



Looe Community Academy

Attendance policy

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1. Aims

Our academy 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
- 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. The school target is a minimum of 96% attendance.

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.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Academy procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day during registration and once during the second session which is period 5. The academy uses lesson monitor in SIMS to record attendance. It is used to mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will create an audit trail logged on SIMS.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register is preserved indefinitely after the date on which the entry was made as part of the SIMS database.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:40am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 2:10pm and will be kept open until 2:20pm.

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 9:00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents may notify the academy of an absence respond to the automated texting system, emails or via the landline.

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.

The academy can be notified in advance of appointments via the student planner, using a note or letter or through telephoning reception.

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.

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. The first step is to send a text home to parents to establish the reason for absence. This may be followed by a no reason for absence letter. On a students' return from absence they will complete a return to school slip to reflect on their time away from school. If a students' attendance falls below 90% a letter will be sent warning of the impact of low attendance. Meetings with Leaders of Year or Deputy Headteacher may take place to agree an individual attendance plan before escalation to a EWS referral. Referrals to the education welfare officer may be made where concerns continue to exist.

3.6 Reporting to parents

Attendance is reported to parents in the interim reports produced every term following a data drop. Attendance is also reported as part of the students annual report.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteachers 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

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 within 21 days or £120 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.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

The academy promotes good attendance through its reward system. Students with 100% attendance for a term (6 week block) receive vivos reward points. In addition students who have 100% attendance for two terms receive a certificate.

Tutor group weekly attendance is shared to encourage attendance through competition.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis and produces summary information on a weekly 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).

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an 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.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

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

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher 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 headteacher 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 deputy headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Form tutors

Form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and logging this information using lesson monitor on SIMS.

7.5 Reception staff

Reception staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school SIMS system.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the deputy headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

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

Appendix 2: Whole school letter re requests for absence during term time

Our Ref:

Date

Dear Parent/Carer

Requests for absence during term time

I am writing to you to inform you of the school's policy regarding absences from school that are not authorised. Any absence that is not authorised by the school will be recorded as such and may make you liable for prosecution or fine under the Education Act (1996).

Here at Looe Community Academy, we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a student is genuinely too ill to attend school, has a medical appointment that cannot be taken outside of school hours or a request for leave has been agreed on exceptional circumstances.

However, the Government does not support parents/carers taking students out of school unless the school agrees this is appropriate under 'exceptional circumstances'. Any request for leave should be made in writing to the Headteacher, Mrs Jenkins well in advance of the requested date.

If you decide to still take your child out of school, without permission, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to Cornwall Council who may decide to take legal action against you. A penalty notice can be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and / or custodial sentences.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this. We are committed to maximising the education of all our students and aim to work with parents/carers to ensure this can be achieved.

Yours sincerely

Mr S Yalden
Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 3: Letter informing that request for absence is rejected

Our Ref:

Dear

Name tutor

I am writing regarding your request to take xxxxxxxxxxxx out of school on until

The law states that a planned absence from school should only be authorised for students in 'exceptional circumstances'. Here at Looe Community Academy we recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence; we look at each request on its own merit, taking into account purpose, attendance history and study commitment and seldom authorise a request for students in any year group.

Under the circumstances, I regret that on this occasion we are unable to authorise your request for absence. If does not attend school on the dates concerned, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If you decide to still take your child out of school, without permission, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may refer the matter to Cornwall Council who may decide to take legal action against you. A penalty notice can be issued under Section 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996. This carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the penalty notice will result in Court action. Persistent absences not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court, leading to fines up to £2,500 and / or custodial sentences.

We are committed to maximising the future chances of all our students and attendance plays a huge part in educational success. We always aim to work with parents and carers to ensure this can be achieved.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Heather Jenkins
Headteacher

Appendix 4: 90% or less attendance letter.

Our ref MJO

Date

Address

Dear parent/carer

Name Tutor group

Our Academy regularly monitors student attendance and expect students to achieve no less than 95%.

Any student whose attendance falls below 90% is immediately flagged as a concern to their Leader of Year and the Education Welfare Officer.

Students with good attendance usually perform better at school. Research suggests that 17 missed school days (91% present) in a year can equal a whole GCSE grade drop.

At present NAMES attendance is % and I am writing to inform you that this is now being monitored on a regular basis. If there is not an improvement in NAMES attendance, it will be necessary to arrange a meeting between NAMES Leader of Year and yourself to discuss a way forward. Continued poor attendance will lead to a referral to the Education Welfare Officer.

