The Lloyd Williamson Schools Foundation

ATTENDANCE POLICY

2025

Updated by	Aaron Williams	28th March 2025
Due for update	March 2026	

Introduction

This policy aims to show Lloyd Williamson Schools Foundation's commitment to meeting obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024), through a whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students and encouraging them to maintain 100% overall attendance to promote achievement and success.

- 10% absence means the equivalent of one day or more per fortnight across a full school year. The expected attendance is at least 92.9% (national average).

- When a student's attendance reaches as low as 90%, the school will put targeted support in place (see student support and sanctions)

- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance.

- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.

- Providing accurate daily, weekly, and termly information and reports on attendance through efficient systems and reporting on AIMS.

- Acting early to address patterns of absence.

- Building strong relationships with parents to make sure students have the support in place to attend school.

- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.

- Ensuring effective liaison with the Senior Leadership Team, Administration Team and Pastoral Tutors so that proactive following up on non-attendance takes place and that there is prompt, accurate communication with the parents.

- Recognising special circumstances in the life of a student and ensuring the school is to be proactive to guarantee that students are well supported so that good attendance resumes.

- Judging every case on its specific circumstances.

- Complying with the UKVI's requirements for Student and Child Student visas.

In accordance with the statutory guidance **Working Together to Improve School Attendance** (2024), the Attendance Policy will be made accessible on our website.

The school recognises that improving attendance is a school leadership issue and the Designated Safeguarding Lead in conjunction with the SLT have responsibility for championing and improving attendance in school and liaising with students, parents and external agencies where needed. The SLT will set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance, establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff. SLT will use the attendance data on AIMS to highlight concerns, look for patterns and support in the revision of this policy.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff

- Support students to maintain 100% attendance.
- A member of the admin team must enter the AM register by 8:45am and contact parent if there are any absences unaccounted for and record this communication on AIMS.
- Teaching staff must complete the register for every lesson during the first 10 minutes. They must promptly amend the register if a student arrives late to their lesson.
- Staff are to adhere to registration codes as generated on AIMS.
- Authorised absences are individual sessions, mornings or afternoons, or days away from School for a good reason such as illness, an unavoidable cause or appointment. Any absences to be considered for authorisation are to follow the reporting procedures.
- Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. Only the Headteacher / SLT can permit an authorised absence due to illness or injury.
- Absence and punctuality data is recorded on AIMS and concerns are highlighted to the class pastoral tutor. This can be escalated to DSL if necessary.
- The SLT will review low attendance and punctuality on an ongoing basis, reasons for it, patterns, support and sanctions. Other relevant staff will be engaged where it is in the student's interest to receive specialist support.
- Use of the Sanctions as outlined in the Behaviour Policy will be put into place for truanting students.

Teachers

- It is the teacher's responsibility to mark students as 'absent' 'late' or 'present' for every timetabled session using AIMS. Registers are an important legal requirement.
- The register must be marked in the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Teachers must only use Present (\) Late (L – generated by AIMS), or Absent (teachers should select the correct specific code generated by AIMS). Morning Register

closes at 8:25am and lessons begin at 8:30am, after which time students will be marked (L) and the specific amount of minutes late will be logged on AIMS.

- Apart from medical appointments or illness (which are reported to the school by the parent), teachers are not allowed to authorise absence, and it is essential that only the Headteacher / SLT are involved in authorising any absence under DfE and UKVI mandates.
- A student who arrives after the register is closed, must be asked about the reason for their lateness. A reminder about punctuality will be given at this stage.
- Persistent lateness will be dealt with by the child's tutor and the SLT.
- Repeated failure to attend lessons or be on time will result in sanctions in line with the school Behaviour Policy (see Appendix 2).
- If a student's attendance and punctuality continue to decline the Personal Tutor must continue to raise this and liaise with the SLT for appropriate further follow up, monitoring and escalation.
- Recognition is given to students who achieve 100% attendance at the end of each year.
- Liaison is made with the Mental Health Leads (Lucy Meyer and Deborah Thackeray) where authorised absence may be required due to mental ill health reasons.
- Patterns of absence or punctuality will be reviewed by SLT, and necessary focus given to individuals and cohorts to reach an improvement.

