



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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At Laurel Park School we firmly believe that all students benefit from 'excellent' school attendance. To this end, we will do all we can to ensure that our students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly. In order for an attendance record to be deemed excellent, students must attend school 100% of the time

100% Attendance - Excellent (expected)

Below 100% Attendance - Serious illness, medical emergencies or authorised absences only

Aims and Objectives

We intend to establish systems and practices which will:

- create an ethos in which excellent attendance is the norm
- maintain a safe, secure environment for students and a curriculum that meets their needs, thereby positively encouraging attendance
- raise student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance, and encourage in students a sense of responsibility

Expectations

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that parent(s)/carer(s) who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day
- A parent should report their child's absence by contacting the school Attendance line on 0208 3684710 - option 1 before 8.30am on the morning of each day of the student's absence or by emailing: attendance@laurelparkschool.co.uk or by sending a message via the SchoolGateway app. Any unreported absences will be unauthorised and noted on the students records.
- Provide medical evidence for any absence lasting for 3 days or more
- Provide medical evidence when requested and/or when a child attendance is 90% and below
- Leave of Absence will not be granted unless authorised by the Headteacher on special Circumstances . Taking your child out of school during term time may result in a fixed Penalty Notice and possible referral to the Educational Welfare Services .

Laurel Park School has a responsibility to ensure form tutors/class teachers:

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- complete registers accurately and punctually during form time and the start of every lesson
- assist the Attendance Officer in investigating any unexplained non-attendance when the student returns
- inform the Attendance Officer/Year Leaders of concerns
- be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Year Lead
- follow the schools Attendance Intervention Chart

The legal framework

In the United Kingdom it is the legal obligation of all parents and carers to ensure their child attends school every day, unless a legitimate reason can be evidenced.

Regular school attendance of children of compulsory school age is the responsibility of the parent(s) / carer(s) and is a legal requirement in accordance with section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Parent(s)/carer(s) are committing an offense if they fail to comply with this legislation and legal action can be instigated.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

- If a child's absence has not been reported on the day to the school, the Attendance Officer will activate the 'School Absence System'. The system will call/text/email the parent(s)/carer(s) contact numbers until a response is received. **Failing to report your child absent from school is a potential safeguarding concern.**
- In the event of no response being received for the absence, an absence letter will be sent home on the first day of absence. If no response is received within three days of an unexplained absence, a home visit will be made as a safeguarding concern.
- all periods of absence from school of 3 days or more will require medical evidence to be provided.
- absence is monitored regularly in conjunction with the Attendance Officer. Parents will be receiving letters updating their child's attendance .
- if, at the next attendance check, there is no improvement, a further letter will be sent home and the parent(s)/carer(s) invited to attend a meeting at school to discuss the matter further . At this stage the school will ask for medical evidence to be provided before authorising any further absences. A student will be put on a parental contract in hope the attendance will improve from the result of the meeting . The school will tell parents that, if the absence persists, a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Services . Once a formal referral is made by school to the EWS, no further absence will be authorised without medical evidence being provided.
- failure to comply with the expectations set by the Trust may result in further action by either a referral to appear before the schools attendance panel, issue of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution.

Lateness

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AM Registration/Roll call from 8.25. Legal registers are closed at 9.30am

- If a student arrives late to Roll-Call after 8.25am without an authorised reason, (such as a medical appointment) he/she will receive a late mark and a 50 minute detention from their tutor, to be sat after school on the same day. They will sign in on our late system recording software at receptions
- A 50 minute detention cannot be deferred unless in exceptional circumstances and pre-agreed by the school. A student will receive a 50 minute detention every time they are late
- Legal registers will close at 9.30am. All arrivals after this time will be considered as an unauthorised absence from the AM session and is marked as a U Code, unless medical evidence is provided. Where appropriate, reasons for lateness are investigated and responded to in the appropriate manner
- All appointments must be communicated with the school in advance by contacting the Attendance Manager via the usual attendance communication systems. Medical evidence may be requested to support your child's late arrival to school.
- Parent meetings will be held by Academic Year Leaders for students who are persistently late

Absences that the school is unable to authorise include (not exhaustive):

- unauthorised holiday (religious holidays are for one day only)
- arrival after the register has closed, i.e. 9.30am onwards without prior notification #
- shopping trips, even if this is for school uniform
- looking after a relative or pets
- Collecting or dropping off a sibling to school
- tiredness due to extra-curricular activities
- unexplained absence of more than 2 days
- Translating for a parent

Appointments

We ask that parents/carers make any medical appointments for their child after school hours so that students do not miss any time off from school.

Where this is not possible, any essential appointments must be communicated with the school in advance by contacting the Attendance Manager via the usual attendance communication systems. students will be expected where possible to attend school, before and after an appointment. Medical evidence may be requested to support your child's late arrival or absence from school.

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and it is essential that parent(s)/carer(s) take their family holidays during the school holidays. It is the school's policy not to authorise absence during term time for holidays, trips or visits and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised.

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Parent(s)/carer(s) may write to the Headteacher requesting leave of absence during term time but such requests are unlikely to be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for long periods of absence will not be authorised and a meeting with the Headteacher or a senior teacher and a School Attendance Manager will be required.

If parent(s)/carer(s) take their children on holiday, trip or visit during term time without authorisation the school will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. The fine from September 2013 will be £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, increasing to £120 if paid after this date, but within 28 days.

Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school. "Parents" includes partners who are not married to, but who live with, one of the parents who has main care responsibilities for the child(ren).

Safeguarding

The school will track and attempt to make contact with parent(s)/carer(s) of students who are absent but remain on roll. Students who are absent for twenty days or more will be considered to be a Child Missing in Education (CME) and the school will begin the process of removing the student from the school's roll.

For students who are on a Child Protection plan (CP), if a safeguarding issue occurs the previous evening to their absence, a home visit will be made by the school the same day of the absence.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, but which seeks to improve a pupil's attendance. Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with the Attendance Manager.

- Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term without the authority of the Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child.
- Where attendance has fallen below 85% or there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during a sixth month period.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.

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