

THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOOL



Pupil Attendance Policy

Approved by: Academic and Pastoral Committee

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1. Aims

- We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Headmaster to account for the implementation of this policy.

3.2 The Headmaster

The Headmaster is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The Attendance Officer (Assistant Headmaster, Personal Development)

The school Attendance Officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headmaster
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headmaster when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Housemasters & Senior Sixth Form Tutors

Housemasters and Senior Sixth Form Tutors are expected to:

- Have oversight of registers within their Houses, ensuring that form teachers maintain accurate registers
- Check for any concerns with a view to intervening effectively in timely fashion.
- Make contact with parents and carers when necessary to support good attendance
- Discuss any concerns with the school Attendance Officer and record these on CPOMS assigning them to the Attendance Officer.
- Work with parents / carers & local authorities to support attendance of pupils in their Houses as necessary

3.5 Form Teachers

Form teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office & Housemasters / Senior Sixth Form Tutors.

3.6 Attendance Administration Staff

Attendance Administration Staff assist in the gathering of information about attendance at the direction of the Attendance Officer.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present (/)
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity (V)
- Absent (N)

- Unable to attend due to other circumstances (using the relevant code as appropriate in accordance with DofE guidance)
- Late after registers have closed (U)
- Absent without an authorised reason ((using the relevant code as appropriate in accordance with DofE guidance)

The school uses the codes recommended by the DofE.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40 on each school day and by 9:30 on Mass Days.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:40 and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 2pm and will be kept open until 2:30.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer should notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents should call the school on 02073850102 and select 1 option for pupil absence. They should record a voicemail stating the pupil name & form, date and reason for absence. Parents should still contact their child's Housemaster or Senior Sixth Form Tutor if there are exceptional circumstances surrounding the absence, or if the parent needs to speak to a member of school staff.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should contact their child's Housemaster or Senior Sixth Form Tutor at least 24 hours in advance of any appointment to arrange an exeat. Appointments where this notice has not been given may not be authorized. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. The school does not authorise absence for holidays in term time. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using code (L)
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.
- Where a late is deemed to be for a valid reason (e.g. widespread and unavoidable transport disruption), that days lates will be cancelled and no further sanction will be applied

A pupil who arrives late without good reason must report to the Pastoral Support Officer with responsibility for punctuality in the Study Hall at 8:20 the following day. If a pupil fails to report appropriate sanctions will be used as per the school's behavior policy.

If a pupil is persistently late (i.e. 5 or more uncanceled lates in a half term), the Pastoral Support Officer will liaise with the pupil's Housemaster or Senior Sixth Form Tutor and will use punctuality reports to support the development of better habits of punctuality. Sanctions will also be considered for persistent lateness if the above measures do not see substantive change in a pupil's punctuality.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, firstly by emailing on the morning of the absence, then following this up with phone calls from the administration team, attendance officer and Housemaster if necessary.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school reports on attendance biannually for all year groups in the Michaelmas and Lent term school reports and in the end of year report. In addition a, a parent can see their child's attendance data at any time on Arbor.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headmaster will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headmaster's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Study Leave
- Leave on compassionate grounds, authorised by the Headmaster
- Dual registration

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school adopts a policy of vigilance on attendance. Housemasters and Senior Sixth Form Tutors check their registers on a weekly basis to look out for any patterns of absence or any concerns, and discuss these with the Attendance Officer.

The Attendance Officer will formally review whole school attendance at the following points in the year:

- At the end of the first half of Michaelmas Term
- At the end of Michaelmas Term
- At the end of Lent Term
- At the end of the Trinity Term

The school works with Local Authorities to support pupils who have difficulties with attendance by offering support. Where appropriate this support may include: more frequent contact from school to home; special arrangements in school for particular times of the day (for example break and lunch times); access to therapeutic services such as counselling; a referral to Learning Support; the use of reduced timetables on a temporary basis. Reduced timetables should not be used indefinitely, but should have a clear purpose of encouraging a return to full school attendance and these should be agreed with parents at a formal meeting and documented on CPOMS.. Attendance contracts may also be used where these are likely to be effective.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headmaster, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The School has high expectations of attendance for all its pupils. Pupils who have exceptionally good attendance & punctuality will receive commendations from their Housemaster on a half-termly basis. The School also encourages the use of Virtue Points for shorter term target setting, especially with pupils who may be struggling with attendance. These should be used at the Form Teacher's discretion.

7. Attendance monitoring

Housemasters and Senior Sixth Form Tutors check their registers on a weekly basis.

The Attendance Officer reviews whole-school attendance on a half termly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to notify the school each day of an absence in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The school collects all data on Arbor. Attendance data is used to:

- Track attendance of individual pupils

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate the attendance of children identified as being in need of intervention and support

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy