THE LATYMER SCHOOL

Founded 1624

ATTENDANCE POLICY

STATUTORY

Policy produced by	Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Attendance and Enrichment
Policy adopted	Chair's Action – March 2026
Review date of policy	March 2028

Introduction: the right to learn

At Latymer, we strongly believe that every child has the right to learn, and therefore regular attendance and excellent punctuality must be priority for us all. We are fully committed to providing every student with a full educational experience, and we believe that for Latymerians to make the most of their education, excellent attendance is critical. Students, parents, carers, and staff share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance at The Latymer School is maximised and unauthorised absence is minimized, and underpinning this commitment is the belief that only if children attend school regularly and punctually will they be able to take full advantage of the academic, extracurricular, and super-curricular opportunities available to them.

*At Latymer School, our level of attendance is higher than the national average, as are our results. The Department for Education's publication "**The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4**" published February 2015, p5 states "Specifically, students with no absence are 1.5 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*-C or equivalent and 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs A*-C or equivalent including English and Mathematics than students missing 15-20 per cent of KS4 lessons". At Latymer, this would translate to students being 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ GCSEs at grades 9-8.*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a802a2d40f0b62302691e66/The_link_between_absence_and_attainment_at_KS2_and_KS4.pdf

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of the following attendance policy and procedures on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Student attendance is categorised as follows:

	Excellent	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Cause for concern**
Percentage attendance	97%-100%	93%-96%	90%-92%	Below 90%
Actual attendance	184-190 days	177-183 days	171-175 days	170 days or below
Whole days of absence	1-6 days absent	7-13 days absent	15-19 days absent	20 days or more absent
Lessons lost (based on 9 lessons per day)	9- 54 lessons lost per academic year	63-117 lessons lost per academic year	135-171 lessons lost per academic year	180 or more lessons lost per academic year

1. Responsibilities

Parents/carers are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their child. Parents/Carers should work closely with the school to overcome any issues which may affect their child's attendance.

The school aims to recognise the external factors which can influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents/carers, and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school takes a proactive and preventative approach to the promotion of excellent attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents/carers and provides an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

2. Procedures

(i) Registration

Registration will begin at 8.40am. Students should have responded to the 8.35am warning bell and be seated in their form rooms by 8.40am. Registers will be marked promptly at this time. Anyone arriving in school after the register has been completed will be deemed to be late and will be recorded as so. Students who arrive after 8.40 am should sign in at main reception and then go to their form room or first lesson depending on what time it is. The attendance officer will subsequently enter the late entry on to the register, and if students have not arrived by 11:00, an absence email will be sent home. **For Health and Safety reasons, it is essential that all students sign in electronically with their lanyards so that we are aware that they are in the building.**

The afternoon register will be taken by the subject teacher during period 7 (Years 7-9) or period 8 (Years 10-13).

Registers should be marked in accordance with the electronic systems and procedures outlined in Registration in the Staff Booklet.

(ii) Poor Punctuality to Morning and Afternoon Registration

Students who arrive after 8.40am will be deemed late and will be marked with an L in the register. Students who accumulate three or more late marks in a half term will have to attend a Late Detention with a member of SLT which will be held during lunchtime on Mondays between September-April, and after school between April and July**.** Parents will be informed of this detention via email sent from the Attendance Officer. These will normally be sent on the Friday, two days before.

Number of Lates (per half term)	Duration of detention
3	30 minutes
6	60 minutes (two Monday lunchtimes)
9	60 minutes (two Monday lunchtimes) plus meeting with Head of Learning and parents

Lates are looked at on a half-termly basis. At the start of each half-term, all students will return to zero lates however the last week of the previous term will be carried over. However, if a pattern of poor punctuality to registration emerges, parents will be asked to meet with the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Attendance and Enrichment and the students and parents could be referred to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

(iii) Authorised and unauthorised absence

All absences will be recorded as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Should an explanation for an absence not be received or should the explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then that absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

An absence can only be authorised by the school. It is not possible for a parent to authorise an absence. An authorised absence are mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason including but is not limited to:

- Illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Emergencies

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no “leave” has been given. This includes but is not limited to:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Unexplained absence
- Students arriving after 10am with no appropriate reason
- Day trips and holidays taken without prior authorisation by the school

(iv) Absence

Parents/Carers are advised to contact the Attendance Officer on the first day of any unexpected absence by 8.30am at the latest. This can be via email (attendance@latymer.co.uk) or a phone call (020 8807 4037). The latter is the preferred option on Day 1. If the student continues to be absent from school, the parent/carer should call or email in every day up to a maximum of five days.

