

ATTENDANCE POLICY (2009 - 2010)

(In this policy parent refers to anyone with legal responsibility for a young person)

This policy has been produced to explain the responsibilities and procedures of all concerned, relating to the attendance of students at Lyndon School Humanities College.

Lyndon School Humanities College places high priority on good attendance and punctuality, believing that it promotes effective learning and has a significant impact on personal development, progress and attainment, whilst at and beyond school.

Parents of registered students have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that students of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full time basis and on time. Permitting unauthorised absence or lateness is an offence and parents may be reported to the Local Authority if problems cannot be resolved. The same applies to lateness to school.

ABSENCES.

When a student is absent, the parent should notify school immediately, either by telephone, personal visit, letter, e-mail or fax, stating the reason for absence. Tutors, Pastoral Managers, College Co-ordinators and relevant Assistant Head Teachers will monitor patterns of absence.

Appendix 1

The school regards truancy from either lessons or school as a matter of great concern. Truancy will result in discussions with both student and parents and the appropriate sanction applied. The Education Welfare Officer will be involved if necessary, where there are issues of poor attendance. The EWO will try to resolve the difficulties by agreement, but if all avenues of improving attendance have failed the officer may use court proceedings to prosecute parents or seek an Education Supervision Order on the student. Education Welfare Officers are independent of the school. Parents or students who may wish to contact them themselves can obtain the telephone number from school or the local authority. Other external agencies may be involved dependant upon the circumstances.

Evidence from research indicates that schools are the most successful in combating and preventing truancy where they;

- operate as a team involving parents, and appropriate others,
- implement whole school policies,
- follow clear guidelines and procedures for dealing with unauthorised absence.

Authorised absences

It is the duty of the school to decide whether an absence is to be authorised or unauthorised. An explanation does not in itself authorise an absence, only the school's acceptance of the explanation offered authorises it.

Absence from school will be authorised for unavoidable medical/dental appointments, religious observance, exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement, works experience, educational visits, interviews, educated off site, exclusions, family holidays agreed by school, illness, approved sporting activity and occasions where permission for absence has been granted by the Headteacher, Deputy Head or Assistant Head Teachers.

Family holidays

Family holidays in term time account for a number of absences in any school year. All leave for holidays is discretionary not an automatic entitlement. Lyndon follows the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 (SI No. 2089). The main points are;

- A student should not normally be granted more than ten days leave of absence in any school year.
- Parents cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right.
- Parental requests must be in writing and will be considered on their merit.
- The school may grant holiday leave but is not required to do so. Any request for leave must be made in advance and it must be for 'going away' on holiday. It is not intended for authorising students to take day trips or have a holiday at home. Request slips are available from the reception office.
- Whether or not to grant the request is a decision for the school. Only schools authorise absence, not parents Nor the local authority. Any absence which is authorised by the school cannot then be used by the local authority as grounds for any offence by the parent.
- It is especially important not to grant holiday leave where students already have a poor record of attendance. The attendance record will always be taken into consideration.
- All correspondence in connection with the gravity of absence must refer to the effect of non-attendance.

All requests for leave of absence are checked by the relevant Pastoral Manager with reference to the Assistant Head Teacher as to whether, or not, to grant leave of absence. If it is recommended that leave is not to be granted there must be sufficient evidence to support the decision.

The **Holiday Authorisation Chart** must be used to guide the decision on whether or not to authorise the requested leave of absence. **Appendix 2**

Unauthorised absences and lateness.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes;

- truancy,
- absences which have not been properly explained,
- keeping students away unnecessarily, eg staying at home to mind the house, workman in, baby sitting, uniform in the wash, birthdays, looking after brothers, sisters etc

Authorised lateness is for students who arrive at school too late after the close of registers, to receive a present mark, unless there has been a suitable telephone explanation or note from an appropriate adult. **At Lyndon this will be for arrivals after 9.30 am, Monday to Friday.**

All students' external appointments should be made, whenever possible, outside school hours. Details are kept in a book in the school reception office and any late marks are recorded.

