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LOXFORD
School Trust

THE LOXFORD SCHOOL TRUST ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Approved by:	MR. D. LOW, CHAIR _____	Date: SUMMER TERM 2019
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At The Loxford School Trust we are highly focused on the pursuit of excellent student attendance and punctuality. We know that it is vital important for the attainment, life chances and employment prospects of other students.

Everyday your child is absent is a lost opportunity at school. Therefore we expect all our students to attend school every day and on time.

For a child 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 children.

Every year we will review our attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will take into consideration national attendance targets. This policy will contain within the procedures that we will use to meet our attendance targets.

We know from DFE research that there is a direct link between Student attendance and attainment. Specifically, Students with no absence are 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs 5-9 or equivalent including English and Mathematics than Students missing 15-20 per cent of KS4 lessons.

Aims – Values and Principles

- To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school to above 95%
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority of those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and students
- To develop a systematic approach to collating and analysing attendance related data
- To further develop positive communication between home and school

Targets- Attendance 95% in 2019

- To ensure that all staff take responsibility for student attendance
- To achieve a whole school average attendance rate of 95% and over
- To reduce the number of PA (persistently absent) students
- To ensure that data is available and used effectively by staff
- To keep parents, carers and governors informed of policy and practice

Students' responsibilities

Student:

- Should attend school and all of their lessons on time, equipped and ready to learn
- Must ask parent/carer to phone on each day of absence to the school number
- Bring a note from parent/carer to explain their absence on the day of their return
- Must follow correct procedures and sign in when arriving late to school after the close of registers
- Must sign out when leaving the school premises
- Should discuss any problems concerning attendance with their tutor or Year Care Team or Achievement Team Leader

Parental responsibilities

Parents/Carer:

- Should work closely with the school to resolve any problems which may impede their child's attendance
- Are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school
- Should ensure that their children arrive at school on time
- Should avoid making non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours
- Should email or phone the school to inform of their child's absence on the first day, then for long term absence, regularly update and follow this up by writing a letter to the form tutor explaining why and when their child needs to be/has been absent
- Should take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be refused except in special/exceptional circumstances.

Staff responsibilities

Staff:

- Will ensure that they accurately mark their registers using SIMS for each tutor time and lesson
- Will ensure that they follow the school's attendance and lateness procedures
- Can ask the Attendance Officer to call home during a lesson if a student has been present for a previous lesson
- Can ask the Attendance Officer or Year Care Team to call home if there are concerns over attendance and/or punctuality
- Can ask the Attendance Officer to write letters home regarding concerns over attendance and punctuality
- Will be proactive in providing a positive ethos which places a high value on attendance and punctuality

School responsibilities

The school will:

- Endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive to educating every student
- Fulfil its statutory obligation to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of students for both morning and afternoon sessions
- Give high priority to punctuality and attendance
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention
- Use a variety of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality among parents and carers
- Develop a range of strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance
- Encourage open communication channels between home and the school
- Promote good attendance through a range of rewards.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR RECORDING AND MONITORING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unexplained. If the absence remains unexplained after a week period, this will be changed to unauthorised.

To inform us of your child's absence, you must call the school on: 0208 514 4666 on the first day and provide the following information; student's name, tutor group and reason for absence (please specify illness type, if applicable, rather than just saying 'unwell').

First Day Absence

- If a child is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day at the start of the school day and every consecutive day of absence, stating the reason for the absence.
- A note should be sent into school on the day the child returns explaining the absence with the appropriate evidence (such as a medical card or a copy of a prescription)

- The only reason your son/daughter should miss school is for illness or unavoidable medical appointments and parents/guardians must inform the school. This can be done by calling the school on the telephone number or bringing a note to the Year Care Team or Attendance Officer.
- If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day, the school will chase it up and will try to phone to secure an explanation for this absence. The school will attempt this again on the second day of consecutive absence and also make contact with the emergency contact numbers on the system
- If the school is unsuccessful on Day 2, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Advisory and Support Service Ltd and a home visit may be conducted
- Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility. Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter
- If attendance falls below 95% contact is made with home outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support
- It is the Parents/Carer responsibility under the Education Act (1996) to ensure the regular attendance of their child(ren).
- Failure to do so may result in prosecution following a referral to the Education Welfare Officer under S.444(1) and (1A) of the act.

Then for long term absence, regularly update and follow this up by writing a letter to the Attendance Officer explaining why and when your child needs to be/has been absent.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% of more absences)

The DfE's guidance explains that from the 2015/2016 academic year onwards, a Student will be considered to be persistently absent if he/she is away for over 10% of school sessions in an academic year. If your child's attendance falls below 90%, your son/daughter will fall into the persistent absent category and our Educational Welfare Officer will investigate the reasons for this. You may also be contacted by the school if we believe your child is in danger of falling into this category. To put these figures into perspective the table below shows the minimum number of days your child will miss for their attendance to fall below 90%.

	Number of Sessions Missed	Number of Days Missed
Half Term 1	7	3.5
Half Term 1-2	14	7
Half Term 1-3	20	10
Half Term 1-4 (Autumn & Spring)	25	12.5
Half Term 1-5	31	15.5
Half Term 1-6 (Full academic Year)	38	19

The school recognises that students who are persistently absent (PA) from school require particularly close monitoring as, not only will their attainment be adversely affected but they may also be putting themselves at risk.

