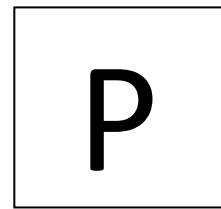




# Attendance and Punctuality Policy



## 1.0 Aim

1.1 It is the aim of staff at Light Hall School to work with students and their parents/carers to enable students to achieve the best possible attendance and punctuality throughout the academic year.

## 2.0 Principles

2.1 Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action by the Local Authority (LA).

2.2 It is the School aim that, at Light Hall, students and staff should enjoy learning, experience success and develop their full potential. The aim of the Attendance Policy reflects this and recognises that regular attendance has a positive effect on the motivation and attainment of students and staff.

## 3.0 Rationale

3.1 There is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of students who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades 9-4 including Maths and English. Of students who have over 95 per cent attendance, 73% achieve five or more GCSEs at grades 9-4

## 4.0 Objectives

4.1 To provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

4.2 To recognise the external factors which influence student attendance and work with parents and the school to address difficulties.

4.3 To encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by attending regularly.

## 5.0 Reasons for Absence

5.1 Every half-day absence from school legally has to be recorded by staff at the school as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

5.2 **Authorised absences** are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, such as illness or another unavoidable reason.

5.3 **Unauthorised absences** are those that the staff at school do not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. These are an offence by the parent and can include:

VERSION 1	TO BE APPROVED BY FULL GOVERNING BODY ON: September 2021	POLICY RENEWAL REQUIRED: ANNUALLY	REVIEW DATE September 2022	SIGNED: ..... CHAIR OF GOVERNORS
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- Keeping children off school without a good reason
- Truancy before the register has been marked
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Taking holidays in term time.

### **6.0 Term –Time Holidays**

6.1 It is not national policy to authorise absences for family holidays in term time.

### **7.0 Medical and Dental Appointments**

7.1 Wherever possible, parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, staff should be informed in advance if at all possible. A 'present' mark may still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day.

### **8.0 Resolving Problems**

8.1 Parents are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. The main person to contact in school regarding Attendance is Mr Petty, our Education Welfare and School Liaison Officer (EWO).

8.2 Wherever possible, the EWO will try to resolve the situation by agreement. However, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, EWOs can use legal proceedings if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Alternatively, parents or pupils may themselves wish to contact the EWO to ask for help or information;

### **9.0 Practice and Procedures**

9.1 The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. This level of absence is the equivalent of a day absent every fortnight. Pupils who miss this much school are called 'persistent absentees' by the government, whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children who are at risk of falling into this category.

9.2 The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

#### **9.2.1 Attendance**

Form tutors mark the register between 8.45am and 8.55am and subject teachers record attendance in the first ten minutes of every lesson using Class Charts.

- Daily attendance is monitored by our Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and his team. Parents are asked to telephone or email the school before 09.30am to explain any absence. There is



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a dedicated extension number to report absences. Please call 0121 744 3835 and select option 1. There is a dedicated email address to report absences – [attendance@lighthall.co.uk](mailto:attendance@lighthall.co.uk)

- Parents are contacted by Class Charts where students have failed to arrive for by 09.30 and notice of their absence has not been received.
- If school has not been contacted, absence will recorded as unauthorised. The designated EWO would ensure the following:
  - If a child was absent for a second consecutive day without parental contact (after attempting to contact on the first day – 2 Class Charts messages plus 2 phone calls), he would conduct a home visit. If still no contact, a calling card is left at home. Following that, a Police safe and well check would be considered.
  - There is an expectation that all students make up any work missed during periods of absence for whatever reason.
  - During the school day students must arrive in school by 8.40am. Any student who is late receives both first break and second break detentions. They will still have access to school dinners, if required. Staff must register their students' attendance at lesson within the first 10 minutes of the lesson starting. Any student who needs to leave the site during the day for an appointment must sign out electronically in student services. They are issued with a pass, then escorted to the reception area where they must be met by the relevant parent/carer.
- Authorisation of absence in most circumstances requires a telephone call, text message or email from parents or carers.
- Unauthorised absences are followed up by either a phone call or a letter home.
- Persistent absence is reported to our EWO for further action.
- Students who do not achieve 96% attendance by the end of each half term have a letter sent home with an attendance printout, this letter seeks to offer support with improving attendance and the catching up of work etc.
- When attendance continues to fall, the school will invite parent/carer for a meeting with either the EWO, Progress & Development Leader or Headteacher.
- At least 5 unauthorised absences (5 days), which equates to 10 sessions, will trigger a letter from the EWO warning of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued.
- Students who achieve 100% attendance will be rewarded with incentives throughout the school year.
- Students who achieve 100% for the year will receive a certificate and a special Light Hall badge to be worn with pride on their blazer.
- Attendance is recorded on all Behaviour for Learning and interim reports

### 9.2.2 Punctuality

Students are expected to be in school by 8.40am and to register with their Form Tutor at 8.45am. Students who arrive before 8.40am must go to their designated year group area. The school gates open at 8.25am. Students should not be on site before that time.



