Lostock Hall Academy (LHA)
Attendance & Punctuality Policy
2020

Date effective from:	September 2020 (updated January 2021)
Date of Next Review:	September 2022

CONTENTS

1   PURPOSE

Lostock Hall Academy is a successful school and promotes strong partnerships with parents/carers in encouraging 100% attendance and punctuality for all students. We aim for an environment which enables all members of the community to reach out for excellence.

Missing out on education has a significant effect on students' life opportunities. Everyone associated with the school – students, parents, carers, all teaching and support staff and external agencies must do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality remain an integral part of the school's work.

Achieving high attendance is a necessity in preparing a young person for future working life as an adult. Students should therefore be at school, on time, every day that the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Missing out on lessons leaves young person vulnerable to falling behind.

Research shows that students who attend well, are more likely to achieve. Each hour in school is a valuable learning experience that cannot be recovered.

	Attendance (%)	Equals number of days absent	Lost learning hours
Excellent	100% - 99%	0 days 2 days	0 hours 10 hours
Good	98% - 97%	4 days 6 days	20 hours 30 hours
Satisfactory	96% - 95%	7.5 days 9.5 days	37.5 hours 47.5 hours
Cause for concern	94% - 91%	11 days 18 days	55 hours 90 hours
Unsatisfactory	90% - 88%	19 days 23 days	95 hours 115 hours
Serious cause for concern	87% or below	25 days	125 hours

The academy recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy is therefore to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance for individual students, vulnerable groups and the academy as a whole. In order to achieve this, all members of the school community have an important contribution to make. Sections 8/9 of the policy contains strategies that identify the ways in which we can all contribute to improving attendance at the school.

2   AIMS

The aims of the policy are:

- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at this school, with a minimum expected target whole school target of **97%**.
- To raise the profile of attendance and make it a priority for staff, students, parents/carers and the Governing Body.
- To ensure the provision of appropriate guidance and support for parents/carers, students and staff.
- To develop and monitor clear procedures for maintaining accurate registers.
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data in order to target attendance related issues.
- To identify at the earliest possible stage those students whose attendance/punctuality to lessons is a problem and act accordingly.
- To develop a framework within which all staff can work to provide a consistent approach to raising levels of attendance using relevant agencies as appropriate.
- To reward those students who attend school on a regular basis and are punctual to lessons.

3   AN OUTLINE OF THE POLICY

In order to achieve a high rate of attendance, it is essential that all staff are aware of the strategies to encourage this: -

- All members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities for student attendance and punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum, including the use of alternative provision for some students, is essential and kept under constant review.
- The need for high quality learning and teaching throughout the school is recognised by all.
- Students are provided with appropriate support so that problems do not escalate and drive them away from school. Our approach to bullying is of particular importance here. Where problems outside school are identified as having an impact on a student's attendance, an appropriate level of multi-agency support will be instigated.
- SEND, Disadvantaged Students and Looked After Children are recognised and given appropriate support.
- Effective partnership with parents/carers through regular contact and support is provided. Parents/carers are kept informed by the text messaging service, e-mails/schoolcomms and Synergy if their young person is absent from school.
- Letters of praise and concern on matters of attendance are sent to parents/carers.

- Any requests for leave of absence will be strongly discouraged. Requests for absence will be declined unless the parents/carers are able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

- Parents/carers are invited into school to discuss matters relating to their young person's attendance, formally through the Parent/Student Attendance Support meetings.

- A comprehensive system of rewards for good attendance is used including stickers, certificates, postcards, early lunch passes, recognition at Presentation Evenings etc.

- Attendance is given a high profile within the school e.g. through assemblies, attendance leagues, newsletter, displays and tutor group awards. Tutor groups who have 100% attendance each week are rewarded with a non-uniform day the following week.

- Governors are encouraged to play a role in raising levels of attendance and are kept informed of attendance targets and any developing issues regarding the students.

- Punctuality to school and to lessons is also highlighted as an important issue through the use of appropriate sanctions e.g. late detentions held at lunchtime and BfL (Behaviour for Learning) after school detentions.

4 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Every half day (=1 session) absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a legitimate reason such as:

- **Medical/Dental appointments** which unavoidably fall in school time – parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should attend school for part of the day they are not at their appointment. Parents/carers/students should show the appointment card to school/Form Tutor.

- **Illness.** In the case of a 'one-off' absence, communication from the parent/carer will usually be acceptable. The school reserves the right to question the validity of this if they have good reason to do so. Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc. For absences exceeding three days, medical confirmation may be requested.

- **Exceptional circumstances**. Reasons given by parents/carers will be considered carefully. However, the student's absence may not be authorised. For absences exceeding three days, medical evidence may be requested to prevent the absences being coded as unauthorised.

Unauthorised

Unauthorised absences are those which school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

The types of absences which may not be authorised include:

- Parents/carers allowing their child to be absent from school unnecessarily e.g. minor illness, tiredness.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Unexplained absences – no reason provided.
- Shopping, looking after other siblings or birthdays.
- Leave of absence during term time for day trips or holidays.
- Students who arrive at school after the register has closed (after 9:10am).

Any outstanding or unexplained absence will remain unauthorised if the school has not received an acceptable explanation within two weeks of the absence.

Parents/carers should be aware that the decision whether to authorise an absence or not rests with the school. Hence, if there is any ambiguity to an absence, school may request further evidence from parents/carers before an absence may be authorised.

Whilst any young person may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school, causing a pattern of non-attendance. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the young person. If a young person is reluctant to attend school it is better for the parent/carer to contact the school to enable both to work together to resolve the issue, rather than trying to cover up their absence, or give in to pressure to let the child stay at home.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling on an on-going basis for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parents/carers full support and cooperation to tackle this and support improvement.

The Local Authority request information on all students who are PA and the support strategies which have been employed by the school to improve their attendance.

5 IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING POOR ATTENDANCE

Strategies for identifying and dealing with poor attendance include:

- Attendance levels for individuals, tutor groups, year groups (including vulnerable groups) and the whole school are carefully monitored and action taken to address poor attendance.
- Attendance levels of other groups of students, such as boys and girls, SEND students, ethnic minority, LAC and disadvantaged students are also monitored and action taken to address significant differences.
- Long term absentees are provided with appropriate support to enable them to make a positive return to school.
- Early identification of potential poor attendees is part of the school's primary liaison work during transition from KS2.
- Attendance Improvement Monitoring (AIM) provides targeted strategies for students with poor attendance, students with deteriorating attendance and potential poor attendees.
- Written agreements and contracts can be set up to encourage good attendance e.g. Parent/Carer Contract, Attendance Monitoring Card, Punctuality Card.
- Fixed Penalty Notices for non attendance can be issued in circumstances where a parent/carer is considered able but unwilling to ensure their young person's attendance (e.g. truancy, parentally condoned absence with no good reason, excessive or unauthorised holidays and persistent late arrival after the register has closed). This could be issued after 10 missed (unauthorised) sessions. The cost is £120+ and is payable by each parent/carer. This must be paid within 28 days. Should the young person's attendance not improve, school can request further action for a prosecution for non attendance.

A range of strategies designed to tackle poor attendance is only part of the school's approach to this issue. The whole school drive for supporting students to strive to be the best, such as providing effective pastoral support, mentoring and effective teaching and learning are recognised as having a direct impact on improving student attendance.

Student Support Attendance Meetings (SSAM) – Tier 1

- To impress the importance of student attendance for good attainment.
- To resolve any issues relating to student attendance e.g. home difficulties/medical concerns.
- Student attendance monitored for 4-6 weeks.
- Student only meetings; parents/carers not invited to the meetings.

Parent/Carer and Student Attendance Support Meetings – Tier 2

- No improvement in attendance from SSAM
- To form good relationships with parents/carers to support students with poor attendance.
- Student attendance monitored for 4-6 weeks.
- If required, Parent/Carer/Student contracts to be issued to support an improvement in attendance.
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6   LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Any requests for leave of absence will be strongly discouraged. Requests for absence will be declined unless the parents/carers are able to demonstrate exceptional circumstances.

