



1 INTRODUCTION

Lancaster School is committed to providing an effective and efficient education for all students. We believe that all students benefit from education and from regular school attendance. We will try to ensure that all students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that impede full attendance are identified and acted upon as soon as possible.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reducing absence and persistent absence is a vital and integral part of the school's work to:

- promote students' welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every student has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that students succeed whilst at school; and
- ensure that students have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

Parents/Carers

Lancaster School wishes to work in partnership with parents/carers to achieve good school attendance. The expected minimum target attendance for each student registered at this school is 95%.

Parents/carers have responsibilities, which are outlined in the Home School Agreement.

Parents/carers of students of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996).

Regular attendance includes students being punctual and persistent lateness can be seen as absence.

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of a student's absence. They should state the reason for their absence and also the date on which they are expected to return to school. On the student's return to school the parent/carer should write a note to explain the absence, to be given to the class teacher, in addition to the original telephone call.

If an appointment is necessary for medical reasons, these should be made outside school time when possible; the appointment card should be shown in advance to the class teacher. We do understand however, that many students have appointments at hospitals in London and would encourage students to return to school on the day of the appointment, if possible to do so.

Students

Students are expected to attend school regularly and punctually and be appropriately prepared for lessons. The expected attendance target for all students is a minimum of 95%.

3 THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body has responsibility for school attendance and will be familiar with the current legislation. They will be acquainted with the registration system in the school. They will request the Headteacher to report on attendance at each Governing Body meeting in order to monitor attendance. Governors will participate in training on attendance issues.

4 THE HEADTEACHER

The Headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for attendance and will ensure that the school meets the legal requirements, sets required targets for attendance and unauthorised absence and publishes attendance figures.

The Headteacher will ensure that parents/carers and students are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality at the point of admission. This will be supported in the signing of the Home School Agreement.

The Headteacher has a duty under The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 1995 to make a return to the Local Authority where there is a poor pattern of attendance or a student has been absent for more than two weeks.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council LA requires that returns of all students with 85% or less attendance be made each term. The information in these returns may be used by the LA to inform parents/carers of the level of their son/daughter's attendance, in addition to contact with parents/carers by the school and whatever the reason for their son/daughter's absence.

5 SENIOR LEADERSHIP

A member of the senior leadership team will take responsibility for registration procedures, monitoring overall attendance and advising the Headteacher and Governors.

6 SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER

The School Business Manager will be responsible for ensuring that class teachers keep registers in the correct manner. It should be noted that the Education Act 1996 s.434 (6) states that a person who contravenes or fails to comply with any requirements imposed by regulations is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine.

The senior member of staff will be responsible for supporting class teachers in following up all attendance issues.

7 POST REGISTRATION TRUANCY

Spot checks on post registration truancy will be carried out at regular intervals and all discrepancies will be reported to the relevant class teacher, who will follow up in accordance with the procedures for other unauthorised absence.

8 PARTNERSHIP

We will discuss with students and contact parents/carers if there are concerns, likewise within the partnership that we at Lancaster School wish to have with our students and parents/carers, we expect to be contacted by parents/carers if they have any concerns about their son/daughter's attendance, or any other matter. The school will arrange to meet with parents/carers who have concerns as a matter of priority and work with them in the interest of their son/daughter.

9 THE CLASS TEACHER

The class teacher has a vital role to play in raising the attendance and punctuality in the school. The class teacher will ensure that registration periods are orderly and calm and that the register is called promptly and correctly. Registers will be returned to the office as soon as the registration period is finished so that they are available for inspection by local authority nominees, information and data reading processes.

The Clerical Assistant will contact parents/carers if absence is not notified. If nothing is heard in three days a letter will be sent to enquire the reason for absence. If nothing is heard the class teacher should notify the SLT, who will make the decision whether to invite the parents/carers into school. If the absence continues for two weeks the student should be referred to the Headteacher. If there are any Safeguarding concerns the designated teacher for Child Protection should be informed on the first day of absence. The class teacher will also notify the Headteacher of any concerns after they have contacted parents/carers and their efforts have failed to achieve improvement. After the Headteacher has worked with the parent/carer to achieve good attendance, a letter will then be sent to parents/carers to explain that as the school has worked with them and failed to sustain an improvement in attendance they may be referred to the Early Intervention Team.

Class teachers will be responsible for welcoming students back to school on their return from absence. They will also notify other staff members as soon as possible if a student is experiencing particular difficulties that led to absence.

10 ATTENDANCE CONCERNS

When a student of Lancaster School is absent for no apparent reason it is the duty of all staff to consider possible causes. When considering reasons they should bear in mind factors that could relate to safeguarding, behaviour and discipline and the anti-bullying policies. The class teacher will have a particular role to play in identifying reasons for absence and addressing such issues, with the support of the whole school staff.

Where attendance issues have been identified the following stages will be used to resolve the situation:

Stage One

Where attendance is identified as a concern by the school, the student and parents/carers will be invited to discuss the issue and school-based strategies used to try to resolve the situation.

Stage Two

If the situation is not resolved by Stage One intervention, the school will invite the student and parents/carers to discuss the issue with other professionals. Where parents/carers are giving ill health as a reason for continued absence without medical verification, a referral will be made to the School Health Service or permission to contact the student's GP will be requested in order for the school to continue to authorise absence.

Stage Three

When a student's attendance is not resolved by action at Stage One or Two within the school, a referral will be made to the Early Intervention Team. Parents/carers will be informed of this referral.

Stage Four

At this stage action will be taken by the LA through the Early Intervention Team to resolve the situation. This may include direct work with the student and family, referral to other agencies and or legal action. There may also be referral to other provision aimed to support the student to make a return to full attendance.

