

STUDENTS' ATTENDANCE POLICY

POLICY AMENDMENTS		
Page number	Previous Version	Summary of Changes
Page 1	18 th June 2016	No need for a note from parents if phone call has been made.
Page 2	18 th June 2016	Change to PM registration time to fit in with new school day timings.
Page 2	18 th June 2016	Changes to number of sessions unauthorised before a letter is sent in line with LA policy.
Page 3	18 th June 2016	Change to 92% being the point at which formal monitoring by the Attendance Team starts.

CONTEXT

Lever Academy Trust considers excellent attendance and punctuality to be of paramount importance. The link between attendance and the pupil's ability to learn, make academic progress and achieve success is crucial. Excellent attendance and punctuality ensures that all pupils take full advantage of the educational opportunities available at Lever Academy Trust. Irregular attendance and poor punctuality undermine the educational process and lead to educational disadvantage.

Lever Academy Trust expects all pupils to strive for the highest possible level of attendance and sets a minimum attendance expectation target of 97% for each pupil.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The school recognises that everyone in the school community, staff, pupils and parent/carers must work together in partnership in order to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

Pupils will:

- Arrive at school by 8.40am each morning.
- Arrive at their registration classroom by 8.45am each morning.
- Arrive for each lesson promptly.
- Endeavour to maintain a high level of attendance.

Parents/carers will:

- Ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, fully equipped, with a positive attitude to learn
- Notify the school by telephone as soon as possible each day, by 8.30am, if their child is prevented from attending school
- Notify the school by telephone as soon as possible if their child will arrive at school late
- Inform the school in advance of any known absences
- Arrange medical or dental appointments out of school hours wherever possible and provide evidence of these appointments to school i.e. appointment letter/card.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term time
- Attend meetings to discuss their child's attendance and/or punctuality where appropriate
- Work in partnership with the school to improve the attendance and punctuality of students
- Encourage their child to maintain a high level of attendance.

School will:

- Ensure that good levels of attendance and punctuality are a key priority
- Provide a welcoming and caring environment in which each member of the school community feels valued and safe
- Promote positive attendance through use of assemblies and learning materials.
- Work with pupils and their families to ensure good levels of attendance and punctuality are maintained
- Provide information, support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils on issues relating to attendance and punctuality
- Use rewards and incentives effectively to acknowledge the efforts of pupils who maintain good levels of attendance and timekeeping or make significant improvements
- Challenge the behaviour of students and families who give low priority to the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Work effectively with relevant partners, services and agencies to provide additional support to pupils and families where appropriate.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

Pupils are registered formally in a morning registration and again at 1.20pm.

For additional monitoring and safeguarding purposes teaching staff are required to take a formal register at the beginning of each lesson.

AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

By law, only the school can authorise absence, not parents or carers. The school need not accept an explanation for a child's absence if it believes that it is not a satisfactory justification for the absence. The school can also withhold authorisation for absence if it doubts the explanation that has been offered. The school may require parents/carers to provide additional information or evidence before an absence is accepted as authorised.

Unauthorised absence will include the following:

- Any absence from school that the school has not permitted or cannot give consent for e.g. looking after siblings, visiting relatives, birthdays, holidays
- Truancy from school, with or without parent's/carer's knowledge
- Inappropriate parentally-condoned absence
- Delayed return from a period of absence that has been approved
- Late arrival at school (after the register has formally closed at 9.45am)

If a child is absent from school without authorisation for 10 school sessions (5 days) over two concurrent half term periods parents/carers are committing an offence and could be liable to receive a Penalty Notice.

The school will send a letter home informing parents/carers when their child has reached 6 unauthorised sessions of absence from the headteacher, formally warning of the possibility of legal action should there be no improvement. A Penalty Notice will be issued by the local authority when 10 unauthorised sessions has been reached over the period of one term.

PUNCTUALITY

Pupils are expected to arrive at school by 8.40am and arrive at their registration classroom by 8.45am. Pupils arriving after this time should report to the pupil reception office to be registered. They will be given a late slip which they must give to the teacher when they arrive at their lesson.

