



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 leads 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;
- Ensure that the school can safely account for all students.

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 are liable to a penalty notice unless exceptional circumstances apply (see Appendix D).

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 LGB meeting;
- 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 year group;
- 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 Year 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 Officer 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 Officer 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 Year 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@lintonvc.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@lintonvc.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, giving prior notice to the College.

- 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 and share medical evidence if an absence will be prolonged.
- 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:

• 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.
- It is a parent's responsibility to alert the school if their child is ill when they are on an IAEP.

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 suspension.

In addition, a parent who takes a child/carer 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 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.

Appendix D:

Absence Request Form

	rner (Director of Inclu	sion/SEN Co-ordin	ator) – LINTON VILLAGE	COLLEGE
I wish to apply	to have an absence a	uthorised for:		
Child's name .			. Tutor Group/Year	
Child's name .			Tutor Group/Year	
Date from		Date to		(Inclusiv
Siblings attend	ding a different school	(please add school)		
Name of Pare	nt(s)/Carer(s):			
Address:				
Signature of <u>B</u>	oth Parent(s)/Carer(s)	(even if separated	and therefore live at differe	ent addresses)
Parent/Carer 1	l		exceptional circumstance	
Parent/Carer 1	t Leave of Absence wii	Il only be granted in		s. Should this not be
Parent/Carer 1	t Leave of Absence wil ke my child out of colle Office use only No of school days	Il only be granted in	exceptional circumstance I may be liable for a Penal	s. Should this not be
Parent/Carer 1 understand tha anted and I tak	t Leave of Absence wil ke my child out of colle	ll only be granted in ge, I am aware that	exceptional circumstance I may be liable for a Penal	es. Should this not be ty Notice.
Parent/Carer 1	t Leave of Absence wil ke my child out of colle Office use only No of school days	ll only be granted in ge, I am aware that	exceptional circumstance I may be liable for a Penal	es. Should this not be ty Notice.

AVOIDABLE ABSENCE IN TERM-TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read carefully the information below.

Permission must be sought in advance. If the circumstances relating to this request are considered exceptional and the absence is authorised by the college, the authorising of the absence will be conditional on the satisfactory attendance of the child(ren) up to the date covered by this request. Most will be unauthorised; a fixed penalty for absence may be

WARNING: If you allow your child to miss college in term time for an avoidable reason without obtaining the prior approval of the college, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice* per parent per child, or made the subject of court proceedings that could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up

As a parent/carer, you can demonstrate your commitment to your child's education by not allowing your child to miss college for anything other than an exceptional and unavoidable reason.

THE FACTS

School aged pupils in Cambridgeshire are expected to attend punctually on the 190 days that the school is open. Whilst there are a number of unavoidable reasons why a pupil might be away from school (illness, medical appointments, exclusions etc), the legislation is clear that any avoidable absence may only be authorised by a school if there are exceptional circumstances.

WHAT YOU SHOULD CONSIDER

Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the learning they have missed. This may affect test results and can be particularly harmful if the child is studying for final year examinations.

Children who struggle with English or Mathematics may also find it even harder to cope when they return to school, while younger children may find it difficult to renew friendships with their classmates.

If the school is unable to authorise the absence and the child is still taken out of school for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more or is classed as persistently absent, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and you may receive a £60* fine per parent for each child.

THE LAW

The law allows schools to consider individual requests to authorise a future avoidable absence. However before the school can authorise any such requests, they must satisfy themselves that there are exceptional circumstances which justify such a decision. It is entirely the responsibility of the parent submitting the request to provide sufficient information/evidence in order to establish this fact. The request for leave must come from a parent with whom the child normally resides

If a child then stays away from school for more than the authorised period this must be recorded as unauthorised absence and could be quoted in a prosecution for poor attendance

If the child is away from school for a total of 10 school days without explanation, the school will refer to the Local Authority and report the absence as a child missing in education. The school may be advised to remove a child from roll following extended absence, subject to advice from the Local Authority. If a child is removed from roll, there is no guarantee that the child will regain a place at the school

Types of Unavoidable absence that will be authorised

- Genuine illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (but try to make these outside the school day)
- Days of religious observance
- Seeing a parent who is on leave from the armed forces
- External examinations
- When Traveller children go on the road with their
- When a family needs to spend time together due to the bereavement of an immediate family member, crisis or serious illness or funeral of an immediate family member
- Transport not provided by the Local Authority when it

Types of absence that will not be authorised

- Any type of shopping
- · Looking after siblings or unwell parents
- Minding the house
- Birthdays
- · Tiredness after a late night
- Relatives visiting or visiting relatives
- Family holidays
- Bullying
- Friendship issues
- Death of a pet
- School refusal
- · To interpret for other family members

The law requires parents to ensure their children receive an efficient full time education, and every minute of every day is important. Please help them not to miss any of this valuable time

We hope that when you have read this leaflet you will consider that your child's education is too important to allow them to miss school for avoidable reasons.

Appendix E: Roles and Responsibilities

Linton Village College Attendance Roles and Responsibilities 2022-2023

Why does Attendance Matter?

95%	47 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 8 days in total or 1 week and 3 days
90%	95 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 16 days in total or 3 weeks and 1 day
85%	142 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 24 days in total or 4 weeks and 4 days
80%	190 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 32 days in total or 6 weeks and 2 days

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

WHAT DO YOUR
ATTENDANCE
FIGURES
ACTUALLY MEAN?

BE SMART BE THERE!

Percentages based on 190 academic days

Role	Responsibility				
Student	To attend school when well enough to do so.				
Parent	To support their child to attend school when well enough to do so.				
Form	To take the AM Register by 8.40am with 100% accuracy				
Tutor	To promote attendance and display the Attendance Matters Poster				
	To review form attendance every four weeks and implement actions if a student's attendance falls between 95%-90%. This can				
	include phonecalls or emails home and one to one <u>chats</u> with the student				
	To feedback this attendance to the Head of year every four weeks.				
Class	To take accurate registers by 15 mins into the lesson				
Teacher	To share concerns if a student is missing from your lesson, but has been present that day				
	To read and follow Safety Plans				
	To ensure that students are able to catch up with lost learning when absent for a period of time (this includes exclusions)				
Support	To record attendance for students in their interventions (ig. Counselling sessions, attending HMC, isolation, well-being sessions, exams etc				
Staff					
Subject	To review the role attendance when it impacts on individuals' progress in your subject				
Leaders	To share concerns with the Form Tutor if the attendance is between 95-90%				
	To share concerns with the Head of Year if the attendance is lower than 90%				
	To challenge class teachers who do not take accurate and prompt registers				
Head of	To know and be able to explain their cohort's attendance, including vulnerable groups				
Year	To receive and ensure that Form Tutors are reviewing their Form's attendance each month				
	To review and action all PA attendance with proactive and preventative measures				
	To ensure that all students who are on a reduced timetable (longer than 3 weeks) are on an IAEP				
	To feedback to the Attendance Officer each month for their year group's attendance				
	To challenge Form Tutors who do not take accurate and prompt registers				
Attendance	To record all reported absences and follow up unreported absence				
Officer	To log all reasons for absence on SIMS so all staff are informed				
	To share best practice in the weekly Staff Bulletin				
	To promote good attendance with parents				
	To log all attendance weekly on a central spreadsheet that can be accessed by the pastoral team				
	To refer teachers and form tutors to their line managers if taking registers becomes a concern.				