Leave of Absence

- Parents/carers are strongly discouraged from taking their children on holiday during term time.
- All requests for leave of absence will be declined unless parents/carers can evidence **exceptional circumstances** which is at the discretion of the Principal.
- Requests for holiday leave during exam times will not be authorised under any circumstances.
- Parents/carers must apply for leave of absence using the LHA application form which can be requested from the School Office or downloaded from the school website.
- If a student fails to return from an agreed period of absence, investigations will be made by staff (telephone calls/home visits by the Family Support and Attendance Improvement Officer).
- If school investigations fail to make contact with the parents/student the case will be referred to the Children Missing Education Team who may, after further investigation, inform school that the student may be removed from roll.
- Penalty Notices will be used in cases where an application for leave of absence is refused and the student is subsequently absent during the dates originally requested. Parents/carers will be warned of potential consequences when an application for leave of absence is denied.

Parenting Contracts - Attendance

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 makes provision for the use of Parenting Contracts where attendance is a cause for concern. The school may choose to initiate such contracts following the case being discussed at the Parent/Carer/Student Attendance Support Meetings (PSASM) and agreed by the Senior Leadership Team.

Parenting contracts will not typically be used the first time a student and their parents/carers are invited to attend an attendance panel. In serious cases where all previous targets have failed, parenting contracts may be used as a precursor to prosecution, and used as a method of gathering evidence of parent/carer's failure to improve their child's attendance.

- Each individual parenting contract will identify areas of concern and set specific targets to be met by students, parents/carers and the school.
- It may be considered necessary to request that parents/carers attend Parenting Support Groups. These may be offered after consultation with senior staff and governors regarding resource implications.

- Each contract will typically last six school weeks to monitor the students attendance.

- Following this period the contract will be reviewed and a new contract issued if necessary.

- Parenting contracts are voluntary, although parents will be encouraged to accept them. Where contracts are refused, it may be necessary for school to make a request to the Local Authority's Legal Team for prosecution.

- Where contracts are successful a letter of acknowledgement will be sent and new targets set to continue the improvement.

- Where contracts are unsuccessful they will be reviewed and a new contract may be issued or school may decide to make a request for prosecution.

Penalty Notices

The school may seek to use Penalty Notices in the following cases:

- Following a Parent/Carer and Student Attendance Support Meeting where parents/carers have been warned in writing of the school's intention to use a penalty notice.

- Where an application for leave of absence has been refused and the student is subsequently absent during the requested date(s).

- Students failing to return after an authorised leave of absence.

- Students who are persistently late after registration has closed.

Safeguarding

The school reserves the right to invite parents/carers into school to discuss any attendance issue that raise potential safeguarding concerns. In addition, if the school suspects that a student may be at potential risk as a result of their absence from school the safeguarding team reserve the right to refer these concerns to the appropriate external agencies, i.e. police, social care, children missing from education. The school will inform parents/carers if a referral is to be made. However, this may not be appropriate in every circumstance depending on the nature of the safeguarding concern and a referral may be made without informing a parent/carer.

7 REGISTERING OF STUDENTS

The school will follow DfE guidance on Keeping Student Registers.

- Students must be registered twice a day, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Any students who attend Alternative Provision (AP) will have their attendance shared each week. Where students are absent from the AP, the provider will contact LHA to inform us about the absence and the AIO will follow up the absence.

- School uses Synergy to register students and to track punctuality rates. Morning registration and Lesson 5 will constitute the 2 session marks.

- Morning registration opens at 8.40am and closes at 8.55am. If a student arrives after this time they are deemed late (code L) until 9.10am.

- Students arriving after 9.10am are 'late after the register has closed' and will be marked as a 'U' for the morning session (this will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence** for the am session).

- Students arriving after 9.10am due to medical or dental reasons will be marked as an 'M' (for medical) for the am session. Please note: this will be recorded as an **authorised absence**.

- Under exceptional circumstances, students arriving after 9.10am with a valid reason will be marked as a 'C' (for other authorised circumstances. Please note: this will be recorded as an **authorised absence**.

- Afternoon registration opens at 2:00pm. Staff should complete afternoon registration by 2:15pm.

- All students follow the late system with the gates being closed at 8:40am and lunchtime/BfL detentions issued to students who are late in the morning.

- In the event of an IT failure a paper register must be returned to the office immediately after or by the end of morning registration and at the start of each lesson.

Student punctuality

- Students' lateness to registration is recorded on Synergy.

- Any student arriving to school after 8:40am must sign in at the Student Reception. Students will receive a Lunchtime Detention for being late to school. An SLT detention will be awarded for any students who are late 2 times or more in one week.

