



CITY OF LONDON
ACADEMY
S O U T H W A R K

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Integritas

Ambition, Resilience, Duty

Responsibility:	Designated Safeguarding Lead
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Table of Contents

1. Aims.....	3
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. School procedures.....	3
3.1 Attendance register	3
3.2 Unplanned absence	3
3.3 Medical or dental appointments.....	4
3.4 Lateness and punctuality.....	4
3.5 Following up absence	4
3.6 Reporting to parents.....	4
4. Authorised and unauthorised absence.....	5
4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence	5
4.2 Legal sanctions.....	5
5. Strategies for promoting attendance	5
6. Attendance monitoring.....	5
7. Roles and responsibilities	6
7.1 The governing body	6
7.2 The Principal.....	6
7.3 The attendance officer.....	6
7.4 Class teachers/form tutors.....	6
7.5 Attendance Officer.....	6
8. Monitoring arrangements.....	7
Appendix 1: attendance codes	8

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled to.
- Offering a broad and balanced curriculum offer that inspires students to want to attend school.
- Promote life skills that are transferable into the world of work and beyond.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.
- Our aim is to achieve 100% attendance, students who fall below 96% are no longer in regular attendance and their progress across the curriculum is likely to be affected.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law our Academy is required to keep an attendance register for all of our pupils. Year 7 to 13.

The legal attendance register will be taken at the start of the first and last session of each school day. As good practice we also take a register at the start of each teaching session. Our registers will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.
- Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
- Pupils must arrive in school by 8.20AM on each school day.
- The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30 A.M. The register for the second session will be taken at 2.30 P.M.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 8.00 A.M or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6). Parents must call the main school number on: 020 7394 5127.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Students must provide a written note or a note in their planner with the doctors note at least a day before the appointment day.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

Pupils who arrive late without a valid reason will be sanctioned in accordance to our behavior policy.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Pupils who are regularly late or absent will receive the following:

Text on the day in question

Warning letter

Final warning letter

Referral to the attendance service who is Lewisham Council.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Principal's may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

The Principal will not authorise any type of holiday. Parents who take students on holiday in term time, or where their child's absence is regarded as persistent will be subjected to a penalty and/or further action as outlined below.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 each within 21 days or £120 each within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

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 pupil 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.

The Academy will work in partnership with Southwark Children services or home LA of the child to report any child deemed missing in education in accordance with the DFE guidance.

The Academy reserves the right to withdraw a child from their roll in accordance with the DFE guidance and LAs protocols.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Pupils who achieve excellent attendance will be rewarded with house points in line with the Academy's Behaviour policy and mentioned in praise assembly.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

Parents are expected to call the Academy each day. If a pupil's absence goes above five days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving our education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Our Academy will use your child's attendance data to track and monitor trends of your child or groups that your child may belong to such as their tutor group, gender or ethnicity.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy. Our link governor is.....

7.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Head of MIS, VP Behaviour and Principal.
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

7.4 Class teachers/form tutors

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. The Pastoral Team are responsible for tracking attendance and implementing strategies to improve the attendance of the pupil.

7.5 Attendance Officer

Administration staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and inform the attendance officer who updates the school system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every academic year by the Vice Principal (Behaviour and Safeguarding). At every review, the policy will be shared with the Principal and Governing Board.

_____	Chair of Governors	_____	Date
_____	Principal	_____	Date
_____	Vice Principal Behaviour	_____	Date

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Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

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