The issue of penalty notices will be administered by the Education Welfare Service after the issue of a warning letter, the trigger for which will be 20 sessions of unauthorised absences.

Prolonged absences.

After a period of 6 days continuous absence the responsibility for pursuing it passes from the Tutor to the Pastoral Manager. When poor attendance becomes a cause for concern the Education Welfare Officer will be notified.

There are a number of reasons for prolonged absences other than refusal to attend school. There are a variety of medical, psychological and emotional problems for instance, but all re-integration will be considered on an individual basis and may include a period of time working in the Student Support Centre.

Prolonged absences on medical grounds

The tutor will still retain the responsibility for marking the register, but the school's Behaviour Strategy Consultant will be responsible for liaising with appropriate others, both in and out of school. This will ensure that all issues such as work, curriculum, assessments, accessibility, communication, special needs, meetings and re-integration are addressed.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Lyndon School Humanities College;

- encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.
- recognise good and improved attendance and punctuality.
- issue letters and certificates celebrating the above.
- set individual, tutor group, year group, key stage and whole school attendance targets.
- monitor attendance and punctuality on a regular basis and take action as appropriate.
- review attendance issues each term at the attendance group meetings,
- investigate all absenteeism.
- work closely with parents on aspects of attendance and punctuality.
- make "First Day" calls where there is concern about a student's absence.
- listen to, and respect the views of students and parents.
- share individual records of attendance and punctuality with students and appropriate adults as necessary.
- provide a copy of the attendance summary with the yearly report, and on request.

Parents;

- ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in fit condition to participate in learning.
- inform the school immediately about the reason for any absence, (telephone, personal visit, letter, E-Mail, fax).
- keep the school fully informed of continuing absences and any progress being made,
- be honest about absences and not to give the impression that attendance does not matter.

Students;

- ensure they attend regularly and on time,
- attend all lessons, and on time
- follow instructions for registering,
- hand in any notes from parents.

Tutors;

- be at the tutor base in time to receive students for the start of the morning and afternoon registration sessions,
- welcome back those students who have been absent,
- mark registers according to the instructions issued, using the correct codes,
- rigorously pursue unsatisfactory or no reason for absences,
- keep unauthorised absences to an absolute minimum,
- consult with the Pastoral Manager before entering the code 'O' for an unauthorised absence,
- advise students of the late procedures and continually reinforce these,
- keep parents informed and involved,
- keep all notes and ensure they are locked away securely,
- check absence records weekly, and bring up to date,
- monitor punctuality and attendance and take appropriate action according to the related policies,
- set, with the College Leaders, tutor group and individual attendance targets where necessary,
- inform the Pastoral Manager of punctuality and attendance issues,
- display information on attendance,
- praise students with high or improving standards of attendance and punctuality.

Appendix 3

Staff ;

- be at their subject base in time to receive students for the start of lessons,
- encourage students to attend and be on time,
- take the group register at the beginning of every lesson and follow up any concerns about absent students as a matter of urgency,
- praise students whenever possible,
- co-operate with spot check truancy monitoring when requested,
- liaise with appropriate others as necessary,
- regularly reinforce the importance of good punctuality and attendance,
- provide help where it is obvious there is no one to register or supervise.

The Administration Staff;

- record the details of any messages related to attendance and pass to Tutors or Pastoral Managers,
- receive a copy of the late arrivals up to 9.30 from Pastoral Managers,
- enter the name of each student who arrives after 9.30 on a 'late arrival' slip and place the slips in the message folders for the tutor to record,
- refer to Pastoral Managers the names of students arriving after 9.30 without a note,
- record the names of students who are leaving during the school day and the reason why, and check that they have valid appointment cards or a note from an appropriate adult.

The Data Officers;

- communicate with staff as necessary,

- ensure that admissions and leaving procedures are implemented and amended as necessary,
- attendance codes are up-to-date and communicated,
- accurate data is in place,
- data is produced for school, local authority and DCSF as required,
- ensure student attendance is accurately recorded,
- issue relevant up-to-date lists to tutors in the event of an evacuation.

The College Leader with the support of the Pastoral Manager and College Co-ordinator;

- utilise the facilities in SIMS to support and encourage good attendance,
- ensure the truancy spot check is used regularly,
- praise and reward good and improving punctuality and attendance,
- arrange for attendance achievements to be announced in assemblies,
- arrange for Attendance Certificates to be awarded and letters distributed each term,
- oversee the registration process,
- collate attendance data for each tutor group and the year group as a whole.
- share good practice,
- communicate effectively with parents,
- make arrangements for support if necessary (counselling, mentoring),
- liaise with the EWO,
- plan the reintegration of long term absentees in conjunction with the Inclusion & Access Team Leader,
- liaise with the Education Welfare Officer.

The Assistant Head Teacher with responsibility for attendance will;

- continue to work to improve punctuality and attendance and reduce the number of unauthorised absences,
- oversee the day to day management of attendance,
- monitor the recording of punctuality and attendance,
- monitor and decide action on authorised and unauthorised absences,
- ensure that the agreed attendance targets are met,
- oversee the publication and use of attendance data,
- co-ordinate the work of the attendance group,
- oversee the work on attendance by administration staff,
- produce letters where necessary,
- liaise with the data officers and EWO on attendance issues,
- provide reports for the Head Teacher, Governors and appropriate others,
- oversee the working arrangements between the College Teams and the Education Welfare Officer,
- monitor and evaluate the Attendance Policy and Procedures.

The Leadership Team;

- support the administration of this policy.

The Headteacher will;

- be involved in the celebration of good and improved attendance and punctuality,
- monitor the whole policy arrangements,
- report to Governors on attendance.

The Governing Body;

- endorse the acknowledgement of good and improved punctuality and attendance,

- review this policy as necessary,
- undertake regular checks on its effectiveness,
- scrutinise attendance data,
- agree new targets,
- provide a representative for an attendance panel if necessary to interview the parents of students whose attendance gives serious cause for concern, except for those with an accepted known problem.

This panel should consist of;

- a member of the Leadership Team,
- one Governor,
- the Education Welfare Officer,
- the relevant Pastoral Manager and/or Behaviour Standards Consultant.

DEALING WITH LATENESS TO REGISTRATION

All arrivals in excess of 5 minutes after the official start of am and pm registration must be marked as late.

1. On the first occasion give verbal warning and explanation of consequences.
2. Second occasion late as above.
3. Third late. 10 minutes Pastoral Manager Detention to be served at break time, or after school on the day of the third lateness.
4. Student fails to attend Pastoral Manager Detention without justifiable reason – arrange for a 40 minutes College Detention.
5. Failure to attend College Detention leads to a one hour School Detention
6. Process then repeated from No. 3 above.

The gates will be locked at 8.55 and students enter by the side doors in the main foyer, where Pastoral Managers will record the arrival of their students. If there is still time students will be directed to their tutors.

Late arrivals from 9.00 to 9.15 will be served with a College Detention, after 9.15 a School Detention and those students arriving after 9.30 will also be recorded with a 'U' for unauthorised lateness. These will be used by the EWO where formal proceedings take effect.

PERSISTENT LATENESS

After 5 recorded lates to either am or pm registration, Pastoral Managers will contact home to alert parents to a developing trend. A two week period of monitoring will follow, and if no improvement put onto a College Attendance and Punctuality Report.

If after this there is no significant improvement, leading to the student coming off report, there will be a referral to the Education Welfare Officer. Parents will be invited to a meeting to discuss further action.

Any student arriving to lessons after 9.30 a.m., not registered as present, should be recorded as 'U'. This should be repeated for each lesson up to the afternoon registration, provided the student arrives at their lesson.

APPENDIX 3

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
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/	Present (AM)	PRESENT
\	Present (PM)	PRESENT
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Authorised Absence
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. Student attending other establishment)	Authorised Absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
F	Extended Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Authorised Absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	PRESENT
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised Absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Authorised Absence
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers officially closed at 9.30)	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Authorised Absence
W	Work experience	Authorised Absence
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances (6th form only)
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances