



Liden Academy

Attendance

Policy

Date of approval	April 2020
Approved by	LGB
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1. Introduction

Liden Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all children and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

The whole school community – children, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this. The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

2. School's roles and responsibilities

All staff (teaching and support) at Liden Academy we have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our children are eager to learn, feel valued and look forward to coming to school every day. All staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Leader

At Liden Academy, the Principal (as Attendance Leader), will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure that the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. They will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with relevant personnel; children and parents are regularly reminded about the importance of good school attendance and data may be used to reinforce this. A report will be prepared for the governing body, termly. She will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the school day and once at the start of the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the attendance registers; administrative staff add prescribed codes for absence. The register will be called promptly at 8.45 am and at 1.00 pm by each class teacher and a mark will be made in respect of each child. The registers will close at 9.00 am and 1.05 pm. Any pupil who arrives after the closing of the register will count as absent. Children who arrive late but before the register closes will be counted as present but will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness.

Categorising absences

A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked as having unauthorised absence, unless leave has been granted by the school in advance, or the reason for the absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the



amendment/correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Head teacher.

Liden Academy recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Liden Academy will then challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum.

A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised;

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances:

a) Where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example:

- A pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- A pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence, the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered.
- In exceptional circumstances.

b) Where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend.

c) Where the children had a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand);

d) Where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;

e) The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;

f) the pupil is no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which required him/her to travel, the pupil/student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;

g) In other exceptional circumstances (e.g. family bereavement) and for a very limited period.

Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for not authorising absence would be:

- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday, without prior permission;



- the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

Approved educational activity

Where a pupil is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Class Registers

In order to track children 'whereabouts through the day, deal with any truancy that occurs after morning or afternoon registration and to ensure that safety of children, class teachers will ensure all expected children attend each lesson. Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the school office and measure taken to locate the pupil.

Staff Training

The school attendance leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receives sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

2. Collection and analysis of data

The attendance leader will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to relevant school personnel, parents and governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. (Target 2012/2013 97%) The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection. Attendance is monitored for each pupil; where relevant, it is analysed and discussed with all appropriate parties.

3. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Liden Academy School and is discussed at assemblies, meetings for parents and in governor meetings. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment. Liden Academy has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences, within the day. Attendance staff endeavour to make contact with the families concerned; if necessary, a follow-up letter is written by the Head teacher and a meeting convened. Advice is sought from the Integrated Services Team when the matter cannot be resolved.

First-day calling

Liden Academy has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation, to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage children who do not have a good reason for absence, or who may be absent without their parent's knowledge. Any reasons given for lateness will be entered into the BROMCOM database in order to help identify any trends that may occur.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to pupil's absence over 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without permission, the school will invite parents to



a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans are put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – unusually no more than 6 weeks. It is explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Referral to the Integrated Assessment and Support Team. (Legal Officer)

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Integrated Service Team. A representative from this team may also be involved in parental meetings.

Fixed penalty notices

In some cases where attendance problems do not appear to be being addressed by Parents, the school, in conjunction with the Integrated Service Team, may find it necessary to issue a fixed penalty notice.

Lateness and punctuality

Children are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Children who arrive after the register closes will be dealt with by the School Attendance Officer. The number of minutes a child is late will be recorded. A pupil who is persistently late will be dealt with in the same way as other children with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Integrated Service Team. Persistent lateness will be followed up by a letter/meeting with those concerned and strategies suggested to improve the matter.

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Children arriving late should therefore report to the office. It is important that all children arriving late follow this procedure. For the same reason it is important that children leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day, are collected from/returned to the office. **Parents do not go to the classrooms.**

Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a pupil goes missing from school, having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the pupil will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. School takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen by taking the register and noting attendance in lessons. If, however, a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will try to make contact with his/her parents immediately.

4. Term-time holidays

From the 1st September 2013, the new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Principals would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

Liden Academy will consider every application individually; its policy is not to grant leave of absence for any holiday, holidays during term time will only be granted in the most exceptional of circumstances.



If an unauthorised holiday is taken. The school will have no option but to seriously consider requesting a penalty notice to be served from the local authority. This is in line with regulations from Government.

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.

Parents can receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. From September 2013 these Notices now cost £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.

5. Extended leave of absence

In considering absence for extended trips overseas, Liden Academy will take account of the following:

- A visit to family overseas, (where this is their country of origin), has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday'.
- Such visits maybe important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up.
- Parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's interrupted attendance at school (although parents could be encouraged to use the school holiday periods for at least part of their trip).
- Where extended leave of absence is granted, there will be an expectation that the pupil undertakes some school set work during this period.

7. Parents'/carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full time education rests with parents/carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Liden Academy.

Liden Academy expects parents/carers will:

- Ensure their children attend the school regularly
- Support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum
- Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents will also be expected to:

- Notify Liden Academy on the first day of absence, a telephone call is sufficient.
- We ask that children are not asked to relay a message about another child's absence, or reason for it.
- Ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day.



- Work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities.
- Contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Liden Academy will endeavour to support parents to address any concerns.

8. Children's responsibility

All children should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher. Children should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. Parents may wish to confirm the reasons for any absence by sending in a letter when the child returns to school. Providing a telephone call has been made at the start of the absence, a follow up letter is not obligatory. In cases of prolonged absence, a letter maybe requested, in addition to the telephone call. The school could ask for medical evidence to be provided for related prolonged absence. The children also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

9. Governors' responsibility

The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are children at the school.

This policy is linked to:

- Anti-Bullying policy
- Acceptable Use IT Policy
- SEN policy
- Intimate Care policy
- Behaviour and Discipline policy
- Safer Recruitment policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (Sarah Turner)
- Part I of Keeping Children Safe In Education (Sept 20)
- The code of conduct for volunteers
- Information about what to do if worried about a child / adult
- Annex A of Keeping Children Safe In Education (Sept 20)
- The school's staff code of conduct
- The safeguarding response for children missing in education
- First Aid and Medical needs policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Children arriving and being collected from school
- Positive handling and the use of reasonable force policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Computing policy
- Mobile Technology Policy
- Internet safety policy
- Safer recruitment policy



- Central Record of recruitment and Vetting Checks
- Looked after Children policy
- Swindon's Neglect Framework
- SBC escalation policy
- Staff and Volunteers code of conduct.
- Managing allegations against staff policy
- Whistle Blowing policy
- Violence and Aggression against staff policy

Last review: April 2020

Next review: April 2021



Appendix A

New Changes to the Law Regarding Attendance 2013

The Department for Education (DfE) has announced important amendments to legislation surrounding holidays in term time. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

Term-time holiday

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 currently allow headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. Principals can also grant extended leave for more than ten school days in exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Principals should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

From the 1st September 2013, the new law gives no entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Principal must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. Principals would not be expected to class any term time holiday as exceptional.

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007

Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, will come into force on 1 September 2013.

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.

Parents can receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking their child on holiday during term time without consent from the school. **From September 2013 these Notices now cost £60 per child per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days.**

In the academic year 2011 to 2012, 9.7% of all absences in England were due to parents taking their children out of school during term time. This high level of absence has led the Government to make this important change to legislation.



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