Lampard Community School

Attendance Policy

Rationale

Attendance at school is a legal requirement between the ages of 5-18 years. Children and young people are entitled to formal education during this phase of their lives. It is important that they receive their entitlement for their present and future lives and for the economic well-being of society.

Lampard Community school seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each student to achieve their full potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels valued and secure.

The Government has a priority in reducing unnecessary absence from school. Many students attending Lampard Community School are more vulnerable and have greater needs than their mainstream counterparts. This means that they may have more genuine absences from school for medical reasons or experience greater social needs than others.

Lampard Community School will work in partnership with students, parents, carers and external agencies to identify issues affecting attendance and will strive to resolve these issues as quickly as possible.

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to ensure their child regularly attends school. If parents and carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted by the Local Authority.

Procedures

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording student's attendance and absence. If a student is absent, it must be marked to indicate if the absence is authorised or unauthorised. A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents/carers for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance at school or in seeking an Education Supervision Order.

Registration at Lampard Community School

At Lampard Community School, we use an electronic registration system called SIMs. The morning register closes at 9.15am, all students absent after this time will be marked as such in the register. At 9.30am, a report from SIMs is run to identify any absent students where a reason has not been provided. This then triggers a phone call to parent/carers to ascertain the reason for absence.

Procedures for following up absence

Students who arrive late (after 9.15am) should be registered as L.

Students who arrive more than 30 minutes after the start of registration (9.00am) should be registered as U (late after the register has closed).

Students who arrive late will enter school via the school office where they will be required to sign in. These absences will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory reason is given via parents/carers. This is also recorded in the SIMs electronic registration system.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. This can be done by leaving a message on the answer phone or by calling in when the school office opens at 8.00am. Parents/carers should contact the school prior to 9.30am.

If contact is not made and we have not received a reason for the student's absence, we will telephone parents/carers to ascertain the reason. If it has not been possible to make contact, the Care and Safeguarding Team will be notified. This may then trigger a response for those more vulnerable students or students who are persistently absent from school. The responses may include; informing a social worker or Education Welfare Officer, or a home visit.

We work closely with our Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to identify and resolve attendance issues affecting attendance at school. Senior Leadership and the Care and Safeguarding Team meet half termly with the EWO to monitor whole school attendance and persistent absenteeism.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. It includes illness, medical or dental appointments (wherever possible, these appointments should be made outside of school hours), exceptional circumstances such as bereavement or attendance at a funeral and days of religious observance. Fixed term exclusions are authorised absences. Absence which has not been explained will remain as unauthorised.

The following examples of absence will not be authorised:

- Looking after the house
- Looking after siblings or sick relatives
- Shopping trips
- Birthdays
- Days out

For compassionate leave it may be necessary for the school to ask the parent/carer to provide written evidence for the reason for absence e.g. appointment cards, medical certificate, GP letter. If there is an extended period of absence due to medical reasons the school may ask for permission to contact the child's GP or other medical professional to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school.

Leave of Absence during Term Time

Lampard Community School follows the DfE guidance in relation to holidays taken in term time:

Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

School Attendance Guidance - Department of Education, September 2018

Lampard Community School will consider each application individually, taking into account the students current and historic attendance data, point in school year, specific facts, circumstances and relevant background information behind the request for holiday leave. This will take into consideration the Disability Discrimination Act, individual student needs and family context. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. The Headteacher will not normally authorise a request for over 5 school days.

Exceptional circumstances may include:

- Children whose parents/carers are in the armed forces.

- Children, whose parents/carers are dictated by their employers/livelihood as to when they can take holidays e.g. Police, Fire Service or working for a company that closes between certain dates. These requests will need to be accompanied by a letter from the employer as to why the family can only take a holiday during said dates.
- A child with a parent/carer or sibling with a life threatening illness. These requests will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical professional working with the family.
- Holidays which are funded by a charity (e.g. Make a Wish, CHICKS and The Children's holiday Foundation).
- Exceptional family circumstances.

Even where the circumstances are considered exceptional, please be aware that requests will not be authorised where:

- Previous holiday has been taken in the current academic year
- The request is made for a time when the student would be taking assessments

If a request for leave was not authorised, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice. If this Penalty Notice is not paid, the Local Authority can institute legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

If a student is deemed to be missing from education (CME), Lampard Community School will follow the procedures issued by the Education Welfare Service. This can involve a referral to the Education Welfare Officer for investigation.

Persistent Absenteeism

The threshold for 'persistent absenteeism' is 90% and below. Lampard Community School monitors students with attendance below 90% very closely. We also monitor students who have attendance between 90-94% in order to identify potential issues affecting attendance and put strategies in place to prevent them from becoming persistent absentees. We work in partnership with parents/carers, Education Welfare Officers and other external professionals (such as social workers) to support students to attend school regularly. This may involve putting targets in place and attendance becoming part of multi-agency planning.

Promoting Attendance

Whilst we do recognise that there are many of our students with diagnosed medical conditions or conditions that impact on their ability to attend school at times, we seek to promote high levels of attendance for all of our school community. Lampard Community School promotes good attendance in a number of ways:

- Attendance statistics are regularly monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body.
- Attendance is discussed weekly at SLT meetings to identify any emerging issues and to monitor the students on the cusp of persistent absenteeism.
- Attendance statistics are also reported to the Local Authority.
- We promote awareness of the importance of attending school through our newsletters and website.
- Parent/Carer meetings and Student Progress meetings can be used to discuss issues with attendance.
- We have a 'First Day' contact procedure.
- Where possible, we arrange health clinics in school to reduce the need to attend offsite appointments (e.g. school nurse, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy). We work closely with our partners in health and social care to offer flexible appointments and appointments in school where possible.
- We celebrate attendance through rewards and incentives through each phase (for example, the attendance trophy presented to classes every half term in assembly, termly certificates for excellent attenders and improvements over time).

Responsibilities

Those with Parental Responsibility will:

- Notify the school each and every day of absence following the school procedure.
- Keep close contact with the school in the event of a long-term absence due to medical reasons.
- Promote regulate and punctual attendance at school to ensure their child has the opportunity to achieve their potential.

Teachers/Tutors will:

- Mark registers by the end of registration on SIMs.
- Discuss any emerging attendance issues with parents/carers at the first opportunity.
- Communicate effectively with parents/carers with regard to student wellbeing.

Administration Team will:

- Follow the school procedures for running an attendance report daily (Attendance Flow Chart, Appendix 2).
- Report absences directly to the Care and Safeguarding Team.
- Make telephone contact with parents/carers to ascertain reasons for absence daily.
- Update and record reasons on SIMs accordingly.

Care & Safeguarding Team will:

- Identify any vulnerable students absent (including Persistent Absentees and those where there is Social Care input).
- Seek to work in partnership with parents/carers to identify issues affecting attendance/punctuality and potential solutions.
- Liaise with multi-agency professionals including the EWO and social care.
- Contribute to statutory planning to promote good attendance where issues are present.
- Work with tutors in supporting attendance.

Assistant Head- Care and Safeguarding will:

- Meeting with the EWO half termly to discuss intervention packages and actions for identified students.
- Publish attendance data termly to SLT and Governors.
- Liaise with SLT and monitor the process for student attendance.
- Monitor and discuss identified students at SLT meetings.

Headteacher will:

- Have overall responsibility for whole school attendance

Related Documents and Policies:

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE, September 2018

Safeguarding Policy, Lampard Community school, September 2018

School Attendance (guidance for maintained schools), DfE, September 2018

Appendices

Appendix 1: Attendance Coding

Appendix 2: Attendance Flow Chart

Appendix 1

Attendance Coding:

/	Present (AM)
\	Present (PM)
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registered)
C	Other Authorised Circumstances
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
F	Extended Family Holiday (agreed)
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed)
H	Family Holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before registers have closed)
M	Medical/Dental appointments
N	No reason yet provided
O	Unauthorised Absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious Observance
S	Study Leave
T	Traveller Absence
U	Late (after registers have closed)
V	Educational Trip or Visit
W	Work Experience
X	Non-Compulsory School Age Absence
Y	Enforced closure
Z	Student not on roll
#	School Closed to Students

Attendance Flow Chart:

9.00 - 9.15am

- Doors open at 9.00am. Students go to class.
- Doors close at 9.10am.
- Class team mark those students that are present with '/' in the register.
- If a student is not present yet mark as 'N'.
- 9.15am - Registers close.
- **ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE A MARK.**
- **Class teams do not need to phone home.**

9.15 - 9.30am

- Students arriving at this time will arrive via Reception and the Admin Team will then mark the register accordingly.
- If student arrives during this time mark register with **'L'** and give reason why (eg.taxi late, parent/carer didn't get them up, etc)

9.30am onwards

- Admin to run a SIMS report to verify which students are not in school (unauthorised), cross-check with absence board in office, **prioritising if students are independent walkers.**
- Admin to phone parents/carers on all available numbers, leaving messages requesting parents/carers to phone back.
- Amend the register accordingly.
- Admin to email class.
- Admin Team to email all Safeguarding Team (CCB/RU/KA) any students who are still unauthorised and there has been no contact from home.
- Safeguarding Team to then identify 'vulnerable students' and try to make contact via external agency/other means etc.
- Admin Team to continue to try to make contact with parents/carers of those students not identified by Safeguarding Team.

Key:

/	Present (am)	I	Illness
\	Present (pm)	M	Medical appointment
L	Late (09.15 – 9.30)	V	Educational visit
U	Late (09.30 – onwards)	W	Work Experience
O	Un-authorised absence	C	Absence authorised by school
H	Holiday authorised by school	N	Reason for absence not yet provided

Lampard Community School

Request for leave during term time (Holidays)

Response form

Student:

Class/Phase: **Year Group:**

Date Request Received:

Current and previous year attendance:

Current year		Previous year	
Overall %		Overall %	
Authorised Absence		Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised Absence		Unauthorised Absence	

Date discussed at SLT:

Exceptional Circumstances outlined/evidenced:

□   None – unauthorised (code G)

□   Authorised - parents/carers in Armed Forces (Code H)

□   Authorised - parents/carers leave dictated by Employer (Code H)

□   Authorised - funded by charitable organisation (i.e. Make A Wish, The Children's Holiday Foundation, CHICKs etc) (Code H)

□   Authorised - parent/carer/sibling has life limiting illness (Code H)

□   Authorised - other (please detail) (Code H):

Rationale for decision making:

Headteacher signature:

Date: