



The Acorns School

Attendance Policy

Approved by: *Jo Hodson Acting Head Teacher*

Date: 30/9/2021

Reviewed by: *Jan Lewis Attendance Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead*

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Next Review Date: September 2022



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ATTENDANCE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to develop a whole school strategy that raises the profile of attendance in order to maximise the educational opportunities available to all pupils.

The Acorns School seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential. The Acorns School will create a positive and supportive environment in which pupils engage with their education and improve in self-confidence regardless of gender, culture, location, ethnicity, special educational needs or family background.

For pupils to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all pupils. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure that each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

All children of compulsory school age should receive a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The primary responsibility for ensuring school attendance falls on parents /carers. Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

AIMS

Our learners are often those who have become acutely disengaged from learning and as such are often those who have very poor records of attendance. We have a commitment to actively pursue each pupil's attendance by a system of daily phone calls leading onto home visits at the close of register-***See Acorns School Attendance Process Flow Chart*** If we have 3 consecutive non attendances without contact from parent /carer or without an adequate explanation, we then follow the school attendance tracking process.

Good Attendance + Good Learning=Raised Achievement, Raised Self Esteem and Good Behaviour

To achieve this all students are expected to work towards at least 95% Attendance and above

All staff at the Acorns School acknowledge the importance of regular school attendance and will:

- Establish a high provide for regular school attendance and punctuality
- Ensure that staff, parents and pupils recognise their respective roles with regard to the promotion of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensure consistent use of a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and monitoring of attendance and punctuality
- Ensure consistent use of rewards to recognise good and /or improved attendance and punctuality
- Ensure the consistent use of sanctions in place to address attendance and punctuality issues
- Work to build positive consistent relationships and communication between school and parents/carers in order to develop helpful working partnerships in order to encourage regular and punctual attendance.
- To develop an attendance framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- Work in partnership with other agencies according to pupil's needs. All information will adhere to GDPR requirements.



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PROCEDURES

Registration:

- Daily attendance record is completed by all teachers checked by the school admin and Attendance Manager
- Alternative/offsite provision are responsible for informing the school office of pupil's attendance which in turn is logged on the daily attendance record on SIMS
- Use of SIMS to record attendance data
- Any messages from parents/carers in relation to attendance are recorded on SIMS and relayed out by email to relevant form tutors and keyworkers
- **The school will decide whether to authorise absences**
- Follow up attendance calls are made by school admin and form tutors and keyworkers and logged on SIMS ***see Acorns School Attendance Process Flow Chart***
- Pupils arriving /leaving early before their designated times are logged on SIMS daily attendance record

Holidays in Term Time/ Extended Leave:

The Acorns School will only authorise holidays in any academic year **in exceptional circumstances for pupils with above 97% attendance.**

This is only on receipt of a prior request a from the parent /carer **at least 2 weeks in advance** with whom the pupil usually resides.

Procedures when pupils are late or absent from school:

- Late arrivals must report to the school office. If the late arrival is due to transport issues the pupil will be marked as present. **See Appendix 1 for persistent lateness procedures.**
- On the first day of absence, where school has not been informed, a telephone call is made initially by a designated person-school admin -***see Acorns School Attendance Process Flow Chart*** to establish the reason for the absence
- Student's Form Tutor /Keyworker will make a follow up call later in the day***see Acorns School Attendance Process Flow Chart***
- If school absence continues or becomes a regular occurrence, a letter will be sent to parent/carers and followed up with a home visit by the pupil's Keyworker/Form Tutor or Attendance Manager.
- For those pupils for whom attendance poses significant problems, regular home visits will be made by the pupil's Keyworker/Form Tutor/ Attendance Manager to establish the return to school date with the pupil's parent/carer.



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- If student absence continues, either an Attendance Review meeting, Attendance Panel meeting with the Head Teacher or Chair of Governors will be arranged to discuss further actions to be taken-***see Acorns School Attendance Process Flow Chart***
- An Attendance Contract may be put in place within the meetings
- Concerns and subsequent discussions will be recorded and copies placed in the student's file and copies sent out to parent/carer.
- **In accordance with LCC protocols, school attendance issues which remain unresolved will be considered for legal intervention.**
- Clerical staff will maintain lists of named contacts in the local community -e.g. local community police officer who may be informed when pupils abscond from school premises.

Legal Intervention:

In accordance with Local Authority (LA) guidelines the school will employ Legal Intervention as appropriate for unauthorised holidays, persistent lateness and other unauthorised circumstances. Under section 444(1) (A) of the 1996 Education Act, parents are required to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. Prosecution under this office leads to a summons to the magistrates' court and can lead to financial penalty. Section 23 of the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act also gives schools the ability to serve penalty notices for poor school attendance. This is a fine of £120 per parent per child. This also applies to unauthorised leave/holidays. Local authorities also have responsibility under sections 444,44A and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 for legal action to enforce attendance at school.

