



Attendance Policy

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Approved by:	
Date Approved:	
Review Date:	August 2023
Status:	The Studio School specific policy - DRAFT

Date	Changes
November 2022	New policy



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Policy produced with reference to: [DfE Guidance Working Together to Improve Attendance](#)

1. Introduction

This School recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for students within this school to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our young people every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all students attend regularly and on time. Students should attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all students to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all students achieve at least 97%. **As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.**

This School believes Staff, Parents, Carers, Students and all members of our school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring students attend to achieve. This policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

2. Aims

- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.

- Maximise the overall percentage of student attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce the number of students who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, students and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for students.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds a consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

2.1 Promoting regular attendance at our school:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and students.

To help us all focus on this, our school will ensure:

- there is a Designated Senior Leader for championing and improving attendance;
- effective strategies are in place to deter poor punctuality;
- an engaging curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly;
- high quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school;
- students are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to minimise disaffection from school;
- vulnerable groups are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously;
- effective partnerships are encouraged with parent/carers through regular contact and support provided;
- parents/carers are kept informed of students' attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required
- good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual student incentives
- attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with students in form time and at assemblies
- attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed

3. Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding concern. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required. Parents/ Carers must inform school on the first day of absence by contacting the school via the absence email or by ringing school directly.

Expectations of students

- Ensure you arrive at by 850am.
- Always attend every lesson and arrive on time.
- Never leave the school site without permission.
- Always use the signing in/out system when late or leaving school for appointment.
- Following all absence complete any missed work that may be provided by staff.

Expectations of Parent/Carer

- Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law
- Ensure your child leaves for school on time
- Contact school if your child is to be late
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours and confirmation of the appointment is provided
- Contact school by 830am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school
- If a text message is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded
- Contact your child's Year Leader if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact
- In case of emergency we need up to date contact numbers at all times. Please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances must be in writing to the Principal and can only be authorised by the Principal. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays

3.1 If a student is absent we will:

- telephone and text Parent/Carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by am
- If no response is received, a member of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible
- If a student is absent for more than 3 school days and there has been no contact with parents/carers regarding the absence, and in the event there have been unsuccessful home visits to check on the welfare of a student, the school will request a welfare and safeguarding visit by Merseyside Police
- If a student's absence continues, the parent/carer will be invited to meet with either Year Leaders, Senior Leaders or the Designated Attendance and Safeguarding Lead. The purpose of the meeting will be to agree how we can best support your child to improve their attendance
- If the Parent/Carer does not attend the meeting and no explanation is provided and the student has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence, parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice warning letter in accordance with the Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the Education Welfare Officer
- If unauthorised absences persist the Designated Attendance Lead will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

4. Understanding types of Absence

Our School has to legally record every absence. This is why it is important that parents/carers directly inform school regarding the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

4.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Principal, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

4.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence following a parental request.

This includes but is not exclusive to:

- parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have not been explained
- students who arrive after the close of registration

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 our school can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents/carers where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer the case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

4.3 Persistent Absence

Whilst we understand that students can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to discuss support and to work together to gain a resolution. Parent/Carers are asked to contact their child's Year Leader in the first instance.

Students are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90% (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year) This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. School will intervene before a student becomes a persistent absentee.

4.4 Severe Absence

Students who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department of Education (DfE) This cohort of students are a priority group for our school and additional support may be required from the local authority and partner agencies to support your child improving their attendance. It is essential that parents/carers work in partnership with the school and its partners, to ensure their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

5. Why Regular Attendance is very important

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect students' learning. Students who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

90% attendance is equivalent to a student missing one half day of lessons per week or approximately 118 lessons per year.

The DfE has published a strong link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement:

Students attendance	Chance of achieving 5 good pass grades at GCSE
100% - 96%	73% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
96% - 94%	64% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades.
93% - 90%	55% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades
80% to 70%	Only 20% chance of achieving 5 good pass grades
50% and below	Only 6% of Students achieve 5 good pass grades

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

6. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carers and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.

The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the student's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists, the EWO will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings which include - Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the local authority.

The EWO for the school is Maxine Eyo.

7. Leave of absence in Term Time

The law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

Principals cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Principal will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

8. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day they can miss work and students arriving disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the student arriving late and can encourage future absence. A range of support and sanctions apply to students who arrive late.

8.1 How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 9.00am by the Form Tutor and students receive a late mark if they are not in their form group by that time. School recommends that students arrive by 8.50 am.

- Students who arrive late to school will be met by the Pastoral Lead Key Stage 4 and 5, and will be instructed further on actions that will be taken
- If a student arrives late to school parents/carers receive a text message to inform them of their child's late arrival
- On the first and second occasion a student arrives late, the student receives a warning and their mobile phone will be removed from them for the day
- If the student continues to arrive late parents/carers will be invited into school for a meeting

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact their child's Year Leader who will offer support to resolve the problem.

Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice. The close of registration for our school this is 930am.

9. People Responsible for Attendance matters at our school

All school staff, parents/carers and students need to work as a team to support the attendance and attainment of students. This continued support therefore is vital in making every student's journey through school a success.

Key Contacts:

Designated Attendance Lead – Amanda Cawood a.cawood@thestudio-liverpool.co.uk
Designated Safeguarding Lead – Amanda Cawood a.cawood@thestudio-liverpool.co.uk
EWO – Maxine Eyo
Pupil Premium Champion – Rupert Evans R.Evans@Lifesciencesutc.co.uk
Ignite Year Leader – Amy Connolly A.Connolly@Lifesciencesutc.co.uk

Year 10 Year Leaders – Chris Challinor and Graham Schofield c.challinor@thestudio-liverpool.co.uk
g.schofield@thestudio-liverpool.co.uk

Year 11 Year Leader – Phil Forrest P.Forrest@Lifesciencesutc.co.uk

Year 12 and 13 Pastoral Lead – Sean Clegg S.Clegg@Lifesciencesutc.co.uk

Student Absence Email - student.services@lifesciencesutc.co.uk

10. Removal from Roll

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to:

Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school. School must complete an Exit form and submit to the CME@liverpool.gov.uk inbox.

- provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school

If your child is leaving our school parents/carers are asked to:

- provide the attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including: any date of a move; your new address and telephone numbers; your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing. In the event a student is moving out of the United Kingdom then parents/carers are asked to inform us in writing, including your new address and contact number, the address and contact number of the school your child will be attending and any flight/travel details and copies of tickets.
- if a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.