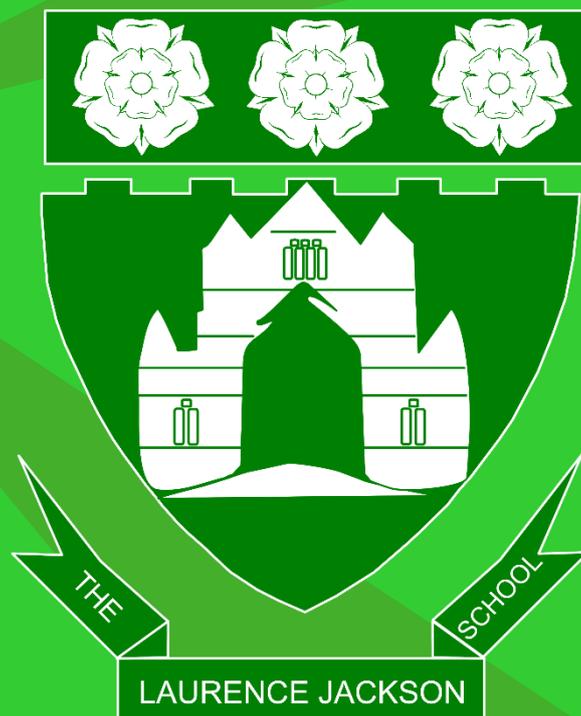


ATTENDANCE POLICY



Reviewed and adopted by Governors: Summer 2018
Next Review: Summer 2019

Author Tim Smith June O'Hanlon	Statutory changes N/A	Doc version Version 2	Date July 2018
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Acronyms

LJS	-	Laurence Jackson School
DfE	-	Department for Education
LA	-	Local Authority
CME	-	Children Missing from Education.
DoAW-		Director of Attendance and Welfare
SWM	-	Student Welfare Manager

Introduction

Laurence Jackson School aims to encourage every student to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all. We recognise the strong link between attendance and achievement.

The school recognise the need to keep children safe and ensure their welfare needs are met in accordance with safeguarding practice.

Purpose

Parents/Carers of a child of compulsory school age are responsible for ensuring the child's regular school attendance. If the child fails to attend regularly without good cause, then the parent/carer may be guilty of an offence under Section 444(1) / (a) of the Education Act 1996.

A student is required by law (under Section 444(1) / (a) of the 1996 Education Act and Regulations of 2006 and 2010) to attend regularly at the school where they are registered. The school is required to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence as stipulated in the DfE School Attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities November 2016.

It is expected that the parent/carer will contact school to inform them concerning absence. However, it is for the school to judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence.

The legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explain how they apply to local authorities, academies, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, students and parents, are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996, sections 434(1)(3)(4) & (6) and 458(4) & (5)
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Further advice and guidance by the DfE can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/contact-dfe>

Redcar & Cleveland Attendance and Welfare Service, Link.

1 Key Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of everyone (students, parents, governors and all staff) to improve the attendance and reach the annual school target of 97%. This is achieved by a close partnership between the DoAW, parents and support agencies.

1.1 Students

All students are expected to attend all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Where there are difficulties, support will be offered from Tutors, Student Welfare Managers and the Director of Attendance and Welfare. Good attendance will be rewarded regularly with Achievement points and other awards. Poor attendance will be monitored closely and parents contacted.

1.2 Parents/Carers

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, on time and properly equipped for learning. They are expected to notify the school promptly on the designated Year Group telephone number or School Comms if their child cannot attend and any absence will be considered unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is received. Student Welfare Managers will contact a parent on the first day of absence if no reason has been provided.

Parents are discouraged from making medical/dental appointments during school time if at all possible and are only expected to remove their child from school for the minimum period of time when this is unavoidable.

The school requires parents to provide proof of medical/illness absence to satisfy the school as to the authenticity of the absence.

- A prescription
- A medical letter
- An appointment card or similar

The school does not require the parent to provide a GP sick note and does not expect the parent to make an additional payment, to satisfy this requirement.

Leave of Absence in Term Time (Holidays) and Legal Framework

The law says that parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school during term time. From 1 September 2013 an amendment to the Schools/Academies Attendance Regulations came into effect. This amendment removed all references to term-time holidays as well as the statutory threshold of 10 school/academy days.

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances. (Family holidays are not normally considered to be exceptional circumstance). If you take a leave of absence without the permission of the school or if your child fails to return by the agreed date if permission was granted, then this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Each parent will be informed in writing within 10 school days of the application being received.

Where the decision is made not to grant leave of absence in term time and the leave is taken without prior approval, or without application, each parent will be informed in writing of the decision to either unauthorise or authorise the absence. This may lead to a referral to the Local Authority if the request remains unauthorised.

