



Policy Title	Attendance Policy
Statutory/Non-Statutory	Statutory
Version	3
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Target audience	All staff, Local authority, parents, wider community
Associated policies/documents	
Date approved by Governors	

AIM

The aim at Lea Manor High School is to provide the very best education so that your child reaches, or exceeds, his/her predicted grades. This will be achieved in a safe, supportive environment in which everyone is valued and can make positive contributions, and where students go on to become responsible, independent members of society.

PRINCIPLES

The Education Act 1996 states that all students should attend school regularly and punctually. Regular attendance means every day, unless a child has permission from school to be absent.

PURPOSE

- To promote, support and reward very high levels of attendance at school
- To enable the exchange of information between school and parents about attendance
- To inform students, staff, parents and governors about attendance and attendance issues
- To meet the requirements of the law on attendance

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Improving attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – parents, students and all staff.

PARENTS

Section 444 of the Education Act states, *“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.”*

Parents who are found guilty of breaking the law on attendance may be taken to court and could face fines of up to £2,500.

If a student is prevented from attending school by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of the student’s absence. This should be by telephone on the morning of the first day of absence (and every day until their child returns) and confirmed in writing.

Parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time unless in exceptional circumstances, which must be put in writing to the headteacher.

STUDENTS

Students are responsible for making sure their own punctual and regular attendance is maintained at the highest level. They should attend all of their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn.

On those occasions when they return to school following an absence, they should follow the procedures for giving their learning lead a note from their parent explaining the reason for their absence.

Students have a responsibility for following school procedures should they arrive late for registration.

Students who experience difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly should speak, initially, to their learning lead. Students will then be offered prompt, sympathetic support from the relevant adult.

SCHOOL

All school staff have a responsibility to set a good personal example in matters relating to attendance and punctuality. The following are responsibilities of school staff necessary to ensure students achieve and maintain excellent attendance:

- to keep an accurate record of attendance and absence
- to differentiate accurately between authorised/unauthorised absence
- to respond to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care
- to contact parents/carers with concerns
- to consult with the Education Welfare Service if students' attendance continues to give cause for concern
- to promote regular attendance
- to acknowledge good/improved attendance
- to carry out class registration and follow up any absences from lessons

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A Guide for Parents

1. When does my child need to be in school?

Your child should be in school at 8:30am in time for registration which will be called promptly at 8.45am.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at 9am in the morning

If your child arrives after 8.45am he/she will be marked late and a late detention will be issued.

If your child arrives after 9am he/she will be marked as late, but this will be an unauthorised absence, unless you provide a valid explanation. Continued lateness will be followed up by the Attendance Officer and parents/carers will be contacted about our concerns.

You are expected to give a written explanation for the lateness.

3. Does the school need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We expect parents/carers to telephone the school on the morning of the first day of absence and every day whilst your child is absent. If you do not phone us, we will text you.

However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to school. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence and this will be shown on your child's report.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointments (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays; appointments during school time should be for no longer than one to two hours)
- Day of religious observance
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details.

In cases of recurring absences for illness, you may be asked to produce medical evidence. Support will be offered to you via our attendance officer, who can be contacted via the school.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

6. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

Family holidays **must not** be taken during term time. If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to request permission for your child to be absent from school, you should complete an application form, at least two weeks in advance, stating the reason for the absence. If you are travelling abroad, please provide copies of your travel arrangements (e.g. flight tickets). The headteacher has the right to refuse permission having given consideration to:

- your child's age
- the time of year
- the overall attendance pattern of the child
- the need to challenge and change behaviour
- the student's stage of education and progress

If the absence is not authorised but is taken anyway, the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

The headteacher is unlikely to approve your child's absence if the timing coincides with examinations.

Absence request forms can be obtained from school reception by emailing reception@leamanor.luton.sch.uk ; and, when complete, returned to the school office along with a covering letter outlining the special circumstances. The headteacher will make a decision and a letter will be sent to you.

7. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure they eat breakfast. Ensure that they leave home in the correct uniform and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value their education.

8. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's learning lead immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons; difficulties with work, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with the attendance officer or wellbeing mentor.

9. Will the school contact me if my child is absent?

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you to discuss the best way forward. The school operates a first day response to absence; we will text you if we have not heard from you in the first instance.

10. What if my child is truanting?

You will be informed by the Head of Year, Dean or attendance officer and support will be put in place to try and resolve any issues/concerns your child may be experiencing. However, if there are further unauthorised absences you may be issued a penalty notice by

the Education Welfare Service. The amount is £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days. This will rise to £120 per child per parent if not paid within the specified time period.

11. What if I take my child out of school without permission for an extended period?

If you take your child out of school for a period of time that has not been agreed in advance, the school will endeavour to establish contact with you. This will be both in person and in writing. If we are unable to secure a return date your child will be taken off roll after 20 school days and referred to the Education Welfare Service.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A Guide for Students

AIM

To maximise the attendance of every student at school.

ATTENDING REGULARLY AND ON TIME

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities here at school. Regular attendance means attending school every day. It will help you:

- keep up with your school work and get the best results you can
- get a job – employers like people who are reliable/it may be used as part of a reference
- your attendance at school is shown in your record of attendance

ABSENCES

Acceptable reasons for absences include:

- illness
- emergency dental/medical appointments (please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays; appointments during school time should be for no longer than one to two hours and if you return to school in this time with evidence to support this we will continue to mark you present)
- day of religious observance
- family bereavement

Looking after brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping or trips to the airport and helping at home are **NOT** reasons to be absent from school.

You will need a note from your parents to explain **ALL** absences from school. You will also need a note if you arrive at school after 9am in the morning. The note could be written in your planner or on a separate piece of paper. If you do not produce this your lateness could lead to an unauthorised absence

NEED HELP?

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at home? You may feel that truanting school is the answer. It is not; it may even make things worse. **TALK TO SOMEONE** – your learning lead; your Head of Year; another member of staff; your parents. We will do everything we can to help you get over the problem.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A Guide for Staff

A) Learning Leads

Learning Leads must complete the daily register of student attendance. These attendance registers are legal documents and must be treated as such. Details from the attendance registers will be entered on the school computer database (SIMS).

Any student who is not present during the registration period in the morning or in Learning Family Time (LFT) after Lunch 2 should be marked as absent ('N' code). It is not acceptable to leave a space if the student's whereabouts are unknown.

Any student who arrives to registration after 8.30am will be marked late. Students who arrive after 9.00am will be marked as 'U' and given an unauthorised absence, unless a valid explanation is given.

Student absence must always be explained by parents via a letter or record of a phone call made to the attendance officer. The provision of such a letter does not automatically constitute acceptance by the school that the absence is authorised. It is up to the school to authorise absence: if the attendance officer has any doubt that the absence has not been for a valid reason he/she should contact the relevant Head of Year/Dean for advice. A standard unauthorised absence letter may then be sent.

Providing a satisfactory explanation is received, absence can be authorised for:

- illness
- dental/medical appointments (if possible these should be made after school or during the holidays; appointments during school time should be for no longer than 1-2 hours)
- family bereavement
- participation in an approved public performance
- annual family holiday (**for which leave has been granted**)
- day of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong
- approved study leave
- traveller child travelling

An absence should be marked as unauthorised for:

- no explanation received from parents
- looking after siblings
- shopping trips or trips to the airport
- unexceptional special occasions e.g. birthdays
- family holidays

There are also absences from school that are counted as attendance for daily totals: these are approved educational activities. The following are classed as approved educational activities. These should be marked in the register with the correct code by the attendance officer. The computer program will then convert these to a statistical 'present' mark:

- approved sporting activity (eg school team match)

- field trips and educational visits in this country and overseas
- interviews for work experience, careers, college, with school approval
- educated off site at an educational institution

The attendance officer will text on the first day of absence and will telephone parents/ carers on the third day of absence if there has been no communication from home to explain the absence. If the attendance officer is unable to reach parents/carers, a standard letter will be sent or a home visit carried out.

B) Dean/Pastoral Team

The attendance officer will work closely with the pastoral team, who will have an overview of the student's attendance/punctuality.

If there are concerns regarding a student's attendance, a standard letter expressing concern will be sent to parents/carers.

C) Attendance Officer

The attendance officer will liaise with the pastoral team and work with parents and students to support good attendance. Parents will be invited to school to discuss their child's attendance.

D) Classroom Teachers

Every teacher should keep a lesson attendance register. Subject leaders are responsible for monitoring the keeping of classroom registers by teachers.

E) Leadership Team

The leadership team will monitor the operation of the attendance policy and will discuss attendance figures on a regular basis.

F) Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The EWS will support the school/student when a concern is highlighted by the Attendance Officer/Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

G) Awards for good and improved attendance

Certificates and prizes will be awarded to students who have 100% attendance throughout a school term and throughout a school year.

There will be an opportunity, also, for students with improved attendance to receive recognition.

Nominations for such awards can be discussed with the pastoral team and the attendance officer.

H) Procedure for Completing Registers

The register should be completed at the start of each morning and afternoon session (LFT)

- Student attendance should be marked with the correct code
- Where a student is not present when the register is called, he/she should be marked absent with an 'N' code

- If the student arrives late during morning or afternoon registration an 'L' should be inserted
- Any student leaving the school must sign out at the main reception and then sign in again on their return
- Any student who arrives after 9am should go to the main reception; the student will be marked with a 'U' unless a valid explanation is provided
- The attendance officer will code the registers of students where there is a known absence

I) Register Codes

There are four broad classifications for attendance registers.

1. Attendance

The following codes are to be counted as signifying attendance:

- / - Present
- L - Late arrival for am or pm session, also for late buses
- N - Absent, no reason given

2. Approved Educational Activity

The following codes are to be counted as signifying approved educational activity, which is counted as attendance for the purposes of daily attendance totals. These codes will be entered by the attendance officer.

- P - Approved sporting activity (e.g. school team match)
- V - Field trips/educational visits and performances in this country and overseas
- W - Approved work experience (including long-term work experience)
- B - Attendance at other educational institution under link course arrangement
- D - Dual registration at another site
- J - Interview

3. Absence Codes

The following codes are to be counted as signifying authorised absence. These codes will be entered by the attendance officer.

- C - Other circumstances (bereavement, other approved absences not covered by other codes)
- M - Medical or dental appointments
- I - Confirmed illness
- E - Excluded
- R - Day of religious observance in religious body to which the parents belong
- 11
- U - Late after register closes
- T - Traveller
- S - Study Leave
- E - Excluded and no alternative provision made

4. Unauthorised Absence Codes

- O - Main marking for unauthorised absence
- N - No reason yet given
- G - Holiday not granted



APPLICATION FOR TERM TIME ABSENCE

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress.

You may apply to the school for permission for leave of absence. A term time absence will only be authorised by the school if they believe there are special circumstances which warrant it. [The Educational (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2007]

If the absence is not authorised and leave is taken, the case will be referred to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice for £120 (or £60 if paid within 21 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Full Name of Child(ren):

Address:

Reason for Application and Dates: (please provide copies of travel tickets if travelling abroad)

Signature of Parent(s)/Carer(s):

Date:

Office Use Only	Date Received:
Dean Signature:	
Headteacher Signature:	