



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Systems and Procedures

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- 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. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all students are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all students must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Students must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day ready for tutor time which begins at 8:50am.

The register for the first session will be taken in tutor time at 8:50am and will be kept open until 10:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at the start of Period 4 at 1pm and will be kept open until 1.30 pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers 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 8:30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents/carers should use the Studybugs App <https://studybugs.com/about/parents> to report an absence or if necessary should contact the Attendance Clerk, Charley Herbert: cherbert@lynghallschool.co.uk or 024 7672 4960 ext. 4125.

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, or if the illness extends beyond 5 school days, the school may ask parents/carers 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/carers 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/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Request forms can be collected from school reception (note: requests for holidays in term time will not be approved).

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and to all lessons. The start of school/lessons are used to give out instructions or organise work. If a child is late, they will miss work, time with the class teacher/tutor giving vital information and cause disruption to the lesson for others. A student who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L). A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U).

Procedures:

- Students arriving late after the gate has closed should sign in via Inventory and then go straight to tutor time.
- Students arriving after 9:10am should report to reception, sign in on the Inventory system and then go directly to their lesson.
- Students arriving after 10:30am will be regarded as absent and a parental note will be required before the absence can be indicated as authorised.

Students who are persistently late to school will be followed up in the first instance by their tutor or a PYC contacting home. Letters will then be sent home reminding parents/ carers of the importance of punctuality. If lateness continues parents will be invited into school for a meeting with their College Leader/Tutor or PYC.

3.5 Following up absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. 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. This could include but is not limited to: phone calls, emails, home visits, requests for Police 'Safe and Well' checks, referral to the Local Authority.

3.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Attendance is reported to parents/carers with each progress check and in the annual academic report. In addition, parents/carers can view their child's attendance using the Talaxy app which is available via the school website.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Headteachers

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence to students during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday.

Any requests to take your child out of school during term time must be provided in writing to the Headteacher. 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 may include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students 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 student is attending educational provision.



Examples of unauthorised absence:

- Parents/carers giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been authorised.

Study leave – we believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted, and students will be expected to attend school in the usual way. A bespoke timetable will be provided for the Year 11, 12 and 13 students to ensure they get the most from this revision period for their Summer GCSE examinations.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents/carers 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/suspended student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.
- Persistent lateness to school.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

The school will take reasonable steps to ensure good attendance without the use of Penalty Notices. When a child has become a concern, the school will issue a penalty warning and if there is no improvement the school will start the Penalty Notice process. Parents and carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued.



Year 12 and 13 students that fail to make improvements to attendance/ punctuality once an issue has been raised are at risk of losing their place at Lyng Hall 6th form.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

We celebrate good attendance with rewards, certificates, college points & praise. Student attendance will be used to support additional student privileges from time to time.

The school will work closely with parents/carers to support regular attendance – for example, communicating early about issues, acknowledging positive improvements, indicating a named contact in school, etc.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance team monitors student absence on a daily basis.

6.1 First Day of Absence

Parents/carers are expected to report to the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

Parents/carers are expected to inform the school each subsequent day a child is ill. If your child is absent, you must:

Contact the school on the morning of the first day of absence via Studybugs <https://studybugs.com/about/parents> or if necessary should contact the Attendance Clerk, Charley Herbert at cherbert@lynghallschool.co.uk or 024 7672 4960 ext. 4125. Information received is used to update the registers.

If your child is absent, we will:

Contact (telephone or text) you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Pastoral Year Co-ordinator if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Assistant Headteacher (Support) if the absence persists and there is no acceptable reason for it. The matter may ultimately be referred to the Local Authority for further action.

6.2 Third Day of Absence

Any child who has not been seen and where contact has not been established with any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence, will trigger the start of a Child Missing in Education procedure. We will make all reasonable enquires to



establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends, and wider family. The PYC and Safeguarding Team or Assistant Headteacher will try to establish contact. If contact is unsuccessful the school will follow Local Authority or DfE guidance.

