification to social services or local authorities, per safeguarding protocols.

## **5. Risk of Prosecution**

Unauthorised absences may lead to prosecution under UK law. Parents found guilty of attendance offenses may face fixed penalty notices from local authorities.

## **6. National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence**

Key information is as follows:

A penalty notice must be considered where there is 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period.

The 10 sessions of unauthorised absence can include any type of unauthorised absence (i.e. holiday taken in term time, arriving significantly late after registers have closed or odd days taken without explanation).

This means that, in any rolling 10 week period, if a child is absent for a holiday for 4 days (8 sessions of school) in week 1 of the rolling 10 week period and then has a further day off school which is not authorised in week 8 of the rolling 10 week period, parents/carers may be liable for a fixed penalty.

Unauthorised absences do not have to be 10 consecutive sessions (or 5 consecutive days) for a penalty to apply. Any 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in the 10 week rolling period may be counted. The absence does not have to be in one single block of 10 sessions for the penalty to apply.

The 10 week rolling period starts from 19th August 2024.

The penalty amount will also increase with effect from 19th August. The penalty will rise from £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days and from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days.

What happens if there is further unauthorised absence after a fixed penalty has been issued?

A new national limit of 2 penalty notices can be issued to parents for the same child within a rolling 3 year period.

If a second fixed penalty is issued for further unauthorised absence within a rolling 3 year period, the fine applied is charged at a higher rate of £160 per parent, per child.

There is a national limit of 2 penalty notices which can be issued to the same parent(s) for the same child. So, at the third or subsequent offence, another course of action such as prosecution or legal intervention will need to be considered by the school in collaboration with the Education Welfare Service.

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## **Review and Compliance**

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

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