

# Leigh Academy Blackheath



## Attendance Policy

**Approved by:** SLT

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## **Leigh Academy Blackheath – Attendance Policy.**

This document is intended to outline the practice which follows from the Leigh Academies Trust policy (which can be found [here](#)), and should be read in conjunction with this.

### **Daily Attendance Procedures**

Studies have shown that missing school means a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. For these reasons, we expect all students to arrive on time, as per the below.

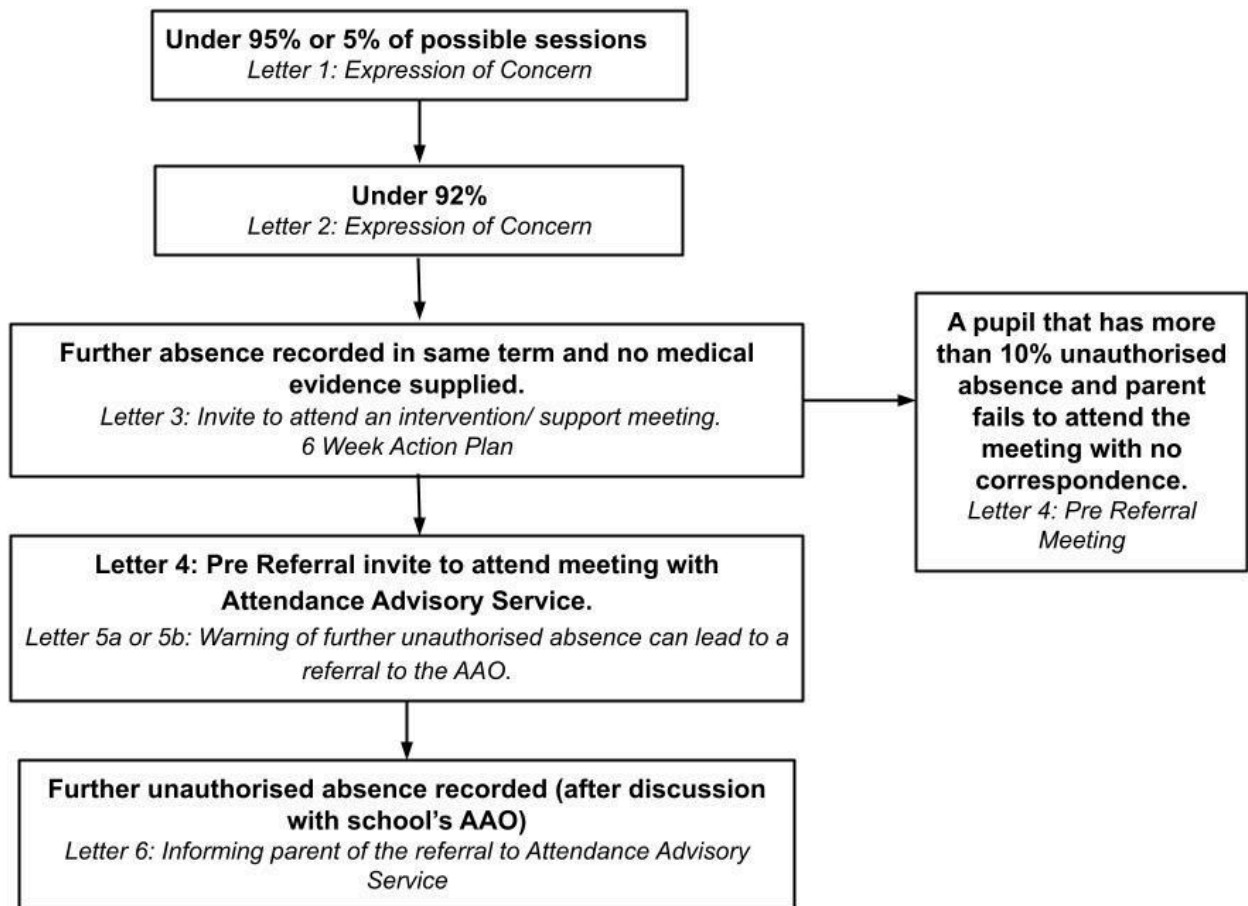
- Students must arrive before 8.20am; morning registers are taken at 08:30. Afternoon registers are taken at 12.20pm.
- Students arriving between 8.30am and 9.30am will be marked as late and will receive a breaktime detention.
- Students arriving after 9.30am will receive an unauthorised mark for the morning session and will receive a 30 minute detention.
- Following the closing of morning registration, attendance texts will be sent to parents and carers of absent students (from whom we have not already received information). This will be followed up with absence calls;
- In exceptional circumstances (such as severe weather or public transport disruptions), the closing of registration may be delayed at the discretion of the Principal.
- Reporting procedures and parental meetings will be held to support our parents and carers in improving the punctuality of any child the academy has concerns about.

### **Absence during term time**

- Parents and carers are expected to notify the academy office of student absence. In the case of illness, parents should phone the academy office on the first day of absence and then each day thereafter. The office number is 020 8104 0888. The academy will continue to phone home every day for a period of extended absence, even if the reason for absence is known.
- Family holidays are not permitted during term time. We kindly ask parents and carers to make routine doctor and dental appointments either after the academy day or outside of term time in order to avoid unnecessary absence.
- The academy may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'. Examples include the death or terminal illness of a close relative; or to attend a wedding or funeral of a close relative. Even in these exceptional circumstances, the academy will typically only authorise 1 day's absence, such is the importance of attendance to student outcomes.
- Applications for leave of absence must be made in writing to the Principal. The Principal will make the decision of acceptance or refusal.
- If absence is not authorised and a leave of absence of at least 10 sessions (5 days) is taken, a referral will be made to the local authority attendance service who may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child taken out of the academy.

### **Procedures for improving attendance and punctuality**

- Academy staff work to build a culture where all can, and want to be in school and ready to learn by prioritising quality first, inclusive teaching across the school.
- The academy works closely with the Royal Borough of Greenwich and follows the council's procedures for improving attendance and punctuality. This involves helping students and parents to access the support they need to overcome barriers early so that absence does not become entrenched.
- College teams analyse attendance data regularly and prioritise families to work with to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are identified, we are committed to listening to students and parents and agreeing on how all partners can work together to resolve them.
- Academy staff work jointly with the Royal Borough of Greenwich on an agreed approach where absence persists. This includes agreeing formalised support where voluntary help has not been effective. At each stage, this will involve explaining the consequences clearly and ensuring support is also in place to enable families to respond.
- Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, we will enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect each student's right to an education.
- Academy staff work to implement effective strategies for cohorts with poorer attendance than their peers, including developing contextualised strategies to deal with food poverty.
- Academy staff work closely with Governors to drive and champion good attendance.
- When a student's attendance falls to 95%, parents and carers will be notified that attendance is becoming a concern and that they should seek support from the school if required
- When a student's attendance falls to 92%, parents and carers will be notified that further absence without medical evidence will be unauthorised.
- When a student is at risk of persistent absence (90% or lower), parents and carers will be invited in for an attendance meeting with the child's Head of College. During this meeting, support strategies will be discussed, and parents and carers will be made aware of the next stages in the procedure should their child's attendance fail to improve.
- In these cases, students' attendance is monitored weekly for 6 weeks. If attendance improves during the 6-week monitoring period, the academy will close the case and monitor in the usual way. If attendance does not improve during the 6-week monitoring period, the academy may invite parents or carers in for a further meeting where the attendance plan previously put in place is evaluated and updated.
- After this meeting, attendance is monitored for a further period. If unauthorised absences continue after this point, the academy and the Royal Borough of Greenwich may begin proceedings to issue legal penalty notices to parents.



### **Children Missing from Education (CME):**

The national definition of CME is: “all children of compulsory academy age who are not on a academy roll, nor being educated otherwise (e.g. at home, privately or in alternative provision) and who have been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time (usually agreed as four weeks or more)”.

Children are at risk of becoming CME for many reasons, such as:

1. They cease to attend due to exclusion or withdrawal: removal from roll with no destination.
2. They fail to complete a transfer between providers.
3. They are offered alternative provision but fail to access this provision.
4. They have moved into the area and are not yet registered on an academy roll.

Leigh Academy Blackheath follows the Royal Borough of Greenwich councils procedures for monitoring and reporting students who we believe are vulnerable and/or missing from education (CME). Should the child be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or should the academy have child protection concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will immediately notify Children’s Social Services. We will not remove any child from our roll

without consulting Royal Borough of Greenwich Admissions Services and the Children's Social Services where appropriate.

### **Removing a Pupil from Roll:**

As per The Education Regulations Act 2006 Section 8, when all possible actions have been taken we will remove a student from academy roll due to continued serious absence.

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy within 10 school days, immediately following an authorised leave of absence, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

Where a pupil has failed to attend the Academy for 20 school days or more and absence is unauthorised, and there are no reasonable grounds for the pupil not to attend, the Academy and Local Authority will make reasonable enquiries to ascertain where the pupil is, and if unable to establish the pupil's whereabouts we will remove from roll. (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006)

### **Education for Health Needs including Mental Health:**

Under section 19 of the Education Act 1996, where a child cannot attend school because of a physical or mental health need, and cannot access suitable full-time education, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable alternative provision.

Local authorities should provide education as soon as it is clear that the child will be away from school for 15 school days or more during the school year, whether consecutive or cumulative. While the section 19 duty sits with the local authority, Leigh Academy Blackheath will work closely with them and any relevant medical professionals to ensure that students with health needs are fully supported at school.

Local authorities should be aware that under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, a school can only remove the name of a pupil who is unable to attend school because of additional health needs from its register in certain circumstances. These include where:

- the student has been certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school, before ceasing to be of compulsory school age; and
- neither the pupil nor their parent has indicated to the school the intention to continue to attend the school, after ceasing to be of compulsory school age.