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ATTENDANCE

&

PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Attendance & Punctuality Policy			
Approved / Accepted by	**The Lowry Academy (UL Academy School)** **The Local Governing Board**		
Author	**Assistant Principal (Attendance) – L Earle**		
Policy Originator	**Senior Attendance Lead**		
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Summary – Attendance at a Glance

Attendance Matters

Here at The Lowry Academy, we have the highest expectations across all areas of school life including attendance. We value positive relationships between both staff and students and want all students to feel they belong here and are valued. We work with our students to ensure that they have the highest possible attendance at school. We believe that this is the best way for them to succeed and to get the most out of all we have to offer.

There is a clear link between academic outcomes and school attendance. We want all students to achieve excellent outcomes to give themselves the absolute best chance in life.

There are 175 non-school days per year for holidays, shopping, and appointments. There is no need, except in extreme circumstances to miss a day's education. If you miss one session in a week (remember, there are two sessions per day) your attendance is 90%.

This means you miss 19 days of education in a year and risk dropping one grade in your GCSEs.

It is vital we work together to teach our students the value of attending school each day. However, we do appreciate that at times, students may not be able to attend school. We ask our parents and carers to follow the processes below. They support our safeguarding procedures.

Should you have a concern about your child's attendance, then we ask that you contact us to discuss this. We believe in strong partnerships across all parts of school life. This includes attending school.

It is also important to us that students arrive to school on time, and they must be at school by 8.25 am for an 8.30 am start.

Absence through illness or unforeseen circumstances

Please call school on 0161529 5200 and leave a voicemail message by 8.25 am each morning of absence. When reporting an absence via voicemail, parents should state their child's full name, year group, and reason for absence. If the call is made from the registered phone number linked to their Arbor account, the system will automatically match the message to the correct student record.

Do expect to receive a call back from the school to discuss your child's absence and to see if we can support in any way. If students suffer any form of injury, then we ask that you contact the school to make us aware. This is so we can do a risk assessment with you. It will identify impacts of the injury and the support your child may need. See section 7.3 of the full policy for further information.

Attending an Appointment

Please schedule dental and non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours. We know this might be tough for hospital visits. If rescheduling fails, your child must bring a medical letter or appointment card. We need it for our records. Students must be picked up and returned to school if their appointment ends during the school day. For more details, check section 6.2 of the full policy.

Known Absence

Your child may need to miss school for exceptional reasons. If so, parents/carers should ask the Principal. They should use the absence request form. Where possible, this should be made at least four weeks before the required date. The form should be completed and emailed back to **attendance@lowryacademy.org.uk**. If such a request is made, the school expects it to be short. But even then, they may not be able to approve it.

If the Principal does not authorise it, then any absence is 'unauthorised' and can incur a penalty.

We must follow legal rules. Therefore, we cannot approve holiday requests during term time. Additionally, we may issue penalty notices. For more details, please check the Attendance Policy and Procedures (section 6.1).

Support

We take absence very seriously. We are committed to supporting any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly. Attendance is monitored for all students. Support may be offered at any stage where patterns of absence emerge, with increased intervention for students at risk of persistent absence (below 90%) or severe absence (below 50%)

Further information on support can be found in the full policy.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 8.30 am and we expect your child to be in school at that time. Arrival after that time will mean the child is late. Lateness means they miss important routines which help get their day off to a positive start. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons during the day for others. Registers open at 8.40 am and remain open for 30 minutes. If a child arrives after 9.10 am this will incur a U code which is an unauthorised absence and may count towards a Truancy Penalty Notice.

How we manage lateness to school and lessons

Lateness to school

Lateness to school will result in a same day 20-minute lunch detention

Arrival after 9 am will result in a same day 35-minute lunch detention. Students will eat their lunch in detention which will either be their own packed lunch or a sandwich of their choice from the canteen and a bottle of water.

Part A - Policy

1. Introduction

This Attendance Policy outlines the culture and approach to supporting good attendance at our academy. The second part of the document outlines the more detailed procedures, roles and responsibilities related to student attendance that operate at our academy. Through all that we do to manage attendance, we are committed to creating a positive learning environment, supporting student achievement, and complying with legal requirements.

This is a successful academy, and all students play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to be proud to

belong and to achieve their best. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is particularly important therefore that parents[1] make sure that children attend regularly, and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this. The school will work with local authority attendance services through attendance support and targeting support processes where appropriate

Regular attendance at school is of critical importance to a child's education. Evidence tells us that the students with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. Any absence affects the pattern of a student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts the learning of others in the same teaching groups by disrupting classroom routines. Ensuring your child's regular attendance is your legal responsibility.