6.3 Tenth Day of Absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child has not been seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing' their education. Parents/carers have a responsibility to ensure their contact details are up to date.

6.4 Continued or Ongoing Absence (Persistent Absence)

If your child misses 10% (equivalent to 3 weeks in a year) or more schooling across the school year (or if attendance drops below 90% over a number of weeks) for whatever reason, they are defined as a persistent absentee. Whether this absence is authorised or unauthorised the school will invite parent/carers to discuss the issues with the Pastoral Year Co-ordinator, Assistant Head or Family liaison officer and agree an action plan to support the child and/or parent/carer.

Student-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.

Data collected within school is used internally to track the attendance of individual students, identify whether or not there are particular groups of students whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those students identified as needing intervention and support. Leadership team monitor attendance through weekly KPI meetings and regular (half termly) reports are presented to Governors.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion)

- Will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school.
- Ensure that attendance is recorded accurately and analysed.
- Lead the Attendance and Safeguarding Teams to ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.



- Has a weekly strategic planning meeting with the Headteacher to plan activity for the next week and review impact from the previous week.
- Has a daily briefing meeting with the PYC and Safeguarding Team at 8:20am.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parent/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Pastoral Year Coordinators, the Safeguarding Team, Family and Early Help Co-ordinator or the Assistant Head will meet with parents to discuss and implement plans to support a student's return to good attendance. Where families continue to work with us we will always seek to avoid the use of enforcement measures e.g. Penalty Notices. Where there is a lack of co-operation or the absence is being condoned inappropriately, then we will seek to use enforcement measures.

7.1 The Governing Body

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 students and issues fixed penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 Pastoral Year Co-ordinators (PYC)

When a student's attendance becomes a concern the PYC will:

- Communicate attendance with both the student and parents.
- Record the outcome of communications on CPOMS.
- Liaise and consult with the Attendance and safeguarding Teams and SLT to put together a plan to improve attendance. The plan may also include the completion of an Early Help Assessment.
- Promote & reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a student's absence and monitor any safeguarding issues.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.



- Consult with the AHT where there is no improvement so that further options may be considered, including the involvement of the Family and Early Help Co-ordinator.

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. They will:

- To record attendance in the first 10 minutes of lesson/tutor time.
- Promote and reward good attendance.
- Liaise with the Attendance team on matters of attendance & punctuality.
- Record any interventions/communications on CPOMS
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a students' absence.
- Support students with absence to engage with their learning once they return using the dept "we missed you" strategy.
- Follow up unexplained absences and keep register codes updated.
- Contact parents about attendance concerns & record outcomes on CPOMS.
- Work with the school Attendance team to tackle persistent absence.
- 6th form tutors will communicate attendance to both the student and parents.

7.5 Attendance Administrator

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level.
- Keep all school register codes up to date.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Collate interventions on absence, keeping records of letters sent and penalty notices issued.
- Send out warning letters prior to penalty notice.
- Collate all leave of absence request forms & inform parents of the school's decision to authorize or unauthorise absence.

7.6 Students

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.
- Go to all lessons and Tutor time on time.
- Take responsibility for signing in/out in Student Services if they are late or leaving school site during school hours.
- Provide evidence following absence or appointments.



7.7 Parents/Carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school and to lessons is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law. Therefore, parents/carers will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence and all subsequent days.
- Discuss with College Leader/Tutor any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year for their child.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.
- Adhere to the Home-School agreement available here: Home School Agreement.

So.... How you can help to ensure your child maintains good attendance to school:

- Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules.
- Ensure your child arrives at school on time between 8:45 and 8:50.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness.
- Take truancy seriously – if your child is not attending school or lessons, they may be putting themselves at risk – Who are they with? What are they doing?
- Take family holidays outside term time.
- Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework).
- Attend parents' evenings and school events.
- Praise and reward your child's achievements at school.
- Always support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school – staff are there to help and will be supportive.

If you require any support or guidance with attendance issues, please contact Chris Green on cgreen@lynghallschool.co.uk

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion) and the Inclusion Governor. It will be presented to the Governing Body for review and ratification.