The exceptional circumstance criteria will focus on:

- A recent serious illness/bereavement of an immediate family member.
- A member of the Armed Forces whereby they need to undertake a tour of duty which conflicts with school holidays.
- Restrictions on Police leave, where a Police Officer has specific duties in relation to a national event which conflicts with school holidays.

[Redcar & Cleveland Attendance and Welfare Service Leave of Absence Policy.](#)

Attendance letters (Appendix 1 to 1.6)

Additional letters may be sent to parent/carer related to student's attendance as appropriate.

1.3 Director of Attendance and Welfare

The school employs a Director of Attendance and Welfare to monitor absences and attendance.

Student Welfare Managers and the Director of Attendance and Welfare will closely monitor a student's attendance and regularly communicate with parents, students and staff. The school utilises a range of supportive strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will promptly follow up absences and lateness.

'Action on Attendance' meetings are held weekly and any student identified as a concern will be discussed. This may trigger follow up action from the DoAW or SWM.

Students with attendance below 97% will be reviewed weekly and the SWM/DoAW will work with the student and their parents where there is a high level of absence/persistent absence.

When the school has exhausted all areas of intervention and there is no significant improvement in attendance, formal intervention will be pursued with a referral placed by DoAW to the Local Authority Attendance and Welfare Service.

See Appendix 2 Flow Chart

- DoAW has regular contact and meetings with the LA AWO to discuss and monitor PA's.
- DoAW liaises with LA AWO related to Child Employment Legislation.

1.4 Staff responsibilities

The law requires all schools to have an attendance register for all students on roll.

The attendance register is taken by Form Tutors at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions each school day and notify the Student Welfare Managers of any concerns.

Entries into the register must not be pre-populated. On each occasion a record is made as to whether a student is

- Present
- Attending an approved educational activity
- Absent or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason
- Absences for half a day (one session) are coded according to category

1.5 Student Welfare Manager responsibilities

- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken if necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not

- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the electronic register, which is used to provide data for the School Census. All attendance information is kept in accordance with confidentiality and data protection practice. The main attendance register is compiled electronically using the School Information Management System (SIMS)

2 Punctuality/Lateness

Code L: Late arrival before the register has closed.

Code U: Late arrival after the register has closed.

Registers close 30 minutes from the beginning of registration. For statistical reasons, arrival to school after this time is recorded as an unauthorised absence and will be subject to formal attendance processes. Afternoon registration closes after the register is taken.

Registration takes place at 8.30am and 12.55pm. If a student fails to arrive before morning registers have closed, he/she should report to the Main Office to sign in. The register entry will read 'late'.

Arrival to registration 30 minutes or more after registers have closed without an acceptable reason can result in a student being marked as an unauthorised absence (U). This will impact upon student's percentage attendance record. The Director of Attendance and Welfare monitors the attendance follows up any incorrect procedures or inconsistencies.

Students late to school without a justifiable reason will receive a late referral. This is served after school for the length of time the student was late. A restorative conversation will also take place with the student and Year leader/SWM during this period.

2.1 Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

It is essential that all staff follow the same criteria when deciding whether or not to authorise an absence. The role of the Director of Attendance and Welfare ensures consistency of practice. The school records absence in line with the latest guidance from the DfE

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance#history>

(Appendix C3- School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities. Last Updated 2 November 2016)

3 Children Missing from Education (CME)

A student who is absent from school for 10 consecutive school days, with no contact to school from parents/carers, is regarded as a 'child missing from education'.

School will make all necessary enquiries to trace the student through any additional contact numbers. If unsuccessful in making contact with parents/carers a referral will be made to the local authority.

If a child has not returned within 20 days of the expected date of return and CME procedures have been pursued, the school may take a child off their school roll after consultation with the Local Authority.

This is regarded as a major safeguarding concern and may involve contact being made with the Police or the local authority children's services. It is important that all absences are notified to school on each day of absence and a change to contact information is updated.
(Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2016)

The school will refer all unauthorised absences to the Attendance & Welfare Service of Redcar and Cleveland Council for them to consider a Penalty Notice. This is currently £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days or £120 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. A two parent family with two children would be fined £240. You will need to pay the increased fine within 28 days or court action can be taken against you and you will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court by the Local Authority for non school attendance.

Further information on the code of practice can be found at [redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/Attendance & Welfare Service](http://redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/Attendance%20&%20Welfare%20Service).

The Headteacher/Director of Attendance and Welfare/Student Welfare Manager will notify the parent in writing of the decision to refuse to grant permission and will code as unauthorised if the circumstances are not "exceptional".