Administration Team

- Ensure all registers are marked and recorded on AIMS on time and conduct review points to highlight absence concerns.
- Reiterate absence reporting procedures to parents as necessary.
- If unauthorised absence is identified, the Administration Team is to follow the Reporting Procedures (see Appendix 1)
- Compile absence and lateness reports for the Headteacher / SLT to follow up and identify patterns or trends of absence or punctuality
- Engage with students and parents accordingly in line with the Absence follow up process, making use of communications templates (Appendix 4)

Student / Parent responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of all parents to ensure students attend every lesson on their timetable.
- If parents / students are aware in advance that an event will result in them missing lessons, they must seek authorisation in advance from the SLT.
- Parents must follow the absence reporting procedures.
- Parents must obtain permission for their child to be absent from the school from the Headteacher (authorised absence).

SLT responsibilities

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school by implementing this policy

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance

- Ensuring teachers receive training on children missing from education on their role in attendance matters, the marking of registers and any changes or important updates – this is covered in staff meeting and morning briefings and induction training

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having regular detailed reviews of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis

- Weekly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff

- Liaising with pupils, parents/guardians

- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues

- Directing, delivering and assisting with intervention or reintegration plans for students and their parents

- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents through all available channels (e.g. assemblies, newsletters)

Senior Leader Contact details for attendance matters

Lucy Meyer (Headteacher) lucy@lws.org.uk / 020 8962 0345

Deborah Thackeray (Senior Administrator) deboraht@lws.org.uk / 020 8962 0345

Clare Smart (Senior Administrator / DSL) clare@lws.org.uk / 020 8962 0345

Local Authority (LA) Responsibilities and Resources

The LA has a duty to ensure that individual pupils attend school regularly, and to help schools in relation to the overall levels of absence and lateness. The LA will regularly collect and publish attendance data and provide updated guidelines to schools.

When the school has made continued contact with parents or carers and invited them into the school, but no significant improvement has resulted, if the pupil is still absent without a proper explanation, SLT can refer to LA Early Help services for support. If the LA accepts the request, they will work with the family to achieve an improved pattern of attendance and address the issues which lie behind the non-attendance.

The school roll - removals

Pupils should be taken off-roll *only* when the school has received confirmation of the pupils' move to another school or another locality and when appropriate reasonable enquiries have been carried out by the school and the LA.

A pupil attending a school must be on the school roll. There cannot be any temporary trial placements of more than two days where a pupil is not formally on the roll of a school. Dual registration is possible in exceptional circumstances, such as traveller pupils.

Pupils are admitted formally, and if the placement breaks down, then the usual exclusion procedures should be followed or alternative provisions should be sought in liaison with parents or carers and the LA. At the same time a pupil may be attending an off-site unit part-time, in which case he/she should not be removed from the roll of the school and placed on the roll of the unit. However, communication between unit and school should make sure that any breakdown in attendance is swiftly followed up.

Legal action

Local Authorities (LAs) have a responsibility to ensure all statutory school age children, living in the area they cover, have education provision. Parents/carers are responsible by law for making sure their children are in school or receiving a suitable education. The LA will take legal action in relation to a child's poor attendance when all other routes to support have been unsuccessful.

Non-Attendance and Bursaries

The school reserves the right to remove financial aid in the form of agreed bursaries for poor attendance, usually below 90%

Student Support and Sanctions

For any students identified as persistent lateness or truanting, the first instance is to issue a sanction and follow the School Behaviour Disciplinary process as per the Student Behaviour Policy and Absence Reporting follow up process.

Additional examples of support that could be offered in addition to sanctions may include:

- Meeting with Pastoral Tutor for target setting and ongoing review

- Communications with parents/guardians

- Time management support

- Mentoring

Incentivising Good attendance

Certificates or public acknowledgement (in Assemblies) are given, and an entry is made on AIMS for 100% attendance over at least a term; an award for 100% attendance over the whole school year is given at Prize Giving. Such acknowledgement is made to motivate students through friendly competition.

Special circumstances

- There will be special consideration and recognition of critical events in the life of a student which may incur significant absences. Absence procedures must be followed as closely as possible and parental engagement sought.

- It is equally important that after such absences students are supported back into a good attendance routine.

- Term dates must be adhered to and late return to school or early departure by flight schedules will be dealt with by the school on an individual case by case basis.

