

## Attendance Policy

### Aim of the Academy Trust

To provide an outstanding education for every child in the trust through high aspirations and through the principles of quality learning using curiosity, exploration and discovery.

This policy is linked to:

Behaviour for Learning Policy

Positive Discipline Policy

Child Protection Policy

### Principles

The aim of The Langley Academy Trust Attendance Policy is to provide an environment which encourages all our students to attend school regularly and punctually. This is vital if we are to ensure they succeed in their schooling and in their future lives.

The whole academy community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance: parents/carers, students and all academy staff.

Children who do not attend school regularly are much more likely to leave school with fewer or no qualifications; and they are more likely to be drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour. Parents/carers are responsible, by law, for ensuring that their children receive suitable full-time education. (National Audit Office June 2005)

- To ensure that the specific responsibilities of academy staff, the students and their parents/carers are clearly defined and able to be evaluated
- To ensure that a system of actions to be taken to address attendance concerns is in place
- To ensure that systems to support good attendance within The Langley Academy Trust Schools are consistent with good practice

### Guidelines

#### Parents'/ carers' responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Parents of children at either of the Primary Academies in the Trust have a responsibility to ensure their child/ children arrive at 08.40 each day.

Section 444 of the Education Act says:-

“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at school fails to attend regularly at school, his parent is guilty of an offence”.

(NB Where the Education Act refers to “he”, it also means “she”.)

If a student is prevented from attending school because of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the academy of the student's absence. Ideally this should be by telephone on the first day of absence, but if this is not possible it should be confirmed in writing. Wherever possible, parents /carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during academy hours.

It should be noted that **only** the academy can authorise absence, not the parent/carer. Academy staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence. Where no satisfactory explanation is given, the absence will be treated as **unauthorised**.

Parents/carers do not have the right to take their children out of school for a holiday during term time. If, however, parents/carers apply to the academy in advance, the academy may, at the Principal/Headteacher's discretion, grant up to two weeks' term –time absence in any academic year. *The Langley Academy Trust will only authorise such absences in exceptional circumstances*

### **Academy's responsibilities**

Day to day monitoring of the Langley Academy Trust Attendance Policy will be carried out by the Attendance Officer in each academy. An Academy Director /member of SLT has responsibility for ensuring that the Attendance Policy is enforced in each academy. However, all the staff at each academy will provide an ethos that places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

The Langley Academy Trust staff are responsible for ensuring that students have good attendance by:

- ensuring that the electronic attendance registers are kept accurately;
- differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence (a letter or message from a parent /carer does not in itself authorise an absence - only the academy can decide whether the parent/carers explanation justifies authorising the absence);
- contacting the parent/carers by text or telephone on the first day of the absence (this is done by the Attendance Officer);
- responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care;
- contacting parent/carers when they are concerned about a student's absence, and recording the contact;
- consulting with the Education Welfare Service if a student's attendance continues to give cause for concern;
- promoting regular school attendance;
- acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual students, classes or house tutor groups;
- keeping subject registers in the secondary academy and following up any absences from lessons in order to deal with truancy which might occur during morning or

afternoon sessions

### **Students' responsibilities (Secondary)**

All students should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their House Tutor.

Students should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their House Tutor a note from their parents/carers to explain the absence. Students also have the responsibility for following academy procedures if they arrive late.

### **Action on Attendance Concerns (Secondary)**

- The academy will consider any student whose attendance is below 93.5% as having **Attendance Concerns**. House Tutors will address issues with student's whose attendance is below this figure with parent/carers and students.
- House Tutors will liaise with Heads of House to address any issues that arise.
- The Attendance Officer will produce a weekly summary of student attendance for Heads of House and House Tutors and identify individual students causing concern.
- Heads of House will monitor the attendance of students in their respective Houses using data from the Attendance Officer. Every 2 weeks they will discuss attendance grids and outline actions agreed to address any concerns with their Academy Director line manager. Heads of House will reward on a termly basis those students who have an excellent record of attendance.
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be considered to have **Serious Attendance Concerns**.
- The Academy Attendance Officer will identify such students and the Head of House will produce an Individual Action Plan Attendance Improvement plan. The Attendance Officer will inform parents/carers in writing of the Academy's concerns.
- Persistent non-attenders will be placed on a **Fast-Track Attendance Improvement Monitoring Programme** managed by the Attendance Officer and an Academy Director
- Parent/carers of students whose attendance does not improve following the Fast Track Attendance Improvement Programme will be invited to attend a Governor's attendance panel meeting. Parent/carers of students whose attendance does not improve following all these interventions will be prosecute.
- The legislation set out in the Education Act 1996 enables the Academy to remove students after a period of 20 days **after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family**. The Langley Academy Trust reserves the right to remove a student from the roll in this instance.

### **Action on Attendance Concerns (Primary)**

- The academy will consider any pupil whose attendance is below 93.5% as having **Attendance Concerns**. Class teacher will address issues with the parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is below this figure.
- Class teachers will liaise with Deputy/Assistant Heads to address any issues that arise.
- The Attendance Officer will produce a weekly summary of pupil attendance for Deputy/Assistant Heads and identify individual students causing concern.
- Deputy/Assistant Heads will monitor the attendance of pupils in their respective Key Stage using data from the Attendance Officer. Every 2 weeks they will discuss attendance grids and outline actions agreed to address any concerns with their Headteacher.
- Headteachers will reward on a termly basis those pupils who have an excellent record of attendance.
- Pupils whose attendance falls below 85% will be considered to have **Serious Attendance Concerns**.
- The Academy Attendance Officer will identify such pupils and with the Headteacher will produce an Individual Attendance Improvement plan during a meeting with the parents.
- Persistent non-attenders will be placed on a **Fast-Track Attendance Improvement Monitoring Programme** managed by the Attendance Officer and Deputy/Assistant Heads and family support worker.
- Parent/carers of pupils whose attendance does not improve following the Fast Track Attendance Improvement Programme will be invited to attend a Governor's attendance panel meeting. Parent/carers of pupils whose attendance does not improve following all these interventions will be prosecuted.
- The legislation set out in the Education Act 1996 enables the Academy to remove pupils after a period of 20 days **after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family**.

### **Child Missing in Education**

In line with Statutory Guidance, schools within The Langley Academy Trust will adopt Local Authority Protocols for Children Missing in Education (refer to Appendix 1).

Primarily, it is the responsibility of The Attendance Officer to alert a member of Senior Staff, preferably Child Protection Officer of children who are missing in Education. The Langley Academy Trust reserves the right to remove a student from the roll in this instance.

### **Punctuality across the Trust schools**

The Langley Academy Trust views punctuality as extremely important in all members. It is imperative that all students arrive at the Academy on time to ensure learning begins promptly and to aid the smooth running of the institution.

Lateness can disrupt lessons and therefore the learning of other students. If a student is late to school they must report to Reception and sign in with the Attendance Officer. A late mark will

be recorded.

If a pattern of lateness is recorded then the Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Head of House a senior member of staff will organise a meeting with the parents/carers.

In the Langley Academy Secondary if a student is late then a sanction will be given. A student will be expected to catch up on work within reason for poor attendance and poor punctuality.

**Review Date: March 2016**

**Ratified Date: March 2016**

**Author: Roberta Wauchob**

**Date of next review: March 2018**

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Slough Borough Council – Child Missing in Education Protocols**

#### **Children Missing Education (Staff Guide)**

Who are children missing education (CME)?

These are children of compulsory school age (5 – 16) who are:

- Not on a school roll
- Not being educated other than at school
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time

Why are children missing education or at risk of missing education?

- They fail to start school
- They cease to attend school either through withdrawal or exclusion (formal or informal)
- They fail to make the transition between primary and secondary school or move into a new authority
- They may be experiencing family or personal difficulties
- They may be moved from temporary accommodation at short notice
- Their whereabouts may be unknown
- They may be unable to attend school due to medical needs
- They may be educated other than at school
- They may need a co-ordinated approach for their complex needs before they are able to start school
- They are not in receipt of full-time provision suitable to age, their needs and ability
- They fail to return from holiday or compassionate leave

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in fulltime education

#### **If I come across at child missing education what should I do?**

##### **1. For children leaving school with no known destination:**

A well established procedure is already in place for schools when pupils leave a school and their destination is unknown. It is essential that schools inform the Pupil Tracking Officer before removing a child from roll if a forwarding school has not been identified. Schools should initially make their own reasonable enquiries. If a child has been absent for 10 school days, schools should initially make a referral to their Attendance Improvement Officer.

If after 20 days, or where there are concerns the pupil has not been located a referral should be made to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

##### **2. For children believed to be missing from education:**

The referral procedure for children believed to be missing from education (excluding those in 1 above who leave a school with no known destination) is straightforward. It must be followed by staff within Education and Children's Services, in schools and partner agencies when children believed to be missing from education come to their attention.

Anyone who believes a child may be missing from education should refer this to the Pupil Tracking Officer by email. ([diana.wingroveowens@slough.gov.uk](mailto:diana.wingroveowens@slough.gov.uk))

If everyone follows this procedure it will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duties in relation to pupils missing education.

The Pupil Tracking Officer will follow up all referrals, liaising with other agencies as necessary, to establish whether or not the child really is missing from education. If the child is missing from

education, the Pupil Tracking Officer will ensure the details are passed to the appropriate team to secure suitable education.

All children missing from education will be monitored by the Pupil Tracking Officer until such time as suitable provision is made.

### **3. Safeguarding**

If there are any concerns for the wellbeing of the child a referral should be made to the duty team at Children and Families. The Pan Berkshire Safeguarding procedures can be found at

<http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

#### **Contacts for Children Missing Education (CME)**

Queries about individual children should be referred to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

Head of School Services: Tony Browne

Tel: 01753 875717

Email address: [tony.browne@slough.gov.uk](mailto:tony.browne@slough.gov.uk)

Attendance Team Manager: Tony Murphy

Tel: 01753 787661

Email address: [tony.murphy@slough.gov.uk](mailto:tony.murphy@slough.gov.uk)

Pupil Tracking Officer (CME) Diana Wingrove-Owens

Tel: 01753 787669

Email address [diana.wingrove-owens@slough.gov.uk](mailto:diana.wingrove-owens@slough.gov.uk)