- It is the Form Tutors' responsibility to deal with student lateness to registration with an appropriate sanction, but the BfL team will deal with those students who are persistently late.

- Students must be punctual to all lessons. Any lateness will be recorded on Synergy and appropriate action taken by the class teacher for more than 3 minutes late to lesson. Repeated lateness to lesson will result in either a BfL or SLT detention.

- If a student continues to arrive to school late the matter could be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued.

8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 <u>Students</u>

Students will:

- Attend school regularly and arrive in school before 8:40am ready to engage in their learning during morning registration.
- Be aware that full attendance at school provides them with optimum learning opportunities which will increase their career opportunities in the future.
- Speak to parents/carers and teachers for support if issues arise in preventing them from attending regularly and on time.
- Be aware of the schools Behaviour and Rewards Policy relating to detentions and further sanctions for persistent lateness.
- Cooperate and participate in interventions and support offered by school and other agencies.

8.2 <u>Parents/carers</u>

Parents/carers will:

- Be responsible for ensuring the excellent and punctual attendance of their child and permitting absence from school without good reason.
- Ensure their child has a healthy routine which allows them to have sufficient rest to engage in maximum learning.
- Ensure their child is prepared for learning by arriving to school on time, in full school uniform and with required equipment i.e. stationary, PE kit.
- Support regular attendance by requesting regular appointments are made outside school hours. If this is not possible an appointment card must be provided.
- Contact the Attendance Officer to discuss any issues or concerns that may affect attendance at school.
- Attend meetings with BfL team to discuss any attendance concerns.
- Support their child's attendance by not taking holidays during term time. Holidays taken during term time will not be authorised, and as such absence will be referred to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued which will result in both parents/carers being fined.
- If leave from school during term time is unavoidable due to exceptional circumstances parents/carers must write an appeal letter at least 6 weeks prior to the expected leave.
- Familiarise themselves with the Attendance Policy and work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which may affect their young person's attendance.
- If required, participate in Parenting Contracts, Common Assessment Framework and accept early intervention strategies offered and cooperate with support and interventions offered by other agencies.

8.3**Class Teachers**

Class teachers will:

- Ensure that all students in lessons are able to access the learning through a range of teaching and learning strategies in line with the School's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy.
- Ensure that Synergy registration is completed accurately in all lessons, and the Student Support Manager is notified of any absentees;
- Identify, within each lesson, any students who should be present in the lesson but are not.
- Monitor carefully the attendance of individuals within a class and alert the Head of Faculty/Curriculum Lead and Senior Form Tutors where patterns of non-attendance are detected.
- When a student is known to have truanted from your lesson, follow this up by making sure they have caught up the missed work in detention time and inform the BfL Faculty.
- Ensure that appropriate work is set and marked for long term absentees and when requested for those on exclusion.
- Ensure that those students who return from a long-term absence are provided with appropriate support to enable them to access the learning within the lesson.
- Welcome back students from long-term absence in a professional manner, avoiding reference to the absence in front of other students.
- Actively discourage any adverse comments about the absence from other students in the class.

8.4**Form Tutors**

Form Tutors will:

- Ensure that registers for the morning are accurately completed in Synergy and maintained daily.
- Chase up absence notes from returning students and inform the Senior Form Tutors and Student Support Manager if no note is returned after reminders.
- Collect and scrutinise absence notes/communication with parents/carers and inform the Senior Form Tutor, Student Support Manager and the Attendance Improvement Officer if professional judgement suggests any are forged. Tackle any instances of inappropriate absence initially with the student and inform Student Support Manager as appropriate.
- Keep registers up-to-date with reasons for absence as identified within absence notes.
- Encourage good attendance through constant reinforcement of individual and class targets, encouraging students to want to be the best attending form in the year/school.
- Monitor attendance within the form and use short-term attendance reports and targets where there is any deterioration.
- Liaise with the Senior Form Tutors, Student Support Manager and the Attendance Improvement Officer as early as possible where there are issues of attendance with individual students, groups within the form or the whole form.

8.5 Student Support Manager and the Attendance Officer

Student Support Manager will:

- Monitor carefully the attendance of students within each year group, taking note of any patterns amongst students from particular classes and particular times of the week.
- Take appropriate steps to support students to reverse the trend of absence.
- Liaise with the Family Support & Attendance Improvement Worker (FSAIW) to ensure students with poor attendance are receiving appropriate levels of support as necessary.
- Monitor the attendance rates of form groups within each year group, taking action alongside Form Tutors where particular forms are identified as having poor attendance.
- Monitor/mentor students who have been identified as those with deteriorating levels of attendance, using monitoring cards, short term targets and other strategies to improve attendance.
- Foster a positive attitude to school attendance within the year through assemblies, notice boards and constant reinforcement with students.
- Encourage a spirit of healthy competition between forms and individuals and issue rewards as appropriate.
- Work with the FSAIW to identify ways in which long-term absentees can be reintegrated effectively.
- Liaise with parents/carers on matters relating to their young person's attendance, including organising the Parent/Student Attendance Support Meetings for students at risk of being poor attendees, including follow-up review meetings.
- Implement sanctions where there have been instances of truancy, whether from individual lessons or whole days.
- Keep Form Tutors informed of any action in relation to particular students.
- Make arrangements to ensure that parents/carers who wish to take their child out of school during term time are contacted and the potential consequences explained.
- Keep the SLT lead informed of issues relating to attendance in the year.

8.6 The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer will:

- Administer the SIMS/Synergy registration system, noting where registers have not been completed or have not been completed accurately and taking appropriate action.
- Ensure that the school's official registers are in line with legal requirements and that any anomalies are reported to the designated SLT member.
- Operate Synergy/SIMS to notify parents/carers by text message or e-mail of absent students.
- Provide weekly/monthly/termly data on attendance for the SLT lead on attendance.
- Support the SSM in terms of administration – letters to parents/carers, agencies etc.
- Assist the SLT lead in keeping the school roll up-to-date, adding or removing students as required.

8.7 The School Attendance Consultant

The School Attendance Consultant will:

- Use attendance data to identify students for support and close monitoring with the Senior Form Tutors, BfL Faculty and SLT lead.
- Investigate instances of suspected truancy and take appropriate action, making parental contact, home visits as necessary.
- Work closely with the parents/carers of targeted students to provide support to get students to return to school.
- Keep in contact with long-term absentees and liaise with the SLT Lead/Head of Faculty to ensure that effective reintegration strategies are used, identifying 'catch up' needs;
- Contact parents/carers where absences have remained unexplained despite previous intervention.
- Liaise with the SENDCO/designated SLT Attendance Lead/DSL and use attendance data to identify students for referral to the Attendance Support meetings and for CAF (Common Assessment Form) support.
- Work with targeted students to improve attendance through parental contact, attendance reports, short-term targets and rewards.
- Prepare cases for referral through the CAF with the SENDCO/SLT lead and for where court action is required. Liaise with the Court Officer to initiate proceedings and follow protocol.
- Work with the SLT lead to involve outside agencies with individuals and groups of students.
- Administer the attendance rewards system, liaising closely with the SLT lead.
- Investigate other support strategies to encourage improved attendance.

8.8 SLT responsible for Attendance

The SLT lead for attendance will:

- Take overall responsibility for developing the Attendance and Punctuality Policy within the school.
- Provide line management for the Attendance Improvement Worker/Senior Form Tutors and ensure there is good communication with Governors on issues relating to attendance.
- Oversee, monitor and evaluate the Attendance Improvement Monitoring (AIM).
- Using attendance data, analyse this for patterns of poor attendance amongst particular year groups or groups of students and take action to address any anomalies.
- Oversee the efficient running of the Synergy registration process and text messaging e-mail service.
- Take a lead in promoting the need for good attendance through assemblies and work with staff and students to build a strong ethos.
- Assist the Local Authority by providing data for persistent absence and attendance.
- Decide upon any new admissions and any initial action required encouraging good attendance, including attendance contracts if necessary.
- Co-ordinate and chair meetings of the Attendance Support meetings, following up on any students for review with the FSAIW.
- Together with the rest of SLT, actively discourage parents/carers from taking students out of school during term time.

9 ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT MONITORING (AIM)

9.1 Attendance Indicators

Students will be divided into 3 identified 'groups' each half term based on their percentage attendance to date.