- PA attendance and intervention strategies
- Monitoring by tutor and Year Care Team and Achievement Team Leader
- Placed on an attendance report
- Home Visit
- School based meeting
- Legal Review meeting

- Penalty notice /Fine
- Prosecution/Education Supervision Order

Unauthorised absence/Holidays

- Authorised absences include illness and emergency treatment during school hours, funerals of close family.
- Absences which will not be authorised include: looking after siblings, birthdays, shopping, non-school trips
- Only the school, within the context of the law, can authorise or approve absence - not parents. The fact that a parent has submitted a note does not mean that the school must accept the explanation as a valid reason for absence. Absence without a valid reason, or where there is no explanation is offered at all is recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Holidays will not be authorised during term time.
- Medical evidence must be provided for 5 days or more absence or where patterns of absence have emerged.

Persistent absence will result in a referral to the Education Welfare Advisor

How do I request permission for an absence?

You must submit a request to the school before you arrange for your child to have time away. If you wish to take your child out of school during term time, you should speak to your Achievement Team Leader or Year Care Team and submit a letter to our Attendance officer, who will pass on a completed form to the Headteacher. This can be done by handing a letter to office or emailing the school.

The Headteacher will then consider whether to give permission for the absence.

When will absence requests be granted?

- Permission for absence will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances.
- The Headteacher will consider each absence request individually and decide whether to grant the absence.
- The Headteacher will also decide how many days your child can be away from school if the absence is granted but this cannot be guaranteed.

Emergency leave requests must be supported with evidence and if relevant flight tickets.

What does it mean by Exceptional circumstances?

It is at the school's discretion to decide which circumstances are 'exceptional'.

Examples of circumstances that are not exceptional may include:

- Cheap holidays or holidays that have already been paid for
- Absence that coincides with important school events such as the start of term or exams

As a general guideline, exceptional absence circumstances usually apply only to immediate family. Requests for leave related to extended family and friends are likely to be refused.

Children Missing Education

The Education (Student Registration) Regulations set out the circumstances in which a school/academy can remove a child from the school roll. Ten consecutive days of absence where no contact has been made will result in time the child being reported to the Local Authority as missing child.

Penalty notices

A Penalty Notice may be issued in the first instance for unauthorised leaves of absences.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded Student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Tutor Time

Tutors:

- Will register their forms at 8.55am and 3.10pm by recording attendance and absence using SIMS.
- If a tutor, supply teacher or cover supervisor does not have access to SIMS they must do a paper register of the form list and return it straight away to the Attendance Officer
- Should chase up letters for absence with the child and forward any notes to Attendance office so that they can reconcile registers on a weekly basis
- Will ensure that students have a clear understanding of holiday procedures and the link between absence and attainment
- Will ensure that attendance statistics and criteria are regularly discussed with their form groups as a whole and with individuals on a one-to-one basis, where appropriate
- Should notify Year Care Team or Achievement Team Leader immediately if they are concerned about the absence of a tutee
- Will liaise with the YCT or ATL about students who have long terms illnesses/issues which might affect their attendance.

A Welcome back

It is important that on return from an absence that all Students are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students. Students who have been absent from school for personal, social and emotional reasons may be reintegrated on a flexible timetable with the DAP and Inclusion Centre (if applicable).

Lateness

- Students are expected to register with their form tutor at 8.55am and 3.10pm daily
- Any Student arriving after this time will be marked late unless there is an acceptable explanation
- In cases for example, where the absence at registration as for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered subject to receiving the evidence
- Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the relevant staff will be arranged to discuss what support can be offered
- Students arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close
- These lates may be subject to an Achievement Team Leader detention and a punctuality report or if persistent a referral to the Education Welfare Advisory and Support Service Ltd (EWASS).

Subject registration

- Staff will register their classes every lesson using SIMS.

School trips and residentials

- It is the responsibility of the trip organiser to hand the list of names to the Attendance Officer so that the correct code can be entered on SIMS in advance of the period of absence
- The trip or residential information should be emailed to the Attendance Officer in advance of the event

Monitoring student absence

The school recognises the need to monitor all student attendance closely and to put in place strategies to ensure that it meets out targets.

Strategies include:

- Publicising our attendance criteria and the link between attendance and attainment to parents via weekly bulletin, parents' evenings, display board, reports and the website.
- Publicising our attendance criteria and the link between attendance and attainment to students via Tutor time, Assemblies, Displays, rewards and sanctions procedures
- Providing parents with attendance and punctuality data at every Grade Tracking period.
- Operating a first absence call via the Attendance Officer for students with unacceptable attendance or contact the emergency contacts lodged with the school
- Reviewing attendance every fortnight with Attendance officer and the Education Welfare Advisory and Support Service Ltd.
- Providing form tutors with attendance data at the beginning of every week and further discussion to take place
- Contacting parents by phone and letter for concerns and arranging meetings with parents to discuss their child's attendance and set targets for those who need to be disciplined due to persistent punctuality and/or attendance problems.
- Putting students on attendance/punctuality report if needed.
- Authorising or refusing to authorise holiday applications
- Close monitoring of persistent absentees with the YCT/ATL
- Attendance stickers given to students every term in order to help them to track their own attendance

- Use of display boards to promote outstanding attendance and punctuality of students

Rewards

- Good or improved attendance must be awarded
- Individualised letters for all students with 95% attendance or better and end of each term
- Students who have achieved 100% termly attendance have certificates presented in assembly or in Tutor Time
- Students who achieve 100% attendance are celebrated on the School Website
- Students who achieve 100% attendance and punctuality throughout the academic year are recognised and rewarded (certificates) and listed on the Display Board of every term
- Positive phone calls
- Completion of positive SIMs for constant outstanding attendance/punctuality or improved
- Name mentioned in the weekly bulletin
- Badges
- Gold pass to jump the lunch time queue
- Opportunity to take part in positive activities in the school