



Absence, Attendance and Registration Policy

Introduction

Leighton Park School believes that for students to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by the school, they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Poor attendance can also have a negative effect on personal and social development amongst students. A child missing from school is a safeguarding and welfare concern as it is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or may indicate that a student is at serious risk of harm.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear, consistent framework which conforms to statutory requirements and promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of students, as well as outlining clear procedures for identifying and addressing situations where students fail to attend regularly, punctually or go missing.

Statutory framework:

- School attendance: DfE advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities -> Working Together to Improve School Attendance (August 2024)
- Guidance published by the ISI forming parts of the Independent Schools statutory regulations (ISSRs)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education (2024)

Staff should refer to the Registration manual for further guidance on our procedures.

Absence, Attendance and Registration is overseen by the Deputy Head Pastoral, Nicky Hardy, with day-to-day procedures covered by Housemaster/Housemistress (HMs), Heads of Section (HOS), Tutors and the Attendance Manager, Michaela Kuhne.

Attendance expectations

Absence from school is a contributing factor in low student achievement. Whilst individual circumstances may be considered as special cases, 96% attendance and above is considered a standard that all children should achieve.

Attendance Strategy:



96-100%

Attendance levels are good to excellent

The school will provide positive encouragement/incentives/rewards to maintain high levels of attendance.



93-95.9%

Attendance levels beginning to cause concern

The school will analyse data and provide reports to regularly monitor attendance/reasons for absence, patterns etc. Parents will be advised that future absences are not to be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.



90-92.9%

Attendance levels causing more significant concern

Depending on the nature of the absence, parents may be invited to a meeting/attendance panel at school and an Attendance Action Plan/contract is agreed. A date for plan/contract to be reviewed agreed at the meeting (three to four weeks), individual attendance target set



Below
90%* 85%**

Attendance decreased to an unacceptable level – below persistent absence rate – despite interventions by school staff

*Below 90% – depending on the nature of the absence, a referral may be made to Family Support Services if complex issues are identified.

**Below 85% – depending on the nature of the absence, a referral may be made to the LA for further advice regarding support, fixed penalty notices and possible prosecution.

Responsibilities of Parents

At Leighton Park we see education as a partnership between the student, family and the School. We are committed to providing the highest quality of education for our students and we look to parents to support this objective. Parents/Guardians with a child of compulsory age, have a legal duty to make sure their child receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and ability (and to any special education needs they may have). Compulsory school age lasts from the term after a child's fifth birthday until their eighteenth birthday.

1. All students are required to be in school by 8.10 am, if they are not having breakfast. Day students should not be dropped off before 7.20 am. The formal school day ends at 4.15 pm or after cocurricular commitments and for many will finish when school transport departs at 6 pm (or 4.45 pm on Fridays).
2. Parents are responsible for informing the school on any occasion when their child is unable to attend school, providing the reason for non-attendance. This should be done as far as possible in advance and by the very latest by 8.00 am on each morning of the absence. Please use the Absence Request Form within My School Portal. Alternatively, a phone call to Michaela Kuhne in Student Services on 0118 987 9503 no later than 8.00 am is also acceptable
3. For other leaves of absence such as medical appointments or other exceptional circumstances such as attending a funeral or wedding, religious observance, elective surgery, or involvement in a regional or national extracurricular competition which require absence of longer than half a day, parents will need to submit the Leave Request Form via My School Portal to seek permission. This will automatically be sent to the appropriate Head of Section and Tutor.

Please be aware, permission will not be granted for early leave or late arrival at School at the beginning and end of terms.

For the avoidance of doubt, early departure or late arrival for flights home or for holiday, do not constitute acceptable grounds for authorising absence and such requests will not be granted. Term dates are published on the website a year in advance.

4. If a student is being collected early due to an unforeseen circumstance (eg emergency dental appointment), the parents must inform Student Services as early as possible of the pick up time and place and the student must sign out at Student Services before leaving school site.