3.1 Child Employment and Entertainment

Part-time work can be a very positive experience for young people and give them some independence and responsibility. Parents must ensure their child is registered with the Local Authority and has a permit to work. Employers have responsibility for children in their employ and should apply to the Attendance and Welfare Service for the permit by completing the ENT1 application form.

The Guide to Employment of Children and Byelaws for the Employment of Children can be accessed using the link below:

[Redcar & Cleveland Attendance and Welfare Service - Child Employment and Entertainment](#)

Partnerships/Communication with the Local Authority:

- DoAW has regular contact and meetings with the LA AWO to discuss and monitor PA's
- DoAW liaises with LA AWO related to Child Employment Legislation
- LJS Alternative Education - Learning and Inclusion



Laurence Jackson School

Church Lane, Guisborough, TS14 6RD

Tel: 01287 636361

www.laurencejackson.org email: reception@laurencejackson.org

 @LJ_School



Headteacher: Belinda Wheatman B.Ed (Hons), NPQH

Appendix 1 – Letter 1

10 July 2018

<<Salutation>>
<<AddBlock>>

Dear <<Salutation>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>> Reg <<reg>>

Actual Attendance at time of writing: <<PercentageAttendance>>%

The DfE (Department for Education) leads schools in implementing attendance policies and procedures. In accordance with these policies, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends regularly in line with the DfE recommendations.

Laurence Jackson School's **minimum** attendance target for students is **97%**.

Attendance procedures may be put in place for students who fall below this target.

As a school we have a legal obligation to inform parents/carers if attendance does not meet this requirement, **even if we are aware of reasons for absences.**

<<Forename>>'s attendance is currently below the school's minimum target. When <<Forename>> is absent, **it is important that you contact us with a reason.** Failure to provide an acceptable reason for absence may result in that absence being recorded as **unauthorised.**

There is a direct link between school attendance and student achievement. As a school we want to work in partnership with parents/carers to improve attendance and trust that you will work with us to improve <<Forename>>'s attendance.

If there is a continued deterioration in <<Forename>>'s attendance, then school may arrange a meeting to discuss further action and it may be necessary to refer to the schools Director of Attendance and Welfare.

If you would like further support or wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact school.

Yours sincerely

Student Welfare Manager

Mrs B Symington – Year 7
Mr C Wood – Year 8
Mrs A Booth – Year 9
Mrs S Dyball – Year 10
Miss J Clements – Year 11

Letter 1

Laurence Jackson School

Church Lane, Guisborough, TS14 6RD

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 @LJ_School

Headteacher: Belinda Wheatman B.Ed (Hons), NPQH



Appendix 1.1 – Letter 2

10 July 2018

<<ParentalAddressee>>

<<AddBlock>>

Dear <<ParentalAddressee>>

Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>> Reg <<reg>>

Actual Attendance at time of writing: <<PercentageAttendance>>%

The DfE (Department for Education) leads schools in implementing attendance policies and procedures. In accordance with these policies, parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends regularly in line with the DfE recommendations.

Laurence Jackson School's **minimum** attendance target for students is **97%**.

Attendance procedures will be put in place for all students who fall below this target.

As a school we have a legal obligation to inform parents/carers if attendance does not meet this requirement, **even if we are aware of reasons for absences**

We want to work in partnership with parents/carers to improve attendance and trust that you will work with us to improve <<Forename>>'s attendance.

At this level of attendance, we will not authorise any future absences based on a verbal advisement unless medical evidence is provided to explain the reason fully. Acceptable medical evidence includes:

- an appointment card from GP or hospital
- note on doctor's surgery headed notepaper
- prescription notice
- label from medication

If there is a continued deterioration in <<Forename>>'s attendance, then school will arrange a meeting to discuss further action and it may be necessary to refer to the Schools Director of Attendance and Welfare where formal attendance procedures may be implemented.

If you would like further support or wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact school.

Yours sincerely

Student Welfare Manager

Mrs B Symington – Year 7

Mr C Wood – Year 8

Mrs A Booth – Year 9

Mrs S Dyball – Year 10

Miss J Clements – Year 11

Letter 2

Laurence Jackson School

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Headteacher: Belinda Wheatman B.Ed (Hons), NPQH



Appendix 1.2 – Letter 3

10 July 2018

<<ParentalAddressee>>
<<AddBlock>>

Dear <<ParentalAddressee>>

**Re: <<Forename>> <<Surname>> Reg <<reg>>
Actual Attendance at time of writing: <<PercentageAttendance>>%**

As you are aware, there is ongoing concern about the attendance of your child, <<Forename>>. Therefore, an Attendance Case Conference, chaired by the Schools Director of Attendance and Welfare, has been arranged for at to be held in .

The purpose of the meeting is to consider and discuss ways of working together to improve attendance, it is important you attend.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J O'Hanlon
Director of Attendance and Welfare