Strategies to Implement the Aims of the Policy:

In order to raise the profile and improve the overall percentage attendance at Acorns School, staff will implement the following:

- Ensure that regular attendance and punctuality are part of the school culture and ethos
- Have designated members of staff responsible for attendance-school admin, Attendance Manager, Form Tutors and allocated Keyworkers
- Complete attendance records daily to provide a record of all pupils for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation
- By reviewing and evaluating attendance issues regularly-school admin and Attendance Manager oversee the attendance daily-any issues or concerns are raised with Form Tutors and Keyworkers. Attendance is an agenda item on monthly staff meeting. Weekly form attendance will be emailed out to all staff every Monday morning. Form Tutors/Keyworkers will have a display in form rooms regarding form attendance. Prominent attendance display in the school foyer.
- Set attendance targets for each pupil and review regularly. Individual rewards will be awarded for meeting attendance targets at the end of every month and every half term.
- Encourage all pupils to monitor their own attendance through Keyworker sessions. Form tutors/Keyworkers to liaise with Attendance Manager to discuss individual strategies and targets.
- Improved attendance figures will be acknowledged using the accepted awards of the systems in place in school i.e. letters home, certificates, attendance prizes.



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- School has systems in place for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future planning and target setting.

Staff at the Acorns School will make attendance and punctuality a priority for parents and pupils by:

- Including attendance data as part of school progress reports
- Having expectations of full attendance to be agreed with parent/carers and pupils through a Home/School agreement document which the parent/carer will be invited to sign as part of the admissions process into Acorns School
- Reminding parents that under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive a suitable full-time education
- Giving written and verbal procedures to parents/carers to follow regarding pupil absence. This is explained in the admissions meeting.
- Communication by letter to inform parents /carers of attendance issues /good attendance
- Good attendance acknowledged through displays and reward system.

In order to promote effective working relationships with other agencies, staff at the Acorns School will:

- Operate an open-door policy and actively support multi agency approaches aimed at improving attendance and punctuality
- Initiate multi agency reviews for persistent non-attenders to agree a plan to support improved attendance and further actions should attendance issues continue.
- For dual rolled pupils-on Intervention Placements- the host school is kept informed of any attendance and punctuality issues. If poor attendance continues and strategies implemented are unsuccessful, pupils may be returned to the host school
- For pupils coming to the Acorns School on Intervention Placement with poor attendance, Acorns School may provide a joint integration programme with the host school until required attendances levels are reached.
- When pupils are reintegrating into mainstream school, close liaison with Pupil Access is maintained and any attendance issues are addressed at the initial planning meeting. Input from the mainstream school will be vital in ensuring a successful transition and full attendance.

When education is included on a Supervision Order, Youth Offending Teams (YOT) will be informed of absence on the first day. Should non-attendance continue close liaison with YOT will run in parallel with the procedures already laid down.

- Where possible appropriate staff will attend YOT planning meetings for pupils on their roll; this may have a direct impact on attendance, achievement and reintegration.
- For those pupils not on a Supervision Order, but whose poor attendance may link with criminal behaviour, the school may refer to other Early Help agencies as appropriate.

Useful contact numbers:

Jan Lewis DSL/Attendance Manager Acorns School	01695 575486
Children Missing Education-Lancashire County Council	01257 517333



Appendix 1

Attendance-persistent lateness

Expectations:

It is the responsibility of parents to make sure that your child attends school regularly and arrives at school on time. Any arrival after school start time could be considered an unauthorised absence. Regarding punctuality to the Acorns School -the following expectations apply to all students:

- School starts at 9:00am and pupils should be in class by 9:00am each day. Students will be marked as late if they arrive after this time-exceptions to this are pupils who have a later start time on their timetable.
- If a student arrives after this time with a genuine reason, a note should be brought in by the student to this effect. This can be brought in the following day if necessary
- If students arrive between 9am and 9.30am-the school office will book them in late on the register
- Any pupil arriving after 10am is deemed to be late after the register has closed and will be marked as such, thus incurring an unauthorised absence.

Legal Interventions:

Unauthorised absence or your child being frequently late could result in a fine or prosecution.

Every school, by law has to register pupils twice a day; first thing in a morning at the start of the school day and again at the start of the afternoon session. If a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend or arrives late they can be marked as an absence for that session.

If a pupil arrives after registration has closed the absence will be recorded as unauthorised for that session. If this persists, legal action in the form of a Penalty Notice or prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 may follow.

The Acorns School defines persistent lateness as 10 late arrivals over a term represented as U in the attendance register. Only the parents /carers of those pupils arriving after the close of registers and thus being recorded as U in the register can be issued with a penalty notice and /or subsequently prosecuted under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

The school or local authority may issue a penalty notice under the 2003 Anti-Social Behaviour Act in cases of persistent lateness provided the following conditions are met:

- A pupil is persistently late and there is a minimum of 10 late arrivals in term coded U in the attendance register



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- The school has sent a warning letter to a pupil's parent/carer as they approach the threshold for persistent lateness, informing them of this and of the legal consequences of continued lateness
- There have been at least two incidents of lateness subsequent to the above letter
- All arrival times have been recorded and made available if required to the courts.