I have attached NAMES attendance certificate for your information. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Academy. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M Johns
Attendance Co-ordinator

Appendix 5: Individual attendance plan



INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN

STUDENT'S NAME:

DOB:

YEAR GROUP:

DATED:

6 WEEK REVIEW DUE:

12 WEEK REVIEW DUE :

INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN

This Individual Attendance Plan is a formal agreement between **NAME**, Looe Community Academy and the Education Welfare Service in respect of **NAME**. This plan has been offered to us due to the poor attendance of my daughter/son which stands at **%**.

Issues Identified:

E.g.

The Academy is concerned that _____ attendance has deteriorated this year and that there appears to be a pattern of absence towards the end of the week. At _____ %, _____ is in danger of becoming a 'Persistent Absentee' (PA).

Agreed action by the parent/guardian(s):

In order to try and address the issues identified, I, being the parent of the above named pupil will during the next 12 weeks:

E.g.

1. Ensure that my child attends school regularly and is equipped with the correct uniform and necessary materials for learning.
2. Ensure that my child is punctual.
3. I will ensure that the school and EWO are informed of any changes in circumstances that will affect my child's attendance at school.
4. Provide medical evidence to cover any future periods of absence if the attendance target is not reached by the six week review.
5. We will ensure that XXXXXX follows school rules and support the school if sanctions are imposed.

Agreed action by the student:

E.g.

1. I will make every effort to attend school regularly and on time.
2. I will seek support from a member of school staff or the Education Welfare Officer if I have any concerns.
3. If placed on attendance report, I will ensure that the report is completed appropriately.
4. I will seek advice from a member of staff rather than staying at home for minor illnesses.
5. I will follow school rules and cooperate with staff when given specific instructions.

In order to support the parent and student in the above, the school will:

E.g.

1. Placeon attendance and punctuality report.
- 2.
- 3.

In order to support the parent and student, the Education Welfare Officer will:

E.g.

1. Monitor XXXXX's attendance closely and inform of any continued concern.
2. Provide regular mentoring sessions forto discuss any issues regarding attendance.
3. Refer to
4. Refer to:

REVIEW

This plan will be reviewed on (6 weeks).

Time: To be arranged Venue:

It is expected that XXXXX will have achieved a minimum of 92% attendance by this date.

Signed..... Parent/Carer Date

Signed Parent/Carer Date

Signed Student Date

Signed Leader of Year Date

Signed EWO Date

INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN 6 WEEK REVIEW MEETING

Student's Name:

Current Attendance:

Target Achieved: YES/NO

(If not) Reasons provided:

Empty box for providing reasons if the target was not achieved.

Action to be taken:

Empty box for detailing actions to be taken.

1ST REVIEW

Date:

Time:

Venue: SCHOOL

Attendance target: 92%

Target achieved: YES/NO

ACTION: *MONITOR / CASE CLOSED / INSTIGATION OF EWS LEGAL PROCESS / PENALTY NOTICE

***Delete as appropriate**

INDIVIDUAL ATTENDANCE PLAN 12 WEEK REVIEW MEETING

Student's Name:

Current Attendance:

Target Achieved: YES/NO

(If not) Reasons provided:

Empty box for reasons provided.

Action to be taken:

Empty box for action to be taken.

2ND REVIEW

Date:

Time:

Venue: SCHOOL

Attendance target: 92%

Target achieved: YES/NO

ACTION: *MONITOR / CASE CLOSED / INSTIGATION OF EWS LEGAL PROCESS / PENALTY NOTICE

***Delete as appropriate**

Appendix 6: EWS referral form



Children, Families and Adults

Education Welfare Service

Attendance Referral Form

Pupil name	M F	Year group	
Date of birth		School	
Parent/carer full name		Address	
Home tel. no.		Work tel. no.	
Others with PR			
Other agencies involved			
Is child in care?	Y N	Is pupil a young carer?	Y N
SEN status			
Support	IEP <input type="checkbox"/> IBP <input type="checkbox"/> PSP <input type="checkbox"/> PEP <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please state your reasons for referral and for deciding not to continue authorising absences.			

Details of prior action taken by referrer (include details of contact with parents)	
Evidence of attempts to make contact with parents where no engagement has been achieved.	
In order to accept this referral, a Registration Certificate (showing at least 10 unauthorised absences within the last 100 sessions) must be provided. Please confirm.	
Details of any Police 121A incident reports you have received about this child with this referral	
Please confirm that you have attempted to inform the parent of this referral to the EWS	
Referred by	Title
Date	Tel. no.

Please return completed referral form direct to the Education Welfare Officer or send to eworeferrals@cornwall.gov.uk If you need advice, please telephone the team on 01872 323400.

Please note that the information provided on this form may be shared with the family.