



LINTON VILLAGE COLLEGE

Attendance Policy

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MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:	DIRECTOR OF INCLUSION AND SEND
THIS POLICY WAS CONSULTED WITH:	SLT AND FGB
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1. Introduction

At Linton Village College we are committed to supporting every student to achieve their full potential. Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective learning, allowing students to make the most of their educational experience. Poor attendance and punctuality lead to gaps in learning, missed preparation for assessments and a lack of continuity, ultimately resulting in underachievement and reduced life chances. We take attendance very seriously and do all we can to obtain high attendance from all our students. Attendance is a national priority. Research shows that attendance of less than 90% is likely to result in a drop of 1 grade at GCSE. Absence at 90% or below is classed as persistent absence. If a child is taken away for a two week holiday every year and has the average number of days off for sickness and appointments, by the time they are 16 they will have missed a year of school. The College monitors attendance closely and parents or carers of any child whose attendance is seen to be of concern below 90% in the first half term rising to below 95% as the year progresses will be contacted.

We expect the vast majority of students to achieve over 95% attendance as a minimum requirement. Linton Village College aims to:

- Raise levels of achievement by ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance, punctuality and involvement in the college;
- Ensure that every student has access to the education to which they are entitled
- Make explicit to all relevant parties, including staff, parents and carers, students and governors the expectations of attendance;
- Be proactive in addressing early patterns of absence.

2. Legal and National Context

The law regarding regular attendance and punctuality:

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents of a child of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure that their children receive full-time education; and, that they have a legal duty to ensure the regular attendance and punctuality of that child at the school where he/she is a registered student. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, then the parent is guilty of an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

The law regarding term time holidays (planned absences):

We are obliged to follow the government guidelines, clarified in 2017, which state that any time taken off during term time will be unauthorised and parents or carers liable to a penalty notice unless exceptional circumstances apply.

Such circumstances might include children taking time to see a family member who is forces personnel on leave from a foreign posting; a parent, grandparent or other close relative being seriously or terminally ill and the holiday proposed is likely to be the last such holiday; or if there has recently been a death or significant other trauma in the family and it is felt that an immediate holiday might help the child concerned better deal with the situation. If leave is taken without authorisation it will be recorded in the school attendance register as unauthorised absence. A Penalty Notice, if issued, is per parent per child. The amount is £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days and before 28 days. After 28 days the case may be escalated for prosecution at the Magistrates' Court.

If you are uncertain as to whether a planned term time absence might be classed as being an exceptional circumstance, please contact the school and ask to speak to the Attendance Officer. To apply for an authorised leave of absence during term time, please complete the 'Application for Leave of Absence Letter' which can be found on the school website: www.lvc.org. This will then be reviewed by the Headteacher, or SLA that acts on their behalf, and a decision made whether or not the leave should be authorised. We ask that parents/carers do not make travel arrangements before the planned absence has been authorised.

Further guidance for families: When sporting activities are likely to be authorised:

Over recent years, the school has seen an upturn in the number of requests from families for students to be absent from school due to sports training camps and competitions. Although each case will be considered individually, we have created the following guidance to give an indication of the likely decision by the school when deciding to authorise or unauthorise the planned absence.

- Up to 2 days of absence, due to a student taking part in a major sporting event or special training opportunity, will usually be authorised.
- 3 days or more of absence will usually only be authorised if it is for a major national or international competition, when the dates are set by a recognised governing body. Training camps, whether inside or outside the UK, are usually unauthorised as the dates could have been organised for during a holiday.
- Students attending a sporting event, who are not competing but wish to attend to support a competitor (e.g. sibling), will usually be unauthorised.

3. Implementation

- Ensure that college policy with regard to term-time holidays is clearly stated on the college website;
- Remind parents/carers of the importance of ensuring their children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance;
- Actively discourage parents from arranging holidays during term-time;
- Unequivocally remind parents that they do not have any right or entitlement to expect termtime leave to be granted and that all leave is granted at the discretion of the Principal (or those authorised to exercise discretion);
- Advise parents/carers that leave taken without authorisation will be recorded in the college attendance register as unauthorised absence and the relevant Head of House will be informed;
- Advise parents that attendance below 90% consisting of mainly unauthorised absences in the previous 6-week period may result in parenting contracts, or legal enforcement including Penalty Notices, School Attendance Orders, Education Supervision Orders or prosecution;
- Provide attendance data on a termly basis;
- Provide a termly report to the Governors at the Standards Committee;
- Inform the local authority of any student who is going to be deleted from the register where they have ceased to attend the college or are in custody or permanently excluded;
- Inform the local authority of any student who fails to attend regularly, is missing for 10 days
 or more or if there are safeguarding concerns this can be before 10 days, classified as 'a child
 missing from education' and;

Pass on attendance data to all Post-16 centres as required.

4. Promoting Attendance

The college uses opportunities as they arise to remind parents and students of the importance of attendance, for instance through Parent Information Evenings, LVC Newsletter, House Assemblies, Parent Handbook and Home/School Agreement.

In addition, the following personnel have a key role in supporting good attendance:

4.1 Heads of Year, who will:

- Give attendance a high profile at assemblies and college events.
- Monitor attendance targets and record keeping for each House.
- Support tutors on issues of non-attendance and with internal truancy, remedying causes and applying sanctions.
- Meet with parents/carers to discuss attendance problems as soon as they are identified.
- Lead on strategies to improve the attendance of students who are identified as being a concern through meetings with students and parents/carers.
- Meet every two weeks with the Attendance Officer to review House attendance.
- Work with the Attendance Officer to implement the letter warning system.
- Work with the Attendance Officer to refer to the local authority in cases where legal proceedings need to commence.
- Work with the Inclusion Manager to ensure that work is provided for excluded students and long-term absentees.
- Look for patterns of absence and consider the impact of curriculum on attendance alongside other possible causes; and
- Work with the Director of Inclusion/SEN Co-Ordinator, Inclusion Manager and Local Authority Attendance Service to create individual packages and re-integration plans where appropriate; and ensure safety plans are followed in relation to attendance.
- Recognise and promote good and improved attendance.

4.2 Attendance Officer, who will:

- Oversee the administration of the SIMS register system.
- Follow the guidance from the Department for Education to ensure the correct attendance codes are used.
- Work with Heads of House and the Director of Inclusion/SEN to streamline and make adjustments to systems and procedures.
- Contact parents/carers of any child whose absence is unexplained or not reported on the morning of absence.
- Keep parents/carers informed of any unexplained absences before they become unauthorised.
- Meet every two weeks with Heads of Year to review attendance data.
- Meet monthly with the Director of Inclusion/SEN Co-Ordinator to review attendance for

- students with special education needs (SEN), looked after child (LAC) and post LAC.
- Monitor punctuality and provide a report to Heads of Year for lateness every two weeks.
- Be aware of work with the Director of Inclusion/SEN Co-Ordinator, Heads of Year and Local Authority Attendance Service to create individual packages and re-integration plans where appropriate.
- Keep the Director of Inclusion/SEN-Co-Ordinator informed of inaccurate marking of the registers. SLT implements a warning system for staff who do not maintain accurate recording of registers.

4.3 Tutors, who will:

- Take the register promptly and ensure that it is accurate.
- Take prompt action where students are late or absent without explanation, recording lateness using minutes late function and notifying the support hub when a student is missing.
- Notify the relevant Head of Year after three days of absence or issues with lateness.
- Follow the process of rewards and sanctions to support attendance.
- Notify immediately supporthub@lvc.org if students with a safety plan are missing.

4.4 Class Teachers, who will:

- Take the class register promptly and ensure that it is accurate.
- Take prompt action where students are late or absent without explanation, recording lateness using minutes late and notifying the support hub when a student is missing.
- Notify the relevant Head of Year if there are concerns over class absence.
- Notify immediately supporthub@lvc.org if students with a safety plan are missing.

4.5 Parents/Carers, who will:

- Ensure that children leave for school on time every day.
- Report all absences to the college every day that a child is absent.
- Provide specific reasons for absence from college. All unexplained absence will be marked as unauthorised if we receive no explanation after one week.
- Ensure that children sign in at reception if late, after 08.40am, or if returning during the college day.
- Collect and sign out children who need to leave during any part of the college day other than 3.00pm.
- Make every effort not to take children out of school in term time and complete a leave of absence request form for all absences under special circumstances, except for medical or dental appointments.
- Notify the college in advance of any medical or dental appointments and provide proof if requested.
- Notify the college as soon as problems arise with a child's attendance.

4.6 Students, who will:

- Arrive by 08.25am for registration every morning at 08.30am.
- Be on time for all lessons.
- Make sure parents/carers provide an explanation for absence by email or telephone to the Attendance Officer.
- Sign in at reception if arriving after 08.50am or if returning to college during the day.
- Sign out at reception if leaving college during any part of the day other than 3.00pm.
- Tell their tutor, Head of Year or member of the support hub team if they are having any problems attending college.

The Attendance Service (Local Authority)

The Attendance Service expects schools to work with parents and pupils at an early stage to resolve problems, this is nearly always successful. The Attendance Service has a legal role and if other ways of resolving attendance have failed, the Attendance Service can use legal sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the magistrates' court.

The Attendance Team includes:

- Attendance Officer
- Senior Lead on Attendance
- Local Authority Attendance Officer (LAAO)
- Education Inclusion Manager (EIO)
- Year Heads

5. Sanctions for Poor Punctuality

The college reserves the right to use any of the following sanctions to fulfil obligations with respect to persistent lateness and truancy:

- Faculty detention
- After school detention for truancy or persistent lateness

The college may also apply other sanctions in line with the Behaviour for Learning policy

6. Support for Students and Parents

The College provides support for parents and students if they are struggling to attend school, including the following:

- Accurate attendance reports through the attendance system.
- Informal phone calls and meetings with appropriate staff members to discuss emerging/ongoing issues with agreed 'school actions' that should help support attendance.
- When appropriate, the school can complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) that may lead to local authority support, such as a Family Support Worker and/or Young People's Worker.
- When appropriate, the school can arrange an Individual Alternative Education Plan (IAEP) for a student. This can lead to a reduced timetable/curriculum if required to support attendance.

Attendance Service involvement and referral:

- Generally, the school will instigate at least 3 interventions with parents/ guardians, prior to referring the case to the Attendance Service (for example; an attendance phone call or email; a letter from the 3-letter system; a Parent Contract Meeting). This is to enable any barriers to accessing education to be identified and appropriate support offered.
- Before referral to the Attendance Service, the school will offer the parent(s) a Parent
 Contract Meeting in which support will be offered, school actions identified and attendance
 targets set within a monitoring period.
- Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school offering the parent the opportunity to enter into a parenting contract following a student's truancy or non-attendance under section 19 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.
- Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 provides that a parent commits an offence if his or her compulsory school age child who is a registered student fails to attend school regularly. This can result in the school instigating a Penalty Notice under section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Parenting orders, Education Supervision Orders or Penalty Notices can also be issued by the Attendance Service on behalf of the LA.
- Prosecution by the Attendance Service on behalf of the LA.

7. Persistent Absence

Absence at 90% or below is classed as persistent absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The college monitors absence thoroughly. If attendance is consistently below 85% for a period of 4 weeks and we have exhausted the letter warning system and any other mechanisms of support offered to the student and their families, we may refer the matter to Cambridge County Council who will arrange a Parent Contract Meeting, followed by a review meeting.

If this fails, the local authority may decide to take more formal action by issuing Penalty Notices, Parenting Orders or Education Supervision Orders.

In summary, penalty notices (fines) may be issued to each parent/carer who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion.

In addition, a parent/carer who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances rule), may also receive a Penalty Notice. Therefore, Penalty Notices may be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable. Parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

More information can be found in Appendix F, Penalty Notice Code of Conduct 2020 and any subsequent amendments made by the Local Authority.

8. Policy Review

Policies will normally be reviewed on a 3-year cycle unless otherwise stated. This review may be brought forward as required by the School to reflect changes in supporting advice/guidance.

Appendix A: Procedure for reporting absence at school

1. If a child is absent from school the following procedures are required to ensure the school is fully informed.

1.1. Short term absence

- The College's Attendance Officer is contacted by the parent on 01223 891233 or email attendance@lintonvc.org by 8.30 am every day that the student is absent.
- Information is provided, including the reason for absence, student name and form group.

1.2. Continued absence

- In the case of longer-term absence, the Attendance Officer is informed so that appropriate support can be provided.

1.3. Ten days' absence

- A student who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children Missing in Education Officers, this is a legal requirement. This can be done immediately if a student is vulnerable or open to Social Care.
- 2. If a child needs to be absent during the school day the following procedures are required.
- The school attendance officer is contacted by the parent on 01223 891233 or email attendance@lintonvc.org to inform of reason for absence during the day, e.g. dental appointment.
- The student must sign out before they leave the school premises and sign in on their return.
- 3. School action in the case of student absence
- In the case of student attendance that is deemed 'at risk', the parent may be contacted by the school, by letter or phone, to discuss absence and actions for improving attendance.
- In the case of a student whose absence is persistently below the 90% Persistent Absence (PA) level, the parents/carers may be contacted be contacted by the college and asked to attend a Parent Contract Meeting, where a formal attendance target and monitoring period will be set.

Appendix B: Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable at LVC. If a child misses the start of the day, they can miss vital work and information. Lateness is also disruptive to lessons.

1. The school day

The school starts with a form registration at 8.30 am. Any student who arrives after this time is registered as late.

Form registers are closed by 8.50 am. A student who is late after this time should sign in at Reception, where they will be given a mark to show they are on site. However, this will be counted as an unauthorised absence for the morning session (coded as 'U' on the register) unless they have a genuine reason for lateness i.e. illness, medical.

If a child arrives late to school, for example due to a dental appointment, a note must accompany the child on their return when they sign in. In this case the absence will be recorded as authorised.

2. Lesson monitor

Every lesson is registered through the school internal system. Teachers are expected to ensure that the register is taken as promptly as possible. The reason for this is to track punctuality and in school truancy. It is essential that registers are recorded accurately, using the internal system. On the rare occasion that the register is not accessible on the system, a paper copy of the register should be used. In this case the teacher is expected to complete the register, not the students, and return it to the Attendance Officer, promptly.

If a student is late in arriving to lesson, the teacher will record lateness on the system. In this case, an N should be changed to an L.

The Year Head has the overview of punctuality and will follow up lateness with individual students, who will be expected to make up the time lost. In cases of persistent lateness, parents/carers will be contacted by the College to remind them of their legal obligation to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually. If lateness fails to improve, then a formal attendance target and monitoring period may be put in place following a Parent Contract Meeting.

Appendix C: Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, either as authorised or unauthorised absence.

1. Authorised absences

Authorised absences are approved by the Year Head, SLA or Attendance Officer on behalf of the Head teacher. An example of an authorised absence that may be approved would be a student observing a religious event or a morning or afternoon away from school for a reason such as illness or medical/dental appointments that unavoidably fall within the school day. We do ask that families organise medical/dental appointments outside of the school day whenever possible.

All absence must be communicated by direct communication with the Attendance Officer on 01223 891233 or email attendance@lintonvc.org

2. Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which permission has not been given. This includes:

- parents keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- truancy before or during the school day;
- unexplained absence;
- students who regularly arrive late, after registration has closed;
- holidays/days off school, and
- students staying off school for invalid reasons such as shopping, caring for siblings, etc.

This type of absence can lead to the Attendance Service using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. The school reserve the right to unauthorise an absence if given a reason to dispute authenticity of the reason provided, for example; the student has a history of truancy or unusual patterns of absence.

3. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to a child's educational prospects. The school monitors all absence thoroughly. If a child's absence is deemed to be 'at risk' of PA, the parent will be informed of this by the Year Head or SLA.

Ethos

At Linton Village College, we believe that all students can achieve and make excellent progress, regardless of barriers to learning or special educational needs. Lessons are inclusive and students are taught in mainstream classes where possible and withdrawn only for specialist intervention when necessary. We maintain high expectations of all staff and students and ensure that those students who need additional support are appropriately provided for. Support is reviewed regularly and adjusted to ensure maximum impact. Consistent communication ensures successful working partnerships between staff, students and parents. Furthermore, we take particular care to ensure that SEND students' safety and wellbeing are catered for, acknowledging the fact that, statistically, students with specific learning needs or physical disabilities are more vulnerable in terms of safeguarding (Reference KCSIE 2018).

Special Educational Needs - a definition

At Linton Village College, we consider students with special educational needs to be a student who:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of the facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.
 (Code of Practice 2015)

We consider that students with special educational needs may have a number of different barriers to learning which will sit within the following broad areas of need:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and / or physical needs (Code of Practice 2015)

English as an Additional Language is not considered to be a special educational need unless there are specific barriers to learning which are not related to the acquisition of the English language. However, specialist provision for English as an Additional Language is provided through the Learning Support Team.

Inappropriate and anti-social behaviour may not always be characteristic of a special educational need. However, some behaviour characteristics may be linked to specific barriers for learning and should be treated as such.

How will we know if your child needs extra help?

When your child first comes to us we use information from:

- primary school teachers with end of Key Stage 2 levels.
- baseline testing, Cognitive Ability Tests and other initial tests in Year 7.
- parents/carers application form information.
- subject teachers.
- specialist colleagues and external agencies.

How will you know how your child is doing?

The College will publish five reports each year which will show current and target levels and report on attitude to learning, behaviour and homework. This information is reviewed and considerations are made for whether specific interventions are needed.

We welcome the involvement of parents/carers and want to keep you up to date and involved with your child's progress. We do this through:

- Parents evenings
- Email
- Telephone calls
- Appointments made with individual teachers
- Annual reviews and additional termly meetings for students with an Education Health Care Plan

Parent Forums

The College provides information for parents through:

- Linton Village College newsletter
- The College website (www.lvc.org)
- Open evenings
- Letters home
- Information evenings (Year 6 through to Year 11)
- Individual consultation meetings
- SEND Matters

How will we support your child?

All teachers will be told about your child's individual needs and will endeavour to adapt their lessons to meet these. Teachers have ongoing professional development to support their understanding and skills with supporting student with additional needs. Where there are concerns regarding access to the curriculum, the teacher will complete a SEND referral to the SEND Dept.

Within the College there are a variety of staff roles to help us fully support your child. Most of our students follow a traditional curriculum. However, a small number of learners have a more personalised curriculum to match their individual needs.

We also have an excellent in-house provision called the Henry Morris Centre (HMC) which provides support for open access for all students at break and lunchtime. We also have a Sensory Room within the HMC, for students who need support with their sensory needs.

Different types of support at Linton Village College:

- In class LSA support
- Adapted curriculum
- Differentiated and personalised resources
- Alternative methods of recording
- Counselling
- Emotional well-being Mentors
- Educational Psychologist consultation
- Touch typing programmes
- Homework club
- Examinations Access Arrangements
- Social Skills programme
- Dog Mentor Therapy
- Lexonic Literacy Training
- Lexia Power Up
- Success @ arithmetic

The above list is not exhaustive and may not be offered to all students with Special Educational Needs. Provision is offered as a result of identification and monitoring.

When your child is approaching the start of Key Stage 4, if necessary, we will assess and apply for exam access arrangements according to the Joint Council for Qualifications Exam Regulations. We have a qualified and experienced teacher to assess students for any exam access arrangement.

The Local Offer

We aim to provide parents with information about how we support children's learning in College. Although we have tried to be comprehensive in our information, please do come and talk to us if you wish to discuss any aspect of our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision. Support can also be found within the Cambridgeshire local offer www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/send.

How will your child be included in activities outside the classroom?

All children in the College are encouraged to take part in extra activities at break time, lunchtime and after school. Day and residential trips are open to all children and your child's specific needs can be discussed if they wish to join such a trip.

How will we support your child's wellbeing?

At Linton Village College we take our pastoral responsibilities seriously. We pride ourselves on providing a high level of student support and guidance. One way we support our students is by assigning them to a form tutor who will (in most cases) remain with them as they progress up the College. This provides continuity and builds a strong relationship between tutor and students. There are additional members of staff at Linton Village College who are able to provide pastoral support. These include the Support Hub Team, Heads of Year and 8M8s during year 7.

We also have excellent relationships with a number of outside agencies including:

- Children's Services, the Police and the Youth Service
- Early Help Support Workers
- Centre 33

If your child finds lunch or break times difficult, we have an excellent provision called the HMC.

The Learning Support Team:

We employ Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) to support students in class with 1:1 and group work, and also to offer interventions at Form time and during lunchtime. The Learning Support Team comprises a range of experienced Learning Support Assistants who specialise in different subject areas and additional needs.

How accessible is our College?

Students with mobility issues have full access to all parts of the College with the exception of the upper floor of the English & Maths block. A lift provides accessibility to the upper floors of the Science and Technology building.

What should you do if you have concerns about my child's progress?

In the first instance, you should contact the subject teacher or your child's tutor who may refer your concerns to a more senior member of staff if needed. Alternatively contact Anna Garner, the College's SENCO.

If you feel you want to raise a complaint, the College has a formal complaints policy which can be found on the website.

How will we help your child's transition into secondary school and beyond?

We liaise with our 'feeder' primary schools and provide additional transition support if it is needed. The Learning Support Team meet students and parents of students transferring who may require additional visits. There are two full-day transition days and an additional morning for students who may be anxious regarding transition.

All students receive advice on careers and are encouraged to visit colleges to explore post-16 courses. If additional support is needed, this will be put in place. Bespoke arrangements can be provided with our Post-16 Advisor to support their transition beyond LVC.

Where can you get further information?

- Contact the College on 01223 891233
- Look at the Local Authority SEN Local Offer via the College website: www.lvc.org or www.lvc.org or www.lvc.org or www.lvc.org or <a href="www.lvc.o
- Contact Cambridgeshire Parent Partnership on 01223 699214
- Contact Cambridgeshire County Council on 0345 045 5200

The SEND Co-ordinator is Anna Garner and she can be contacted via the College office on 01223 891233 or by email: agarner@lintonvc.org.

The Examination Access Arrangements Coordinator is Dr Oliver Marston - Email: omarston@lintonvc.org.

The SEND Governor can be contacted via the Clerk to the Governing Body: tcoston@lintonvc.org