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- If students arrive after the register has been taken they should sign in at Student Services.
- **Students who arrive after 11.00am need a note or telephone call from home explaining their late arrival. If no email/telephone call/note is received, this becomes an unauthorised absence.**
- Persistent lateness is monitored by the pastoral team and EWO. Students who are persistently late will have letters sent home and their parents will be requested to attend a meeting in school to discuss the concerns. It is likely that the EWO will make home visits regarding concerns about punctuality / persistent lateness.

### 9.2.3 Long Term Absence

- When students are absent, or likely to be absent, for more than one week on medical grounds, work will be set and marked by staff.
- At least five days notice is needed for Heads of Year/ pastoral managers to collate work.
- Permission for public performances and productions outside of school needs to be sought in writing from the LA.
- As is national policy, family holidays in term time are not authorised.

### 9.2.4 Monitoring Absence

- Progress and Development Leaders and Pastoral Managers monitor attendance on a weekly basis and refer names of poor attenders to the EWO.
- Progress and Development Leaders monitor known poor attenders with the EWO.
- Progress and Development Leaders monitor known students with persistent absence with the EWO and take appropriate action e.g. praising them in House assemblies, have meetings with students, invite parents in for a meeting.

## 10.0 Students and Achievement

- Best Attendance and Punctuality in Tutor Groups is reported termly in the 'Light Hall Word'.
- Forms with best termly attendance in each year group receive a prize.
- Students with 100% attendance receive a letter at the end of each term.
- Students with 100% attendance for the year receive a certificate and Light Hall badge.
- Students with 100% attendance will be rewarded with incentives during the school year.

## 11.0 Recording Absence

### 11.1 Parental Communications

Authorisation of absence requires a telephone message/ email/ text from parents or carers. Once confirmation of absence is received by the Form Tutor, Progress and Development Leaders / Pastoral manager or any member of staff, it will be directed to Student Services for further action.

### 11.2 Family holidays



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It is not national policy to authorise absences for family holidays in term time.

### 11.3 Offsite activities

These are normally recorded as an authorised absence, depending on circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher.

### 11.4 Lesson truancy

All subject teachers are required to keep a lesson register, taking the register on SIMS within the first ten minutes of the lesson.

## Appendix A

### The Role of the Form Tutor

1. To mark and save the register by 8.55am
2. To return any notes regarding absence to Student Services.
3. To monitor attendance and punctuality of students in the Form.
4. To inform the Heads of Year of any attendance concerns.

### The Role of the Subject Teacher

1. To mark and save a register each lesson within the first 10 minutes of the lesson starting.
2. To inform Student Services of any student missing from the lesson and marking absent in Sims register, where it is obvious that they were marked present in the previous lesson.
3. To inform the Progress & Development Leader of any attendance concerns from subject groups.
4. To ensure that missed work is caught up.

### The Role of the Pastoral Manager

1. To review attendance of the year group weekly.
2. To promote good attendance and punctuality through public praise in weekly assemblies
3. To ensure letters are sent home where there are attendance concerns.
4. To meet with students and the parents and carers of those whose attendance and punctuality is causing concern and work with them to improve these areas of concern.
5. To report to SLT on a half termly basis regarding attendance and punctuality of their year group and action/ intervention undertaken.

### The Role of Attendance and Admissions Officer

1. To liaise and support the EWO with attendance and punctuality concerns.
2. To send "Class Charts" message to parents/ carers of all students who are not in school and about whose absence the school has not been notified by 09.30am each day
3. To telephone home on a student's first day of absence if this is not previously explained.



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### **The Role of the Education Welfare and Family Liaison Officer**

1. To monitor attendance on a daily basis.
2. To support students who have poor attendance.
3. To carry out a home visit if there is no parental contact within two days.
4. To follow up absences and address concerns with students and agree on strategies to improve attendance.
5. To work with and support parents and carers to improve attendance of students who fall below the 96% threshold.
6. To liaise with Pastoral Manager and student services regarding student attendance.
7. To ensure appropriate action is taken to address attendance.
8. To meet with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Senior Assistant Headteacher (Student well being) Head of Inclusion Faculty and Inclusion manager on a weekly basis to report on attendance, action, intervention and support provided for students with poor attendance and the most vulnerable.
9. To attend any necessary legal meetings with regards to attendance.

### **The Role of the Deputy Headteacher**

1. To review weekly attendance print outs.
2. To monitor Persistent Absence.
3. To support the Pastoral Managers with attendance issues.
4. To liaise with Pastoral Managers, EWO and Student Services regarding student attendance.
5. To ensure appropriate actions are taken to address attendance.
6. To report to governors on a half termly basis on attendance, punctuality and Persistent Absence.

### **The Role of Parents**

1. To ensure that their children attend daily and on time.
2. To telephone/ email the school before 09.30am to explain any absence on the day of absence.
3. To make dental and medical appointments for their children out of school time as far as possible.
4. To follow national policy and not take family holidays in term time.