

Attendance and Punctuality Statement of Practice



Lees Brook
Academy

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Introduction

This document summarises Lees Brook Academy's ethos and operational procedures for attendance and punctuality in line with the Trust policy for Attendance and Punctuality.

Related Policies, Statements of Practice and procedures

- Behaviour & Exclusions Policy
- Behaviour statement of practice
- Safeguarding statement of practice
- Safeguarding Policy

Statement of Practice

At Lees Brook Academy's, attendance and punctuality are a key priority and we are persistent in our pursuit for statistics in both of these areas to be high for all groups of students. It is evidenced that strong attendance and punctuality have a direct correlation upon a student's academic outcomes therefore we are insistent on our daily expectations of students being in the school each day and on time. It is a parent and carers legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends the school regularly and we value this support in meeting these responsibilities daily and on time. Where required we do ask that parents and carers support any disciplinary actions that are taken in order to ensure that their child is a successful student.

All of our staff team give a consistently clear message on why students are expected inside the school each day and the importance of being punctual to the school and all lessons across the day. We use an online system called Go4Schools to record, monitor and track all of our student's attendance and punctuality and parents and carers can access this data at any time to also review their child's performance in these areas. Below is an outline of key staff and their roles placed in supporting our students with their attendance and punctuality to the school;

Role of the tutor

Tutors play a very important pastoral role for all students and central to this is ensuring that key messages around attendance and punctuality are frequently given within the form group. Any concerns a tutor may have with a student's attendance or punctuality will be forwarded in the first instance to the student's year leader for further enquiry. Tutors will have regular conversations with those students falling within the attendance bracket of 95-100% to help encourage regular attendance as expected and outlined in the Trust's Policy.

Role of the class teacher

The class teacher uses G4S to record all students attendance to every lesson and registers are taken within the first 15 minutes of each period so we are tracking all of our students movement and can quickly and proactively address any absence. It is vital that students are in every timetable lesson they have in order to ensure their progress is strong and they are not missing vital learning opportunities.

Role of the Year Leader

It is the role of the Year Leader to ensure that attendance and punctuality are constantly a high priority and students are aware of their own attendance percentage but also that of their year group on a weekly basis. This is not only done via daily visits to tutor groups and reviewing group performance but also in weekly assemblies where key analysis of data is given to the year group as a whole. These staff monitor all students' attendance however specific focus and intervention is on those within the 95-90% bracket.

Role of the Attendance Administrator

This staff member supports our pastoral team and Assistant Principal responsible for attendance and punctuality by maintaining regular communication with home and school to ensure positive patterns of punctuality are evident for all students. They manage the recording of lateness and allocation of late detention (after school). The Attendance Administrator also manages the positive points system with rewarding high levels of attendance and punctuality, supports with recording first day calls, sending initial correspondence regarding unknown reasons for absence and holiday related absence (after consultation with the Assistant Principal) and also has responsibilities for exclusion attendance data.

Role of the Attendance Improvement Officer

This staff member supports our pastoral team and Assistant Principal responsible for attendance and punctuality by maintaining regular communication with home and school to ensure positive patterns of attendance are evident for all students. They contact parent/carer of students with unexplained absences and record on G4S. They meet regularly with the Assistant Principal to review data and specifically monitor the attendance of those students within the 90% and below bracket. They also contacts home after the second day a student is absent to offer support for their return and interrupt any long periods of absence. They are responsible for analysing and providing data to inform interventions (such as attendance concern letters, home visits, referrals to SEMH support services and external agencies), facilitating meetings with students and parents/carers and the collation of evidence and communication with the Education Welfare Service for referrals for persistent unauthorised absence, unauthorised leave of absence and Children Missing In Education, and also other agencies when appropriate. The Attendance Improvement Officer also has responsibilities for the promotion of good attendance and punctuality in the form of communications and competitions.

Role of the Assistant Principal

The Assistant Principal has an overview of attendance for all groups of students and constantly strives for above national average trends for all students. Through weekly line management meetings with Year Leaders and the Attendance Improvement Officer, all absences are tracked and monitored in addition to those students that have been late to the School. Should there be a need for intervention then this is initiated by the Assistant Principal and in extreme cases via the Education Welfare Service.

Role of the Principal

The Principal reviews key data in this area with the Assistant Principal and strategically plans intervention(s) where needs are highlighted. They will also support when parent/carer meetings are needed and attendance contracts are being issued to ensure compliance and prevention of further concerns.

