



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Approved / Adopted by Governing Body:	December 2023
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Date of Next Review:	November 2024

OVERVIEW AND AIMS

Longfield Academy is committed to maximizing education opportunities and achievement for all pupils. We believe that regular attendance at school will enable pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. Longfield Academy and partners will work with pupils, parents / carers to remove any barriers to attendance by working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot be seen in isolation, it is a concerted effort from everyone across the school, the trust, the local authority and other local partners.

Parents and carers have made the decision for their child to be educated at Longfield Academy and have a duty to ensure that their child attends the academy regularly. This means that their child must attend school every day except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the academy.

Our aim is that all pupils achieve 100% attendance, and we actively support pupils and parent/carers to achieve that aim.

Procedures

- Providing clear attendance and punctuality information and procedure for all staff to ensure consistency and clarity. These procedures are regularly reviewed and updated and reflect the guidance provided in Working together to improve school attendance (May 2022) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-schoolattendance>

A summary of responsibilities for school attendance:

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/108444/summary-table-of-responsibilities-for-school-attendance.pdf)

Personalisation

- Ensuring every pupil has access to a full- time education to which they are entitled to. We will work with families and young people to identify barriers to attending school regularly and create a personalised plan of intervention. We recognise that for the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and will work with the LA and external agencies to support such families.

Practice

- We create a foundation for good attendance by ensuring the academy is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.
- We monitor attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance and share this regularly with parents / carers to ensure we can work together to resolve issues.
- We will work collaboratively with children and their families, the Local Authority and external support to understand barriers to attendance and address issues.
- Where there is a lack of engagement in support being offered, we will explain the consequences and enable families to respond. This may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.
- When all avenues have been exhausted and support is not being engaged with, statutory intervention or prosecution will be enforced to protect the pupil's right to an education.

Data and Tracking

- Data systems will be used to record, track, and monitor pupil attendance. This is done through SIMS, A Star, and internal attendance spreadsheets.
- Data systems will also be used to supply statutory returns to external agencies (Appendix 1 – attendance codes.)
- Attendance data and persistent/severe absentee information will be provided termly to governors and the Trust Board of Directors meetings. Attendance is regularly discussed at Senior Leadership meeting and Pastoral meetings.

Parental Engagement

- We will endeavour to build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them. We, therefore, actively encourage parents/carers to communicate with the academy to report or talk through the reasons for their child's absence and to seek support.
- It is the parents / carers responsibility to contact the school to report absence and provide a valid reason. However, we believe it is a two-way process and will contact families to discuss issues when our monitoring system has raised a concern or query.
- We will endeavour to open avenues of communication by exploring all barriers that parents / carers may be experiencing such as language barriers, cultural differences, or their own poor experiences of school.

2. Statutory Guidance

- This policy meets the requirements of a range of statutory and non-statutory guidance:
- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2006/2010/2011/2013/2016/
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 • Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2022

The academy works together with the relevant Local Authority to ensure that parents / carers fulfil their responsibility. There are a range of legal sanctions that may be imposed for dealing with unauthorised absence: Penalty Notices, Parenting Contracts and Orders, Education Supervision Orders or referral to the Magistrates Court which can recommend fines (up to £2500) or up to 3 months in prison.

Registration

- The law requires the register to be taken twice a day – at the start of the morning session and once in the afternoon session.
- Pupils are expected to arrive by 8.30 am to be ready for the start of the first form time at 8.45 am.
- Pupils are registered during tutor period (8.45 am to 9.15am) and at the start of every lesson of the day.
- Pupils arriving after registers have closed (10:00 am), will be marked as unauthorised absence unless medical evidence (prescription etc.) has been provided or in exceptional circumstances.
- The register is marked using the DfE Attendance and Absence Codes (see Appendix 1)
- Due to the staggered lunch times, the legal PM registration is taken from Period 3 for years 8 and 9 and Period 4 years 7,10 and 11. The official close of PM registration is 12.30 pm.

Punctuality

- Any pupil arriving late should sign in at Reception giving their reason for being late. This will be recorded on Sims and ClassCharts.
- Pupils who arrive late will receive a sanction according to the Choices Policy. This will be communicated to parents / carers via ClassCharts.

- Repeated lateness will be reported to parents / carers. We will encourage parents / carers to discuss how we can support better punctuality.
- Repeated lateness after the register has closed may be dealt with in the same way as absence. Parents / carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice or even prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.

Authorised / Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the academy has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents / carers may not authorise absence; only the academy can do this.

- Parents / carers should contact the academy Attendance Office - using mySchoolApp to 'report pupil absence', telephoning the academy on 01325 380815 and choosing Option 1 or emailing the Attendance Officer Email: attendance@longfield.swiftacadmies.org.uk on the morning of absence, preferably before 8.30 am, giving a reason and an expected date of return.
- Absence will not be authorised for such reasons as:
 - looking after brothers / sisters / unwell parents / carers, birthdays, days out, shopping trips, family holidays where permission has not been granted (please note, family holidays during term time will not be approved)
 - special occasions, where the academy does not agree that the absence should be granted.

Parents / carers are advised to complete a form to request authorisation for any leave of absence including holidays. These can be obtained from reception and Appendix 2.

- Medical / dental and other appointments should be arranged out of school hours wherever possible. Where an appointment requires a pupil to take time out of school, parents / carers should ensure their child comes to school before the appointment, signs out and returns after the appointment.

Confirmation of all appointments by way of appointment card, letter or electronic / text confirmation must be provided for any absence to be authorised. If medical appointments are attended at the start of the day, causing the pupil to arrive late to the academy, confirmation of the appointment (as above) must be provided or a late detention will be issued.

- Following an explanation from parents / carers regarding a pupil's absence, the academy will decide whether or not it accepts the explanation and authorise / unauthorised accordingly
- An absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.

Parents / carers are strongly urged not to take pupils out of school for holidays or other purposes during term time. All requests for leave of absence are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and are always at the discretion of the Head of the individual academy.

It is expected that a Request Form (appendix 2) is submitted to the Attendance Office at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence. All factors that need to be considered must be stated on the request form. The academy has the right to serve a Penalty Notice on parents / carers who insist on taking their children out of school without authorisation.

Penalties require each parent to pay a fine of £60 per child if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay within the specified timescale could result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court for failure to ensure regular school attendance. This legislation also applies to any pupil taking leave of absence without prior notification to the academy.

How we respond to Absence / Lateness

- If a pupil is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent / carer to explain the absence, the academy will contact parents / carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents / carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence.

Contact will be via automated message which will text mobile numbers for contacts with parental responsibility. Parents / carers can reply to the text message with a reason for their child's absence. Parents / carers can contact the academy directly to inform us of the reason for their child's absence. The academy asks that parents / carers ensure their most up to date contact details are provided at all times.

- If no response is received to the automated service, the academy may telephone, or in some cases, make a home visit to parents / carers to fulfil our legal duty to establish the whereabouts of their child. Unexplained absences may be followed up by text, letter or email.
- All absence notes will be retained for a period of 3 years.

- Where a pupil's absence is a cause for concern, contact will be made to the family via telephone, letter, or text. It is vital that parents / carers respond to enable us to discuss any barriers and provide support. This may include (but is not exhaustive) a meeting in school, attendance action plan, home visit, formal attendance monitoring and or involvement of the Local Authority.
- Where no sustained improvement in attendance is demonstrated, despite intervention, legal action may be issued in line with each relevant Local Authority's Code of Conduct.

Persistent Absence (PA) Below 90%

Attendance is tracked using the 'A Star' system and our own internal tracking systems. When a child is nearing an absence rate of 96%, we will begin to intervene. This means we will be contacting home to discuss issues and avenues of support to avoid the child becoming a persistent absentee.

A pupil becomes a Persistent Absentee (PA) when they miss 10% of their schooling across the academic year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents'/carers' fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.

Any pupil whose attendance has reached the PA threshold will be invited in for a meeting to discuss an action plan to improve attendance which may involve referrals to other agencies alongside meetings between relevant academy staff and parents / carers.

- At each stage of this plan, the outcome of interventions must be measured, and time given to allow for interventions to take effect (4 to 6 weeks). Throughout this period, monitoring will be undertaken weekly and if absence continues, further intervention will be put in place immediately. If an improvement in attendance is shown at any stage throughout the monitoring period but this improvement is not sustained and attendance begins to deteriorate again, the process should be picked up where it left off previously. There is no requirement to go back to the beginning of the process.
- Where parents / carers fail to co-operate with support and strategies provided by the academy, further advice may be sought which could lead to legal sanctions being imposed.
- Persistent Absence data is communicated to the relevant Local Authority via the School Census on a termly and annual basis.