5. When parents/guardians are to be away from home overnight during term, they are required as part of their contract with the school, to inform the school of the name and contact number of a temporary guardian. This information should be provided to the Head of Section and should be copied to the relevant Housemaster, Housemistress, if they are a boarding student.

Responsibilities of the Students

Students have a responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well to arrive at school in time for morning registration at 8.15 am each day during term time. Please note this is not before 7.20 am in the morning. If, for any reason, a student needs to leave the school site during the school day, he/she must seek and receive permission from his/her Head of Section, or when ill, the School Nurse. Students must always sign out before they leave school in the day, via Student Services.

Failure to attend school regularly or punctually or failing to attend registration without good reason or leaving school without permission constitute breaches of the school's Behaviour and Discipline Policy and may lead to formal disciplinary action being taken.

Students are not normally allowed to leave the site during the school day unless accompanied by a member of staff, or a trip, a visit or a sporting fixture, the dates of which are published in the calendar or will have been notified to you in advance. Sixth formers are allowed to leave school for driving lessons provided that they sign in and out at Student Services and have their Head of Sections' permission, in accordance with the school's procedure on driving lessons.

Responsibilities of the School

The School reflects the changes to the law on keeping school attendance and admission registers including a revised set of codes, granting leaves of absence and access to, and sharing of, attendance information introduced through the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. (see codes in appendix)

Teachers take and maintain an accurate School Attendance Register of all students formally twice each day throughout term time: once at 8.15 am and once at the start of Period 5.

Lesson attendance is recorded for every lesson.

Teachers ensure they advise Student Services and other relevant members of staff if a student will be absent from a lesson due to an event ie STEAM, meeting etc at least 24 hours in advance and alert them if the student does not arrive for this particular event.

Parents of students who have not arrived at school by the time the register closes and for whom no reason for absence has been given to school, will be contacted by school staff to ascertain the student's whereabouts.

The school will follow up any absences to:

- ascertain the reason
- ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken

- identify whether the absence is approved or not
- identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system

The school will inform the LA and/or Children's Social Services as appropriate, immediately, if:

- A single absence raises child protection concerns (see the Missing Student Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)
- A child has 10 days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence)
- A child of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the school register when the next school is not known. In this last case, the School will report the circumstances, as soon as possible after the grounds for deletion are met, to the LA in which the student lives and in any event before the student's name is deleted from the register.
- The school has regular attendance meetings with Reading Borough Council in relation to students causing concern.

Boarders (Full, Weekly and Flexi)

The Boarding House is at the centre of a student's life at school. All students are cared for by a Housemaster/mistress and a team of House staff. Together, they will be responsible for students during term time, including ensuring that he/she is safely occupied outside normal school hours.

The school expects students to 'sign out' when they leave their House and 'sign in' on return outside of the formal teaching hours, 8.15 am to 4.15 pm. This is to ensure that we always know the whereabouts of every student, when leaving the school site.

The school expects students to live with parents/guardians when he/she is away from school during the week as well as half term during term time. Parents must give authority to the student's Housemaster/ mistress before he/she leaves the school to stay with another family.

Parents must telephone the school if the student is taken ill during a holiday and will not be returning on time. We will always telephone the home if a student is more than three hours late in returning from a holiday or a period of sanctioned leave.

The term dates are published a year in advance to allow booking of flights without disrupting student's education. **We therefore expect students to arrive punctually on the first day of term, and not to leave school before the end of term.** It is important that parents / guardians let the Housemaster know the exact time that flights will be arriving in the UK each time a student returns to school after a long leave break, or at the start of a new term.

Possible outcomes of poor attendance

Parents are committing an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school or otherwise. Prosecution could result in a fine, a jail sentence of up to three months or a community sentence. Alternatively, Local Authority Education Welfare Officers and Police Officers have the authority to issue penalty notices to parents. Where parents need support to prevent their child from truanting or habitually arriving late, we will do our utmost to help. Where parents fail to ensure regular attendance or do not engage with support, a parenting order may be requested by the Local Authority or imposed by Magistrates. This is not a voluntary agreement and requires parents attend parenting classes for a maximum period of up to 12 weeks. The order may be given for a period of up to 12

months and would require parents to have regular contact with a supervising officer – usually the Education Welfare Officer.