Rewards

The role of rewards and praise is key to promoting our values and celebrating those students that do meet our expectation of being in the School 100% of the time. We endeavour to reward every student each week that they achieve both 100% attendance and punctuality through the allocation of positive points using Go4schools, this acknowledgement is also complimented at the end of every term where we issue further rewards for such achievements. We believe that rewarding outstanding attendance and punctuality helps us to promote Lees Brook Academy's core values and enables the students to understand the importance of positive attendance and punctuality within all that they do.

Sanctions

As a school we set rigorous targets for both attendance and punctuality and are committed to monitoring and improving both areas for all of our students. When a student is late to the school there are clear sanctions in

place to challenge the student however communication is made home also to offer support should it be needed to prevent further lates. We expect 100% attendance and punctuality and constantly remind and promote this priority to all students, however, when a student does not meet our expectations, there are clear sanctions and follow up actions that all of our staff follow an example being an immediate detention for any student that is late to the school.

Procedures for students required to leave the School early

Wherever possible routine appointments are expected to be made outside of the School day i.e. doctor's appointment, dental check-ups however, we do acknowledge that sometimes this isn't always possible for example for an orthodontist appointment or hospital appointment. Where there is such a request for leave we ask that parent/carers make this request known to their child's year leader by writing or email, a minimum of 48 hours in advance and show proof of the appointment i.e. copy of the letter or appointment card. The child's year leader will inform our attendance administrator ahead of the appointment and then the student is expected to report to reception and sign out which is recorded in the early departure log. Without this communication and evidence, we will not allow a student to leave the School. Should a student become ill during the School day then the student's year leader or a member of the student Services will contact home and gain consent to send home with parent/carers asked to collect their child.

Procedures for managing a holiday request during term time or leave of absence

Parents and carers are made aware of the School policy on taking holidays during the term through the School's website in addition to a letter sent at the start of each academic year. Parents and carers are not permitted to take holidays during the School term (all term dates are also on the School website). For any request of leave during School term time, parents and carers will be required to send a written request to the Principal stating clearly what the 'exceptional circumstance' is and length of absence being requested. The decision to authorise the absence will be made by the Principal. In all but very extraordinary circumstances, such absence will not be authorised and parents/ carers may incur a penalty notice issued by the Local Authority at the School's request. If the parent/carer is found to take an unauthorised leave of absence without permission from the School, this will be registered as a 'G' code and the parent/carers may be liable for prosecution and incur a Penalty Notice

The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion. Parents must pay £60 if they pay within 28 days; or £120 if they pay within 42 days.

Amendments to 2007 regulations will reduce the timescales for paying a penalty notice. Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

Procedures for Children Missing in Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area and we endeavour to maintain a close relationship with the local authority in order to ensure the safety of all of our students. A student going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect and so we will always follow robust procedures to ensure we are monitoring and reporting any students missing on repeat occasions to help minimise risk of future missing occurrences. We will always ensure we follow our safeguarding practises to alert key agencies and awareness for students that may travel to conflict zones or we believe may be at risk of FGM or forced marriage (further procedural information is contained in our Safeguarding policy).

A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School and college staff should follow the school's or college's procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education, particularly

on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

We shall ensure we make the local authority aware of any student on our register that triggers the following;

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education.
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered.
- Have been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before ceasing to be of compulsory school age, and neither he/she nor his/her parent has indicated the intention to continue to attend the school after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period.
- Have been permanently excluded.

Following up absence

The academy will follow up all absences and will ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. The academy will always contact parents/carers as soon as possible to alert them that their child has not arrived at the academy if the absence is unexplained. This is usually a phone call to ensure the student is safe and to clarify arrangements that can be made to ensure the student returns to the academy as quickly as possible. A member of staff may visit the student's home to discuss attendance. The academy may use the ATTEND framework to support in the pupil's attendance improving.

Strategies to promoting attendance

The academy regularly reviews the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of students of all abilities and support is implemented to ensure they can access the learning, thus motivating them to attend. The academy has a praise culture, therefore attendance awards are used to promote good attendance. Praise strategies such as reward points, postcards, prize draws, badges and principal breakfast may be used. This is alongside half termly initiatives to raise attendance. There is a weekly inclusion meeting to discuss vulnerable pupils and review interventions and barriers