Severe Absenteeism (SA) Below 50%

We will work jointly and share data on individual cases where it is of benefit to the child (e.g. Health services, where there are identified medical conditions, or police where there are extrafamilial harms). We will collaborate with the Local Authority termly Targeted Support Meetings and alert them to new admissions and deletions to the register that fall outside the standard admission times and provide the names and addresses of any child who fails to attend school regularly or has missed school for 10 days or more without authorisation.

Focus will be given to those pupils who are absent from school more than 50% of the time. These severe absent pupils may require a more intensive support across a range of partners.

- These pupils will be a top priority for support and may include a whole family plan and consideration for an education, health and care plan or an alternative form of educational provision to overcome barriers to school.
- If severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute as neglect. We will work closely with everyone to address potential safeguarding issues in these cases and will request a full children's social care assessment.

Intervention Strategies and Partial Timetables

Children who are experiencing medical conditions of special educational needs and disabilities have the right to an education in the same way as other pupils and our attendance ambition for them is the same as for other children not experiencing these issues. However, we are mindful of the barriers these pupils face and will put additional support to enable access to a full-time curriculum.

Intervention could include a range of strategies which will be discussed during meetings with parents and may include other agencies. Strategies could include, for example, regular mentoring by a member of the academy team, change of classes, peer mentoring, counselling – to name but a few. For pupil's experiencing diagnosed medical issues, we will explore making reasonable adjustments to uniform, transport, routines, and accessibility and/or an individual health care plan. For pupils with long term illness or severe health needs. we will consider guidance from supporting pupils with medical conditions in school.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medicalconditions—3>

One intervention strategy may be a reduced or partial timetable. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interest, there may be a need for a temporary parttime timetable. This will be discussed on an individual basis with parent/carer, pupil and key academy staff. At the point of discussion, a form must be completed with a clear rationale and objectives, times of absence from the academy, and time frame for review and plan to increase in hours to full time. This will only be granted on the approval of the Head teacher. Absence as part of this agreement, when compliant with the expectations of this plan, will be authorised by the academy.

Re-integration following Long-term Absence

Where a pupil has been absent for a prolonged period of time, perhaps due to illness, the academy will:

- Welcome the pupil back to the academy and value their return.
- Provide support for the pupil in consultation with parents/carers to enable a successful return to the academy.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are informed of the circumstances.
- Work with other agencies, where appropriate, to ensure a successful outcome.

Rewarding Good Attendance and Punctuality

It is the belief that all pupils are more likely to attend regularly if the curriculum is engaging and personalised to meet their needs. The curriculum is monitored and revised on an annual basis so that it meets the ability needs of all pupils. In addition to this we also ensure:

- Pupils are regularly informed of their attendance levels and, if appropriate, how they can improve. This is done through attendance leagues during form time.
- Good and improved attendance and punctuality will be promoted and rewarded through ClassCharts, assemblies, form time and specific attendance-based events
- Pupils, parents / carers and staff are regularly reminded about the importance of good attendance. Pupils' attendance will be reported six times a year.

3. Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Improving attendance is everyone's business. It is the responsibility of all members of the academy, the Local Authority and external agencies to play a part in improving attendance, punctuality and reducing absence.

Subject Teachers

- Welcome and value the attendance of all pupils to lessons.
- Will ensure all pupils are accurately registered.
- Will ensure that pupils know the register is being taken.
- Will identify pupil absence to lessons and take appropriate action.
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the appropriate members of staff.

Form Tutors

- Will discuss absence and attendance weekly with pupils
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will raise these with the pupil and appropriate members of staff
- Will work with identified pupils, setting targets to improve attendance and monitoring progress towards those targets
- Will ensure that all absence notes or verbal messages are sent to the Attendance Office
- Award green clicks on ClassCharts to all pupils who achieved 100% attendance in the previous week.

Year Managers

- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly
- Will discuss absence and attendance concerns with pupils and set targets for improvement
- Will contact parents / carers where attendance concerns have been identified
- Will support pupils to improve their attendance
- Will promote attendance through assemblies
- Will work with other members of staff to share information and support pupils and their parents / carers to improve attendance.