If a student is absent for five days or less, on returning, we require either a hand written note or email confirming the absence. Only on receipt of this note will the Attendance Officer authorise the previous absence. If patterns of absence are such that the school is concerned about a student's attendance, a note will be placed in the student’s file and parents will be asked to come into school to meet with either the Head of Learning or Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Attendance and Enrichment. In some cases, a referral may be made to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) for advice/support.

(v) First Day Absence procedure

If the school office has not received notification of absence for pupils in Years 7-11 by 10.10am, the Attendance Officer will either send an email or call parents by telephone to verify the reason for absence. If the parents fail to reply to this communication, the Attendance Officer will make further contact the subsequent school day and the absence will be unauthorised until parents have provided a valid reason for the absence.

(vi) Absences of five days or over a longer period

For those students who are absent for more than five days, the school requires further evidence to support this absence. On receipt of this evidence, the absence is normally authorised.

The evidence can be one of the following dependent on the student's individual situation;

Situation	Evidence
General illness which has needed a medical appointment (doctor/dentist)	Appointment card brought/sent into school White portion of prescription
More prolonged illness requiring hospital appointments	Appointment card for hospital and/or letter from doctor/consultant treating the child

It is essential that the school receives this information as soon as possible. If the school is not in receipt of this evidence, the absence is unlikely to be authorised. The school is aware that letters from doctors/hospitals can take time to materialise. Parents are kindly requested to maintain contact with the surgery/hospital in order to speed up the process and to keep the school informed.

(vii) Unauthorised absence for continuous period of 10 school days or more

All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more, at such intervals as are agreed between the school and the local authority.

(viii) Expected Levels of Attendance and Absence Letters

The school expects all students and parents to aim for excellent attendance (between 97-100%) and we strongly believe in celebrating excellent attendance. We do this by:

- Sending congratulatory letters home
- Sending letters when a student's attendance has improved
- Within each year group, the form with the highest attendance figures earns a positive referral each week to celebrate their attendance, and this is shared with parents and staff via our newsletter
- The year group with the highest attendance figures earns a positive referral each week to celebrate their attendance, and this is shared with parents and staff via our newsletter

We acknowledge that illness and personal circumstances may mean that excellent attendance is not always possible. At the end of each half-term, The Latymer School will evaluate individual student absence. Parents of students that have attendance below 92% will receive two different types of letters:

- **Satisfactory attendance:** Those students' whose level of attendance deemed 'satisfactory' is between 90- 92%. Parents will receive a letter informing them of the school's concern and the students' tutor will call the parent to discuss strategies to support the student. Extracurricular activities and trips will be reconsidered for the academic year ahead if attendance does not improve after one term.

- **Cause for concern:** Those students' whose level of attendance is at 90% or below (Government threshold for persistent absenteeism) will receive a letter informing them of the school's concern and reminding them of their responsibility to ensure that their child attends school. The letter will reiterate the school's expectation regarding attendance and for a sustained improvement to be seen in the next half-term. Parents will be informed at the end of next-half term of any improvements. If no improvement is seen, parents will be invited for an attendance review meeting. In some cases, if the attendance is showing a downward trend, the school will need to be in contact with the EWO who will contact the parents directly.

(ix) Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that level is given priority and parents will be informed by the school's Attendance Officer. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include the allocation of additional support through the EWO.

(x) Unexpected or planned absence whilst at school

If a student in Year 7-11 feels ill whilst at school, they should report to the Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer will evaluate the student's health and if the student needs to return home, the Welfare Officer will call parents to notify them. The school expects parents of students in Year 7-11 to come to school to pick up their child. **Students who feel ill, should not make private arrangements with their parents/carers, or leave school of their own accord to meet them outside school or at another venue.** Students who need to leave school due to illness must follow the protocol above, wait at the Welfare Office until their parents/carers arrives, and then sign out with the Welfare Officer. All parents/carers picking up children must come to Main Reception to meet their child. This protocol is in place for the Health and Safety of the child and for communication to exist between the Welfare Officer and the Attendance Officer. If a parent/carer gives permission for a student to leave school of their own accord, we will need an email giving them permission to travel home on their own before the student can be released.

