

## Introduction

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment, which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

## Why Regular Attendance is so important:

**Learning:-** Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

**Safeguarding:-** Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses-

Attendance  
Behaviour Management  
Health and Safety  
Access to the Curriculum  
Anti- bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

## Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

## To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular Home – School Bulletin;
- Report to you at least every Module on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through Year Group competitions, certificates and outings/events.
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on
  - Raising attendance levels across the school.

## The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- (a) To age, ability and aptitude and
  - (b) To any special educational needs he/ she may have
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

## The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

## Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments that unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Academy using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

## Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parental support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in-group activities around raising attendance. Students whose attendance is a major concern a CAF will be completed for outside Intervention. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the School Attendance Welfare Officer.

## Absence Procedures:

### If your child is absent, you must:

1. Contact us as soon as possible **on the first day of absence**; ring the school on 0207 819 4700 and DIAL '1' for student absence. Please leave a clear message that states your son/daughter's name plus their tutor group and reason for absence.
2. Send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – **you must do this even if you have already telephoned us; this can be a letter or a signed and dated note in the student planner.**
3. Medical Evidence will be requested if your son/daughter's attendance drops below 92% to allow the absence to be authorized.
4. If you are unable to ring or email, you can call into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff to speak with you as soon as possible.

### If your child is absent, we will:

1. Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you
2. Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer or Head of Year; meetings with the Assistant Head teacher (KS3 or KS4) will take place if absences persist;
3. Refer the matter to the Education Attendance and Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 90%.

## Child Protection:

Students who are on the CP register who are absent will be contacted immediately by the AWO who will then notify the Safeguarding Team at Lambeth Academy. The AWO and Senior member of staff will trigger any child on the Child Protection register who has had two days of unauthorised absence, a home visit.

# Attendance and Punctuality

## Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we do not then something, important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

## The School Attendance Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. Your first point of contact will be your son/daughter's FORM TUTOR, or their HEAD OF YEAR. The emails are to be found at the end of this document. This contact is nearly always successful.

However, if difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the School Attendance Welfare Officer. She will also try to resolve the situation by agreement, but if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorized absences persist, the Attendance Welfare Officer can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school.

**Any queries or questions surrounding attendance should be forwarded to the Attendance Welfare Officer.**

## Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

## How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at **8.20 am** and we expect your child to be **in class by 8.25 a.m.** at the latest. Any time after 8.30a.m will be marked as late (L).
- Registers are marked by **9.00am** and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- At **9.00am**, the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark (U code) that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence for the morning. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the Head of Year to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time; we are here to support you and your child if there are difficulties.

Your son/daughter will be detained at lunchtime or after-school for the following duration if they are late to school or if we see a pattern of lateness to lessons.

## SAME-DAY LATE DETENTIONS/ COMMUNITY SERVICE

The **Assistant Head of Year / Tutor** will be responsible for speaking to the 'late' students on the same day they are late. They will inform your child of their detention time. These will follow the pattern of:

- 30 minutes detention/Community Service at lunch-time with the AHOY or HOY – if up to 30 minutes late to school (8.30-9.00a.m)
- 40 minutes detention/Community Service after-school (3.20-4p.m.) – with AHOY or HOY, if late to school after registers close (first time they are late) or if the student has failed to turn up to the lunch-time same-day detention
- If students persistently fail to attend the late detention/Community Service, this can result in an exclusion for wilful defiance of the Academy's rules.

## ATTENDANCE/ PUNCTUALITY REPORT

To help support the student, if the pattern of lateness persists, the student will be closely monitored on **Attendance/Punctuality Report** for at least one week and will need to pass the report successfully for this not to escalate further. The student is responsible for getting the Report Card signed at the start of every lesson and tutor period. This will be shown to their Tutor/AHOY/HOY at the end of every day.

A student who has been late 10 times in a term will be invited with parents/carers to attend a punctuality panel chaired by a School Governor and assisted by the AWO as well as an Assistant Head teacher.

## PENALTY NOTICES

- Please note that after 3 instances of 'late to school' that are AFTER our registers close, this will result in a Warning letter from the Attendance Welfare Officer and then a Penalty Notice WARNING LETTER to parents/carers.
- Should this lateness persist, the Penalty Notices can then be issued to parents as your child has 10 UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE due to persistent lateness to school.

## Holidays during Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not to take children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Due to the new government legislation No holiday is to be taken or will not be authorised during school term time unless for exceptional circumstances. If holiday leave is required, you will need to place your request in a Letter prior to the travelling date to the Head teacher.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday **and as a general rule holiday during term, time will not be authorised. However, we recognise that many of our students have family across the world and there may be times when a family visit is required e.g. illness. On these occasions, parents may request compassionate leave absence.**

All letters for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the school, a maximum of 10 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

Full details of our policy and procedures are available from the school, but it is important that you understand the circumstances when we will not agree leave in term time:

- When a pupil is just starting the school. This is very important, as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.
- Immediately before and during assessment periods, GCSE or any other public examinations.
- When a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.
- Where a pupil's attendance rate is already **below 94%** or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking holiday leave.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

Government Regulations Guidelines 2006 stipulate that any failure to return to school within **20 days of continuous absence** due to holiday will result in your child being off-rolled.

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school and for classes are displayed in the school and you should take time to study them.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 95% attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the city.

Through the school year, we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be Provided in our Home - School bulletin as well as on our website and **we ask for your full support.**

**Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:**

You will be given your son/daughter's FORM TUTOR email contact this year.

# Attendance and Punctuality

**School Absence Line – 0207 819 4700. Press ‘1’ for Student Absence.**

**School Attendance Officer – Ms Thatcher**

**Email: [jthatcher@lambeth-academy.org](mailto:jthatcher@lambeth-academy.org)**

**Head of Year 7 – Mrs Adeyemi**

**Email: [ladeyemi@lambeth-academy.org](mailto:ladeyemi@lambeth-academy.org)**

**Head of Year 8 –**

**Email:**

**Head of Year 9 – Miss Anthony**

**Email: [eanthony@lambeth-academy.org](mailto:eanthony@lambeth-academy.org)**

**Head of Year 10 – Mr Lowe**

**Email: [tlowe@lambeth-academy.org](mailto:tlowe@lambeth-academy.org)**

**Head of Year 11 - Ms Reid-Arnold**

**Email: [treid-arnold@lambeth-academy.org](mailto:treid-arnold@lambeth-academy.org)**

## Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted

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Please tear off this reply slip and hand in to **your son/daughter's Form Tutor**.

- I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance and punctuality policy at Lambeth Academy.
- I have spoken to my son/daughter about the Academy's high expectations of attendance and punctuality.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ [parent/carer]

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Form: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to make a comment about the attendance, policy please do so in the box below.

Comment Box:

## Lambeth Academy

### Attendance Groups

Group 1: No Concern

Group 2: Concern

Group 3: Risk of Underachievement

Group 4: Severe Risk of Underachievement

Group 5: Extreme Concern

