



Lancaster
High School

Ambition • Kindness • Service

Attendance Policy

2026-27



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Lancaster High School creates opportunities and experiences which empower all our pupils to develop alongside our values of ambition, kindness and service, ensuring personal success, enabling individual progress and preparing for life beyond school
- 1.2 For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and every child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless they have an unavoidable reason to be absent. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning
- 1.3 Absence or late arrival also disrupts daily routines and teaching and so may affect the learning of others in the same class
- 1.4 Government research shows a direct link between attendance and attainment and good attenders also make better progress socially, learn to work with others, and are better prepared for the transition to higher education, training and employment
- 1.5 It is very important that parents make sure their child attends regularly and our attendance policy sets out how together we will achieve this. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently and we will always consider the individual needs of pupils, and their families, who have specific barriers to attendance. We will also be mindful of our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and give consideration to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 1.6 Our attendance target for every pupil is 97%, but all pupils should strive to achieve 100% attendance if they can.

2. Responsibilities and expectations

2.1 Families

- 2.1.1 Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly, if they are of compulsory school age and registered at a school (see the appendix for details of how the law applies to school attendance and how "parent" is defined in law)
- 2.1.2 Parents and pupils should know the times the school day starts and finishes and when the register closes (see section 4, below), the processes for requesting leave (see section 3.4), and the process for informing school of the reason for unexpected absence (as follows).
- 2.1.3 Parents can help with their child's attendance by:
 - 2.1.3.1 Ensuring your child leaves for school on time
 - 2.1.3.2 Informing school if your child is to be late by telephone, email or text

- 2.1.3.3 Making sure routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments are made outside of school hours
- 2.1.3.4 **Contacting school by 8.45am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school. This can be done via email or by calling the school 01524 32636**
- 2.1.3.5 Responding to messages received due to your child's absence, to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded
- 2.1.3.6 Contacting our school office or Attendance Officer if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact
- 2.1.4 **In case of emergency**, we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers
- 2.1.5 Parents must also ensure that school has up-to-date contact information for emergency contacts
- 2.1.6 Pupils' responsibilities depend upon their age, maturity and capability but they too must do their best to attend school regularly and punctually
- 2.1.7 School contact information for attendance-related matters is given below at the end of section 2.2.

2.2 School

2.2.1 Headteacher

- 2.2.1.1 Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters and protected time allocated to discharge those responsibilities
- 2.2.1.2 Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school confirms to statutory requirements regarding attendance
- 2.2.1.3 Consider each request for leave against the school's criteria, decide whether some, all, or none of the leave will be authorised and notify parents of this decision
- 2.2.1.4 Where there is uncertainty regarding an absence, make the decision whether or not to authorise an absence, or to request further evidence to support the decision-making process
- 2.2.1.5 Provide regular reports to the governing body on school attendance, including persistent absence and vulnerable groups

2.2.2 Senior Attendance Champion

- 2.2.2.1 Take overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school, liaising with pupils, parents and external agencies where needed

- 2.2.2.2 Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- 2.2.2.3 Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff
- 2.2.2.4 Have a comprehensive understanding of attendance data
- 2.2.2.5 Use attendance data to target attendance improvement efforts and support to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most
- 2.2.2.6 Regularly monitor and evaluate progress, including the efficacy of the school's strategies and processes
- 2.2.2.7 Regularly communicate pupil attendance and punctuality levels to parents

2.2.3 Other staff with designated responsibilities for attendance

- 2.2.3.1 First day response: contact parents if a reason for absence has not been provided and record this information accordingly. Contact emergency contacts if parents cannot be reached
- 2.2.3.2 Update attendance registers
- 2.2.3.3 Regularly monitor and analyse data to identify pupil, class and whole school attendance concerns and to target attendance improvement support for those who need it most, particularly vulnerable groups
- 2.2.3.4 Discuss attendance concerns at an early stage with pupils and parents
- 2.2.3.5 Work with pupils and parents to remove barriers to regular and punctual attendance, using attendance contracts where appropriate
- 2.2.3.6 Involve external agencies to support pupils and parents as appropriate to better understand and address the issues causing attendance concerns
- 2.2.3.7 Promote regular attendance through the school newsletter, website and displays and ensure the school's attendance policy is readily accessible
- 2.2.3.8 Use projects and strategies to improve attendance and punctuality for groups, classes or the whole school (eg incentive and reward schemes, certificates, traffic light letters)

2.2.4 All school staff

- 2.2.4.1 Provide a welcoming atmosphere for pupils and a safe learning environment, particularly for those returning to school following a period of absence
- 2.2.4.2 Be aware of factors that can contribute to poor attendance and punctuality

- 2.2.4.3 Recognise that absence is a symptom of other issues impacting a pupil's welfare and can be a warning sign of safeguarding concerns
- 2.2.4.4 Adhere to the procedures in place within school to promote good attendance
- 2.2.4.5 Promote the link between attendance and educational attainment to pupils and parents
- 2.2.4.6 Complete attendance registers in accordance with the legislation and under the direction of the Headteacher
- 2.2.4.7 Raise any concerns about attendance with the Senior Attendance Champion and/or Headteacher.

