



ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 2023 –Version 13

REVIEW DATE – September 2024

Larches High School Attendance Policy

Rationale

To develop a whole school strategy that raises the profile of attendance in order to maximise the education opportunities and outcomes for all pupils at Larches High School.

Larches High School aims to ensure that all of its pupils receive a full time education so that each pupil can realise their true potential. Larches High School will create a positive and supportive environment so that pupils engage with their education regardless of prior barriers.

For pupils to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all. Larches High School staff will work with pupils and their parents/ carers to ensure each pupil attends regularly and punctually.

All pupils of school compulsory school age should receive suitable education and the primary responsibility for ensuring school attendance falls on parents/ carers. Failure to comply with this requirement is an offence under Section 444 of The 1996 Education Act.

Aims

We recognise that our pupils are often those who have become acutely disengaged from learning and education and as such are often those who have very poor records of attendance. At Larches High School we have a commitment to actively pursue every pupil's attendance by a system of daily phone calls and will complete home visits when we have 3 consecutive days of non- attendance without contact from parent/ carers or as we deem appropriate. In some cases we may do this on day one. (eg vulnerable students)

Good attendance is linked to raised achievement, improved self-esteem and improved life chances.

Larches High School expects an attendance of 97% or above in line with Department for Education expectations.

All staff at Larches High School recognise the importance of regular attendance and punctuality and will keep this as a high priority area:

- ✓ Ensure staff, parents / carers and pupils recognise their respective roles with regard to the promotion of good attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Ensure consistent use of a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and monitoring attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Ensure consistent use of the systems of rewards to recognise good and / or improving attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Ensure the consistent use of sanctions in place to address punctuality issues
- ✓ Work to build positive and consistent relationships and communication between school and parents/ carers in order to develop helpful working partnerships and in order to encourage regular and punctual attendance
- ✓ To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- ✓ Work in partnership with other agencies according to pupils' needs ensuring all information exchange adheres to GDPR requirements

Procedures

- ✓ A daily attendance record is completed by Form Tutors during morning and afternoon registration sessions and is checked by the Attendance Officer and team
- ✓ Daily calls / texts and on occasion emails are sent to parents / carers when a pupil is absent
- ✓ All authorised and unauthorised absence will be recorded with the appropriate symbol

- ✓ Daily calls are made to alternative educational providers
- ✓ SIMS is used to record attendance data
- ✓ All contact regarding pupil attendance and punctuality are logged on Behaviour watch

When a pupil is late or absent

- ✓ If a pupil is late they must report to the Attendance office
- ✓ Calls will be made to parents / carers each day of absence by the Attendance office where school has not been informed
- ✓ If contact is not made initially the Attendance office will continue to attempt contact and complete a home visit as appropriate. The DSL will also be informed
- ✓ If absence or punctuality continues or becomes a regular occurrence a letter will be sent to parents/ carers informing them of their statutory obligations and a home visit will be made to establish the return to school date
- ✓ For pupils whose attendance and punctuality poses significant problems a review meeting will be arranged between parents/ carers and the Attendance Officer Ms C Mclean.
- ✓ Concerns and meetings will be recorded and a copy kept on Behaviour Watch
- ✓ In accordance with Lancashire protocols attendance issues which remain unresolved will be considered for legal intervention
- ✓ Referrals will be made to CME as appropriate
- ✓ Referrals to other agencies for support will be made as appropriate

Holidays

We do not encourage holidays to be taken in term time. In line with Department for Education guidance permission for holidays will only be granted in exceptional circumstances **and** also if a pupil's attendance is above 95%, or above 90% for the previous academic year. A holiday request form must be completed at least 2 weeks prior to a holiday and will only be granted if there are exceptional circumstances. There is a very clear link between attainment and attendance and a two week holiday will mean that a pupil will miss 100+ hours of lessons. Penalty notices will be issued for unauthorised leave

Legal Intervention

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities.

In accordance with Lancashire guidelines Larches High School will employ legal interventions as appropriate for unauthorised holidays, persistent lateness and other unauthorised circumstances. In law an offence occurs if a parent /carer fails to secure a pupil's attendance at the school to which they are registered without justification. Legal sanctions are available and Larches High School as part of Lancashire has a duty to satisfy themselves that pupils in the education system are attending regularly. If a parent fails to ensure that their child attends school regularly then a prosecution under Section 444, 444A and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 will be used to enforce attendance at school where appropriate. Section 444 is a maximum fine of £1,500 and will lead to a summons to attend the magistrates court. Section 23 of the 2003 anti-social behaviour act may also be used to serve a penalty notice on a parent. This is a fine of £120 per parent per child.

Unauthorised absence or a pupil being frequently late may result in fine or prosecution. Every school, by law, has to register pupils twice a day; first thing in the morning at the start of the school day, and again in the afternoon session. If a pupil of compulsory school age fails to attend or arrives late they can be marked as an absence for that session. If a pupil arrives after registration has closed the absence will be recorded as unauthorised for that session. If this persists legal action, in the form of a Penalty Notice or Prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 may follow.

The register will close at 9.20 am.

Persistent Lateness

Larches High School may issue a Penalty Notice under the 2003 anti- social behaviour act in cases of persistent lateness provided the following conditions are met.

Larches High School defines persistent lateness as a pupil having a minimum of 10 late arrivals in any 6 week period coded "U" in the attendance register. School will send a warning letter to parents / carers as they approach the threshold for persistent lateness informing them of this and the legal consequences of continued lateness. All arrival times will be recorded and made available to parents / carers and the courts if required.

Actions to raise the profile and improve overall attendance and punctuality Larches High School will:

- ✓ Develop a whole school improvement plan for attendance which will be reviewed regularly
- ✓ Ensure that regular attendance and punctuality is part of the whole school culture and ethos and will be discussed with parents/ carers from the admissions meeting
- ✓ Have designated members of staff responsible for attendance
- ✓ Complete attendance records daily to provide a record of all pupils for the purpose of monitoring, analysis and evaluation
- ✓ Ensure that attendance tracking data is collected every half term and shared with all staff and reported on to the Governing Body
- ✓ Ensure that all pupils have a half termly attendance / punctuality meeting with their Form Tutor where current attendance will be reviewed and a % target for improvement will be given by the Attendance officer
- ✓ Encourage all pupils to monitor their own attendance
- ✓ Good and improving attendance will be acknowledged via a system of individual rewards on a weekly, half termly, termly and annual basis
- ✓ Monitor individual and whole school attendance and punctuality and will analyse patterns and trends to inform future planning

Larches High School will make attendance and punctuality a priority for parents / carers and pupils by:

- ✓ Outlining expectations of high attendance and punctuality at the Admissions meeting and agreeing this with parents / carers via the Home School Agreement
- ✓ Including attendance data as part of tracker progress reports
- ✓ Reminding parents/ carers that under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 they are required to ensure that their child receives suitable full time education
- ✓ Giving parents / carers written and verbal procedures to follow as regards pupil absence and details of how school can support parents/ carers and pupils
- ✓ Communicate with parents / carers by letter when there are issues
- ✓ Will acknowledge good attendance and punctuality

Larches High School will promote effective partnerships with other agencies by:

- ✓ Actively supporting a multi-agency approach aimed at improving attendance and punctuality
- ✓ Initiate multi- agency reviews for persistent non- attendance to agree a plan to support improved attendance and further actions should attendance issues continue
- ✓ Liaising with mainstream schools to keep them informed of the attendance and punctuality of any pupils who are at Larches on an intervention place
- ✓ Liaising with mainstream schools and the Pupil Access Team to monitor the attendance and punctuality of the pupils from Larches High School who are being reintegrated

- ✓ Inform external agencies on the first day of absence if it is included as part of a Supervision Order
- ✓ Attending multi agency meetings to support pupils and their parents / carers
- ✓ Referring pupils to other Early Help Agencies as appropriate

Effective School Attendance Improvement and Management

EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils, parents/carers and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

ALL PUPILS Developing good attendance patterns through effective whole school approach to attendance (including half termly data collection, form tutor & student meetings).

PREVENTION of poor attendance through good whole school attendance

MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

PUPILS AT RISK OF POOR ATTENDANCE Using attendance and absence data rigorously to support pupils with increasing levels of absence, arriving at school late or taking leave in term time without permission before it becomes a regular pattern. (Lateness letters, meetings with parents/carers

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss & meet with pupils, parents/carers to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents/carers to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

PUPILS WITH POOR ATTENDANCE Intervening as early as possible and agreeing an action plan for pupils with high levels of absence and those demonstrating growing

EARLY INTERVENTION to reduce absence before it becomes habitual

PERSISTANTLY AND SEVERELY ABSENT PUPILS

Put additional targeted support in place, where necessary working with partners, and agree a joint approach with local authorities for all severely absent pupils.

FORMALISE SUPPORT Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with Larches will work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision

TARGETED reengagement of persistent and severely absent pupils

ENFORCE Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.