- GROUP 1: RED   Attendance of <90%
- GROUP 2: AMBER   Attendance of between 91% - 96%
- GROUP 3: GREEN   Attendance of more than 97%

9.2 Strategies For Group 1/Red students (PA students)

A variety of the following could be employed:

- Attendance warning letter to the parents/carers, with monitoring improvement period outlined.
- First day personal phone calls in addition to the Synergy/e-mail system by the Attendance Officer/Attendance Improvement Worker.
- The student to be met by the AIW or SLT lead and short-term targets set/attendance report implemented, with a 2 week monitoring period.
- A formal requirement for parents/carers (and the student) to attend a meeting of the Attendance Support meetings consisting of the SLT lead, Senior Form Tutors, Attendance Improvement Worker and a member of the Governing Body.
- If there is no improvement, a further requirement to attend a meeting of the Attendance Panel and/or a referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice.

In addition, a TAF/CAF may be opened to access further support and multi-agency involvement before a further in-house reintegration support plan is implemented. Rewards will be given to students exceeding their individual targets.

9.3 Strategies for Amber Groups

This group contains those students who are at risk of becoming a persistent absence (PA) student.

The aim is prevention, with support the key.

- The SLT lead to meet with the AIW to scrutinise data to assess possible patterns/reasons for absence.
- The SLT lead and the AIW to meet with parents and the student to implement an attendance plan over a two week period.
- The SLT lead to monitor attendance carefully.
- A first day response phone call in addition to the Synergy/e-mail service.
- Rewarding students who exceed their targets.

9.4 **Strategies for Green Groups**

This group contains students who have been identified by Form Tutors, who would initiate some or all of the following:

- Set individual targets and rewards as necessary.
- Encourage students to exceed their half term targets.
- Give suitable rewards.
- Weekly Tutor group rewards for 100% attendance

The aim is for numbers in the Red and Amber groups to decrease. There clearly will be movement between groups as individual attendance deteriorates or improves throughout the academic year.

9.5 **Half Term Attendance Rewards**

Any student who achieves 100% attendance over a half term period will receive a reward postcard and entry into a draw at the end of every half term and a tiered number of achievement points depending on their attendance record.

There are also awards for the winner of the Attendance League between forms in each year to encourage healthy competition between Tutor Groups.

9.6 **Attendance/Behaviour Reward Trips**

Only students whose attendance remains above 95% will be considered for Attendance/Behaviour Reward trips. Students with unauthorised absences during term time will not be considered.

9.7 **Attendance Awards**

Students who achieve 100% attendance over the whole of an academic year will receive a certificate presented at the annual Teaching and Learning Assemblies and the GCSE Awards Evenings.

Tutor groups will also be rewarded with a non-uniform day if all student attendance is 100%.

DOES ATTENDANCE MATTER?

OVER A SCHOOL YEAR THIS IS WHAT ABSENCE AND LATES MEAN...

100%	0 Days	0 Lessons Missed
99%	1 Day Off	5 Lessons Missed
98%	3 Days Off	15 Lessons Missed
97%	1 Week Off	25 Lessons Missed
96%	1.5 Weeks Off	35 Lessons Missed
94%	2 Weeks Off	50 Lessons Missed
93%	2.5 Weeks Off	65 Lessons Missed
92%	3 Weeks Off	75 Lessons Missed
90%	3.5 Weeks Off	90 Lessons Missed

LATES = LOST LEARNING

5 MINUTES LATE EACH DAY = 3 DAYS LOST

10 MINUTES LATE EACH DAY = 6.5 DAYS LOST

15 MINUTES LATE EACH DAY = 10 DAYS LOST

20 MINUTES LATE EACH DAY = 13 DAYS LOST

30 MINUTES LATE EACH DAY = 19 DAYS LOST

Maximise your potential attend school every day! LHA

Whole School Attendance Policy in the light of Covid- 19 (Secondary)/School closure.

1.   Who should attend school at this time?

- Vulnerable children unless the risk assessment process indicates they are not able to attend (usually due to health needs). This applies to those students with an EHCP and also those open at CIN and CP level to Children's Social Care alongside other students where we have agreed a placement in school is in their best interests.
- Students of critical workers (where required).