If a student needs to leave the school for a medical appointment, he/she must have provided evidence in advance (appointment card, letter from home) to the Attendance Officer. This will have resulted in the register being altered for that particular set of lessons. On the day, the student should go to the Welfare Office and sign out, taking with them evidence for the need to leave school. If there is no evidence, the Welfare Officer will need to call the parent/carer to permit the absence. Again, the student should sign out and meet their parent in Main Reception.

(xi) Suspected Truancy or Leaving the School Site without permission

If students are feeling unwell physically or emotionally, they should see their teacher and then the Welfare Officer. This way, teaching staff know where the student is and arrangements can be put in place by the Welfare Officer to support or send the student home. **Students who do not do this and who skip a lesson, causing extra work for staff who have to look for them are likely to receive an appropriate sanction.**

Similarly, if any student in Year 7-11 leaves the school site without permission, albeit temporarily or for the rest of the day, is likely to receive a sanction too.

(xii) Term-Time Holidays

Parents and carers are requested **not** to arrange family holidays in term time. Requests for leave of absence must be made both in advance and in writing to the Deputy Head Pastoral. **No absences of this nature will be authorised in retrospect.** The pupil's record of attendance will be taken into account in considering requests. **Parents are asked not to request leave of absence during exam weeks or in exam year groups (10-13)**. Such requests are **unlikely** to be granted. Requests are to be made by the parent/carer who has primary care and control of the student. Parents are asked not to request leave of absence during term time in successive years.

(xiv) School Anxiety leading to Persistent Absence

Students may become anxious about some aspect of school life at some point in their school lives. This has been exacerbated by lockdown and COVID-19. For some students, anxiety about a particular aspect of school life or home life may become overwhelming and sometimes the anxiety affects other aspects of school life.

When anxiety is acute and exists over a long period of time, this can adversely affect the student's health and well-being. Similarly, anxiety if not addressed can adversely affect academic progress, the student's overall 'engagement' with school may deteriorate, and attendance may decline. Anxiety is often behind difficulties with attendance and can affect arrival time at school. There may be signs in a student's attendance patterns that all is not well.

Potential Indicators of concern:

- A pupil who is failing to engage with school, school staff or peers and there are no signs of improvement
- A recent change of school, or any other transition
- A pattern of late arrivals and absences for minor ailments
- A pupil with disturbed sleep patterns or difficulty getting to sleep
- Possible avoidance patterns: a pupil who visits the medical room frequently or leaves class for the toilet frequently and for extended periods
- A pupil with regular attendance who is unable to attend lessons
- A pattern of absences at the beginning and end of term and/or half term
- Frequent absences for minor illnesses
- A pupil with limited social links
- A withdrawn or very shy pupil who is hard to get to know, particularly where there are concerns about attendance or arrival time
- Apparent unhappiness over the long term, for no identifiable reason
- Any child who is reporting bullying where anxiety is shown both at school and at home
- A return to school following a period of illness
- A return to school or attendance at school when there has been a traumatic event (e.g. bereavement, divorce, or a parent/carers' illness (young carers)
- New learners, refugees/asylum seekers or other pupils with English as a Second Language.

Students attendance levels are closely monitored in the first instance by the form tutor, Assistant Heads of Learning and Head of Learning for each year group. The School Attendance Officer and form tutor will inform the Head of Learning if a student is absent due to anxiety or stress or, if a student is absent for three or more consecutive days.

If a parent/carer notifies the school of a physical, social, emotional or mental health issue impacting on their child's attendance or wellbeing, the Head of Learning will offer a meeting with the family (including student where practicable) to discuss medical considerations, health practitioners' advice, reasonable adjustments that may need to be made to enable the student to access learning, and to consider putting a Pastoral Support or Care Plan being put in place. Plans should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that any changes are acknowledged and needs continue to be met.
If a student is absent for 5 days (without supporting medical evidence having been provided already) the school will request that the parent/carers arrange a G.P. The school will then work closely with the family of the student and external agencies to provide support for the student.