The principles of a 'support first approach' are adopted and we seek to:

Support first approach (as set out in DFE Guidance)	
Expect	Aspire to high standards of attendance from all students and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.
Monitor	Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.
Listen and understand	When a pattern is spotted, discuss with students and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.
Facilitate support	Remove barriers in school and help students and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.
Formalise support	Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order.
Enforce	Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the student's right to an education.

2. Aims

Our aim is to create a school environment where children feel they belong and want to come to school. We believe our school is a wonderful place to learn, and that being in school day in, day out, is in the best interests of all our students. However, we recognise that there will be times when there may be barriers that prevent children from attending school. In these instances, we will act early to understand the issue, provide support and work with the child and their family to get them back to regular attendance as quickly as possible. Consideration will be given to students with SEND, long term health conditions, young carers, and students with a social worker, who may face additional barriers to attendance. The SENDCo and Senior Mental Health Lead are consulted for children with SEND.

We believe that one of the most key factors in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school and a sense of belonging. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children, and to foster positive and mutually respectful relationships with parents.

By promoting good attendance and punctuality we aim to:

- Make good attendance and punctuality a priority for all those involved in the school community.
- Raise our students' awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.
- Provide support, advice and guidelines to parents, students, and staff.
- Work in partnership with parents, including regularly informing them about their child's absence and attendance levels.
- Support students back into school following a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Celebrate and reward good attendance and punctuality.

This policy sets out our school's position on attendance and details the procedures that all parents[2] must follow to report their child's absence from school and to remind them of their legal duty, to ensure their child attends school regularly.

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently, considering the individual needs of our students and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. Therefore, in the development of our policy we have considered our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We want our students to go to school every day unless they are not well enough to attend.

We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning, and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our students to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident, and competent adults who can realise their full potential. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential in the workplace and children who are used to attending school on time, and on every occasion unless they are too unwell to attend, will be better prepared for the attendance expectations in the workplace.

In April 2017, the Supreme Court clarified the definition of regular attendance to be attendance "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school", therefore if an absence is not authorised by the school, the student's attendance is deemed to be irregular.

We will do all we can to encourage our students to attend. We will also make available the best provision we can for any student who needs additional support in school or who is prevented from attending school, due to a medical condition.

Please see DfE guidance documents 'Supporting students at school with medical conditions - December 2015', 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs- January 2013' and Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – or ask the school for printed copies.

2.1. Effects of non-attendance

The table below indicates how what might seem like just a few days' absence can result in children missing a considerable number of lessons.

Attendance during school year	Days lost in a year	Which is approximately	Approximate number of lessons missed
95%	9.5 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons

3. Safeguarding and Attendance

Our school will monitor trends and patterns of absence for all students as a part of our standard procedures. However, we are aware that sudden or gradual changes in a student's attendance may indicate additional or more extreme safeguarding issues. In line with government guidance, **Keeping Children Safe in Education** we will investigate and report any suspected safeguarding cases on to the relevant authorities. As part of our safeguarding duty and our standard procedures, we will inform the Local Authority and/or the Police of the details of any student who is absent from school when the school cannot establish their whereabouts and is concerned for the student's welfare. Severe absence (below 50% attendance) will be treated as a safeguarding concern and may result in multi-agency involvement where appropriate.

The school recognises that unexplained absence can be an indicator of safeguarding concerns. Where concerns exist regarding a student's welfare, the school will take appropriate action, which may include repeated contact attempts, home visits, liaison with external agencies, or referral to Children's Services where necessary.

Home Visits

Where concerns exist regarding a student's attendance, welfare or safety, the school may undertake a home visit. Home visits may be used when the school has been unable to contact

parents/carers, where there are safeguarding concerns, or where further support is required to help improve attendance.

Home visits form part of the school's graduated response to attendance concerns and may be carried out by attendance, pastoral or safeguarding staff. The purpose of a home visit is to establish contact, assess any barriers to attendance, and work collaboratively with families to secure regular school attendance.

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance July 2026 from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's 2015 statutory guidance on **School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures.** These documents are drawn from legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Children Act 1989
- The Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Sentencing Act 2020
- The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007
- The Education (Information about Individual Students) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendments) Regulations 2024

5. Using data to support improvements in attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence may seriously affect their learning. The Department for Education (DfE) defines a student as a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason.
For students who miss more than 50% of sessions they are defined as 'severely absent'.