DfE Guidance around the attendance of vulnerable students has been updated to state:

'Vulnerable children and young people's attendance is expected, where it is appropriate for them (that is, where there are no shielding concerns for the child or their household, and/or following a risk assessment for children with an EHC plan) so that they can gain the educational and wellbeing benefits of attending. Vulnerable children and young people - regardless of year group - that have not been attending in the recent period are expected to return to nursery, early years, school or college provision where this would now be appropriate for them to do so. A brief summary of attendance expectations across the different groups of vulnerable children and young people is as follows:

- *For vulnerable children and young people who have a social worker, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection, and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable).*

- *For vulnerable children and young people who have an education health and care (EHC) plan, attendance is expected where it is determined, following risk assessment, that their needs can be as safely or more safely met in the educational environment.*

- *For vulnerable children and young people who are deemed otherwise vulnerable, at the school, college or local authority discretion, attendance is expected unless the child/household is shielding or clinically vulnerable (see the advice set out by Public Health England on households with possible coronavirus infection, and shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as clinically extremely vulnerable).'*

2.   Provision for those students not currently eligible for a place in school

Those students who are not eligible for a place at this time MUST work at home to complete the work set for them by their teachers on **Synergy, Zoom and Google Classroom.**

3.   What if I do not want a place in school for my child at this time?

Eligible children – including priority groups – are strongly encouraged to attend their education setting, unless they are self-isolating or they are clinically vulnerable.

Parents will not be penalised if their child does not attend school at this time. **However, we will be working with our students and their families to prepare them for a return to school**. If a student is not engaging with the remote learning set, we may ask that your child begin to attend school so they are not vulnerable in terms of poor educational outcomes on the return to school.

School registers will be used and absences will be recorded. At this time, all absences will be recorded as authorised. The data held in School Attendance registers at this time will not count towards your child's or to the school's overall attendance data.

4.   When should your child NOT attend school

IT is <u>**ESSENTIAL**</u> that you do not send your child to school for 7 days if they have any of the following symptoms:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If these symptoms remain (excepting the cough) after the 7days

You should also <u>not send your child</u> to school if:

- *The household is self-isolating* - from day 1 of a member of the household showing the above symptoms, the remainder of the household should self-isolate for 10 days. If they subsequently become ill then they should isolate for 10 days or until they no longer have a high temperature and/ or loss of smell and taste.
- They have tested positive for Covid-19 - they should then isolate for 10 days.
- A student in the class tests positive - we will inform you if this happens. At this point, your child should self-isolate for 10 days.
- **Parents/carers should ensure that school has an up to date emergency contact number.**
- Any student who is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable should not attend school **- you will know this as you will have a letter to direct your child to shield. We may ask for a copy of this letter.**
- Any student who is clinically vulnerable AND has medical advice advising to shield. **We may ask to see a copy of this advice.**

- If a member of your household is classed as extremely clinically vulnerable, we will discuss individually the measures that may be needed to ensure a safe return to school. We will only ask for a return to school in cases where we are clear that strict social distancing can be adhered to at all times.
- If a member of the household is classed as clinically vulnerable or is pregnant then the student SHOULD attend school.

5.   What happens if my child develops symptoms when on site?

In this situation, we will make immediate contact in order to send the student home. **It is ESSENTIAL that parents/carers have provided us with up to date contact details and that parents respond quickly to enable us to remove the student from site as soon as possible.**

Parents/ carers should ensure that a test is requested and inform school of the result of this test as soon as possible. If the test is positive, then the student should remain at home for 10 days and the class group will be self-isolated. If the test is negative, then the student should return to school as soon as they are well.

School procedures

1. **The School day**

2. **Absence from school**

In the circumstance of a student who is due into school not attending at school at the required session time:

School will:	Parent/ carer will:
• Investigate the absence and code the register as below. • Consider if any safeguarding responses are necessary. • Make contact with the family if a pattern of absence develops.	• Inform school by 08:40 through Synergy or telephoning. • Provide an expected return date and a reason for the absence. • If the absence is Covid-19 related the parent should request a test and inform school of the outcome of the test.

3. Punctuality

We expect that students arrive at school at 08:40.

Students will be registered in their class groups/year group bubbles.

The school registers will close at 09:10.

It is important that students be on time as the school day is structured to avoid mixing and ease social distancing. Late students may compromise the safe running of school.
If students are late a senior member of staff will speak to them and contact will be made to parents/carers.

4. Attendance/ absence codes

The school register will be completed to follow DfE guidelines.