If absence continues for 10 days or more, Social, emotional and mental health **(**SEMH) issues are a factor and the actions above have not brought about an improvement, further discussion will be had with parent/carers regarding referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) if not already involved. At this stage the Education Welfare Officer will become involved and advice will be sought from the Local Authority Attendance Support Unit.

The school will liaise/continue to liaise with L.A Special Educational Needs, Educational Psychology Service (EPS), CAMHS, School Nursing and other services whilst the student remains absent/is attending irregularly. A Team Around the Family or other meeting will be arranged if a number of agencies are involved to co-ordinate actions and strategies to support the student/family.

If a student is hospitalised the school will liaise with the School Room/tutor at the hospital to ensure access to their agreed programme, where appropriate.

If a student is absent for a protracted period due to physical health needs, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Tuition Service as the student might be eligible for home tuition or other support if the criteria is met.

Contact with students who are not able to attend for health reasons will be maintained where medical advice supports this; this may include keeping in touch with tutors via emails, invitations to school events and facilitation of contact with classmates etc.

3. Staff Roles

(i) The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is responsible for the day-to-day monitoring and administration of attendance. The Attendance Officer should:

- administer the Inventory Late Registering System.
- track and highlight any students whose attendance is causing concern.
- liaise regularly with staff on attendance matters.
- monitor the form class registers and inform the form tutor if the register has not been taken.

- monitor class/subject teacher registers and inform the subject teacher if the register has not been taken.
- communicate and support parents on issues relating to attendance in liaison with the welfare officer, EWO, the Head of Learning and the Assistant Head of Learning.
- reconcile the whole school registers at the end of each week, term and academic year.
- produce attendance data for the Head teacher, governors and LA as appropriate.
- ensure that attendance data is provided for the Head teacher, SLT and the governing body upon request.
- ensure that Attendance Certificates for students with 100% attendance are prepared once a year.
- ensure that Absence Letters are sent to parents of those students whose attendance falls below 90% each half-term and similarly that Attendance Improvement Letters are sent to those who warrant them.

(ii) The Form Tutor

At The Latymer School the Form Tutor is seen as the key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance. The Form Tutor should:

- provide a good example by always being punctual to registration.
- carry out registration in accordance with electronic registration procedures.
- ensure that all notes from parents are scrutinised before the register is amended.
- deal with registration lateness according to the sanctions system.
- alert the Head of Learning and Attendance Officer only when there is a problem which has not been resolved by the above procedures.
- discuss attendance and/or punctuality issues, with the Head of Learning/Assistant Head of Learning at the earliest opportunity.
- offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves.

(iii) The Subject Teacher

Subject teachers should:

- take a register at the beginning of every lesson, and ensure that the students know that a register is being taken.
- follow up any suspected internal truancy and liaise with the Attendance Officer as appropriate.
- follow up internal truancy with a departmental detention or other after discussion with HOD/DHP.
- be responsible for dealing with lateness to a lesson. This could be 15 minutes detention without warning at the end of the day or an after school detention with at least 24 hours' notice.

(iv) Head of Learning (HOL)

The Head of Learning is responsible for monitoring the attendance of their year group with the assistance of the Assistant Head of Year. Together they should:

- review registers and attendance and punctuality figures on a half-termly basis based on information provided by the Attendance Officer.
- monitor attendance/patterns of absence of individuals on a regular basis and set targets for improvement as appropriate.

- monitor the performance of individual form groups, following up with individual Form Tutors instances where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed.
- review registers and attendance and punctuality fortnightly with the DHP.
- regularly put attendance onto the agenda of Year Team Meetings, ensuring that attendance and punctuality procedures are understood by the Form Tutor and followed correctly.
- Follow up internal truancy using the sanctions system as appropriate.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies.

(vi) The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
The EWO is responsible for the overview of the poorest attenders. The EWO should:

-
- Communicate with the parents of those students whose absence is significantly below 90% and continues to show no sign of improvement.
- Make home visits as necessary and appropriate to work with families to maximise student attendance.
- The EWO will liaise regularly with the Attendance Officer and the Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour, Attendance and Enrichment.

As part of this process the School Attendance Consultative Group (SACG) panel will monitor those students whose attendance is a serious concern.

4. Communication

The Latymer School's Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

Regular newsletter items and curriculum and parents' evenings and regular communications with parents/carers.

5. Evaluation and Review

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team every two years.