We will use data to complete:

- Weekly attendance analysis.

- Cohort analysis (i.e. looking at the year group as a whole)

- Benchmarking against national and local averages.

- Monitoring of:

- SEND
- FSM
- Young carers
- Social worker cohort
- CIC
- PP students

The school will ensure that data, including the DfE's View Your Education Data platform, is routinely monitored to identify emerging attendance issues and will seek to prevent any student becoming persistently or severely absent. This will include: identifying the individual needs of students; working closely with families and wider support services to remove barriers to attendance; and where a formalised approach in conjunction with the local authority is required in line with the DfE guidance **Working Together to Improve School Attendance.**

6. Understanding Barriers to Attendance

In relation to understanding barriers to attendance, we will ensure all students and parents are treated with dignity, and staff will model respectful relationships to build a positive understanding between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. In communicating with parents, we will highlight the link between attendance and attainment and wider wellbeing and enhance their understanding of what good attendance looks like. Where a student or family needs support with attendance we will identify who is best placed to work with them to address issues.

We will support students and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance. Where barriers are outside of the school's control, all partners should work together to support students and parents to access any support they may need voluntarily. Where wider family barriers are identified, the academy may initiate Early Help assessments and work through a Team Around the Family approach.

Early Help and Whole Family Support

The academy recognises that attendance difficulties are often a symptom of wider family circumstances rather than the primary issue itself.

Where attendance concerns are identified, the academy will seek to understand the underlying causes and work with families to secure appropriate support.

This may include:

- Early Help Assessment.
- Team Around the Family meetings.
- Family support services.
- Mental health support services.

- Housing, financial, or social care support.
- Support from health professionals.

The academy will work with families voluntarily wherever possible and will adopt a supportive and collaborative approach, building on family strengths and identifying solutions that help remove barriers to attendance.

Where appropriate, one professional may take the lead role in coordinating support and ensuring effective communication between agencies.

Where absence intensifies, so should the support provided, which will require the school to work in tandem with the local authority and other relevant partners.

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities. In working with parents to improve attendance, we are mindful of the barriers these students face and will put additional support in place where necessary to help them access their full-time education.

Reduced timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for a limited period and to support students to reintegrate back into education to access fulltime provision.

The school is committed to share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe

7. Staff Training on Attendance

Improving attendance requires knowledge of guidance and regulations but also expertise in working with families to remove barriers to attendance and safeguard students. Just as those barriers are regularly evolving, so too is the training that school staff require to address them. The school therefore will facilitate training for all staff to understand

- the importance of good attendance and that absence is almost always a symptom of wider circumstances,
- the law and requirements of schools including on the keeping of registers
- the school/trust strategies and procedures for tracking, following up and improving attendance,
- the processes for working with other partners to provide more intensive support to students who need it.
- Attendance training will form part of induction for all new staff.

For staff with specialist attendance responsibilities, they will receive training to include

- the necessary skills to interpret and analyse attendance data,
- and any additional training that would be beneficial to support students and student cohorts overcome commonly seen barriers to attendance.

Part B - What the Law Says and Our Procedures

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body

The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Principal to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Principal- Mrs Coy

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual students and requests fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Senior Attendance Lead – Mrs Earle

If you would like to speak with Mrs Earle or book an appointment, please email ask.lowry@lowryacademy.org.uk

- Leads on implementing the school's attendance strategy in line with DfE guidance.
- Monitors attendance data to identify patterns and concerns.
- Works closely with pastoral teams, parents, and external agencies to address barriers to attendance.
- Ensures robust systems for recording and reporting attendance.
- Oversees interventions for persistent absence.
- Acts as school lead for Targeting Support Meetings with the Local Authority.
- Oversees Attendance Contracts and formal support measures.
- Promotes a culture where regular attendance is recognised as essential for academic success and wellbeing.

Attendance Officer

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual student level.
- Completes home visits and welfare checks
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Co-ordinates requests for Term-time Leave of Absence (this includes liaison with the DSL and Safeguarding Team) and advises the headteacher as requested.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has strategic oversight of the relationship between safeguarding and attendance.

The DSL will:

- Review attendance concerns where safeguarding risks are identified.
- Ensure attendance is considered within safeguarding assessments and referrals.
- Support investigations relating to Children Missing Education.
- Work with social workers and external agencies where attendance concerns form part of a wider safeguarding concern.
- Monitor the attendance of vulnerable groups, including Children in Care, previously looked after children, students with a social worker and young carers.
- Escalate concerns through safeguarding procedures where absence places a student at risk of harm.
- Oversee Children Missing Education referrals and investigations.
- Ensure safeguarding enquiries are completed where a student's whereabouts is unknown.
- Review proposed removals from roll where safeguarding concerns exist.

The DSL will work closely with the Senior Attendance Lead to ensure that attendance concerns are identified, assessed, and addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Head of Year

- Meet regularly with the Assistant Principal for Attendance to review year group attendance data.
- Make phone calls to parents/carers regarding student absences.
- Conduct home visits where necessary to support attendance.
- Monitor attendance and punctuality across the year group.
- Identify students who require additional support and arrange appropriate interventions.
- Liaise with form tutors, the SEND team, and the behaviour team to address barriers to education.

Class Teachers/Form Tutors

- Act as the first point of contact for students or parents who raise concerns or difficulties in school.
- Welcome students back after an absence and ensure they are prepared for lessons.
- Share attendance data with the form group and celebrate improvements.
- Support the delivery of the attendance curriculum within form time.

2. Contents of the Admissions Register

The admission register (sometimes referred to as the school roll) must contain specific personal details of every student in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers, and details of the school last attended. The school will enter students on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the student will attend.

A student's name can only lawfully be deleted from the admission register if a reason set out in regulation 9 of the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date, it is a legal document. Therefore, we encourage parents to inform the school of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

3. Contents of Attendance Register

The law makes it clear that schools must take the attendance register at the start of the morning session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. Registers will be taken at the same time for all students. On each occasion the register is taken, the appropriate attendance and absence code must be entered for every student. Please refer to Working Together to Improve School Attendance for the code descriptors and Appendix 2 of this document. The school must record whether each student is:

- Attending, or
- Absent

Effective and timely use and sharing of register data is critical to safeguard children, improve attendance and is supported using our electronic Management Information System to record attendance information. Our registers will be preserved for 6 years from the date after the last entry was made.

4. Attending the School (and Lateness)

It is the duty of parents to ensure that children attend school on time. This encourages habits of good timekeeping and lessens any classroom disruption.

Arrival expectations: Our students are expected to arrive at school by 08:30 to support a strong equipment and uniform check before transitioning into form time learning activities. This arrival time helps students who live further away to settle before registration begins.

Morning registration: Our morning register opens at 08:40am and closes at 09:10am.

- Students present in school when the register is taken at 08:40am will be marked as present (/)
- Students arriving after 08:40am but before 09:10am will be marked as late (L)
- Students arriving after 09:10am will be marked as absent with an unauthorised absence code (U), unless there is a valid reason provided

Afternoon registration: Our afternoon register opens at 12:20pm and closes at 12:50pm.

- Students present in school when the register is taken at 12:20pm will be marked as present (P)
- Students arriving after 12:20pm but before 12:50pm will be marked as late (L)
- Students arriving after 12:50pm will be marked as absent with an unauthorised absence code (U), unless there is a valid reason provided

If a student leaves the school premises after registration, they are still counted as present for statistical purposes.

However, if the student is late arriving due to a valid reason such as an unavoidable medical appointment, the absence will be authorised and coded accordingly. See DfE guidance **Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)**

5. Attending a place other than the school

Students are marked as attending a place other than the school if they are present for the assigned session. These codes include:

- Code K Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code V: Attending an educational visit or trip
- Code P: Participating in an authorised sporting activity, such as an inter-school sports competition. Please note that if the sporting activity is not organised through the school, an absence request form must be completed and submitted for the principal's consideration. Any absence will only be authorised if approval is granted.
- Code W: Attending work experience
- Code B: Attending any other approved education activity
- Code D: Dual registered at another setting

Our school retains responsibilities for the safeguarding and welfare of students attending an approved educational activity. Our school must be satisfied that appropriate measures have been taken to safeguard the student. Our school should ensure that we have in place arrangements whereby providers notify the school of any absence. Our school must record the student's absence using the relevant absence code.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider, such as another school, for part or all their education, our school will decide for the student to be dual registered at the other setting and mark our registers accordingly.

If a student is attending an alternative education provider arranged by the school, which is not a school, for part or all their education, we will mark the sessions which the student attends the alternative setting as code B (any other approved educational activity).

The school expects the alternative provision (AP) to notify us of any absences by individual students, to ensure we become aware of any attendance concerns as soon as possible and take follow up action, as necessary. Attendance updates will be provided on a daily basis, or more frequently if agreed with the alternative setting. Any attendance concerns will be followed up by us, in conjunction with the Alternative Provision (AP).

6. Absent – Leave of absence

A leave of absence means that the school has given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away from the school. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence' which means the student's absence is with permission granted by the school. These codes include:

- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code M: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
- Code J1: Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

6.1. Leave of Absence Requests – 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time.

Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. The school will consider each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. The school will not operate blanket policies for granting exceptional leave and all requests will be

considered individually. The request must be made by the parent with whom the child normally lives, and permission must be sought in advance. The school will not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case; following consultation with other staff as required, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days the student can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.

Circumstances which could be authorised include significant family emergencies or funerals. However, parents will also be aware that, wherever possible, it can be better for children to continue to attend school normally during difficult family times.

Parents should complete a Leave of Absence Request form which is available from the school.

The request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated; and wherever possible, at least four weeks before the absence. Although such absence may be unauthorised, it is better that we know your child is safe, rather than missing. Please be aware that you may be required to provide us with additional evidence to support your request. If we have any concerns about possible safeguarding risks such as risk of FGM or Forced Marriage, we will follow the necessary protocols.

All term time absence for children in care should be discussed at the child's Personal Education Planning (PEP) meeting in advance where possible and agreed with the Social Care and Virtual School. This permission should be gained before school is approached for approval. The school will contact the Virtual School in relation to any requests for term time absence for a child in care.

6.2 Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents should try to make appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. It is not acceptable for a child to miss a whole day's schooling for an appointment, unless necessary, in which case the school will need an explanation as to why this is.

No student will be allowed to leave the school site to attend a medical appointment during the school day without parental confirmation.

Advance notice is required for medical or dental appointments, unless it's an emergency appointment, and must be supported by providing the school with sight of, or a copy of, the appointment card or letter – only then will the absence be authorised. Please email photos/scans of evidence to **attendance@lowryacademy.org.uk** or come into school and we can scan copies of documents at reception.

6.3 Part-time timetables - Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable

Students are entitled to a full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and any special educational needs or disabilities that they may have.

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a student's best interests, there may be a need for the Academy to provide a student of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. We refer to these as Build Up Timetable. For example, where a medical condition prevents a student from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the student access as much education as possible. We do not use part-time timetables to manage a student's behaviour.

A part-time timetable will:

• Have the agreement of both the Academy and the parent/carer the student normally lives with.

• Have a clear ambition and be part of the student's wider support, health care, or reintegration plan.

• Have regular review dates which include the student and their parents to ensure it is only in place for the shortest time necessary.

• Have a proposed end date that considers the circumstances of the student, after which the student is expected to attend full-time. It can, however, be extended as part of the regular review process. In some limited cases, a student with a long-term health condition may require a part-time timetable for a prolonged period.

7 Absent – other authorised reasons

Absent due to other authorised reasons means that the school has given approval in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. These codes are classified for statistical purposes as 'authorised absence.' These codes include:

- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

7.1. Mobile student - Parent travelling for occupational purposes

The school will authorise the absence of a mobile student of no fixed abode who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent who is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with Traveller parents, as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible. Authorised Traveller absence will be recorded appropriately in the register.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, wherever possible, the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling for occupational purposes. In

which case the child will be dual registered at that school and this school, which is their 'main' school.

Children from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities whose families do not travel for occupational purposes are expected to register at school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

7.2. Religious Observance

Our school acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the school community and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holidays or weekends.

In accordance with the law, the school will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Should any additional days be necessary, they should be requested in advance using the leave of absence in term time process. Additional days taken without exceptional circumstances will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absence. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body, to confirm whether the day is set apart.

7.3. Illness

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported by following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised. That is unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school follows Department for Education guidance **'Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk)'** 2024[3] which states that if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence.

Where a parent cannot provide any written evidence, we will endeavour to have a conversation with the parent and student, if appropriate, which may itself serve as the necessary evidence to record the absence.

We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily. In some instances, the school may ask the parent to obtain a letter from a GP, or the school may seek parental permission to contact the student's GP directly to help support the needs of the individual student. Medical evidence will only be requested in a minority of cases and never through blanket policies.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a student has a high level and/or frequency of absence, the school may require medical evidence of some description in order to authorise any future medical absences. If this is the case, the school will make the parent/s aware of this expectation in advance.

