



## **ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2023-2024**

The Assistant Head of College responsible for Attendance & Punctuality is Michael Williams

### **STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE**

We believe that good attendance and punctuality at The Leigh Academy are vital to the wellbeing and future prospects of all our students. Attendance and punctuality are intrinsically linked to our academy strategy for raising achievement. This policy provides the framework within which all staff, parents, students, carers and external agencies ensure that high attendance and excellent punctuality are ensured.

### **AIMS**

- To improve the overall attendance of students at The Leigh Academy and reduce unauthorised absence
- To reduce the levels of persistent absence
- To develop a learning environment for the academy where students are encouraged to attend regularly and to be punctual
- To make attendance a priority for students, parents, staff and governors
- To create a framework which defines roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To create a rigorous system for monitoring and analysing attendance across the academy
- To provide support and advice to parents so that they can help their child return to school
- To recognise the needs of individual students when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence
- To ensure that attendance data is accurate and regularly generated so that:
  - Students can be praised and rewarded for their good attendance
  - Parents/carers can be quickly informed of issues
  - Individual students and groups can be monitored easily
  - Causes of absence and issues of inclusion and equal opportunity can be readily identified
  - Targets for individual students, groups of students and the academy can be set and regularly reviewed

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Principal** takes overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the

Policy by:

- Giving attendance a high profile with students, staff and parents/carers
- Identifying clear roles and responsibilities and ensuring that staff have the time and resources to fulfill them
- Ensuring that there is sufficient funding to support reward systems



**The Academy Leadership Team will:**

- Through the Head of College oversee, coordinate and monitor the policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality throughout the academy
- Ensure that the learning environment on offer to students, through the curriculum, behaviour policy and reintegration procedures, create the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality and low levels of fixed term suspensions.
- Ensure that academy expectations in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality are communicated clearly to all stakeholders
- Give attendance a high profile at academy Leadership Team and staff meetings
- Ensure that procedures are followed across their areas of responsibility
- Analyse and act swiftly in response to data on attendance and punctuality
- Support Middle Leaders in reviewing data, setting targets and action planning to support tutors to improve levels of attendance and punctuality
- Be visible in areas of responsibility, welcoming students, praising achievement and ensuring that any incidents are quickly dealt with so that all students feel safe in their areas
- Lead college lineups ensuring excellent conduct and routines
- Monitor for internal truancy. Look for patterns of absence and consider the impact of the curriculum upon attendance alongside other causes
- Ensure that students on long term absence/exclusion access the curriculum and are supported on their return
- Ensure regular liaison with the SSM, tutors and SENCo to ensure procedures are being followed for students with continued low attendance
- Ensure that attendance is regularly discussed in assemblies and that students with high levels of and/or improved attendance are praised and rewarded regularly
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance and punctuality.

**The Head of College responsible for Attendance will:**

- Ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the academy computerised registration systems for attendance and punctuality.
- Assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality, through for example, organising attendance meetings with parents/carers and external agencies, making home visits
- Regularly liaise with the AWO to ensure their work persistent absentees is having an impact

**SENCO will:**

- Support the academy in giving attendance a high profile
- Support the College Leadership teams to ensure that procedures are followed across their Colleges and offer advice as appropriate
- Ensure that students with SEN on long-term absence access the curriculum and are supported on their return
- Liaise with external and internal agencies to ensure that students and parents/carers are given relevant support to improve their attendance, as directed by the Deputy Principal and Head of College
- Attend meetings for students with Statements of Special Educational Needs/EHC Plans as requested by Head of College
- Liaise with the Student Service Managers with regards to any issues relevant to student attendance



**Form Tutors will:**

- Support the academy in giving attendance a high profile
- Ensure that the register is taken daily at the correct time, using the correct codes
- Ensure that students who have been absent from the academy are made to feel welcome on their return
- Encourage their students and tutees to take responsibility for their attendance and punctuality through monitoring and reinforcing the need for high levels of attendance and excellent punctuality
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance

**Teachers will:**

- Take the register at the beginning of every lesson/registration period in accordance with the procedures outlined in this policy
- Make attendance a high profile by praising students with high attendance and relating this to attainment
- Set work for students who are absent for a long period on the Google Classroom
- Ensure that systems are in place so that work missed can be easily made up
- Ensure that the classroom continues to be a safe environment where plans are made to meet individual student needs and lessons continue to be as relevant and stimulating as possible
- Refer concerns and action taken to relevant staff
- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance

**Support Staff will:**

- Be the very best of role models in terms of attendance
- Be positive and encouraging to students, recognising achievement and good attendance
- Pass on any concerns to relevant staff

**Students will:**

- Maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality
- Support their fellow students and thereby their tutor group and college in winning awards that relate to attendance and punctuality
- Arrive on site by 8:20 am each academy day, correctly dressed in uniform
- Attend lineup and tutor time on time
- Attend all lessons on time
- Ensure parents/carers provide proper explanation of their absences by email, telephone call or official documents as evidence, and follow the Academy procedures for dealing with attendance and punctuality, immediately during or after a period of absence or unavoidable late arrival for the Academy day
- Be prepared to make up missed work and ask for help if this is required
- Sign out with reception if they have to attend an appointment (evidence must be provided to reception and college admin)

**Parents/Carers will:**

- Be fully supportive of the academy with regard to attendance and punctuality as part of signing up to the Home Academy Agreement
- Encourage students to leave home in plenty of time in the morning
- Ensure that students are in the correct Academy uniform
- Inform the Academy if a student is unwell or going to be late. Give an indication as to when the student will be well enough to return.
- Make routine medical/dental appointments out of school time
- Arrange for holidays to be taken out of term time. Should this be impossible, application for a holiday must be made to the Principal



## ABSENCE

Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attends the Academy on a regular and full-time basis. Every half day absence has to be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised. The Academy must record the reason for any half day absence. Unauthorised absence such as truancy will lead to sanctions being taken against students or in exceptional cases, extended periods of unauthorised absence may lead to legal action being taken against parents.

Under normal circumstances, the only reason a student should miss any lessons is if they are too ill to attend. This is an example of an authorised absence, ie, students have missed a morning or afternoon session for a valid reason.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. This includes keeping students away from lessons unnecessarily, truancy and absences, which the Academy considers to have not been properly explained.

The Education (Pupil Regulations) 2006 and the DfES Circular 10/99 state that a leave of absence can only be granted at the discretion of the Academy Governing Body/Principal. The Academy does not encourage or support any holidays during term time but will consider a leave of absence on compassionate grounds upon request.

The Student Service Manager and College SLT work with the Attendance Welfare Officer in overseeing any such requests from parents. Each request will be considered individually taking into account: the age(s) of the student(s), the time of year, overall attendance percentage(s) and the student(s) progress. If the Academy does not agree to the request then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If the leave of absence involves any travel arrangement, these must not be booked until permission is granted. The leave of absence application form (in Appendix 8) must be requested in writing to the student's form tutor. The SSM will pass the request to the College SLT along with the recent attendance certificate and any other relevant information. The College SLT will consider the request taking into account:

- The student's previous attendance history;
- The time of the year regards any public or internal examinations;
- Attendance and punctuality in the current academic year;
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made.

A letter of approval (or a letter stating the request is not approved) will then be sent to the parent/guardian clearly stipulating that approval is only given in these exceptional circumstances and that no further requests will be considered. Parents/Guardians are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed, a fixed penalty notice could be issued.

**On receipt of an application for leave on the appropriate form together with any supporting documentation, consideration will be given to the circumstance. A letter outlining the decision of the school will be sent to parent/carers within seven days (Appendices 9 & 10). Any leave of absence that is not authorised is very likely to result in a Penalty Notice being issued by KCC. The Penalty Notice carries a fine of £120.**

All data relating to attendance will be kept for a minimum period of three years from the last date of entry.



## UNEXPLAINED CONTINUOUS ABSENCE

### 1st Day of Absence

All students not seen during tutor time should be marked as an unexplained (N) absence, unless tutors have prior knowledge and proof of the reason for the absence – which should be advised to the Attendance Officer immediately. The College Admin will email on the first day of absence if no explanation has been received.

### 10th Day of Absence

A CME referral (Child Missing in Education) will be made after the student's 10th day of consecutive absence if the parent/carer & student **did not** contact the academy about absence, the student has not returned to the Academy and there has not been a valid reason for absence received.

## PERSISTENT ABSENCE

'If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.' (*Education Act 1996*). Persistent absence has been defined by the Department for Education as all attendance falling below 90%.

## PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION

### Tutor Registration

Morning registration sets the tone for the rest of the academy day. Tutors should prepare to be at line up to meet their tutees and take the register by 8.35 am. It is the tutor's responsibility to formally take the register and this task must never be delegated to students. As with any lesson, we expect tutors to ensure that students are in appropriate uniform, in their designated seats with bags placed on the floor. The register will formally close at 8.50 am. Registers will be taken by computer, where there is a breakdown of this system paper registers can be collected by the tutor.

The register taken during period 5 will act as the afternoon registration.

### Subject Registration

It is essential that an electronic subject register is taken at the start of every lesson. This will ensure that the academy is able to monitor and reduce truancy from lessons. If it is found that a student has been truanting then this will be formally recorded as an absence.

## PUNCTUALITY

It is vitally important teachers and form tutors are punctual to lessons/tutor sessions, otherwise this gives the impression to students that late arrival is acceptable. Tutors, teachers, middle leaders and SLT must reinforce the importance of punctuality when communicating with students and parents.

Truancy is not tolerated at the Academy and will be dealt with swiftly in line with the sanctions detailed in the behaviour policy.

With reference to The Leigh Academy Behaviour for Policy, detentions will be issued to those students who arrive late to the Academy in the morning or late to lessons during the day. The system for maintaining a consistent approach across tutor groups and subject areas for dealing with poor punctuality has been agreed and the following sanctions will be applied to students. These sanctions will be reset each module.

Late to the Academy (arriving after 8:30am):

- 1-3 lates - S1 15 minute detention (notifications from BROMCOM)
- 4-5 lates - S2 30 minute detention (phone call and letter)
- 6+ lates - S3 60 minute detention (meeting with parents)



## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The academy will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through the Head of College with responsibility for attendance who will oversee the generation of attendance data, which will be analysed by year group and student group, reporting to the Academy Leadership Team where there are any key issues. The Academy Leadership Team will analyse the data to look for patterns and generate the required plans of action to improve attendance and/or punctuality, which will feature in the Academy Performance Agreement.