Statutory Advice

All Independent schools - Regulation 3(17) “The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006”.

For Boarding Schools – NMS 20.5: “Staff know the whereabouts of boarders (or know how to find their whereabouts) in their charge at all times.”. NMS 20.6: “Staff working within the school know and implement the school’s policy, and any local protocols, in relation to boarders going missing and understand their role in implementing that policy. Staff actively search for boarders who are missing, including working with police where appropriate.”.

Every school is required by law to maintain two separate registers, an Admissions register, known as the “School Roll”, and an Attendance register. School Inspectors are required to check both registers and assure themselves that the requirements of the regulations are being met.

The Regulations covering school admission and attendance are very prescriptive, reflecting the importance that successive Governments have attached to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age attend school. Schools are required to ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day, at the start of the morning session, and during the afternoon for all day students. The Regulations specify the contents of both registers and the manner in which they are operated and maintained.

Boarding students are covered by the Boarding Standards: National Minimum Standards. Standard 20 places a legal requirement upon staff who have boarders in their charge to know their whereabouts at all times (or to know how to find their whereabouts), e.g. by operating a signing in and signing out system when boarders leave the school, and by registering attendance in the boarding house. This is done through the REACH Boarding Software and regular roll calls.

The School Register

- A student’s name must be included in the register from the beginning of the first day on which the student is to attend Leighton Park.
- The register is to be completed at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session.
- The register must show whether the student is:
 - I. present;
 - II. absent;
 - III. attending an approved educational activity outside school (approved by the school and supervised by a person also approved by the school including work experience or sporting activity);
 - IV. unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the School site or part of it; unavailability of transport provided by the school, or local authority, where the home is not within walking distance);
 - V. taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the School; unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause; observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs);

VI. taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken; the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

A student must not be marked present at the point registration occurs unless he/she is physically present.

Author: Nicky Hardy, Deputy Head: Pastoral

Sign off: Matthew Judd, Head

Date of last review: September 2024

Date of next review: September 2025

Publication: portal.leightonpark.com

Appendix:

Attendance Codes 2024/25

Code	iSAMS Description	DfE Description/ Explanation
/	Present (AM)	present for school morning session
\	Present (PM)	present for school afternoon session
B	Attending and other approved education activity	Attending and other approved education activity. Not applicable for virtual learning
C	Other authorised circumstances	Leave absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Leave of absence – regulated performance	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
C2	Leave of absence – Temporary part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
D	Dual registered	Dual registered to another school
E	Suspended or excluded without alternative provision	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence as pupil on a family holiday, not agreed, or is taking days more than an agreed family holiday
I	Illness	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
J1	Leave of absence – Interview for employment or transfer to another educational institution	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
K	Alternative provision provided by LA	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
L	Late (before registers closed)	Late arrival before the register closed
M	Medical or dental appointment	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Reason absence not yet established

O	Absence in other or unknown circumstance	Absence in other or unknown circumstance
P	Participating in sports activity	Participating in sports activity
Q	Unable to attend – lack of access arrangements	Unable to attend the school because of lack of access arrangements
R	Religious observance	Religious observance
S	Study leave for public examination	Study leave for public examination
T	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes	Traveling with parent for occupational purposes
U	Late (after registers closed)	Late (after registers closed)
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Attending an educational visit or trip

W	Attending work experience	Attending work experience
X	Not required to attend; non-compulsory school age pupil	Not required to attend; non-compulsory school age pupil
Y1	Unable to attend – Transport not available	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being provided
Y2	Unable to attend – widespread travel emergency	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend – unavoidable partial closure	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed.
Y4	Unable to attend – unavoidable full closure	Unable to attend due to the whole schools' site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend – criminal justice detention	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend – Public Health Guidance / Law	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend – Unavoidable other than Y1- Y6	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause.
Z	Pupil not on roll	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure	Planned whole school closure