2.2.5 Governors

- 2.2.5.1 Ensure compliance with The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
 - 2.2.5.2 Agree an attendance policy and review it annually or more frequently if required
 - 2.2.5.3 Agree targets for attendance at Lancaster High School
 - 2.2.5.4 Where the school is not meeting its attendance targets, or when the governors believe there is cause for concern, instigate a review of school's attendance procedures
 - 2.2.5.5 Authorise the Headteacher (or other designated person) to make decisions regarding leave of absence requests
 - 2.2.5.6 Work with the Headteacher in establishing equitable and consistent criteria against which leave requests will be considered
- 2.2.6 Schools are bound by a range of attendance legislation, regulations and guidance; please see the appendix for further details.

2.2.7 School attendance contacts

- 2.2.7.1 Contact for parents to notify school of a pupil's absence: **Dr Carroll, Attendance Officer**
- 2.2.7.2 Contacts for day-to-day enquiries about attendance: **Dr Carroll, Attendance Officer or your child's House Tutor**
- 2.2.7.3 Support for specific and more serious attendance concerns: **Dr Carroll or the Pastoral Officer for your child's year group**
- 2.2.7.4 Senior Attendance Champion, the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school: Mrs Crossman, Deputy Headteacher
- 2.2.7.5 The staff named above can be contacted on 01524 32636.

2.3 Lancashire County Council (the local authority)

2.3.1 School Attendance Support Team

2.3.1.1 Each school has a named contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can advise schools on attendance related matters, and with whom Targeting Support Meetings will be held. For mainstream nursery, primary and secondary schools this is a School Attendance Support Worker (SASW).

2.3.2 School Attendance Legal Team (SALT)

2.3.2.1 Following requests from schools for legal interventions when parents fail to ensure their children attend regularly, the School Attendance Legal Team undertakes enforcement processes, including penalty notices, prosecutions, parenting orders, education supervision orders and school attendance orders.

2.3.3 Children Missing Education (CME) Team

2.3.3.1 The Children Missing Education Team ensures the local authority fulfils its statutory duty to identify children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. For further information see section 7, below, regarding notifications schools must submit.

3. Types of absence

3.1 Every half-day absence from school is classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers. As a school, we will always work with parents (and other agencies, as appropriate) to understand the reasons underlying absence.

3.2 Unauthorised absences

3.2.1 Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable or justifiable. If school has followed its attendance procedures and a pupil continues to have unauthorised absences, the school may seek advice from the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team or request legal interventions from the School Attendance Legal Team. Examples of unauthorised absences are:

3.2.1.1 Parents/carers keeping their child off school unnecessarily

3.2.1.2 Absences which are not explained satisfactorily

3.2.1.3 Pupils who arrive at school after the register has closed and without a legitimate reason (see section 4.2)

3.2.1.4 Days off for shopping, birthdays or looking after other children

3.2.1.5 Day trips and other leave in term time which have not been agreed by the Headteacher

3.2.1.6 Days that exceed an amount of leave agreed by the Headteacher

3.2.2 It is the Headteacher's responsibility to decide if an absence is authorised or unauthorised and, if there is any uncertainty relating to an absence, school may request further confirmation from parents before an absence is authorised. For absence due to illness, this may be in the form of:

3.2.2.1 Sight of an appointment for your GP or for the hospital, clinic, etc

3.2.2.2 Sight of prescribed medication or prescription for medication

3.2.2.3 Sight of medical notes/records

3.2.2.4 A letter from a medical professional such as a specialist or consultant

3.2.3 Parents should not ask their doctor (GP) to provide "sick notes" to excuse absence

3.2.4 Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for other reasons. If your child is reluctant to attend it is better to speak to school as soon as possible to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let them stay at home. As a school, we will always work with parents (and external agencies as appropriate) to understand and address the reasons behind absence.

3.3 Persistent Absence (PA)

3.3.1 Persistent absence is when a pupil misses 10% or more of their schooling across the school year for whatever reason, authorised and unauthorised (including illness, exclusion, holiday, etc). Absence at this level will damage any pupil's educational prospects and we expect parents' fullest support and co-operation to address this

3.3.2 At Lancaster High School, we monitor all absence thoroughly, therefore any pupil whose attendance indicates they are likely to reach the PA threshold will be prioritised and parents will be informed of this promptly. Pupils who are persistent absentees are tracked and monitored carefully and the attendance procedures below (section 5) will be followed.

3.4 Severe Absence (SA)

3.4.1 Severe absence is when a pupil misses 50% or more of their schooling across the school year. Sometimes such absence may be due to, for example, a long-term medical condition preventing full attendance at school, though even in such circumstances the pupil is still entitled to a suitable full-time education. However, absence at this level will usually require more intensive support and intervention by the school and, if required, the Local Authority.