The reporting of absence due to illness remains the responsibility of the parent. Absences due to illness which have not been reported to the school by the parent on the first day of absence may not be authorised.

Please call school on 0161529 5200 and leave a voicemail message by 8.25 am each morning of absence. When reporting an absence via voicemail, parents should state their child's full name, year group, and reason for absence. If the call is made from the registered phone number linked to their Arbor account, the system will automatically match the message to the correct student record.

If a child is absent for more than one day, the parent should contact the school each day to provide an update on the child's condition, unless otherwise agreed by the school.

On the child's return to school, a note should be provided by the parent, confirming the reason for their child's absence. (Delete if you do not want to include this requirement.)

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental Health, Anxiety and Emotionally Based School Avoidance

The academy understands that mental health needs can have a significant impact on attendance and that some students may experience difficulties attending school because of anxiety or other emotional wellbeing needs.

Where concerns regarding emotionally based school avoidance, anxiety-related absence or mental health difficulties are identified, the academy will seek to work collaboratively with the student, family, and relevant professionals to understand the barriers to attendance and develop an appropriate support plan.

Support strategies may include:

- Regular pastoral check-ins.
- Safe spaces and trusted adults.
- Attendance support plans.
- Short-term reintegration programmes.
- Reasonable adjustments to the school day.
- Referrals to appropriate mental health services.
- Collaboration with the Mental Health Support Team (where available).
- Early Help or multi-agency support.

Any reintegration arrangements will be time-limited, regularly reviewed and focused on supporting the student's return to full-time education as soon as reasonably possible.

The academy will avoid approaches that unnecessarily increase anxiety and will seek to balance support with maintaining high expectations for attendance wherever possible.

Parents who have concerns about their child's mental wellbeing can contact their child's head of year for further information on the support available. All enquiries to school can go to **ask.lowry@lowryacademy.org.uk**

Parents should also contact their GP or the NHS Helpline by phoning telephone number 111 for advice if they are concerned. In case of emergency parents should dial 999.

Students taken ill during the school day

If a student needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of school staff. In such circumstances, no student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation, and the parent must arrange for the child to be collected. We cannot allow a child who is too unwell to be in school to make their own way home.

7.4. Suspensions (Exclusions)

In this policy, the word 'suspension' is used to refer to what legislation calls an exclusion for a fixed period. Suspensions and permanent exclusions are both types of exclusion, and where this policy uses the word 'exclusion' this includes both suspensions (fixed-period exclusions) and permanent exclusions.

If the school decides to send a student home due to their behaviour, this will be recorded as an exclusion. The school will follow the current **DfE's statutory guidance on suspensions and permanent exclusions.** The full behaviour and exclusions policy for our school can be found here www.lowryacademy.org.uk

Any exclusion must be agreed by the Headteacher.

The school will notify the parent of the exclusion in writing. If the student is a Child in Care, the school will notify the student's carer, social worker, and the Virtual School. In other instances, where a student is open to Children's Social Care for any reason, the school will also inform their allocated social worker.

No student will be allowed to leave the school site without parental confirmation.

8. Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause

In accordance with DfE school attendance guidance, our school will record students as 'Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause' in the following circumstances (such circumstances are not recorded as absences and are not counted as possible attendances):

- Code Q: Unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements
- Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Code Y5: Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention

- Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

9. Absent - unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence or no reason for absence was provided.

Absence will be unauthorised if a student is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst parents can provide explanations for absences, it is the school's decision whether to authorise the absence or not.

Unauthorised absence includes:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Day trips
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance by the school)
- In the case of term time leave - if a student is kept away from school longer than was agreed, the additional absence is unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in Legal Sanctions, usually Penalty Notices or Prosecutions. The unauthorised absence codes include:

- Code G – Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N – Reason for absence not yet established
- Code O – Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U – Arrived in school after registration closed

10. Administrative codes

Where necessary and applicable, our school will use the defined administrative codes. These codes are not collected for statistical purposes and are:

- Code Z: Prospective student not on admissions register
- Code #: Planned whole school closure

11. First Day of Absence Response

Parents will receive a text message if their child is absent from school without reason. Parents must contact school to explain the absence. Where attendance is a concern, Head of Year may also call to discuss the reason further and to try and ensure the child returns to school as soon as possible.

If the school is unable to contact any of the emergency numbers provided, and is concerned for the welfare of the student, we may undertake our own 'safe and well' checks and/or request a Welfare Check from the police.

