




THE
LONG EATON
SCHOOL

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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Signed:	
Review Frequency:	Annually
To be Reviewed By:	Miss K Gould

Vision

At The Long Eaton School we promote 'a High Performance Learning culture for all'. Our School Vision statement includes, 'Opening Doors to the Future' through 'Co-operation between school, home and community', working together to develop students who are confident, self-assured learners, prepared for the next stage of their education, employment, self-employment or training.

Rationale

Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government's strategy to raise educational standards. Mutual co-operation between home and school is a key factor in encouraging good attendance and punctuality. Good attendance is essential if students are to benefit from the full range of opportunities which will enable them to fulfil their learning potential and achieve academic success. Good attendance is the way in which friendships are developed and membership of groups is formed. The Long Eaton School promotes an ethos where good attendance is the norm. Punctuality is important to help a child become a dependable adult and, eventually, a reliable employee.

Aim: To promote good attendance and punctuality.

Attendance

The Long Eaton School works closely in partnership with parents to support them in ensuring their child attends school regularly and on time.

Parents of a child of compulsory school age have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives sufficient and suitable full-time education, either at school or otherwise. If the child is registered at a school, parents must ensure regular attendance and good punctuality. The Local Education Authority has a legal duty to see that these statutory obligations are met.

The school will provide advice and support for parents whose child is not attending school regularly. If help is needed they should contact the child's tutor, Achievement Leader or Student Services in the first instance. The school will do all it can to work with parents to help to improve a child's attendance and punctuality. The Attendance Consultant, on behalf of the school, seeks to help parents resolve poor attendance and address issues of punctuality. Parents are asked to seek early advice from the school or the Attendance Consultant if their child is beginning to experience difficulty in attending school. Help at an early stage is usually most effective. The school reward system is used to reward good and improved attendance and punctuality through form tutors, assemblies and display. The school is proactive in working with multi-agency services to support attendance where a student has complex needs. Students with attendance issues are raised, where appropriate, at the fortnightly multi-agency team meetings.

Early Intervention

The school regularly makes use of data analysis in order to identify students at risk of low attendance. Regular data analysis is also used to identify trends and inform effective practise.

The school intervenes early to help students improve and maintain good attendance. Students in different groupings are monitored to identify indicators of attendance issues where attendance falls below the average of 96%. (see Appendix 1).

Children may have to stay away for illness or other exceptional reasons, but they should only be absent when it is absolutely essential. The school can give advice on what reasons for absence are acceptable by law.

Good attendance, based on an understanding of the circumstances of the young person, is rewarded and poor attendance is challenged. A range of appropriate sanctions are implemented to address poor punctuality. A student may be placed on an Attendance Contract and with a target set for improvement or the student may be referred to the Attendance Consultant. This applies to

PROCEDURES

Attendance

- The Headteacher is the only one empowered to authorise an absence.
- When a child is absent from school, parents should notify the school by telephone as soon as possible, giving the reason. Notifying the school of the reasons for absence is important so the school can determine in the register whether it is an authorised or unauthorised absence.
- If a student is absent and the school has not been notified of the reason, Student Services will contact parents to communicate all details about absence. This first day response procedure provides an early warning for students who have left home yet failed to arrive at school. The school may also attempt to make direct contact with the parents of some identified vulnerable students to ensure safety.
- The school's Attendance Officer and Achievement Leaders will monitor student attendance and students who give cause for concern will be placed on an Attendance Contract to help them improve their attendance. Should a student's attendance fail to improve, a referral will be made to the Attendance Consultant. Unexplained or repeated absences are referred to the Attendance Consultant for investigation as appropriate.

Punctuality

Students need to be made aware of the importance of punctuality, not only for school, but for their working lives.

- The morning session begins at 8:25am. Students who arrive after this time must report directly to Student Services.
- They will receive a late mark and will be instructed to serve a break time detention. Latecomers will be issued with a red slip to indicate to the class teacher that they have registered with Student Services.
- Students who arrive late to registration without a slip will be sent to Student Services and a further sanction will be imposed for failing to follow procedure and loss of curriculum time.
- In line with the DfE 'Guidance on Absence and Attendance Codes', students who are late and who have failed to register within 20 minutes of the start of the school day, will receive a U mark, indicating absence, as opposed to lateness for that session. Each individual case will be assessed in terms of identifying the reason for such lateness and an appropriate sanction will be implemented.
- A student is classed as being late once the bell has gone at 8.25 am – regardless of whether the teacher has taken the register or not.
- Students who arrive exceptionally late, which is after the official close of registers at 8.45 am, with no mitigating circumstances, are given a one hour after school detention.
- A student who receives 3 late break time detentions in a two-week period will be given a one hour after school detention. Failure to attend this detention will result in an internal exclusion.
- Persistent lateness will result in more serious sanctions and can lead to parents being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Exceptional Leave of Absence

Parents requesting leave of absence of 'exceptional circumstances' need to refer to the Exceptional Leave of Absence Policy.

Procedure for requesting leave of absence

Headteachers cannot and will not authorise school absence purely for the reason of a family holiday. There is, however, a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. **Please note:** This is not an entitlement and a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Parents/carers should complete the request for 'Exceptional leave of absence form' at least one month prior to the start of the leave. This form can be collected by the student or a parent from Student Services and the completed form should be returned to Student Services. In the case of a 16+ student requiring exceptional leave of absence a form can be obtained from the 16+ reception and should be returned there. The form will then be processed and a decision letter sent out.

Any absence which has not been agreed **in advance** by the Headteacher is marked as unauthorised absence. The Headteacher cannot authorise leave of absence retrospectively. In circumstances where a student is withdrawn from school without prior permission the school will request that a penalty notice be sent out.

Communication

There are regular meetings, both formal and informal, with the Attendance Consultant, FSW, SLT, Heads of Year, Achievement Leaders and form tutors to review procedures and implement improvements to practice. There is clear communication of the procedures relating to attendance, punctuality, lateness and exceptional leave of absence with students, parents and teachers through the form tutors, parents' information evenings, Tutor and subject evenings, assemblies, Governors and the Staff Handbook.

The school target of 96% is discussed with all students and promoted through school display as well as through regular discussion form tutors.

Monitoring

- The reward system is used as an incentive to encourage students to improve their attendance and punctuality. A Rewards System is in place to recognise students who achieve 100% attendance.
- Each half term the school is required to submit details of the level of absence to the Local Authority. The school is required to inform how many half days were missed due to authorised and unauthorised absence. This is recorded as a percentage attendance and is used as an overall guide to the school's success in promoting good attendance.
- The school is required to publish annually their absence figures in the school prospectus and Governors' report to parents; and to include in their annual reports to parents about individual children the number of times the student has been absent without authority (unauthorised).
- Parents should be aware that there is a Government requirement to audit whole school attendance figures by adding authorised and unauthorised absences together. Should this joint figure be considered excessive, action will be taken by the Local Authority to improve attendance.

Responsibilities

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children receive education in accordance with section 7 of the Education Act 1996 and if on a school roll that they regularly attend school and on time.

Form tutors are responsible for having an overview of the students in their group and will include attendance and punctuality as part of that discussion, helping students to set attendance and punctuality targets to secure improvement.

The Attendance Consultant will work with the SLT link to implement the Attendance Action Plan which will be reviewed annually.

An attendance report will be made to Governors as part of the Student Development Self Evaluation Part 1 and termly through the Headteacher's report to Governors.

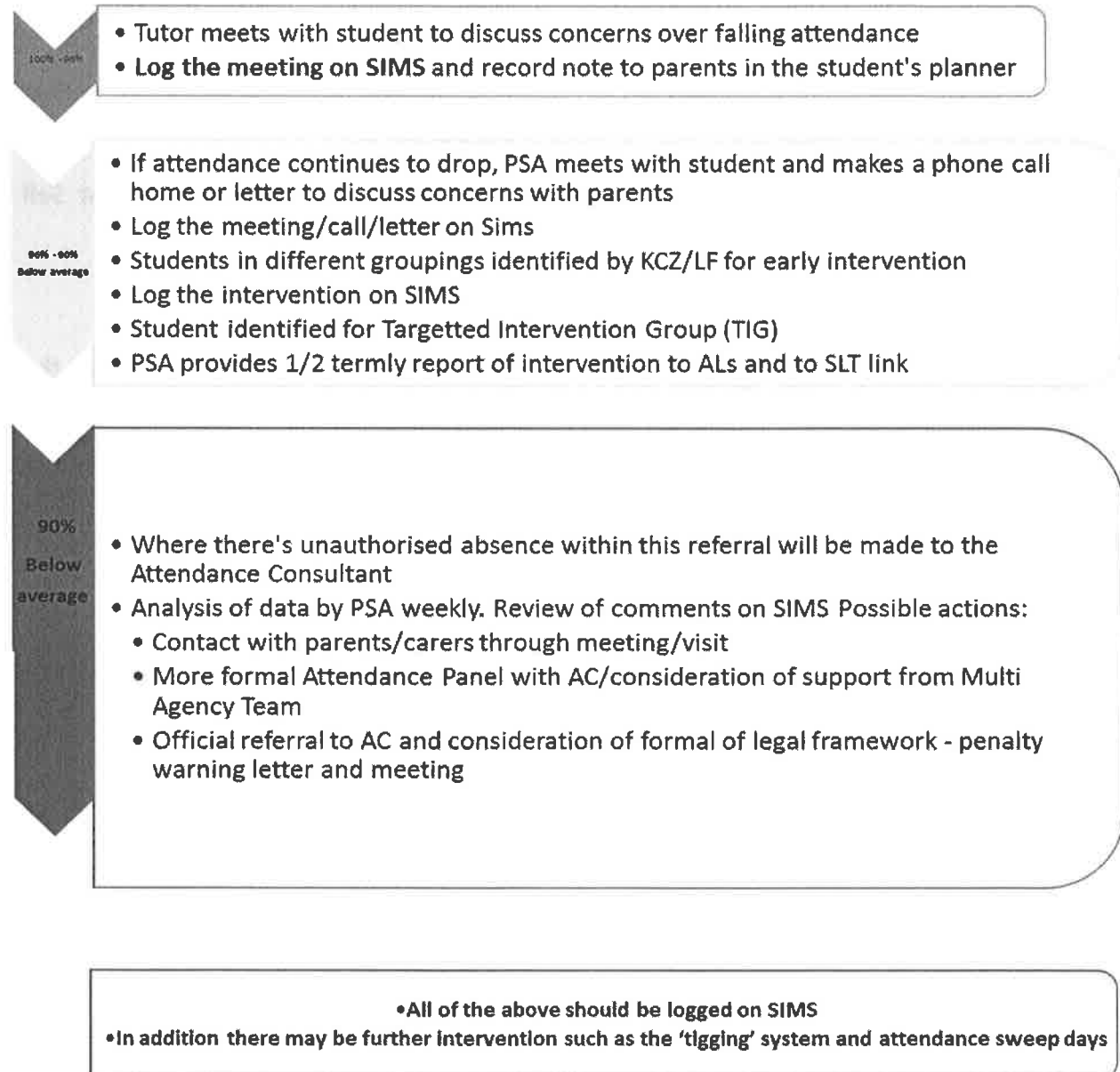
Evaluation

The Governing body will review this policy each year. The Governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this if the Government introduces new regulations, or if the Governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Appendix 1

Attendance Intervention Flow Chart

In addition to this there may be further intervention such as the 'tigger' system and attendance sweep day. (A 'TIG' group, is a Targetted Intervention Group').



Appendix 2 – Request Form

APPLICATION BY PARENT/S FOR A CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES



PLEASE NOTE - The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** state that Headteacher's should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

To the Headteacher

Name of Student(s)	Tutor Group

Name of Parent/Guardian 1: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian 2: _____

Address: _____

I/We wish to apply for our child to be absent from school for **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**.

Date from: _____ Date to: _____

Total number of days requested: _____

Please supply in as much detail as possible the reason for your request and why you feel it is an **exceptional circumstance**. Please include the names of the adult(s) who will be with your child(ren) during their absence from school.

Signed by both parents (if applicable): _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian 1: _____ Parent/Guardian 2: _____

THIS FORM SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE HEADTEACHER AT LEAST 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE DATE OF REQUESTED LEAVE AND BEFORE THE HOLIDAY IS BOOKED.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE POLICY

At The Long Eaton School we believe that students who have regular attendance are more likely to reach their potential and achieve the best possible results. In line with DfE guidelines, it is the policy of the school and the Local Authority to discourage all avoidable absence during term time.

Good attendance is vital if students are to benefit from the full range of opportunities on offer. It is essential not just during Key Stage 4 and at Post 16, when students are working towards their GCSE's and A Levels, but throughout their education, during which formal assessment and feedback takes place regularly in a variety of forms.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amended) Regulations 2013 amend the 2006 regulations by removing references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents and carers cannot demand leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday; it is not a right. The dictionary definition of exceptional is "unusual" or "rare", and each request will be considered individually on its merits. These regulations state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Circumstances that may not be considered exceptional include:
(These examples are illustrative and not meant to be exhaustive)

- Parents' employment restrictions
- Visiting family and friends who have different school holidays
- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements.
- Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term.
- Birthday of student or family member

Procedure for requesting leave of absence

Parents/carers should complete and return the Exceptional Leave of Absence Request Form to Student Services, at least **two weeks** before the anticipated start date. The form will then be processed and a decision letter sent out. Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as unauthorised absence.

If leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday is not granted and then taken, the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice. Parents who remove their child from the school for the purpose of a family holiday without seeking prior approval can also be issued with a penalty notice. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Appendix 3 – Authorised Holiday Letter

NDE/tb - Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Student Name: _____

Form: _____

Thank you for your recent application for exceptional leave of absence.

I am able to confirm that on this occasion I am able to authorise your child's leave of absence from

_____ to _____ for the purpose of a family holiday.

Please contact your child's Achievement Leader to discuss a possible study pack or project outline that your child can complete whilst away. I hope that you have a good holiday and that your child finds it an interesting and stimulating experience.

Yours faithfully
The Long Eaton School

N Devine

Mrs N Devine
Acting Headteacher

Appendix 4 – Holiday Letter, Not Approved, No Penalty

NDE/tb - Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Student Name: _____ Form: _____

Thank you for your recent application for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances from _____ to _____.

In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which came into force from 1 September 2013, and the School Policy, the circumstances related to your request are not considered to be exceptional and the absence has not been approved. The School Policy states that all absence due to holiday is marked as unauthorised, except in cases of exceptional circumstance.

Yours faithfully
The Long Eaton School

N Devine

Mrs N Devine
Acting Headteacher

Appendix 5 – Leave Request Denied - Unauthorised

NDE/tb - Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Student Name: _____ Form: _____

Thank you for your recent application for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances from

_____ to _____.

In line with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, which came into force from 1 September 2013, and the School Policy, the circumstances related to your request are not considered to be exceptional and the absence has not been approved.

The School Policy states that all absence due to holiday is marked as unauthorised, except in cases of exceptional circumstance. On the student's return to school, details of the absence will be forwarded on to the Education Welfare Service, who may issue a Penalty Notice.

Yours faithfully
The Long Eaton School

M Devine

Mrs Devine
Acting Headteacher

Appendix 6 – Challenge Letter, No Reason

NDE/tb - Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Student Name: _____ Form: _____

Your child was absent from school for ____ days between _____ and _____
_____. You were sent a text message, enquiring about the reason for absence, during this time.

I understand that the absence from school was due to a family holiday. In view of this, in accordance with Government regulation, I must mark the register with a 'G' which means 'unauthorised absence for a holiday during term-time'. The school will also forward details to Derbyshire County Council, who may decide to issue a Penalty Notice.

Yours faithfully
The Long Eaton School

N Devine

Mrs N Devine
Acting Headteacher

Appendix 7 – Challenge Letter – Reason Provided

NDE/tb - Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Student Name: _____ Form: _____

Your child was absent from school for _____ days between _____ and _____ which resulted in him/her missing _____ sessions of education.

We have reason to believe the reason for this absence was for the purpose of a family holiday and we must inform you that unless we receive medical evidence within the next seven days, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. In this particular case it would be 'G' coded which is used for leave in term time that has not been approved by the head teacher.

You should be aware that unless this absence is evidenced, it will be referred to the Local Authority requesting that a penalty notice be issued.

Yours faithfully
The Long Eaton School

N Devine

Mrs N Devine
Acting Headteacher