- Any absence excluding illness or medical appointments must be communicated to the SLT in advance who will discuss any cases with the Headteacher for approval and liaise with parents / guardians where necessary.

- The school will make sure that any students missing school because of mental, physical ill health or those with SEND, will be given support by considering the individual needs of students.

Religious Holidays

LWSF respects the diverse religious practices within the community while emphasising the importance of regular school attendance for academic success.

The school recognises that certain multi-cultural and mixed-faith community religious festivals occur during term time. LWSF permits authorised absences for religious observance under specific guidelines. Pupils may be absent on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by their parent's religious body. To balance religious observance with educational requirements, LWSF pupils can take up to three days of authorised absence per academic year for specific religious observance, which parents must notify the school about in advance.

If religious holidays fall on a weekend or a Bank Holiday, pupils will not be entitled to absent days in lieu.

Parents are encouraged to discuss their family's religious practices with school staff upon their child's enrolment, provide advance notice for any intended absences due to religious observance, and coordinate with teachers to help their child catch up on any missed work.

The school recognises that students may need to fast during some religious holidays, and LWSF will plan to support students at this time.

Disciplinary Process that may result in permanent exclusion for truanting or persistent lateness

- The SLT, including the Headteacher, will implement the Sanctions Process as outlined in the Behaviour Policy and the Exclusion Policy if it is deemed a pupil is truanting or is persistently late with no reasonable explanation that can be authorised by the Headteacher, and it cannot be remedied through reasonable interventions to support the student back into education.

- It is the responsibility of the DSL to inform social services or the police as relevant if there are serious concerns about a students' welfare.

- A member of the SLT / DSL will intervene in the absence of the Headteacher for the disciplinary process.

- The Headteacher is responsible for making the final decision on whether a student will be excluded for continued truanting or persistent lateness.

- Progress will be tracked carefully and failure to improve will be dealt with by the SLT and Headteacher.

- LWSF supports students to improve their attendance; however, a continual failure to improve is unacceptable and will lead to sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy (sanctions – Appendix 2)

- The visa sponsorship of a student will be withdrawn if they are permanently excluded.

UKVI

UKVI state that authorised absence should be 'reasonably granted'. This means we should actively consider the intentions of the student, i.e., whether they are genuinely intending to continue their course and the impact of any absence on the student's ability to complete their course.

If either of these factors is in any doubt, SLT will consider alternative action, such as withdrawal or deferral.

The school will observe the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration organisation (UKVI).

Maintaining satisfactory attendance is part of the visa conditions for students studying under a visa in the UK. LWSF will ensure accurate attendance monitoring and prompt follow up occur across all courses.

LWSF will cease to sponsor students who repeatedly fail in meeting attendance requirements.

LWSF will withdraw sponsorship for any student on a Child Student Visa or Student Visa who misses **10 consecutive contact points** (*a contact point is defined as an entire day – Monday to Friday*).

A student who has missed 10 missed contact points may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed back into the school. The student will be required to document any reason for the absences and continued sponsorship will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

When the school ceases to sponsor a student, this will be reported to UKVI via the SMS and the Child Student Visa or Student Visa will then be curtailed by UKVI.

Monitoring and review

Admission and attendance registers will be kept electronically on AIMS, and all entries in these registers will be preserved for 6 years. The Local Authority have the right to examine and take extracts of attendance registers from the school if required.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or earlier if guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated. The review will include the views of all stakeholders, including teachers, parents and students.

In developing and implementing this policy, the School has considered its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Related documents:

- Behaviour Policy

- Children Missing from Education Policy

- Safeguarding Policy

Appendix 1: Student Absence Reporting Procedures

Method of Reporting Absences:

Parents / guardians / pupils must notify the school of their child's absence by telephone or email. This should be done before or on the first day of absence before registration.

- Lower School 020 8963 0345

- Upper School 020 8962 0345

- admin@lws.org.uk

Timing of Reporting:

- Notification must be made between 8:00am – 8:25am (or as soon as is practicable if necessary) on the first day of absence.

- Parents/guardians should provide an update on each subsequent day of absence.

Information to Provide:

- Child's full name and class.

- Reason for absence (provide specific details, especially for illness).

- Expected date of return, if possible.

Procedure for Unexplained Absences (Crucial for Safeguarding):

First Day of Absence (if no communication by 9:00am):

- 9:00am: a designated member of the administration team will attempt to contact the parent/guardian via telephone.

- If telephone contact is unsuccessful, an email (email 1) will be sent – see communication template in Appendix 4).

- A text message may be sent via T2P if possible.

- The student's form tutor/class teacher will be informed of the unexplained absence.

Continued Absence (Third Day):

- If there is still no communication, a second telephone call will be made, and a follow-up email (email 2) will be sent – see communication template in Appendix 4).

- If the student has siblings in the school, contact will also be made with those siblings' teachers.

- A letter may be sent via post, particularly if other methods of communication have failed.

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed of the continued unexplained absence and make an assessment as to next steps.

Persistent Absence (Third Day and Beyond):

The Headteacher and DSL will assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.

This may include:

1. Parents/carers to be invited to school meeting. A formal action plan to support attendance to be agreed, individual attendance targets to be included. Date set for further meeting to review plan.

2. Contacting relevant external agencies (e.g., social services, police) if there are concerns about the child's welfare.

3. Accurate records of all contact attempts will be recorded on AIMS.

If the school has strong concerns, a child missing from education (CME) referral will be made to the local authority.

Approx. 3 Weeks – sooner if child completely absent

- Meeting to review the plan and agree a request for support from RBKC (or the child's relevant borough) Early Help Services

Beyond 3 Weeks – legal action

- Continue to report to and communicate with RBKC or the child's relevant Borough.

Inconsistent unauthorised absence

When attendance falls below 90% parents, the Headteacher / SLT will take the following action:

- Parents/carers to be invited to school meeting. A formal action plan to support attendance to be agreed, individual attendance targets to be included. Date set for further meeting to review plan.

- The DSL will consider any potential safeguarding concerns and decide what to do next if a referral is deemed relevant and there are concerns about the child's welfare.
- Accurate records of all contact attempts will be recorded on AIMS.
- If attendance continues to fall and drops below 85%, the headteacher and DSL will make an appropriate referral to RBKC or the child's relevant Borough.

Recording and Documentation:

- Records of all communication attempts, conversations, and actions taken will be maintained on AIMS.
- These records will be stored securely and in accordance with data protection regulations

Appendix 2: Sanctions for truancy and poor punctuality

The Headteacher / SLT may apply sanctions outlined in the Behaviour Policy, where appropriate, for poor attendance (unauthorised / truancy) and poor punctuality.

Sanctions and Stages of Intervention:

Stage 1. Verbal Warning/Reminder:

- A calm, non-shaming conversation with the pupil to address the behaviour and reiterate expectations, offering re-direction and de-escalation.

- Focus on explaining the expectation, impact of the behaviour and providing an opportunity for the pupil to correct it.

- Used for low level challenging behaviour in class or the playground.

- Not reported on AIMS

- Desired outcome: the student re-thinks on the spot and applies themselves in line with expectations.

Stage 2. Teacher-Led Restorative Conversation:

- A private, more structured conversation facilitated by the teacher, involving the pupil reflecting on their actions and making a commitment for change.

- Encouraging the pupil to understand the consequences of their behaviour and to consider how to make amends before a detention is applied.

- Used for more challenging or persistent low to mid-level challenging behaviour.

- Reported on AIMS.

- Desired outcome: The student understands the nature of the problem, its significance to themselves and others, knows how to change and is willing to behave in line with expectations.

Stage 3. Formal Warning/Detention:

- A formal discussion and clear warning (documented on AIMS), with consequences (detention and/or being on report) outlined.

- Detention may be used to provide time for reflection or to complete restorative tasks.

- Putting the student on report to encourage / secure more lasting change.

- Desired outcome: The student understands the nature of the problem, its significance to themselves and others, knows how to change and is willing to behave in line with expectations. May need support (being on report) for this to be communicated and applied more consistently.

Stage 4. Parent/Carer Contact:

- Communication with parents/carers to inform them of the behaviour and to seek their support.

- Collaborative problem-solving to develop strategies for improvement.

- Putting the student on extended report to secure lasting commitment to change.

- Desired outcome: to inform parents and elicit their support in helping the student understand the nature of the problem, its significance to themselves and others, know how to make sustainable change and be willing to behave in line with expectations. Parents should also make a commitment to upholding similar expectations outside of school.

Stage 5. Internal Exclusion (followed by and inclusive of Stage 6):

- Removal of the pupil from regular classes for a specified period, with supervised work and reflection.

- Used for more serious or persistent challenging behaviour where the student is having a significant negative impact on their own learning, and/or the learning of others. To provide a period of separation where self or supported regulation may be necessary.

Stage 6. Formal Restorative Meeting:

- A formal meeting facilitated by the Headteacher involving the pupil, affected parties, and relevant staff and parents.

- Focus on repairing harm, rebuilding relationships, and developing a plan for future behaviour.

- Used for serious and/or persistent challenging behaviour where the student is having a significant negative impact on their own learning, and/or the learning of others.

- Desired outcome: commitment to long term, sustained change and behaviour within the expected parameters which will monitored and assessed in a follow up meeting at a time decided by the Headteacher.

Stage 7. Fixed-Term Exclusion followed by a Return to School Meeting (RSM):

- Temporary removal of the pupil from the school, in accordance with legal guidelines.

- Followed by a RSM facilitated by the headteacher or member of the SLT.

- Used for serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy and any act of violence.

- Desired outcome: commitment to long term, sustained change and behaviour within the expected parameters which will monitored and assessed in a follow up meeting at a time decided by the Headteacher.

Stage 8. Permanent Exclusion (in conjunction with the Exclusion Policy):

- Permanent removal of the pupil from the school, in accordance with legal requirements and procedures detailed in the Exclusion Policy.

- Used when the relationship has broken down to the point where none of the previous interventions and Sanctions have had a desired impact on securing a change in behaviour.

- Sometimes used when the relationship with the parent has broken down and the parent no longer supports the school in securing acceptable behaviour in line with the Behaviour Policy.

Key considerations within this sequence:

- **Proportionality:** Sanctions will always be proportionate to the severity of the behaviour.

- **Documentation:** All sanctions (from Satge 2 onwards) will be documented on AIMS.

- **Support:** Pupils will be offered support to address the underlying causes of their behaviour.

- **Legal Compliance:** All exclusions will be carried out in strict adherence to relevant legal guidelines outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

Appendix 3: Attendance register codes and Register Opening and Closing

Support and Intervention

- Arrange meetings with parents/guardians to discuss persistent attendance issues.
- Develop Action Plans to improve the student's attendance, involving the student, parents, and relevant school staff.
- Regular Check-ins and monitoring of the student's attendance closely and communicating regularly with the student and parents regarding updates on progress or any ongoing concerns.
- Providing any necessary support such as health meetings, wellbeing counselling, mentoring or academic intervention

Logging and Reporting and Documentation

- Maintain Records: Keep accurate records of attendance, communications, and interventions on AIMS on each student file.
- Weekly reports of absence and poor punctuality are discussed by the SLT for necessary follow-up and intervention.

Ongoing Review and Adjustments

- Evaluate Effectiveness: Regularly review the effectiveness of attendance policies and procedures in SLT meetings.
- Adjust Strategies: Make necessary adjustments to strategies based on feedback and outcomes and where necessary individual student needs.

Appendix 4

Communication Templates

- 1ˢᵗ Parent communication (email 1) to be sent by Administration Team:

Subject: [Student's Name] - Absence on [Date of Absence]

Dear [Parents' name],

I trust this message finds you well.

I am writing to inform you that [Student's Name] is absent from school today, [Date of Absence]. We have not received any communication from you regarding their absence. Despite several attempts to contact you by telephone, we have been unable to reach you, and we are naturally concerned.

Please reply to this email as soon as possible, clarifying the reason for [Student's Name]'s absence and assisting the school in ensuring their attendance. It is imperative that we receive this information promptly to ensure their safety and well-being.

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. We look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Best wishes,

[Your Name]

- Escalation/Emergency email: Parental Email 2 to be sent by SLT

Subject: Urgent - [Student's Name] - Continued Unauthorised Absence

Dear Parents,

I trust this message finds you well.

We are writing to express our serious concern regarding [Student's Name], who has been absent from school since [Date]. Despite our previous attempts to contact you, we are yet to receive any communication or update regarding [Student's Name]'s absence.

It is imperative that you contact the school immediately to provide the reason for [Student's Name]'s absence. Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students is our utmost priority.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this urgent matter.

Best wishes,

[Your name]