



# Lord Grey School

## ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENTS POLICY

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### **Mission Statement**

'Lord Grey School is a future-driven, aspirational and inclusive school offering all learners outstanding social and academic opportunities. Our international, national and local community links promote the development of fulfilled and successful young people. We aim to maximise learner potential to the highest academic levels and to encourage a love of learning that will last a lifetime. We are a high achieving school with an ambition to become an outstanding first choice local school'.

**Motto: Aspire, Learn, Achieve**

### **Core Values:**

"Be resilient, independent and hardworking."

"Be kind, caring and positive."

"Be ambitious, aspirational and determined."

"Be respectful, helpful and honest."

<b>POLICY MANAGER:</b>	<b>Nigel Handyside/Sarah McVeigh</b>
<b>COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>Community Committee</b>
<b>REVIEW DATE:</b>	<b>Autumn 2017</b>
<b>NEXT REVIEW DATE:</b>	<b>Autumn 2018</b>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Statutory Duty of Schools.....	3
2. Aims.....	3
2.1. The school will ensure that:.....	3
2.2. Pupils will be encouraged to: .....	3
2.3. Parents, Carers or Guardians should:.....	3
3. Registration.....	4
4. Absence.....	4
4.1. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence .....	4
4.2. Absence from school will be authorised for the following reasons: .....	4
4.3. Absence will not be authorised for: .....	4
4.4. Absence Notification .....	4
5. Prosecution Stage.....	5
5.1. Attendance Panels and Parenting Contracts.....	5
5.2. Contracts .....	5
5.3. Legal Interventions.....	5
5.4. Strategies for Promoting Attendance .....	5
6. Register Policy .....	6
7. Attendance Procedures.....	7
7.1. Whole School.....	7
7.2. Heads of House .....	8
7.3. Form Tutor .....	8
7.4. External Agencies.....	8
7.5. Morning and Afternoon Registration.....	9
7.6. Lesson Registration .....	9
7.7. Lateness .....	9
7.8. Staff setting a good example.....	9
7.9. Fines.....	9
8. Changes Log .....	10

## **1. Statutory Duty of Schools**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance or otherwise. The government has set an attendance target of 95%. The school also sets, annually, its own aspirational overall minimum internal target (e.g. 96%).

Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age on the school's admission roll.

## **2. Aims**

Lord Grey School aims to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all students to take full advantage of the learning experiences and educational opportunities available to them.

### **2.1. The school will ensure that:**

- it encourages good attendance and punctuality through personal example
- pupils are registered accurately and efficiently twice daily using SIMs (School Information and Management System) registration
- attendance targets are set for individual pupils, house groups and year groups
- parents, carers or guardians are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised. This should be on the first day of absence for identified students
- pupil attendance and lateness is monitored regularly
- school attendance statistics are reported to governors and to the DfE
- it works in partnership with the Senior Attendance Officer – Legal Interventions (formerly Educational Welfare Service)
- students for whom attendance is an issue are supported
- it celebrates excellent attendance of individuals and/or groups
- parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems will be offered appropriate support from school in matters of communication.

### **2.2. Pupils will be encouraged to:**

- attend school and all their classes regularly by the setting of targets and adherence to the school's rewards and sanctions procedures
- inform their Form Tutor, Head of House or the Attendance Officer in Student Services if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

### **2.3. Parents, Carers or Guardians should:**

- encourage good attendance
- inform the school on the first day of non-attendance and send in written confirmation by letter or via the student planner on the pupil's return
- refer to the newsletter regularly, taking note of attendance targets and other relevant information

- discuss planned absences with the school in advance; holiday forms must be completed in advance and forwarded to the Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion). The school **never** authorises holidays in term time
- avoid making medical or dental appointments during the school day
- try to avoid making orthodontic appointments during the school day.

### **3. Registration**

- Registration will take place punctually each day at 8.50am and 1.15pm in lessons 1 and 4.
- If a pupil arrives late for registration after 8.50am or 1.15pm they must sign the late book in the Student Services. They will then be registered as late.
- If a pupil arrives 30 minutes or more after the closure of the register they should sign the late book in Student Services and this will be recorded as late absent. (An explanation will need to be given to the Form Tutor).

### **4. Absence**

#### **4.1. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

The school makes the decision whether to record absence as authorised or unauthorised. A parental letter requesting authorised absence does not in itself authorise an absence.

#### **4.2. Absence from school will be authorised for the following reasons:**

- genuine illness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointment
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances such as bereavement
- examination leave
- leave of absence for students to participate in activities in the pursuit of excellence in their chosen field.

#### **4.3. Absence will not be authorised for:**

- holidays in term time will not be authorised, as per the DfE directive
- shopping
- birthday celebrations
- house minding
- caring for siblings or relatives.

#### **4.4. Absence Notification**

- Parents should notify the school either in person or by telephoning the absence hot line on the first day of absence, giving the reason and, if possible, the likely duration of the absence.

- All absence notes and formal notification are to be submitted to Student Services for central collation and monitoring. The absence slips at the back of the planner should be used for all absence notes and medical notes. Explanations should not be written in other parts of the planner. Once the official notes are exhausted, a letter should be submitted. All notes require the student's full name, tutor group, date, explanation and parental signature.
- If a student is absent and no notification is received the Attendance Officer will contact home as soon as is practicable.
- If a student is absent for more than three days without notification or contact from home the Attendance Officer may arrange a home visit. Parents may be required to provide medical evidence.
- The school follows a point system in which parents are notified of absence below 95% by telephone or letter. Parents/carers/guardians will be notified four times (points 1-4) before referral to Legal Interventions at 'point 5' which is the prosecution stage.
- Long term absence will be referred to other agencies for support and/or action including Legal Interventions.

## **5. Prosecution Stage**

If a pupil is persistently late or absent and the school's efforts to improve the situation have been unsuccessful, Legal Interventions may contact parents officially as it will have reached prosecution stage.

### **5.1. Attendance Panels and Parenting Contracts**

Where attendance falls below 90% parents/guardians may be asked to attend an attendance panel which can be run jointly by Legal Interventions (formerly EWS) and the school. This might take the form of a pre-court interview.

### **5.2. Contracts**

Where attendance falls below 90% Legal Interventions and the school may set up an attendance contract in consultation with parents/guardians, prior to prosecution.

### **5.3. Legal Interventions**

The Education Welfare Service is now slimmed down and mostly only deals with serious cases, such as the pre-court and prosecution stage of the process. It has been re-named Legal Interventions. The school liaises closely with the service.

### **5.4. Strategies for Promoting Attendance**

- Lord Grey School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcome. The school's ethos must demonstrate that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow-up action will be taken, if attendance/punctuality is not acceptable.

- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all pupils to help to encourage good attendance. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to pupils' needs, in order to build the link between self-confidence and good attendance.
- Attendance data will be monitored regularly and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievements and support and inform policy/practice.
- 100% attendance awards will be presented by the Headteacher or his/her representative at the end of each school term. In addition, this will be celebrated monthly at House level.
- Pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern will be set targets for improvement. The Form Tutor will monitor and review these targets.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, academic review or target setting sessions, parents' evenings, etc) of the importance of regular attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored re-integration programmes prepared for them. This may incorporate use of the Learning Support Unit.
- Heads of House will regularly liaise with other services and agencies to support and assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Visits will be made to feeder primary schools in order to ensure the smoothest possible secondary transfer.
- The Headteacher will make an annual report to the school's Governing Board on attendance matters and the Deputy Headteacher: Pastoral will report regularly to the Community Committee on attendance issues.

## **6. Register Policy**

The school will maintain an up to date register of all students on roll at Lord Grey School, updating regularly to account for mid-term entries and leavers. The SIMs registers are legal documents and tutors follow clear guidelines regarding registration of students. Training/Inset is provided at the start of each school year on how to take a register - and for teachers new to the school as necessary. The Staff Handbook outlines how to take a register.

Students are registered twice a day statutorily. In addition LGS registers students in all lessons and during Tutor Time. All registers are checked and updated as and when necessary on a weekly basis. All data, including addresses, named contacts and contact

details - on students entering Lord Grey - is put into SIMs, which is a secure database, managed by our data team.

Data on student attendance is provided in line with legal requirements at the request of the DfE.

## 7. Attendance Procedures

To improve attendance the following procedures and strategies are in place.

### 7.1. Whole School

- First Day Call - A first day call will be made for all year groups. The Attendance Officer will manage this.
- A weekly prize draw will be held by Heads of House in House assemblies to reward good attendance and punctuality.
- Good attendance will be highlighted and rewarded regularly through assemblies. For example a prize draw will be run at the Head's Assembly at the end of the year for all those with 100% attendance.
- Attendance reviews at which tutors discuss attendance with students once a term will take place in the registration periods and as part of the Academic Tutorial review with parents.
- Post registration truancy which results in a student being absent from a lesson must be reported to both the Head of Faculty and Head of House so that parents are notified and the appropriate sanction applied.
- Absence notes will be collected centrally in Student Services to record reasons and monitor levels
- Accurate completion of registers must be a priority. Any errors will be quickly highlighted through First Day Call. It is essential that parents are not contacted unnecessarily or truancy missed because of inaccurate recording of attendance.
- To ensure that information is accurate Student Services must be notified of any students who will be off site for educational purposes. Any alterations for trips etc., will be recorded.
- Students involved in activities which take place during registration should normally register first (for example, mentoring). If a student does not appear in front of the tutor he/she should be marked absent.
- A varied and flexible curriculum will be offered to all students. Every effort will be made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to pupils' needs. Closer monitoring of curriculum issues linked to truancy will take place.
- Improved publicity and communication will be used to raise awareness through the school newsletter and letters home, emphasising the importance of good attendance.
- Parents will have daily access to attendance and punctuality information via our parent portal, Insight.
- Letters requesting reasons for absence will continue to be issued where necessary by the Attendance Officer but First Day Call should reduce the need for this.
- Attendance data will be monitored regularly and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievements and support and inform

policy/practice.

- Lord Grey School will offer an environment in which students feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos must demonstrate that students feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.
- Visits will be made to feeder primary schools in order to ensure the smoothest possible secondary transfer.

## **7.2. Heads of House**

- There will be a league competition between the tutor groups managed by the Heads of House.
- Assistant Heads of House will meet once a fortnight to discuss specific students and strategies for improvement. They will feed information back to Form Tutors.
- Students who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will (when appropriate) have individually tailored re-integration programmes prepared for them. This may be via the Learning Support Unit.
- Heads of House (HoH) and Assistant Heads of House (AHoH) will regularly liaise with other services and agencies when this may serve to support and assist students who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Weekly RAGs (red, amber, green) of persistent absentees (PA) will be discussed with Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, Deputy Headteacher (Inclusion) and HoHs, with interventions recorded.

## **7.3. Form Tutor**

- Students whose attendance starts to fall or who truant from lessons will be placed on report card reporting daily to either the Form Tutor or the House team.
- Good communication between the Form Tutor, Head of House and Attendance Officer is essential.
- To facilitate the accurate recording of attendance, students should follow the school's accepted standard routine. Registers are to be taken in silence, students seated with outdoor clothing removed and visual contact made of the student. Should tutors experience any issues with any aspect of this, it is essential that Heads of House are notified. Registration is a formal legal procedure which should be done carefully and in an atmosphere which signals its importance.
- Students whose attendance is cause for concern will be set targets for improvement which the Form Tutor will monitor and review.

## **7.4. External Agencies**

- Fixed penalty notices and fast track prosecutions will be used when all other strategies have been exhausted on behalf of Legal Interventions.
- To avoid the need for any external scrutiny of attendance, it is vitally important that students very quickly get into the habit of attending school on a regular basis and ensuring that they are punctual, not only to the school but also to class. This applies to all lessons.

## **7.5. Morning and Afternoon Registration**

It is the responsibility of the Form Tutor to record attendance accurately. The register is a legal document and records are scrutinised. Any student who misses the close of the registration period in either the morning or afternoon is legally absent, even if he/she subsequently attends lessons. This point should be emphasised in discussions with students and parents.

## **7.6. Lesson Registration**

Subject teachers should keep an accurate lesson register. These records are often needed to track the movements of students. Patterns which emerge should be discussed with the Head of Faculty, Tutor and Head of House.

## **7.7. Lateness**

In all cases the school's adopted procedure of 'Punctuality Flow Chart' should be followed. Students who arrive late, before registers close should sign in at Student Services. Students will receive one warning and thereafter a half hour detention at lunchtime will be issued. Persistent lateness will trigger a warning letter and if necessary parents will be invited in to discuss possible solutions. Lates to afternoon registration via lesson 4 will be monitored and for lateness to lesson 4 the 'Punctuality Flow Chart' will be followed with the accompanying sanction. See Staff Handbook and SharePoint for a copy of the flow chart. It is also displayed on all form tutor base notice boards.

## **7.8. Staff setting a good example**

It is imperative that all staff set a good example to students and thus staff should therefore be in the classroom waiting for the students to arrive. This allows for an orderly start to the lesson and will help tremendously with behaviour management.

## **7.9. Fines**

Students whose attendance falls below 95% are monitored. Fines can be issued by the school, at the school's discretion for ongoing poor attendance. Regulations have also changed from the DfE, tightening the school's powers should a student be taken on holiday in term time. Again, in this case, a fine can be levied at the school's discretion.

**Lord Grey School does not authorise leave of absence for family holidays.** If parents wish to take their children out of school during term time they can request a form from Student Services. The form reiterates that the holiday will not be authorised and that a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent per child can be issued. This is payable within 21 days. All monies raised by fines related to attendance are not kept by the school; they are passed to Legal Interventions.

## 8. Changes Log

Section Changed	Paragraph	Changed by	When change made
7.9	Whole second paragraph added	Sarah McVeigh	Oct 2014
3	Registration times changed	Nigel Handyside	March 2015
All	Grammar checked	Tracey Jones	May 2015
	EWS changed to Legal Interventions	Tracey Jones	Jan 2016
Throughout	Small grammar changes	Tracey Jones	Sept 2016
Throughout	Small grammar changes	Jane Kenyon	Sept 2017