Repeated unexplained absence may result in escalation through safeguarding procedures and referral to the Local Authority Children Missing Education Team where appropriate

12. Rewarding Good and Improved Attendance

Attendance is key to progress and is a whole-school priority.

We believe that students should be empowered to understand and take ownership of their attendance. To support this, we have introduced attendance monitoring cards which enable students to know and care about their own attendance patterns.

Our rewards system:

- Annual recognition: Students who achieve band 1 across the entire academic year receive special recognition
- Regular celebrations: Good attendance is celebrated through assemblies and regular competitions

Inclusive approach to rewards: We recognise that some students face unavoidable barriers to attendance. Children with diagnosed medical conditions who cannot avoid absences are not excluded from attendance rewards, as we will authorise legitimate absences. Our focus is on progress rather than perfection, and we regularly incentivise improving attendance for all students, not just those with perfect attendance.

This approach ensures that every student can be recognised for their efforts to improve, regardless of their starting point.

13. Support for Poor School Attendance (other than unauthorised term time leave)

Sometimes students can be reluctant to attend school. We encourage parents and students to be open and honest with us about the reason for the student's absence. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or for a parent to give in to pressure to let the child stay at home. This can give the impression to the child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why a student is reluctant to attend to be able to support students and parents in the best way.

When we have concerns about the attendance of a student, we will do our best to make the parent/s aware of the concerns about their child's attendance and give them the opportunity to address this. However, if parents do not make use of the support offered and improve their child's attendance to an acceptable level, this may result in legal sanctions. Where there are no genuine reasons for the absences, parents may be asked to meet with the Attendance Lead to discuss the matter. In some cases, this may result in a formal action plan being produced in the form of an Attendance Contract.

If our school refers a case of poor school attendance to the Local Authority for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction. This will at least be evidenced via the sending of a Notice to Improve – attendance warning letter.

We will not usually request legal sanctions from the Local Authority in cases where poor attendance is symptomatic of complex family circumstances. In such circumstances our school will take a holistic approach to the issue and involve other agencies, as necessary. The exception to this will be where parents fail to accept or engage with support offered by the school and/or other agencies or fail to implement the suggested changes. Again, when referring for legal sanctions, we will show that we have warned the parent/s that they are at risk of receiving a Penalty Notice or other legal sanction.

If our school has safeguarding concerns about a student who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary.

Attendance Contracts

Where attendance concerns continue despite supportive intervention, the academy may agree an Attendance Contract with parents and students.

An Attendance Contract is a formal written agreement that:

- Identifies barriers to attendance.
- Records support offered by the school and other agencies.
- Sets clear expectations and attendance targets.
- Identifies actions to be completed by all parties.
- Establishes review dates and success measures.

Attendance Contracts are intended to strengthen partnership working between home and school and support improved attendance outcomes.

Attendance Contracts will normally be reviewed at agreed intervals and may be amended as circumstances change.

Where attendance fails to improve despite reasonable support and engagement, the academy may consider escalation through Local Authority attendance procedures and other statutory interventions.

14. Penalty Notices and Prosecutions

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school on a regular basis. It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered student at the school. This applies to both resident and non-resident parents who may both be subject to legal sanctions if their child fails to attend school regularly. It also applies to others who may not be the parent but may have day to day care of the child.

Unauthorised absence from school can result in a few different outcomes for parents and children. Each case is considered individually.

Under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered student at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence. Parents with more than one school aged child need to be aware that each child's irregular attendance is dealt with as a separate matter.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence that meet the threshold for a Penalty Notice to the Local Authority for legal action unless there are reasonable grounds for not doing so. The outcome of a referral to the Local Authority may be a Penalty Notice or Prosecution. The legal threshold for consideration is 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 school weeks. The school follows the Salford Guidance for issuing Penalty Notices alongside the national.

Penalty Notices are intended as a sanction for low level offences and a tool to support improved school attendance for example in circumstances associated with an unauthorised holiday taken during term time. They are an alternative to prosecution and may not be issued if prosecution is a more appropriate response to a student's irregular attendance.

A student's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

1. A Penalty Notice. The penalty is £80 per parent, per child payable within 21 days, rising to £160 per parent, per child if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.) If a second Penalty Notice is issued within a rolling 3-year period the penalty is £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. There will be no option to pay a lower amount.

2. Prosecution. Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or up to 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on School attendance parental responsibility measures for more information.

Penalty Notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of Penalty Notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four Penalty Notices would be issued. Penalty Notices cannot be paid in instalments.