Code	Meaning	Use
X	Not required to attend	Used when the student does not fit into the eligible groups (as above) and when provision is not offered to that student group during that session. Students will be following remote learning activities from home.
I	Absent due to illness	Any illness - including Covid–19 symptoms. We may ask to see your evidence of Covid-19 test results. *We will not be following our usual practice of requesting medical evidence at this time. This requirement will resume when it is safe to do so.*
C	Authorised absence	Used for students who are eligible but not in attendance at school due to either parental choice or other circumstances such as bereavement. This code will also be used if no reason for absence is provided. Vulnerable students who are working in school part time will be marked with a 'C' on the days they are not in school.

M	Medical appointment - counts as absence	Medical evidence may be requested for individual students where poor attendance is a concern.
E	Exclusion - absence	Please note that our amended behaviour policy confirms that exclusions will occur if there are serious breaches of policy.
D	Dual registered	Used for students attending alternative provision.

During this time, school will not be using unauthorised marks such as O, N, and U

5. **Legal intervention**

   Absences during this period are exempt from prosecution.

   Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, we have disapplied certain statutory provisions, so that the parent of a child of compulsory school age is not guilty of an offence on account of the child's failure to attend regularly at the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996). This means that parents/carers will not be penalised if their child does not attend school.

6. **Leave requests**

   The protocol and school policy around leave in term time remains the same. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parent/carers must request permission for the leave BEFORE the absence. Requests cannot be agreed retrospectively.

   Whilst the current situation feels exceptional to us all this should not in itself be seen as an exceptional reason to support a request for leave. The Covid-19 situation has affected all families. The lengthy absences from school were unavoidable but once we are able to return to face to face teaching it is essential that we have full classes to enable students to fill in any learning gaps.

7. Safeguarding

- We will continue to apply all safeguarding responsibilities connected to student attendance at school as detailed in the attendance and safeguarding policy.
- Non-attendance of timetabled pupils will be followed up in the usual way and the reason for absence will be documented on SIMS.
- Where every effort has been made to contact a family of a child that has failed to attend and there are safeguarding concerns, a home visit may be required. No staff member should enter the property; they should ensure that social distancing is adhered to. If further concerns are raised reporting should take place through the normal channels.

Guidance for staff when undertaking home visits during lockdown.

- Do not enter the home.
- Knock on the door and then speak to parent/carer and child from a safe distance ideally 2 metres from the front door.
- If a family is self-isolating, view the child through a window and ascertain as best you can through gestures, thumbs up, waving, lip reading, etc. that the child is safe and well.
- It is important to physically see the child, even if only through a window.
- The home visit must be completed with another member of staff.

8. Student engagement during school closure

During a school closure all students are expected to follow their usual timetable whether they are in the critical worker/vulnerable student school or working remotely from home.

Morning registration (online)

All students are expected to attend the online morning tutor session with their Form Tutors each day. During these sessions students will be registered and all bulletin messages will be shared with all of the tutor groups. Ready to Learn activities including 'Wellbeing Wednesday' will be shared with the students.

Non-attendance will be recorded on Synergy. Form tutors will send one to one messages to parents/carers of students who do not attend these sessions. Year Leads will then monitor student attendance in these sessions and communicate with students and parents/carers of any repeat offenders. Solutions will be sought to ensure all students are able to engage in these sessions.

Remote learning/lessons

During a school closure all students follow their usual timetable for each of their lessons throughout the day via Synergy. Learning activities in each subject area are uploaded within the 'Classwork' tab on synergy and will be made up of live lessons (zoom), recorded lessons (loom) and subject activities/tasks using subject specific work including oak academy and other ed. tech platforms.

Student attendance is recorded in all sessions and where students do not attend or engage with remote learning activities the class teacher will record the absence(s) on Synergy and send a one to one message to parents/carers. Absence alerts automatically inform the BfL Team of any repeat offenders and the team will make contact with the parents/carers to find the reasons for any absence/non engagement. Where IT concerns are raised by parents/carers or students, solutions are found to enable remote access including the loaning of school equipment.

A small number of students (SEND) may struggle to access their work online, if this situation arises Student Work Packs are requested and staff forward work to the admin. support team who will print out the work and contact the families to collect these packs. When collecting new work packs, previously complete work will be dropped off and returned to individual teachers to mark and assess.