Attendance Officer

- Will monitor registration on a daily basis
- Will receive calls and messages from parents/carers regarding pupil absence
- Will contact parents / carers regarding pupil absence and provide support to improve their child's attendance
- Will support pupils to improve their attendance
- Will identify absence trends or concerns and raise these with the appropriate members of staff
- Will discuss attendance concerns with parents/carers and liaise with relevant members of staff

- Will monitor pupils being late to the academy and liaise with parents and Year managers to improve their punctuality
- Will work with outside agencies, including the Local Authority, where appropriate to improve attendance of individual pupils
- Will provide data to the Headteacher, Senior Leaders and the Governing Body on a regular basis.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Will liaise closely with the Attendance Officer to identify poor attendees from vulnerable families and provide support for those families
- Will work closely with families who need support with attendance and maintain consistency to build stronger relationships with our most vulnerable parents / carers
- Will support the Attendance Officer with home visits
- Will monitor those children missing for long periods of time and pro-actively address signs of children missing in education
- Support the Attendance Officer in addressing staff in situations of inaccurate register taking and provide training to staff
- Develop targeted action plans for existing vulnerable pupils and those identified through attendance tracking
- Work closely with external agencies to provide appropriate support for all identified persistent and severely persistent children.

Designated Senior Lead for Attendance

- Will take the lead on raising the profile of attendance throughout the academy, including improving attendance and reducing persistent absence
- Will monitor absence and attendance regularly
- Will identify any absence trends or concerns and will liaise with the pupil, parents and appropriate members of staff
- Will issue the Pupil Attendance Tracker to Year Managers and relevant staff on a weekly basis
- Will ensure that the academy Attendance and Punctuality Policy is implemented and regularly reviewed
- Will ensure the whole academy ethos promotes excellence in attendance and punctuality;
- Support the Attendance Officer on reporting to the Governing Body and Academy Trust Board on attendance
- Monitor the curriculum to develop ways of improving the provision of educational experience
 - Utilise attendance data to inform strategic planning.

The Head teacher and Senior Leaders

- Will ensure that the academy attendance and punctuality policy is implemented and regularly reviewed to secure understanding by all stakeholders
- Will develop and maintain whole academy culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
- Will ensure the accurate completion of admission and attendance registers
- Will ensure daily attendance processes are carried out consistently • We have a dedicated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Local Governing Body

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures • Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.

Wider Responsibilities of Stakeholders

Parents / Carers

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness)
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

Local Authorities

- Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.
- Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.
- Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.
- Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

Appendix 1

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the academy
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the academy
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the academy
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	Academy has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the academy
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the academy
N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	Academy is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at academy after the register closed

Appendix 2**Leave of Absence Request Details**

It is expected that this Request for Absence Form is submitted to the academy at least 4 weeks in advance of the proposed absence.

Pupil name:		DoB:	
Address:			
Class / Form:			
Start date of requested leave:		End date:	
Return to school date:		No. of days:	

What are the exceptional circumstances for your leave of absence request that you wish the school to consider? **Please provide evidence E.g. Note from employer / medical letter etc**

Name of parent / carer (print):			
Signature:		Date:	

C. For School Use

Current attendance %:			
Previous LOA this academic year:			
Does the LOA request time coincide with Assessment/Exam periods			
Any mitigating / aggravating circumstances (Including any ongoing medical issues):			
What evidence has been provided? (attach)			
Child's current / potential level of attainment?			
Is the LOA approved?:	YES	NO	
Reason, if not approved:			
If YES - Number of days to be authorised for this LOA application:			
Signature of Head Teacher:		Date:	
*Register Code to be used for this LOA:			



100%

PERFECTION

100% Attendance

IMPRESSIVE

98% Attendance

Equates to 4 school days off each year

98%

96%

GOOD

96% Attendance

Equates to 7 school days off each year

NEARLY THERE

95% Attendance

Equates to 9 school days off each year

95%

94%

NEEDS TO IMPROVE

94% Attendance

Equates to 11 school days off each year

DANGER ZONE

90% Attendance

Equates to 1 month off each year

90%

80%

EXTREME IMPACT

80% Attendance

Equates to 2 months off each year