The school registration period will be left open until 9.45am. Pupils arriving at school after 8.45am but before 9.45am will be recorded as late. Pupils who arrive after 9.45am without good reason, or who fail to register at the pupil reception office, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

If your child is late to school, for any reason, they will be required to attend a late detention on the same day. This detention will be held after school and will last for 10 minutes. Should they fail to attend this detention pupils will be issued with a C3 detention.

FIRST RESPONSE TO ABSENCE

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school of pupil absence. When a pupil is absent from school, and no notification of absence has been received, the Attendance and Welfare Leader will endeavour to contact parents/carers by telephone. A home visit will be undertaken if no contact is established. If a pupil's attendance is causing concern i.e. below 92%, a home visit may also be carried out to support parents / carers.

If a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Order is absent without satisfactory explanation the Early Intervention Team will be contacted before 10.00am and asked to undertake a home visit.

Where there is a safeguarding concern relating to a pupil's absence, and the pupil is not subject to a Child Protection Order, the Attendance and Welfare Team will undertake a home visit as a matter of urgency.

The purpose of this visit is to establish the safety and well-being of the pupil. If safeguarding concerns persist this will be referred to the Child Protection Co-ordinator.

KEY COHORT OF PUPILS

The attendance of ALL pupils, and in particular those pupils in key cohorts (Pupil Premium, Children who are Looked After, Special Educational Needs, English as an Additional Language, International New Arrivals) will be monitored and analysed each half term. Any pupils with attendance issues may be placed on a Pupil Attendance Plan setting out appropriate intervention strategies.

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

All staff have an important role to play in promoting good attendance and punctuality. Staff directly involved in monitoring attendance and implementing interventions will include Form Tutors, Year Leaders, Progress Leaders, Deputy Head Teacher for Behaviour, Personal Development and Welfare and the Attendance and Welfare Leader.

Good attendance and punctuality is recognised through the use of rewards and prizes. Pupils who have full attendance and punctuality each week are given award points by their form tutors. There are numerous incentives and rewards for pupils with excellent attendance and letters are sent home each term for pupils achieving 100% attendance.

The attendance of all pupils is monitored regularly each half term.

If a pupil's attendance falls below **97%** it is monitored more closely on an informal basis by the tutor and/or relevant pastoral staff. At this stage discussions will be held with pupils and parents/carers about the need for attendance levels to be improved.

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

If a pupil's attendance falls below **92%** a more intense level of monitoring will be introduced. Parents/carers could be asked to attend a meeting to discuss issues surrounding their child's absence. Unless absence can be explained by a one-off reason that is unlikely to be repeated (e.g. a period in hospital, bereavement) it may be decided to set up a Pupil Attendance Plan. The plan identifies patterns of absence from school and barriers to securing good attendance. It sets out strategies to support students in school and at home to improve levels of attendance. A target will be set for each pupil and a review date will be set to evaluate the success of the plan.

Once a pupil's attendance falls below **90%** it will be regarded as 'persistent absence' and by subject to more detailed scrutiny on a daily basis by the Attendance and Welfare Leader.

Additional support and intervention strategies to be used at this stage may include:

- Seeking family support from the Early Intervention Team or other relevant agencies
- Drawing up a parenting contract setting out agreed targets and actions to be carried out by home and school to improve levels of attendance
- Requesting a medical examination to be carried out where insufficient medical evidence exists to justify such high levels of absence
- Arranging meetings with senior staff/governors in school to explain the need for good levels of attendance and to set out relevant strategies and targets
- Using Fixed Penalty referrals where absence is unauthorised.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Pupils will only be granted leave of absence in term time in the most exceptional of circumstances. Where leave is granted it will be for a maximum of five school days.

Parents/carers who take their children out of school in term time without relevant authorisation are liable to receive a Penalty Notice.

Further information is set out in the separate 'Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time Policy'.