



Longbenton
HIGH SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

2025/26

Rationale

The government is clear that students need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school. Absence from school will lead to gaps in knowledge and understanding and will have an impact on attainment. Attendance is essential for students to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. Good attendance and punctuality help to prepare students to enter the world of work. Regular attendance is also important to develop skills such as confidence, resilience, communication and social skills. Regular attendance allows students to build relationships with staff and peers, supporting students to maintain friendships. It is important for students to achieve good attendance and understand why it is important to do so. In order to achieve good attendance, every member of the school community must make attendance a priority.

Longbenton High School is committed to a positive culture of encouraging students to attend school regularly. The school will work with students and all partners to secure this aim.

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation about school attendance through our whole school approach that values good school attendance, including:

1. Promoting excellent attendance and punctuality
2. Ensuring every child has access to full-time education
3. Building and maintaining a strong relationship with families to enable targeted support to better school attendance
4. Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
5. Acting early to address patterns of absence
6. Promoting the importance of both attendance and arriving to school and lessons on time to support punctuality

Expectations

There are 190 days per academic year. We want to support students in achieving 100% attendance by being in school on all 190 days. However, our minimum expectation is that students achieve 96% attendance.

Each day consists of 5 lessons. One missed day at school results in 5 lessons being missed.

10 days absence = 95% attendance = 50 lessons missed
20 days absence = 89% attendance = 100 lessons missed
29 days absence = 85% attendance = 145 lessons missed
38 days absence = 80% attendance = 190 lessons missed
47 days absence = 75% attendance = 235 lessons missed

If a student were to have 89% attendance throughout Year 7 to Year 11 they would have missed 500 lessons during their time at high school.

Parents/Carers

For students to achieve good attendance, it is vital that schools and parents/carers work together to support our young people.

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that children attend school both regularly and on time. Not only that, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to make sure that their children attend school regularly, even if they are missing school without their knowledge. Parents/carers can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for failing to ensure that children attend school regularly. We want to work with parents/carers to prevent an escalation of poor attendance that requires referrals to the Attendance and Placement Team.

If a parent/carer has a concern about their child's welfare, including attendance and punctuality, we ask they contact school promptly to allow for early intervention and to ensure support is put in place. We recognise that poor attendance could be a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a student's life. This may be linked to problems at home and/or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. An EHA identifies the issues you are worried about as a family that may be impacting upon school attendance. Following this, a Team Around the Family (TAF) will be held to formalise support that can be put in place to improve attendance.

Guidelines

1. The AHT Pastoral will have an oversight for all attendance procedures in years 7 -13.
2. The Attendance Officer will monitor attendance daily. The Attendance Officer will work alongside the pastoral team to provide intervention and support for individuals/groups of students in order to improve both punctuality and attendance.
3. The pastoral team, with oversight for their year groups, will be responsible for encouraging good attendance and for ensuring that students are rewarded appropriately for achieving good attendance and punctuality.
4. The attendance team, including the Attendance Officer, Pastoral Managers, Year Leaders, Associate Assistant Headteachers and the Assistant Headteacher will work collaboratively to regularly monitor attendance, identify trends and deliver targeted intervention to support students and families.
5. All attendance information will be regularly shared with staff to ensure attendance remains a key focus for the school and that all staff are aware of whole school, year group and tutor group attendance levels.
6. All students will record their attendance weekly to take ownership of their attendance, self reflect and target set.
7. Form Tutors/Pastoral Teams/SLT will put students onto punctuality report if they receive a specific number of late marks.
8. Form Tutors/Pastoral Teams/SLT will notify the parents of students who are placed onto punctuality report.

Procedures and Practice in School

Attendance

It is important that throughout the school and within our community we stress the importance of regular attendance.

To make this central to our school culture we will:

- Reward good and improved punctuality and attendance. Each week tutors will award a house point to students who were on time every day and also students who have attendance above 96%. Each half term attendance and punctuality achievement points will be highlighted in year group celebration assemblies
- Students receive HERO points in every lesson when they are 'Here' and 'On Time' to promote attendance and punctuality all day, every day
- Routinely highlight attendance during assemblies
- Display attendance figures around the school
- Communicate attendance weekly with all staff. This information will include tutor group, year group, whole school and individual student attendance.
- Communicate regularly to students and staff individual students' attendance percentage. Colour coded spreadsheets will be issued to form tutors every week containing individual student's attendance percentage and the number of late marks. Tutors will use attendance information to inform discussion or carry out intervention with their tutees. The categories and the colour coding used is displayed below. For consistency, when referring to levels of attendance, staff should use the categories described below:

ATTENDANCE CATEGORY	ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGE	COLOUR CODING
Excellent	96-100%	
Good	95 - 95.9%	
Requires Improvement	92 – 94.9%	
Cause for Concern	91.9% - 90%	
Persistently Absent	89.9% and 80%	
Severely Absent	Below 80%	

- Utilise tutorial time for review and target setting of attendance
- Target groups to be shared with all staff to help students to improve their attendance
- Include details about our policy on the website for parents/carers
- Regularly keep students and parents/carers up-to-date with the school's performance
- Include regular inputs and discussion about attendance and punctuality for whole staff and foster a culture of attendance being everybody's responsibility.

Attendance Procedures

Morning tutor time starts at 8.45am. Our morning register opens at 8.45am and will remain open until 9.15am. Students who arrive to school after 8.45am but before 9.15am will receive a late mark, recorded as an L. Students who arrive to school after 9.15am will receive an arrival after registration mark, recorded as a U. A U code is classed as an unauthorised absence due to being absent when the register was open and therefore will impact a students attendance.

Our afternoon register is taken at 1pm and will remain open until 1.30pm. Any students who arrive to school once the afternoon register has closed, i.e. after 1.30pm, will receive a U code.

If an absence is known in advance, parents/carers are asked to contact school in writing via attendance@longbenton.org.uk. If an absence is unplanned, parents/carers are requested to call the school **before 8.30am** on the morning of each day their child is absent. If no phone call is received, then the school will attempt to make contact with home to check on the reason for absence via telephone. Every effort will be made throughout the day to contact the family. In the event we have been unable to make contact for three consecutive days of absence we will endeavour to conduct a welfare check, either via telephone, a partner agency or in some cases a home visit.

Receipt of a reason for absence does not automatically authorise an absence. Please refer to appendix 1 for the absence codes used.

If a child is looked after or under a child protection or child in need plan, and no valid reason for absence is given on the first day of absence, or if there is a concern with information shared then the AHT/AAHT/YL/PM is informed. This practice will be followed for those students with on the SEN register who have been identified as most vulnerable.

Wherever there is serious cause for concern and it is considered that a child's safety might be at risk the matter is referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who will follow the Safeguarding policy procedures.

Truancy

If a student is suspected of truanting:

1. Parents/carers are informed immediately and if the student cannot be located the school will take all reasonable steps possible prior to the police being contacted
2. Once the student has been found, their immediate safety is secured and the circumstances around the absence are checked then parents/carers are informed and a meeting is arranged with the pastoral team.
3. Following discussion with the student, sanctions are imposed according to our Behaviour Policy.
4. If the truancy is part of a regular pattern, a range of support/intervention strategies will be considered to support reintegration.

Internal Truancy

All staff are expected to be proactive and are responsible for checking that students have arrived at their lesson by using Bromcom. Registers should be marked within 10 minutes of the start of each lesson wherever possible. If a student has been marked in to a previous

lesson and has not arrived to a subsequent lesson, the teacher will alert on call. On call will locate the student. If a student is reintegrated into a lesson they will be set an R1 reflection. If a student does not arrive to their lesson, i.e. truants a lesson, they will be set an R2 reflection.

Persistent Absence

Where absence escalates and students miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these students.

This support may take the following forms;

- Targeted support by the pastoral team
- Attendance meeting in school
- Offer of voluntary support – Early Help Assessment
- Formal support – a referral to Attendance and Placement
- Education Supervision Order – legally binding
- Attendance Prosecution

School refusal

Where there are concerns that a student is finding it difficult to come into school either because of emotional difficulties or due to some other known/unknown reason then the school will:

1. Contact the family and arrange to look at the underlying issues causing the behaviour.
2. Depending upon the conclusion from that meeting the most appropriate support package will be agreed upon and may lead to the involvement of other agencies. It could also include the completion of an Early Help Agreement.
3. Work in collaboration with the Attendance and Placement Team to ensure the right support in place for each family.

In such cases imposing sanctions may not be appropriate and alternative strategies may need to be explored. Where an underlying cause emerges the school will respond to this in accordance with the procedures outlined in the appropriate linked policy. In order to support the successful reintegration of students who have been absent for a significant amount of time a personal plan will be drawn up.

Holidays during term-time

Government legislation means that schools cannot authorise requests for children to be taken out of school to go on holiday during term time. Parents/carers must inform the school in writing of their intention to take their child out of school for a term time holiday. Under guidance published in August 2024, schools are required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons including term time holidays. Longbenton High School routinely refer term time holidays to the Attendance and Placement team for a fine. The fine for school absences across the country will be £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you believe you have an extenuating circumstance, please contact the school.

However, please note that a holiday for purposes of recreation and leisure is not classified as an extenuating circumstance as per Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

Sport events

Sporting events, such as competitions and fixtures, will only be authorised if a student is playing at a national level - for example, representing Team GB. Recreational sporting activities, such as weekends away at Flamingo Land, will not be authorised.

Medical, dental or hospital appointments

Wherever possible, appointments should be made outside of the school day. However, if this is not possible parents/carers should contact the school to give notice of the appointment, and a pass out will be authorised for the student.

Child Missing from Education (CME)

It is vital that when a student leaves we are aware of their new school and the local authority responsible for their education. Every effort must be made by the pastoral team to establish these details if they are not shared with us. If destination information is unavailable the pastoral team will make a CME referral to the Attendance and Placement team.

Punctuality

Rationale

Punctuality is an essential life skill to help a student succeed. Poor punctuality can result in lost learning which has a negative impact on school life, attainment and success.

Late to School

Students who are late will be recorded as L. Students who are late after the register closes will be recorded as U.

Students are expected to be on site by 8:40am and in registration by 8.45am. Students who are late to school but arrive prior to 9am will receive a 15 minute lunchtime reflection. Students who are late to school and arrive later than 9am will receive a 45 minute after school reflection.

If your child is going to be late to school please notify us as soon as possible. We understand that there may be some exceptional circumstances that are out of a student's control, for example a closure on public transport.

Late to Lesson

Students who are late to lesson, without good reason or authorisation, will be set a reflection by their class teacher. If a student is less than 15 minutes late they will receive an R1 reflection. If students are more than 15 minutes late they will receive an R2 reflection.

Persistent Poor Punctuality

Students with persistent poor punctuality may be referred to the Attendance and Placement Team.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The attendance targets are set annually by the Headteacher in the autumn term and agreed by the governing body. The Assistant Headteacher Behaviour and Attitudes will update governors on progress towards attendance targets and on trends/interventions. Annually, at least one member of the governing body will meet with key staff to evaluate the procedures and practices and to consider the effectiveness of the overall school policy. This information will then be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team.

Conclusion

These attendance and punctuality procedures will result in improved performance, relating to absence and punctuality. These procedures will create a culture of high expectation around attendance and punctuality, with all members of the community understanding their importance. Effective monitoring of the system will support staff, students and parents/carers and will result in better outcomes for our students. It will also result in a whole school environment where there is a desire to attend school and be on time to lessons.

This policy has been assessed in terms of Equality Impact.

Appendix 1: Attendance Codes

<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Scenario</i>
<i>/</i>	<i>Present (am)</i>	<i>Pupil is present at morning registration</i>
<i>\</i>	<i>Present (pm)</i>	<i>Pupil is present at afternoon registration</i>
<i>L</i>	<i>Late arrival</i>	<i>Pupil arrives late before register has closed</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Off-site educational activity</i>	<i>Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school</i>
	<i>Off-site educational activity</i>	<i>Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the local authority</i>

K		
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Leave of absence	The pupil should be participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad
C2	Leave of absence – Part-time timetable	For compulsory school-age pupil who is on an agreed part-time timetable

<i>E</i>	<i>Suspended or permanently excluded</i>	<i>Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>Illness</i>	<i>School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness</i>
<i>J1</i>	<i>Leave of absence</i>	<i>Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ admission to another educational institution</i>

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<i>M</i>	<i>Medical/dental appointment</i>	<i>Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>Religious observance</i>	<i>Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Study leave</i>	<i>Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>Parent travelling for occupational purposes</i>	<i>Pupil is a mobile child due to the parent travelling from place to place for business/trade</i>
<i>Q</i>	<i>Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements</i>	<i>Pupil is unable to attend due to a lack of access arrangements made by the local authority</i>

Y1	<i>Unable to attend due to lack of transport</i>	<i>Where the school or local authority normally provides transport which is not available; and the school is beyond reasonable walking distance</i>
Y2	<i>Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel</i>	<i>Pupil is unable to attend school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency</i>
Y3	<i>Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed</i>	<i>Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use</i>
Y4	<i>Unable to attend due to the whole school being unexpectedly closed</i>	<i>Where the whole school was planned to be open but remained closed unexpectedly</i>
Y5	<i>Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention</i>	<i>If the pupil is in police detention or on remand to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing</i>
Y6	<i>Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law</i>	<i>Pupil travel to or attendance at the school would be contrary to restrictions set by the secretary of state for health</i>
Y7	<i>Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause</i>	<i>The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent</i>
<i>Unauthorised absence</i>		
G	<i>Unauthorised holiday</i>	<i>Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school</i>
N	<i>Reason not provided</i>	<i>Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no</i>

		<i>reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)</i>
<i>O</i>	<i>Unauthorised absence</i>	<i>School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence</i>
<i>U</i>	<i>Arrival after registration</i>	<i>The pupil arrived late and after 30 minutes from the start of the session</i>

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<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Scenario</i>
<i>X</i>	<i>Not required to be in school</i>	<i>Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend</i>
<i>Z</i>	<i>Pupil not on admission register</i>	<i>Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school</i>
<i>#</i>	<i>Planned school closure</i>	<i>Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day</i>

Responsibility	AHT Behaviour and Attitudes
Governing Committee	Staffing
Reviewed	September 2025
Next Review	September 2026
Ratified	TBC