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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

LEARNER ATTENDANCE POLICY

1.Preamble

- ❖ Regular and punctual school attendance by learners will not only instill discipline among learners but is likely to improve learner retention in the system and overall performance.
- ❖ The monitoring of learners' absence and the taking of appropriate follow up action will enable a school to successfully curb absence. Thus enabling Legae La Bana Primary School to protect every learner's fundamental right to education.
- ❖ The willingness of parents to play a critical role in assisting the school in getting their children to school on time and on a regular basis is a necessary ingredient to improving learner attendance.

2. Objectives of this Policy

The primary purpose of the learner attendance policy is to:

- ❖ Keep the standard procedures for recording, managing and monitoring learner attendance.
- ❖ Inform principals, educators, learners, parents and all stakeholders of their responsibilities towards promoting punctual and regular attendance at public schools.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

3. Definitions and Acronyms

3.1 Definitions

Term	Definition
Class	Refers to a group of learners who are under the administrative supervision of a class teacher
Class register / Learner Attendance Register	Means an official document, which may be an electronic document, in which the attendance of learners in a class is recorded each school day.
Class teacher / Class Guardian	Is a teacher to whom the principal has allocated administrative responsibility for a class for a school year (or part thereof)
Continuous absence	Means absence of a learner from school for 10 consecutive school days without valid reasons.
Educator	Refers to any person, excluding a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extra-curricular duties, who teaches, educates or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services at school.
Departmental Head	Refers to a teacher of subjects and specialists who in turn are leaders of such specialized fields/subjects. He/She lead departments and carry a workload they must execute in their classes and being part of the management
Learner	Means any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of relevant legislation.



368 MOROLONG SECTION

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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent	Means – a) the parent or guardian of a learner; b) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner; or c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in paragraph (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at school.
Period	Refers to the time allocated on a school timetable for instruction in a subject or learning area.
Period register	Means an official document in which the attendance of learners in a period is recorded.
Principal	Means an educator appointed or acting as the head of a school.
School	Refers to Legae La Bana Primary School.
Suspension	Refers to the temporary refusal of admission to a learner to a school, usually suspension precedes expulsion.
Temporary class register	Refers to a register maintained by a class teacher for no more than 10 consecutive school days commencing from the first day of school on which learners report to school to the 10th school day
Temporary closure of schools	Means temporary closure of a school during the school year by the HoD in terms of 16(4) of SASA or by the SGB in terms of the National School Calendar Policy.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.2 Acronyms

Acronyms	Explanation
EAS	Electronic Administration System
SA-SAMS	South African Schools Administration System
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems: EMIS is a function and unit in the DBE with the responsibility to develop and maintain an integrated education information system for management of education.
DP	Departmental Head of a school
HoD	Head of Department
PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
RCL	Representative Council of Learners
SMT	School Management Team

4. Application and Scope of the Policy

- ❖ This policy applies to the learners, educators, support staff, the school management and parents of learners at the school.

5. Legislative Framework

- ❖ The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996), as amended.
- ❖ National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 of 1996), as amended.
- ❖ The South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No. 84 of 1996), as amended.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

- ❖ Education Policy Act, 1998 (Act No. 12 of 1998).
- ❖ Policy on Learner Attendance (General Notice No.361 of 2010)

6. Policy statements

6.1 Attendance Records

- ❖ Legae La Bana Primary School will maintain class registers and period registers as attendance records.
- ❖ The registers referred to above will be kept in the form of electronic records and paper based records for monitoring and verification purposes.
- ❖ For the first 10 days of the academic year, commencing from the first day of school on which learners report to school to the 10th school day, a teacher is required to maintain a temporary class register.
- ❖ The principal of the school will supply the class teachers with class registers and period registers annually after the 10th school day.
- ❖ All staff members are required to maintain the respective learner attendance records meticulously and accurately as these are legal documents which may be brought before a court in case a legal action is instituted against a school as a result of a mishap to a learner.
- ❖ The class register will be marked daily during the registration period by the class teacher and the period register will be marked daily during the teaching period by the subject teacher.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

- ❖ In the absence of a class teacher/subject teacher a member of the SMT/another teacher will mark the relevant register.
- ❖ The class register shall be compiled by the class teacher.
- ❖ The class register shall be marked twice a day, during morning and afternoon registration times indicated on the school timetable.
- ❖ Once the register is marked after each registration, it must be sent down to the administration assistant for capturing on the EAS.

6.2 Learner Absence

6.2.1 When is a learner considered to be absent?

In line with the National Policy on Learner Attendance, Legae La Bana Primary School, will consider a learner to be absent from school when such a learner is not present in class during the times when the class register is marked during the class registration period and/or during the time when the period register is marked or when the learner is not participating in an official educational, cultural, recreational or social activity of a school within or outside the school premises.

6.2.2 Valid reasons for learner absence

Taking the cue from the National Policy on Learner Attendance, Legae La Bana Primary School considers the reasons on the table below as valid for learner absence, implemented by clear actions and responsibility:



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

No.	Valid Reason	Action to be taken	By Whom
a.	Physical or psychological illness must be supported by a medical certificate from the registered medical practitioner or traditional healer for illness longer than three days.	The principal should be notified (telephonically/in writing) from the first day the learner is absent.	Parent
b.	Religious or cultural observances or any other activities approved by the School	The Parent to be notified by the school in writing.	Principal/ SMT
c.	Death of a family member	The principal should be notified immediately	Parent
d.	Natural disasters or Any Unforeseen emergencies	The Parent to be notified by the school in writing or through the media.	Principal /SMT
e.	Exceptional cases (decision of Principal)	The Parent to be notified in writing	Principal



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.2.3 What to do in cases of learner absence

- ❖ A class teacher must inform the principal of the school if a learner is absent from school without explanation for three (3) consecutive days.
- ❖ The Principal will follow up learner absence if a learner is absent for three consecutive days without an explanation, the following should happen:
 - a. The learner will be charged with breach of the school's code of conduct for learners.
 - b. The learner's record in the class register will be cancelled if the learner is absent for ten (10) consecutive days
 - c. Any cancellation of a learner's records can only be implemented on the following grounds:
 - (i) Exemption from compulsory school attendance.
 - (ii) Expulsion
 - (iii) Transfer to another school
 - (iv) registration for home education
 - (v) continuous absence
 - (vi) Notification by parents that the learner will not return to school.
 - (vii) death of a learner
 - d. After cancelling a learner's record from the class register, the Principal must, in writing:
 - (i) Inform the parent and the class teacher of the date of and reason for cancellation.
 - (ii) If the learner is of school - going age, inform the District IDSO of the date of and reason for cancellation.
 - (iii) The Principal will ensure that a record of all communication will be kept in the learner's profile.
 - e. A learner whose records were previously cancelled on the class register because of continuous absence from the school may be re-instated if the Principal has a reason to believe that it is in the best interest of the learner.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Learners

- ❖ All learners have a responsibility to attend school regularly and punctually.
- ❖ No learner may take study leave for examinations or when examinations have ended.

7.2 Class teacher

- ❖ A class teacher must ensure that he/she receives a copy of an official class register or use a computer generated class list.
- ❖ A class teacher may use a temporary class register for a maximum of ten (10) consecutive days starting on the first day of the first term while class lists are being finalised and maintained in the same manner as the class register in terms of this policy.
- ❖ The data on the temporary register, once approved by the Principal, must be copied on the official register as soon as these become available after the 10-day life span or alternatively be stored for safe keeping and a new official register be used.
- ❖ A class teacher will compile and mark a class register during the class registration period during the time allocated on the school timetable on each school day and take it to the principal's office on the last day of the week for safe keeping.
- ❖ Report to the Principal/SMT of any repetitive patterns of absence from school and the reasons thereof.
- ❖ Inform the principal of the school if a learner is absent from school without explanation for three (3) consecutive days.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

7.3 Subject teacher

- ❖ A subject teacher must ensure that he/she receives a copy of the period register for his/her subject/learning area from the subject Head of Department (HOD).
- ❖ The subject teacher will receive a period register from the subject HOD on the last day of the week in preparation for marking the register for the following week.
- ❖ A subject teacher is responsible for marking a period register daily and taking it to the subject HOD on the last day of the week for safekeeping.
- ❖ A subject teacher must report a learner who is absent for a period without a valid reason to the subject HOD.
- ❖ A subject teacher must support a learner who was absent from a period with a valid reason to make up for time lost or assessments missed in the form of catch-up programmes.

7.4 School Management Team (SMT)

- ❖ The SMT must work together with the all stakeholders of the school to develop a culture of punctual and regular attendance at the school.
- ❖ The Subject educators will forward period registers at the prescribed time on the last day of the week to the SMT Learner Attendance Coordinator to consolidate period attendance statistics for the week.
- ❖ The subject teachers will collect period registers at the prescribed time on the last day of the week from the SMT Learner Attendance Coordinator before the end of the last school day of the week.
- ❖ Compile statistics and reports for learner attendance in the school.
- ❖ Follow up cases of irregular attendance during teaching time and report to the Principal accordingly.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

7.5 Principal

- The Principal is responsible for developing a culture of punctual and regular attendance at the school.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff members understand the importance of accurate record – keeping and monitoring of learner attendance and carry out their responsibilities competently.
- ❖ Will provide all class teachers and subject teachers with class registers and period registers.
- ❖ Must give each learner a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and the learner attendance policy. Learners will be requested to sign acknowledgement of receipt.
- ❖ Will avail a class/period register to an authorised official of the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) or an authorised judicial officer upon request.
- ❖ Must ensure that quarterly attendance returns are generated and submitted to the District Office when required.
- ❖ Must implement government programmes to assist learners with problems leading to absence and irregular school attendance.
- ❖ Must monitor and analyse learner attendance statistics by grade and include the information in the reports to the Head of Department.
- ❖ Must establish in advance the difficulties that the writing of Controlled Tests/Examinations will bring in relation to accommodation of all learners in the school and the likelihood this will have on learner attendance, teacher absenteeism on Controlled Tests/Examinations marking duty and the program of action to alleviate this.



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LEGAE LA BANA PRIMARY SCHOOL

7.6 Parents

A parent of a learner is expected to fulfil the following duties and responsibilities:

- ❖ Ensure that the learner attends the school daily, on time and for the entire school day unless there is a valid reason for absence.
- ❖ Ensure that the learner is not taken out of school without a valid reason as determined by the school and without a permission note.
- ❖ Where a learner obtained permission to be taken out of the school early, inform the school who will be fetching the learner and what relationship is the person to the learner.
- ❖ Inform the class teacher in a school diary or in a letter to the class teacher or by a telephone call to the administration office if the learner is absent or expected to be absent or be late for school with a valid reason.
- ❖ Notify the principal in writing well in advance of the learners' intentions to take certain school days off for the purpose of observing religious holidays/festival or cultural practices.
- ❖ Cooperate with the school in resolving cases where the learner is absent without the valid reason or permission from the school.
- ❖ Encourage the learner to participate in catch-up programmes to make up for time lost for absence from school.



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