3.5 Leave during term time

3.5.1 By law, schools cannot authorise any leave in term time other than in exceptional circumstances. Taking a child out of school in term time will

affect their education and progress as much as any other absence. If leave is being requested that involves arranging travel or accommodation, approval must be obtained from the Headteacher before making any bookings.

3.5.2 Leave of absence in term time **will not** be granted unless:

3.5.2.1 A request for leave has been made in advance by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides (using the form available on the school website or from the school office), **and**

3.5.2.2 The Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **exceptional circumstances** relating to the request.

3.5.3 Due to the need to evidence exceptional circumstances, parents are advised to provide school with any relevant information regarding their request at the point of application if they believe the circumstances are exceptional

3.5.4 In considering the request school will also consider other factors such as:

3.5.4.1 The timing of the requested leave, eg when a pupil is just starting at school or during assessment periods

3.5.4.2 A pupil's attendance record already includes unauthorised absence

3.5.4.3 Attendance is already a concern, or could become a concern, as a result of taking leave

3.5.4.4 Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

3.5.5 Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract legal sanctions such as a penalty notice

3.5.6 In certain circumstances, as outlined in regulation, parents risk losing their child's place on the school roll if leave is taken and the criteria governing removal from roll are met (see Appendix 1).

3.6 Religious Absence

3.6.1 School will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, eg Eid, and this will be marked as code R in the register. The day authorised will be that set aside by the religious body of which the parent is a member

3.6.2 Parents must request any additional leave in advance and this can only be authorised if the Headteacher agrees that exceptional circumstances apply; this would be marked in the register as code C.

3.7 Participation in Sporting Events

3.7.1 Parents can request leave of absence for their child to take part in regional, national and international sporting events. However, as always, granting leave is at the Headteacher's discretion and she/he will need to discuss

with you the length and frequency of the absence(s) requested and how learning will continue if absence occurs, eg the sports club or association providing an approved education tutor

3.7.2 Leave for a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school can be marked in the register as code P

3.7.3 Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late in order to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the Headteacher and is unlikely to be approved if it would occur regularly.

3.8 Participation in Performances (eg theatre, television, modelling)

3.8.1 Parents of a child performer can request leave from school for their child to take part in a performance. A local authority licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Before a licence is granted, school will be consulted and Headteachers must be satisfied that the leave will not have a negative effect on the child's education

3.8.2 Where the licence specifies the dates that the child is to be away from school, the Headteacher should authorise those days. However, where the licence does not specify dates, it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise the leave request. Any absence authorised for the child to take part in a performance will be recorded as code C1

3.8.3 Parents wishing to apply for a performance licence should go the Lancashire County Council [Child performance licences webpage](#).

4. Registration

4.1 Attendance Registration

4.1.1 Morning registration is at 8.50am. AM registers close at 9:20am

4.1.2 Afternoon registration is at 1.20pm. PM registers close at 1:50pm

4.1.3 The school day starts at 8.50am. Pupils are expected to be on the premises by 8.45am to move to their form time line up areas at 8:50am

4.1.4 When the attendance register has been taken it remains open until 9.20am in the morning and 1.50pm in the afternoon

4.1.5 School finishes at 3.20pm.

4.2 Late Arrival

4.2.1 Pupils who arrive after 8.50am go straight to the school office at the main entrance to sign in and give a reason for their lateness to the member of staff on duty

4.2.2 Pupils who arrive after the register has been taken (8.50am or 1.20pm) but before it is closed (9.20am or 1.50pm), will be marked as code

L. This is classed as late but present for the session (ie the morning or afternoon)

4.2.3 Pupils who arrive after the register has closed and without a valid reason for being late (such as attending a dental or medical appointment) will be marked as code U, which is classed as an unauthorised absence but indicates that the pupil was physically present in school for part of the session. A U code mark will impact your child's overall attendance percentage.

4.3 Punctuality

4.3.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work, targeted intervention sessions and miss time with their House Tutor getting important news and information for the day. Pupils arriving late also disrupt lessons, which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. Being 10 minutes late every day throughout the academic year is the same as missing two weeks of school

4.3.2 If your child is often late you will be asked to meet with a member of the pastoral support or Senior Leadership team to discuss ways to improve punctuality, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time

4.3.3 Persistent lateness after the register has closed may result in further action, as outlined below, under section 5.

4.3.4 How do we manage lateness?

4.3.4.1 The school day starts and registers are taken at 8.50am by the House Tutor and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their form by this time. School expects pupils to arrive on site by no later than 8.45am.

4.3.4.2 Pupils who arrive late to school should go to the main school office and sign in using the machine in reception

4.3.4.3 If they have a genuine reason for lateness such as a medical appointment, they should bring a letter from a parent or appointment evidence

4.3.4.4 If a pupil arrives late to school, parents/carers will receive a message to inform them of their child's late arrival

4.3.4.5 If a pupil is late without an authorised reason, they will be placed on a 15-minute lunchtime detention on the next school day. For pupils arriving late after form time (from 9:20am) without an authorised reason, they will be placed on a 30-minute after school detention the next school day

4.3.4.6 If a pupil is persistently late their parents will be required to attend a meeting to discuss what support is necessary to improve the situation.

5. School attendance procedures

5.1 First Day of Absence

5.1.1 If your child is absent and we have not heard from you, we will contact you on the first day of absence to find out what the reason is and when your child is expected to return. If we are unable to reach you, we will approach your child's listed emergency contacts and, if necessary, make a home visit. Please note that such home visits may be unannounced.

5.2 Attendance concerns

5.2.1 Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with us in resolving any attendance problems together; this is nearly always successful. However, if concerns persist or absences are unexplained, school will use the following procedures and interventions, as required, to support parents in improving their child's attendance and/or punctuality:

5.2.1.1 Telephone calls and/or letters to make parents aware of school's concern about their child's attendance

5.2.1.2 When there is uncertainty about the reason for absence, school may ask parents to provide appropriate evidence and/or undertake home visits to ascertain where a child is and to ensure they are safe

5.2.1.3 Invitation to meetings to discuss concerns with your child's House Tutor, pastoral staff, or member of the Attendance or Senior Leadership Team

5.2.1.4 Attendance plans or contracts to identify barriers to regular attendance, ways to overcome these and agree targets for improvement

5.2.1.5 Incentive and reward schemes for individual pupils, if appropriate

5.2.1.6 The Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and/or referral to other agencies and services, including Family Support services, School Nurses and Mental Health Workers, if appropriate

5.2.1.7 For unauthorised absences, request legal interventions by the Local Authority, such as penalty notices, prosecution or other attendance-related court orders.

5.2.2 At any stage, we may seek advice from the Local Authority School Attendance Support Team.

5.3 Home Visits and Welfare Checks

5.3.1 A pupil missing from education without a valid reason or for an extended period is a potential indicator of abuse and neglect. Where school has received notification that a pupil is absent without a valid reason; hasn't been able to contact the pupil's parent/carer; or has received a response from parents that it is concerned about; school will undertake a home visit to the pupil's house to check that they are safe and well. This will involve

staff from school attending the pupil's home address in person and talking to the pupil and parents to understand the reasons for absence.

5.3.2 Where a pupil is absent from education on a long term basis the school will take steps to undertake regular welfare checks on the pupil to; ensure that they are safe and well; ensure that the family can continue to access support from the school; to allow the school to understand what steps it can take to remove any barriers to education.

5.3.3 When school visits a pupil's home address and there is no answer, school will leave a letter to inform parents of the visit.

5.3.4 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider further actions, or support should it be required.

5.4 Pupils with Medical Needs who have Difficulty Attending School

5.4.1 Government guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (see appendix 0) emphasises the role of governing bodies in ensuring that pupils with medical conditions are able to fully access education in the same way as other pupils. A key element of this responsibility is reducing the amount of time missed by these pupils, whether their condition is short or long term

5.4.2 School will work with parents and other relevant professionals to minimise absence for reasons of ill health. This may be in the form of reasonable adjustments, specific support or resources used within school, or by sourcing appropriate provision at another establishment. When education is to be provided at an alternative location, this should always be done via the use of a direction (please see section 6, below).

5.5 Pupils Refusing to Attend School

5.5.1 At Lancaster High School we believe that every child has a right to a full-time education, and we would not accept "school refusal" as a reason for non-attendance. In such cases, we will work with parents to identify the reasons why a child may be reluctant to attend school. We may request advice from the School Attendance Support Team and, with consent, make referrals to other external partners such as the Children and Family Wellbeing Service or Mental Health Workers, as appropriate, to try to ensure the correct support is secured for the child and their family.

5.6 Promotion of Good Attendance

5.6.1 Lancaster High School will promote and incentivise attendance by acknowledging and rewarding good attendance by all pupils and efforts to improve attendance by individual pupils who have additional needs or challenging circumstances.

5.7 Use of Penalty Notices and other Attendance Legal Interventions

5.7.1 Legal interventions may be sought if providing support to improve attendance is not appropriate (eg for an unauthorised holiday in term time),

or has not been successful or engaged with. In accordance with the Lancashire Code of Conduct, we may request that the Local Authority issue penalty notices for unauthorised absences that include:

- 5.7.1.1 Leave of absence which is taken without a prior request being made
 - 5.7.1.2 Leave taken after a request has been declined
 - 5.7.1.3 Days taken in excess of an agreed period of leave, without good reason
 - 5.7.1.4 Other unauthorised absence that meets the required threshold, including sessions marked as late after the register has closed (code U)
- 5.7.2 On 19 August 2024 new penalty notice arrangements came into force, with changes to the cost of a penalty notice and to the thresholds at which penalty notices may be requested by school. The DfE now requires that schools **must** consider if a penalty notice is appropriate when the thresholds are met. The changes to be aware of are:
- 5.7.2.1 Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at £160 per parent per child. This will reduce to £80 if paid within 21 days
 - 5.7.2.2 Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate
 - 5.7.2.3 The threshold at which a penalty notice must be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or consecutive school years
 - 5.7.2.4 A maximum of two penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions)
 - 5.7.2.5 If a school requests a penalty notice for absences other than unauthorised holidays, including being late after the register has closed, the local authority School Attendance Legal Team may issue a Notice to Improve to parents. A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for parents to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and offers of support have not been engaged with by parents or have not worked, a Notice to Improve may be issued to give parents a final chance to engage with support and improve their child's attendance

5.7.3 The code of conduct for penalty notices and information and FAQs for parents can be found on the Lancashire County Council [education penalty notice webpage](#).

6. Alternative Provision and use of Directions

- 6.1 There is a range of circumstances when pupils might be required to access educational provision at a venue other than their main school. The main reasons are:
 - 6.1.1 Pupils who have been permanently excluded or suspended for a period of more than 5 days
 - 6.1.2 Pupils unable to access provision at their main school for medical reasons
 - 6.1.3 Pupils required to attend another venue for the purpose of improving behaviour, either on a temporary basis or with a view to making a permanent move to the alternative provision (via a managed move)
- 6.2 When a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for the purposes of improving behaviour, the governors of the main school must issue a written direction or notice informing all parents of the alternative provision which their child is required to attend. Where a pupil is required to attend alternative provision for other reasons, the issuing of a written direction is considered best practice.

7. Notifications school must submit to the Local Authority

7.1 Admissions

- 7.1.1 All schools must notify the Local Authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the Local Authority with all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school's youngest year unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided (currently Lancashire does not).

7.2 Leavers

- 7.2.1 All schools must notify the Local Authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided (Lancashire currently does not)
- 7.2.2 Where a school notifies the Local Authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the Local Authority with the required information as laid out in the regulation

7.2.3 In addition to submitting a notification about removal from roll, some circumstances also require school to make referral to other local authority teams such as the Elective Home Education team or the Children Missing Education team. Schools may also contact the School Attendance Support Team for advice on removing children from roll. For pupils with an EHCP on roll at a special school, the school must have the agreement of the Lancashire Inclusion Service (SEND) before removing from roll.

7.3 Pupils who Fail to Attend

7.3.1 Attendance returns: all schools must inform the Local Authority of any pupil of compulsory school age who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission (codes G, O, and/or U) for a continuous period of 10 days or more. In Lancashire schools, this can be done via a variety of means and school can contact the School Attendance Support Team for further advice

7.3.2 Sickness returns: all schools must inform the Local Authority of any pupil of compulsory school age who has been recorded absent with code I (illness) and who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively due to sickness. Only one sickness return is required for a continuous period of sickness in a school year.

7.4 Pupils on a Part-Time Timetable

7.4.1 Schools must inform the Local Authority when a pupil is placed on a part-time timetable. In Lancashire, this should be done via the appropriate form available to schools

7.4.2 Only the Headteacher or Senior Attendance Champion can authorise a pupil to access a part-time timetable for an identified reason and these are used as a short term intervention to support a pupil's attendance.

7.5 Children Missing Education (CME)

7.5.1 Local Authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not on roll at a school or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local Authorities should trace those children and ensure they receive a full-time education

7.5.2 If a pupil has stopped attending and her or his location is unknown, schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the Local Authority, before deleting the pupil's name from the register. In such cases, school should undertake a home visit, prior to a referral being made to the local authority Children Missing Education team.

7.6 Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

7.6.1 Pupils

Daily
• Arrive on the school site by 8.45am

- Be at your form line up area for registration at 8.50am
- Be on time for lessons throughout the day
- Attend any detentions issued.

7.6.2 House Tutors

Daily
• Set an example by arriving to register pupils prior to 8.50am to greet pupils at line up • Complete registers on Sims each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in discussions during Form Time • Monitor and support pupils on stage 1a support • Discuss absences with pupils returning to school • Discuss any concerns relating to a pupil absence with the Pastoral Officer or Progress Leader.
Weekly
• Ensure all members of your form know the school target (97%) and their current attendance percentage and group • Monitor/follow up identified pupil attendance by contacting parent/carers where appropriate, and a record of conversation logged in Sims • Ensure attendance has a high profile in form time, pupils complete their attendance trackers and display boards are updated each week as required.

7.6.3 Attendance Officer

Daily
• Ensure staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensure input of accurate attendance marks in the register via Sims • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason and telephone contact with parents/carer stating pupil is absent from school • Log parental voicemails, and emails regarding pupil absences • First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences • SLT, House Tutors and Teaching staff are contacted with specific attendance queries and any necessary follow ups required. This may include visiting classrooms to remind staff to complete register if waiting for marks • Log the attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits including clear comment with initials/times • Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to, and their attendance is entered accurately on to Sims • Daily liaison with alternative curriculum providers for pupils off site to ensure pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems • Supporting staff with registration queries and support the interventions of the House Tutors • Monitor and support pupils on stage 2.
Weekly
• Inform Progress Leader/Pastoral Officer/Senior Attendance Champion about pupil patterns of absence and request staff follow up • Provide weekly pupil attendance and punctuality figures to Senior Attendance Champion • Attend LHS attendance panel meetings.

Half-Termly

- Attendance certificates and rewards produced for Achievement Assemblies
- Arrange for 100% attendance reward post cards to be sent to families
- Review year group attendance from previous term & complete the half termly cohort document for the Senior Attendance Champion and Headteacher.

7.6.4 Progress Leaders**Daily**

- Supporting staff with registration queries and support the interventions of the House Tutors during form time
- Engage in informal discussions with identified pupils/cohort to follow up attendance issues and agree future action required.
- Liaise with House Tutors regarding identified pupils causing concern regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups
- Communicate with parents of pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties and conversations logged
- Communicate with Pastoral Officers, Attendance Team & Senior Attendance Champion regarding appropriate further action with pupils and/or families through the Attendance Panel Meetings
- Discuss concerns about identified pupils regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups with DSL/Deputy Head as and when required
- Communicate with parents of pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties and conversations logged
- To monitor and support pupils at stage 1b
- To coordinate focused interventions with persistently absent pupils and their families
- To make referrals to external agencies to support pupils and families where appropriate.

Weekly

- Meet with identified pupils in stage 1b support (attendance and punctuality concerns)
- Catch up with vulnerable pupils or pupils returning from long term absence
- Review year group attendance from previous week swiftly identifying trends and any anomalies
- Discuss attendance in fortnightly pastoral meeting
- Ensure all House Tutors receive attendance information and display all information in form rooms.

Half Termly

- Monitor and track attendance for key groups
- Celebrate attendance success in regular assemblies and achievement assemblies
- Liaise with Pastoral Liaison Officer to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern.

7.6.5 Pastoral Officers**Daily**

- Engage in informal discussions with identified pupils/cohort to follow up attendance issues and agree future action required
- Liaise with House Tutors regarding identified pupils causing concern regarding specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups

• Communicate with parents of pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties and conversations logged • Communicate with the Pastoral team regarding appropriate further action with pupils and/or families • To coordinate focused interventions with persistently absent pupils and their families • Conduct home visits of pupils where we are concerned about attendance Safeguarding home visits as required • To monitor and support pupils at stage 2.
Weekly
• Rewards for positive / improved attendance • Meet with identified pupils (attendance and punctuality concerns) • Catch up with vulnerable pupils or pupils returning from long term absence • Attend LHS attendance panel meetings • Discuss attendance in House Tutor briefing • Raise the profile of attendance in assembly each week with a real focus on performance of the year and improving pupils.
Half Termly
• Work with cohorts of identified pupils at risk of falling into PA • Monitor and track attendance for key groups • Create partnership / support plans for identified pupils • Liaise with Pastoral Team to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern • Analysis of year group for attendance and punctuality by key groups.
Termly
• Coordinate Attendance certificates produced for Achievement Assemblies • Meet with identified pupils based on attendance concerns • Review year group attendance from previous term • Analysis of year group for attendance and punctuality by key groups.

7.7 Attendance Overview

7.7.1 Staged Attendance Model

The staged approach is a graduated system of support and intervention designed to improve pupil attendance. It ensures that pupils receive the right level of support at the right time, with increasing intensity as attendance concerns persist. The goal is to identify barriers early, engage families, and prevent persistent absence through positive reinforcement, structured monitoring, and multi-agency collaboration.

7.7.2 Attendance is reviewed regularly in attendance panel meetings. From this meeting pupils are allocated an attendance stage. Each stage is monitored, should a pupils attendance continue to decline they will move through the stages of support.

7.7.3

Stage	LHS group	Attendance %	
0	Gold	100 - 96.0%	Excellent Attendance: Recognition and Rewards
1a	Silver	95.9 - 93.0%	House Tutor Monitoring and Support
1b	Bronze	92.9 - 90.0%	Progress Leader Monitoring and Support
2	Blue	89.9 - 85.0%	Pastoral Officer Monitoring and Support Attendance Officer Monitoring and Support (Parent Partnership Plan)
3	Orange	84.9 - 70.0%	Senior Leader / Attendance Manager Monitoring and Support (Attendance Contract / LA Referral)
4	Red	69.9 - 0%	Local Authority Action: Prosecution / Educational Neglect Order

Stage 0 (100 - 96.0%)		
Actions	Who	Support
Positive praise and recognition in form time	Tutor	Universal
Recognition in rewards assemblies	PL	
Positive communication home	Admin	
If attendance drops below 96% refer to Stage 1a	Attendance Panel	

Stage 1a: House Tutor (95.9 – 93%) 2wks		
Actions	Who	Support
Stage 1a referral letter sent	Admin	Universal +
Stage 1a referral txt sent	Admin	
Daily house tutor monitoring	Tutor	
Weekly house tutor support and recognition in attendance form time	Tutor	

Identify and remove any barriers to attendance	Tutor	
If attendance improved: - Send stage 1a positive txt - Stage 1a passed letter - Tutor praise and recognition	Attendance Panel Admin	
If attendance declined: - Refer to Stage 1b	Attendance Panel	

Stage 1b: Progress Leader (92.9 – 90%) 2wks		
Actions	Who	Support
Stage 1b referral letter sent	Admin	Universal +
Stage 1b referral txt sent	Admin	
Year Team monitoring card	YT	
Weekly Year Team recognition in attendance form time	YT	
Identify and remove any barriers to attendance	YT	
Year Team monitoring call (week 2)	YT	
If attendance improved: - Send stage 1b positive txt - Stage 1b passed letter - Year Team praise and recognition	Attendance Panel Admin	
If attendance declined: Refer to stage 2	Attendance Panel	

Stage 2: Pastoral Officer (89.9 – 85%) 4wks		
Actions	Who	Support
Stage 2 referral letter sent	Admin	Universal ++
Stage 2 referral txt sent	Admin	
Parent Partnership Meeting 1 booked	Admin	
Stage 2: Parent Partnership Meeting - Complete Parent Partnership Plan - Consider if Early Help is required - Triage to TAF Panel if required	Attendance Officer	
Attendance Team monitoring call (week 2)	Attendance Officer	
If the partnership meeting is not attended by the family: - Send PPM No Engagement Letter 1	Admin	
Add to Targeted Home Visits List	Attendance Officer	
If attendance improved: - Send Positive txt - Send Stage 2 passed letter - Year Team praise and recognition (Family and Pupil)	Admin Attendance Officer	
If attendance declined: Refer to stage 3	Attendance Panel	

Stage 3: Attendance & SLT (84.9 – 70%) 4wks		
Actions	Who	Support
Stage 3 letter sent	Admin	Universal ++
Stage 3 referral txt sent	Admin	
Attendance Contract Meeting Booked Attendance Contract Meeting Invite /	Admin	
Attendance Contract Meeting: - Complete LA Attendance Contract - Consider if Early Help is required - Consider if LA referral needed - Triage to TAF Panel to refer for support	SLT	
Senior Leader / Attendance Team monitoring call (week 2)	SLT	
If contract meeting is not attended by the family: - Send did not attend letter	Admin	
Add to Targeted Home Visits List	Attendance Officer	
If attendance improved: Send Positive txt Send Stage 3 passed SLT praise and recognition (Family and Pupil)	Admin SLT	
If attendance declined: referral to stage 4	Through Attendance Panel meeting	

Stage 4: Local Authority Action <69.9%		
Actions	Who	Support
Complete LA Statutory Intervention Request Form	Admin	Universal ++
Stage 4 txt sent	Admin	
Send Enforcement Letter	Admin	

7.8 Wider strategies

7.8.1

Attendance Streaks	Aim for 100% attendance each week to keep your attendance streak alive
High 5 Fridays	Friday's attendance is often the lowest attending day – Be in school every Friday to win
Beat the Bell	Arriving to school on time matters – Beat the Bell
U Codes 10 x 10	U codes Warning Texts U codes Warning Letters U codes Fixed Penalty Txt U codes Fixed Penalty Letter

Half Termly Attendance Report	A half termly attendance report which shows % attendance, days missed and lessons missed.
Broken Weeks	A letter for pupils with multiple broken weeks of absence
Attendance – Days of the week	A letter to parents for pupils who regularly miss a specific day (in this case Fridays)
Attendance Reset	A presentation to reset attendance with a target group
Attendance communication plan: Timeline texts	A series of text messages which follow the school year to prompt attendance at key times. Schools can analyse historic attendance patterns and pre-empt absence with clear messaging This can also be adapted for messages to pupils
Weekly Staff Briefing	On Tuesday morning staff are briefed on the previous weeks DFE attendance headlines: This includes: - Reminding it is everyone's business - Reminding about kind and consistent methodology - Overall attendance headlines - Year to date comparison - Year group and subgroup headlines - Key trends - Priorities for this week – e.g. attendance streaks
House Tutor – Attendance Monitoring	Once per week each House Tutor will go through the attendance of every child and this is recorded in their attendance tracker The House Tutor will check in with pupils who are on stage 1a and praise / support pupils each morning.
Year team monitoring	Once per week year teams will visit forms to check form tutors are monitoring attendance They will check in with pupils at stage 1b and praise / support each morning

APPENDIX 1

- 7.9 There are many pieces of legislation and government regulations and guidance that are relevant to school attendance and to children and their parents and carers. The list below relates to this attendance policy but is not exhaustive.

7.10 Parents and carers

7.10.1 Duty to ensure children receive education

- 7.10.1.1 [Section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#) covers the duty of parents to secure the education of children in their care who are of compulsory school age and states:

- 7.10.1.2 The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—
(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
(b) to any special educational needs he may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise

7.10.2 Offence if a child does not attend regularly

- 7.10.2.1 Under [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#), if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, their parent is guilty of an offence.

- 7.10.2.2 The offence is absolute as the only defences available to the parent are those statutory defences listed within that section of the Act, ie

7.10.2.2.1 the child was absent with leave granted by the school;

7.10.2.2.2 the child was prevented from attending by reason of sickness or any unavoidable cause;

7.10.2.2.3 absence was on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs;

7.10.2.2.4 that the school is not within statutory walking distance and that the local education authority has made no suitable transport arrangements or enabled the pupil to become registered at an alternative nearer school.

7.10.2.3 Compulsory school age

- 7.10.2.3.1 [Section 8 of the Education Act 1996](#) establishes that a child becomes of compulsory school age on the start date of the term following her/his fifth birthday, or that day if her/his fifth birthday falls on the day term starts.

7.10.2.3.2 A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which he/she

reaches the age of 16 or if he/she reaches 16 after the last Friday in June but before the start of the new school year.

7.10.2.4 Legal definition of "parent" in relation to attendance

7.10.2.4.1 The law requires that all "parents" are held responsible for their child's attendance. This definition can include any person who has care of the child. [Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#) states:

Meaning of "parent".

(1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person—

- (a) who is not a parent of his but who has parental responsibility for him, or
- (b) who has care of him

7.10.2.5 Thus, the definition of "parent" means all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and includes any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility and/or care for a child or young person.

7.11 Schools

7.11.1 Attendance and Absence Registration Codes

7.11.1.1 [Working together to improve school attendance](#), DfE statutory guidance 2024, explains which codes schools should use to record attendance and absence in their registers, and specifies the DfE's expectations of schools and local authorities with respect to school attendance.

Code	Meaning	Type
/	Present at school, morning	Present mark
\	Present of school, afternoon	Present mark
A	Present at school but not in timetabled class i.e. Nurture Room, intervention session or peri music lesson	Present mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next table for breakdown)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Education at a secure/residential site - Off-site direction/managed move	Present mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances – any other absence not authorised by the school	Unauthorised absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next table for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Code	Meaning	Type
The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes	
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating	
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention	
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law. contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease	
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	
The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time or part-time timetable.	

7.11.2 Data Protection

- 7.11.2.1 Schools must ensure that personal data is handled in accordance with the [Data Protection Act 2018](#).
- 7.11.3 Duty for schools to include attendance information in reports for parents
 - 7.11.3.1 [The Education \(Pupil Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2005](#)
- 7.11.4 Duty for schools to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave school
 - 7.11.4.1 [Regulation 13 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- 7.11.5 Duty for schools to report attendance concerns about individual pupils to the local authority

- 7.11.5.1 [Regulation 13 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- 7.11.6 Duty for schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
 - 7.11.6.1 [Keeping children safe in education](#), DfE statutory guidance, regularly updated
- 7.11.7 Duty for schools to share attendance data with the Government
 - 7.11.7.1 [Section 537A of the Education Act 1996](#) and
 - 7.11.7.2 [Share your daily school attendance](#), DfE guidance 2024
- 7.11.8 Leave of absence
 - 7.11.8.1 [Regulation 11 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)

7.12 Legal Interventions

- 7.12.1 Parents/carers commit an offence if a child who is on a school roll fails to attend regularly and those absences are recorded by the school as unauthorised.
- 7.12.2 Legal interventions are available under the following acts, guidance and regulations:
 - 7.12.2.1 [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#)
 - 7.12.2.2 [Section 36 of the Children Act 1989](#)
 - 7.12.2.3 [Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003](#)
 - 7.12.2.4 [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)
 - 7.12.2.5 [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#), DfE guidance 2015
- 7.12.3 Pupils experiencing social, emotional or mental health issues
 - 7.12.3.1 [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#), DfE 2023
 - 7.12.3.2 [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#), DfE 2018
- 7.12.4 Pupils with health needs who cannot attend school
 - 7.12.4.1 [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#), DfE statutory guidance 2023
 - 7.12.4.2 [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#), DfE statutory guidance 2015
- 7.12.5 Pupils with individual needs and specific barriers to attendance

- 7.12.5.1 When considering the individual needs of pupils and families who have specific barriers to attendance, schools should be mindful of their obligations under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#). The [Technical Guidance for Schools in England](#), published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, outlines the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 for schools.
- 7.12.6 Regulations regarding participation in performances
 - 7.12.6.1 [The Children \(Performances and Activities\) \(England\) Regulations 2014](#)
- 7.12.7 Regulations regarding removal from roll
 - 7.12.7.1 [Regulation 9 of The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- 7.12.8 Regulations regarding the school day and number of sessions
 - 7.12.8.1 [The Education \(School Day and School Year\) \(England\) Regulations 1999](#)
- 7.12.9 Requirement for mainstream, state-funded schools to deliver a school week of at least 32.5 hours
 - 7.12.9.1 [Length of the school week, DfE guidance 2023](#)
 - 7.12.9.2 Specialist and alternative provision settings are also encouraged to consider extending their core week where appropriate.