In addition to Penalty Notices, there is a range of other legal interventions open to schools

We will work together with local authority and make use of the full range of legal interventions rather than relying solely on fixed penalty notices or prosecution and will work closely with the local authority to decide whether to use them in an individual case after considering the individual circumstances of a family. These are: Parenting contracts, Education supervision orders, Attendance prosecution, Parenting orders, Fixed penalty notices

15. Children Missing Education (CME)

Children Missing Education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered at a school and are not receiving suitable education elsewhere. The Academy recognises that children missing education are at increased risk of underachievement, safeguarding concerns, exploitation, and becoming NEET.

The Academy will work proactively with families, the Local Authority, and relevant agencies to identify and support students at risk of becoming Children Missing Education.

Where a student's whereabouts is unknown, or where a student has not attended school and the Academy cannot establish their location, reasonable enquiries will be undertaken. These may include telephone calls, emails, written correspondence, contact with emergency contacts, home visits, liaison with other schools and liaison with external agencies.

Where appropriate, referrals will be made to the Local Authority Children Missing Education Team, and any relevant safeguarding concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Academy will notify the Local Authority of additions to and deletions from the admissions register as required by legislation and will only remove students from roll where a lawful ground exists under the School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Poor attendance alone will never be a reason for a student to be removed from roll.

16. Following up Unexplained Absences

Where no contact has been made with the school, the school will contact parents by text, email, telephone, or letter to try and establish the reason for a child's absence. When we establish the reason for the absence, we will mark it as authorised or unauthorised depending on the reason for the absence. If we are unable to establish the reason for absence, we will make the absence as unauthorised, using the O code. If we are concerned about a student's absence and are unable to contact the parent/s, we may contact the student's emergency contacts and/or other professionals or contacts of the family who we reasonably expect may be able to advise us of the student's whereabouts.

17. Reporting to Parents

Parents can access their child's attendance and their attendance certificate on our online platform called Arbor. You can download the Arbor app. Please email **ask.lowry@lowryacademy.org.uk** if you need help accessing Arbor.

We will email parents from our attendance monitoring system called A-Star Attendance.

We discuss attendance on a weekly basis with students, and you can look at their attendance card which they carry in their blazer pocket.

Attendance is also highlighted on school reports.

Where a child's attendance drops below 90%, for whatever reason, our school will write to the parents to highlight this, unless there is a good reason not to.

18. Recording Information on Attendance and Reasons for Absence

All attendance is recorded on Arbor and/or A-Star Attendance along with reasons for absence and whether we have sent a text message or made a phone call to discuss this. Meeting notes, failing to attend meetings and any other communications are also all recorded electronically to form a complete chronology of attendance actions.

Attendance Returns and Information Sharing

The academy will fulfil its statutory duties in relation to attendance data and information sharing.

Where required, the academy will provide attendance information to the Local Authority, including:

- Daily attendance information.
- Children Missing Education notifications.
- Removal from roll notifications.
- Admission notifications.
- Sickness returns where required by legislation or Local Authority arrangements.
- Information relating to persistent and severe absence.

Information will be shared in accordance with data protection legislation and safeguarding requirements.

The academy recognises that timely and accurate attendance information is essential in supporting vulnerable students, safeguarding children, and improving attendance outcomes.

19. Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Attendance Lead or more frequently if there are changes to legislation and guidance. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

20. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to the Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Inclusion Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Supporting Students with Medical Conditions Policy.

Guidance Documents (include but are not limited to):

Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE 2026)

Working together to improve school attendance (applies from July 2026) (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Supporting students at school with medical conditions (DfE December 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-students-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3

Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school (DfE January 2013)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

Mental Health issues affecting a student's attendance (DfE February 2023)

Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Arranging education for children with who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE December 2023)

Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Keeping children safe in education (DfE September 2025)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/686b94eefe1a249e937cbd2d/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2025.pdf

School attendance parental responsibility measures (DfE January 2015)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parental-responsibility-measures-for-behaviour-and-attendance

School census guidance and regulation

https://www.gov.uk/education/school-censuses-and-slasc

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

Home to school travel and transport guidance (DfE July 2014)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance

Appendix A – Department for Education (DfE) Attendance & Absence Codes

Attending	
/ \	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
Absent – Leave of absence	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age student not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age student subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
Absent – other authorised reasons	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel

Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as student is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
Absent – unauthorised absence	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
U	Arrived in school after registration closed
Administrative Codes	
Z	Prospective student not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure