

The Lakes School Attendance Policy and Procedures 2018-2019

Approved By	
Position	
Date	
Review Date	

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1. Statement of Intent

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

At The Lakes School, we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Promoting Good Attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. The Home School Agreement (Appendix 1) will contain details of how we work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

To focus on this, we will:

- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and tutor group achievements
- Rewarding good or improving attendance through the merit system, certificates, vouchers etc.
- Set targets for the school and for classes for attendance and display these in the school

2.2 Responsibilities of the school's attendance leaders

A member of the senior leadership team (Ms Sharon Rainey – Deputy Head teacher), alongside the school's attendance manager (Miss Gemma Anderson) will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school. They will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need, reasons for their child's absence, and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

2.3 Responsibilities of classroom staff/tutors

- Ensure that all students are registered accurately
- Promote and reward good attendance with students at all appropriate opportunities
- Liaise with the attendance leaders on matters of attendance and punctuality
- Work closely with students and parents to discuss attendance concerns and provide support to improve attendance
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence
- Support pupils with absence to engage in their learning once they are back in school
- Provide work to support student learning during any periods of prolonged absence

2.4 Responsibilities of students

- Attend everyday unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Arrive in school on time
- Attend registration and all lessons on time
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

2.5 Responsibilities of parents/carers

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children's attendance at school as required by law (section 7, 1966 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

- Inform the school on the morning of the first day of absence
- In all cases, provide a written or email record of the reason for their child's absence. Emails can be sent to Form Tutors or to the attendance@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk address
- Discuss with the tutor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by email/letter if a phone is unavailable
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments. If such appointments are necessary, aim to bring child in to school for am or pm registration before collecting for the appointment and then returning to school after the appointment has been attended
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- Avoid taking holidays during term time

3. Recording Attendance

3.1 Recording Attendance

Legally the register must be marked twice daily. This is once at the start of the school day, 8.45am and again for the afternoon session at 2.00pm.

3.2 Lateness/punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions and to lessons.

If your child is late they can miss work time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lessons for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

- The school day begins at 8.45am and **all pupils are expected to be in school from 8.40am so that they can arrive promptly to registration.** Morning registration is at 8.45am and it closes at 9.15am.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Cumbria County Council and Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site but is legally recorded as an absence.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- Students who are late to school will be subject to our detention arrangements which apply to all students who are late without good reason. Details of how the school manages lateness can be viewed in the letter to parents in Appendix 12.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as **unauthorised absence and may be subject to legal action** (see section 6 of this policy for further detail).

3.3 What to do if my child is absent?

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

If your child is absent, you must:

- contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and any subsequent days
- send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us

If your child is absent, we will:

- telephone, text or email you by 10.00am on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you – this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance
- If there is no response to the first contact a further letter may be sent to enquire about the unexplained absence (Appendix 2)
- We will review each child's attendance every month
- If attendance drops to below 95% an initial attendance letter (Appendix 3) will be sent to inform parents of their child's attendance.
- If attendance does not improve a second letter, (Appendix 4) will be sent requesting a meeting with parent/carer and the form tutor where support can be offered to resolve attendance issues.
- Where there is no response to school intervention and where the absence or pattern of absence has persisted without explanation the school may refer to the Education Welfare Officer (Appendix 5).

- Where there is no improvement in attendance a referral (Appendix 6) may be made to the County Inclusion Officer at Children's Services and relevant action taken to secure attendance.
- Ongoing and repeated lateness will be monitored every month and a letter will be sent to parent(s)/carer to remind them of the importance of punctuality, (Appendix 7). If punctuality does not improve unauthorised absence procedures are followed as seen above.
- Improvements in attendance is recognised through the school merit system and a letter of recognition is sent to parent/carers, (Appendix 8).

3.4 Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carers then the local authority is notified that the child is at *risk of being missing in education*. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child.

Help us to help you and your child by making sure we have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

3.5 Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as *persistent absentees*. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his/her learning. Research shows that the impact of these gaps increases progressively as attendance declines and becomes significant when attendance drops below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education.

If your child has had absence and their attendance is falling towards 90%, we will contact you and, depending on the reasons for the absence, will meet with you to produce an Attendance Plan to support your child in improving their attendance.

If attendance continues to fall, referral to the schools EWO will be made and you may be invited to an Attendance Panel. If attendance does not improve, the County Inclusion Officer would be informed, and you may be issued with a Penalty Notice or prosecution, (see section 6)

4. Leave of Absence

4.1 Request for leave of absence

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: The Education (Pupil Registration), (England) Regulations state that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is important to note that head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence, as well as whether absence is authorised at all. The fundamental principles for defining exceptional are rare, significant, or unavoidable, which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance

www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/key-topics/parents-and-pupils/naht-issues-new-guidance-on-authorised-absence/

There is no legal entitlement for time off in school term time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will not be authorised. Parents/carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to fill in an

application form available from The Lakes School reception in advance and before making any travel arrangements. This form is also available at the bottom of the attendance section of the school website which can be found here <http://thelakeschool.com/the-lakes-school-cumbria/attendance/> and can also be found in Appendix 13.

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the threshold set down in the Cumbria County Council's *Code of Conduct*, parents/carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance with the code (see Appendix 9).

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking children out during school time.

5. Understanding Types of Absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

- authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised
- unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence from school after a parent/carers request. This includes:
 - parents/carers giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
 - truancy before or during the school day
 - absences, which have not been explained.

A school can if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa, if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers. An example of this would be where a parent/carer states that a child is unwell but on return to school, there is evidence they have been on holiday.

6. Legal Measures

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Cumbria County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:

1. the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents/carers are complicit in the child's absence.

The following legal measures will be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting Contracts set out at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting Orders

- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

Where a child has unauthorised absence, the school must enforce Cumbria County Council's *Code of conduct: issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools* or follow its guidance on other legal measures for non-attendance. The *Code of conduct* is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools within the authority, (see Appendix 9).

Unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place, other agency involvement or other sanctions are already being processed then the Code of conduct states that schools or Cumbria County Council can issue a Penalty Notice to parents/carers who have the responsibility for a pupil and the pupil has

- accumulated 10% or more unauthorised absence during a four-week period
- been absent for 10 sessions (5 consecutive days) or more of unauthorised absence due to leave taken during an academic year
- had attendance that is below 95% during the preceding 12 weeks before the leave was taken, and the absence is unauthorised
- one or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessments or testing where dates have been published in advance.
- been persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (5 days) after the register has closed
- been persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), but the school has met with parents, other sanctions have been used and there has been clear communication that any further lateness will be categorised as unauthorised (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (5 days) has been met.

Parents/carers will be warned of the likelihood of a Penalty Notice being issued for unauthorised absence via a letter, (see Appendix 10). The Penalty Notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/carer who was responsible for the child during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence, the school or Cumbria County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to **one or more parents/carers** for each child. **NB:** This could mean four Penalty Notices for a family with two siblings, both with unauthorised absence for holiday.

Each Penalty Notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the Penalty Notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days, the penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances.

The maximum penalty for these offences is a fine of £2,500, 3 months imprisonment or both.

Please note: If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action will be taken. For example, in the event that a Penalty Notice has previously been served due to an unauthorised holiday, should your child have any future unauthorised leave this will result in further legal action for you, such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order. For further information, parents/carers should visit Cumbria County Councils website at:

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/ils/attendance.asp>

7. Other Information

7.1 My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parent/carer and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Contact your child's form tutor or one of the Pastoral Managers (Miss Evans and Mr Taylor) immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child may be avoiding school for a number of reasons, it is important that we identify the reason and work together to tackle the problem.

7.2 What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and is properly equipped.

Be interested in what your child is doing in school, chat to them about the things they have learnt, what friends they have and what they have done during the day. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

7.3 Leavers

If your child is leaving the Lakes School (other than when leaving at the end of Year 11) parents/carers are asked to:

- Give the attendance administrator (Mr Ian Wilson) comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move, new telephone numbers and address, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try to locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

7.4 Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling.

Parents/carers of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the head teacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether the employer will provide education during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, authorised absence.

7.5 Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport.

Parents/carers of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the head teacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of

the head teacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

7.6 Study leave

We believe that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 and Year 13 students during the time of the GCSE and GCE examination periods respectively. Should any students wish to attend school on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so. The school will work within the legal requirements, i.e.:

- Study leave should only be granted to Year 11 and Year 13 students and never to those in any other year groups
- It should never exceed 15 school days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, i.e. not before the beginning of that period
- It should always be granted sparingly, taking account of an individual student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study
- Any pupil has the right to attend school during study leave and a parent has the right to insist he/she does so

7.7 Teenage pregnancy

Support will be directed to keeping a pupil in school and, wherever possible, her return to full-time education as soon as possible after the birth. A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed no more than 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. After that time, any absence should be treated as unauthorised.

7.8 Flexi-Home Schooling

Flexi-home schooling can only be allowed where there is a clear benefit to the pupil concerned and only then if the pupil's attainment and progress does not suffer.

Flexi-home schooling can only be authorised by the headteacher.

There should be a written agreement between the parent(s) and the school in any flexi-home schooling arrangement.

Children must be marked as absent when they are educated at home.

Schools do not have to agree to flexi-home schooling.

7.9 Home Education

The school recognises that parents are legally entitled to education their children at home.

In managing requests for home education, the school will operate in accordance with DfE and Cumbria County Council guidance.

Parents who are considering home education for their child should discuss their intentions with the school and may wish to refer to the Home Education in Cumbria web page which can be found here

<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices/schoolsandlearning/lis/homeed.asp>.

The Lakes School will always encourage parents to think carefully about home educating their child in the knowledge that attending school is a priority for all children. This may involve meetings with parents and the child, work with other agencies and writing to parents to formalise the school's support for children and families. An example of this letter can be found in Appendix 11.

Should a parent wish to withdraw their child for the purposes of home education, the school will require a formal letter from the parent stating the following; intention to home educate your child, the date from

which you would like home education to begin, a brief statement recognising that the school has worked closely with the child and their family to ensure that you are aware of the implications of home education. Upon receipt of such a letter, the school has a duty to refer the case to the South Lakes Access and Inclusion Team, who will make contact with the family in accordance with their safeguarding duties.

8. Record preservation

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups.

Appendix 1: Home School Agreement

Success at school depends very much on a partnership between school, student and parent/carer. In this agreement, we have set out ways in which we can work together to develop that partnership and make it more effective. Please read the agreement carefully and consider how you can help us to fulfil our obligations to each other and ensure success.

The Lakes School will...

- work in constructive partnership with students and parents.
- care for each student’s safety, well-being and happiness.
- value every student as a unique individual and encourage him or her to play a full part in the life of the school community.
- support all students to achieve their full potential through high expectations, high standards of teaching and regular homework.
- provide a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the National Curriculum, legal requirements and individual needs.
- keep parents and students informed about student progress, development and achievements through reports, scheduled parents evenings and at other times where appropriate.
- welcome contact with parents, listen to their views, and seek to keep them informed about general school matters and offer opportunities to become involved in the life of the school.

The Student – I will make progress in all of my subjects by...

- attending school and lessons regularly.
- demonstrating a positive attitude to learning.
- being polite and helpful.
- behaving and communicating appropriately.
- caring for the environment by keeping the school free of litter and graffiti and looking after property.
- being proud to be a member of The Lakes School this means being smart in my school uniform and aware of my presence in the community.

Parents or Carers will...

- work in constructive partnership with the school.
- take an active interest in my child’s work and progress in the school and encourage their efforts in homework.
- read carefully the guidance and information I receive about my child’s education and courses.
- support the school’s policies and guidelines on behaviour and responsibilities.
- ensure my child attends school, on time and with the proper equipment and uniform.
- inform the appropriate staff about any concerns or problems that might affect my child’s work or behaviour.

Signed:

School

Student

Parent

Date

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:



Appendix 2: Unexplained Absence Reminder

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent(s)/Carer)

Name of Student

According to our records (Name of student) was absent from school on (Dates) and we did not receive a phone call into school to explain his/her absence. We have tried calling you and have sent a text message asking you to contact school. Please ensure you have given us your correct contact details.

We are legally required to record reasons for absence from school. For any possible future absences, please contact school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and any subsequent days following. If we do not hear from you, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Could you please enter the reasons for (Name of student's) absence next to the date on the slip below and return it to his/her form tutor, or Mrs Reid, Attendance Administrator, at the school office.

If you have contacted the school prior to receiving this letter – please accept our apologies and ignore this reminder.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Rainey

Deputy Headteacher

The Lakes School – Re: Attendance

Form Tutor: _____ Student Name & Form: _____

Date(s) of Absence: _____

Reason for absence:

Signed: _____

Date:

Name: _____

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Appendix 3: Initial Attendance Letter

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

Re: School attendance of.....

We are writing to inform you that <<chosen_forename>>'s percentage attendance has fallen below 95%, which is the current school target for attendance. <<chosen_forename>>'s percentage of attendance for this academic year is <<percentage_attendance>>%.

As you are aware, school attendance is a high priority for us here at The Lakes School. We are keen for all of our students to achieve their full potential, and good school attendance is a significant factor in achieving this. Statistically students with good school attendance go on to achieve better grades at school and subsequently often have more opportunities in their further education and career plans.

The Department for Education (2012), in relation to attendance, stated that:

'Children with lower attendance are less likely to succeed academically and they are more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) when they leave school. There is a clear link between lower attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of students who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including Maths and English. 73% of students who have over 95% attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C.

We understand that a period of illness can be a legitimate reason for lower than expected attendance. However, it can also be possible that a drop in attendance percentage is an indication of a potential problem that we can work together to resolve.

You do not need to do anything at this stage. If you would like further support regarding school attendance, please feel free to contact a member of our pastoral team on 015394 40810.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Rainey

Deputy Headteacher

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Appendix 4: Request for Attendance Meeting

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

Re: School attendance

I recently wrote to you to express my concern about <<chosen_forename>>'s absenteeism from school. <<chosen_forename>>'s percentage of attendance has continued to drop since I sent the letter and <<chosen_forename>>'s percentage of school attendance for this academic year is now <<percentage_attendance>>%.

As you are aware, school attendance is a high priority for us here at The Lakes School. We are keen for all of our students to achieve their full potential, and good school attendance is a significant factor in achieving this. Statistically students with good school attendance go on to achieve better grades at school and subsequently often have more opportunities in their further education and career plans.

The Department for Education (2012), in relation to attendance, stated that:

'Children with lower attendance are less likely to succeed academically and they are more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) when they leave school. There is a clear link between lower attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of students who miss more than 50% of school, only three % manage to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including Maths and English. 73% of students who have over 95% attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C.

Therefore, I would like to invite you to a meeting on with << form Tutor>> to discuss <<chosen_forename>>'s school attendance and what strategies could be put in place to support them. If you have any concerns or queries before then please do not hesitate to contact me on 015394 40810.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Rainey

Deputy Headteacher

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Appendix 5: Notification of Referral to Education Welfare Officer

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

Re: School attendance of

Thank you for meeting with a member of the pastoral team regarding <<chosen_forename>>'s school attendance. As you are aware <<chosen_forename>>'s school attendance is currently <<percentage_attendance>>%.

I would like to invite you to a review meeting on <<date and time>> to look at whether school attendance has improved, or whether further strategies are needed to support <<chosen_forename>>. As discussed, I will now be referring <<chosen_forename>> to the schools Education Welfare Officer, Dee Adamson-Sharpe who will attend this meeting.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need further advice or support on 015394 40810

Yours sincerely

Ms S Rainey

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 6: Notification of Referral to County Inclusion Officer

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

Re: School attendance of

Thank you for meeting with me on <<Date>> regarding <<chosen_forename>>'s school attendance. As you are aware <<chosen_forename>>'s school attendance is currently <<percentage_attendance>>%.

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

You explained that school attendance is lower than average for the following reasons.

- L
- L
- L

The following actions were agreed to try to address these issues

- L
- L
- L

I would like to invite you to a review meeting on <<date and time>> to look at whether school attendance has improved, or whether further strategies are needed to support <<chosen_forename>>. As discussed Nicky Braund-Smith, Inclusion Officer from the Access and Inclusion Team will join us to support both yourselves and school to draw up a manageable Action Plan to help improve <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need further advice or support on 015394 40810

Yours sincerely

Dee Adamson-Sharpe

Education Welfare Officer

Appendix 7: Notification of Lateness/Punctuality

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear (Name of Parent/Carer)

Re: Student Name

I am writing to express our concern about your son/daughter's punctuality. Last week, (Name of student) has been late to or missed registration (Total lates) times. I am writing to seek your support in addressing this issue with (Name of student) and to let you know that she/he will be serving an after-school detention this week for lateness.

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

As you appreciate, attendance at registration is an essential part to school life and being part of the school community. Furthermore, students who arrive late at school often:

- Miss vital parts of lessons that are key to their learning
- Disrupt the class when they arrive and the lesson is already underway
- Find it embarrassing entering a class once the lesson has started
- Miss form time where important messages are passed on

Please can you discuss this at home and ensure (Name of student) understands the importance of punctuality. Punctuality will be crucial in (Name of student's) future working life and forming good habits now is essential. Registration begins at 8.45am; (Name of student) also needs to ensure that she/he attends afternoon registration on time at 2.00pm.

Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and may be subject to legal action.

If there is a reason beyond their control why (Name of student) is late to school (such as public transport), please let school know.

Yours sincerely

Mr Ian Walker

Attendance Administrator

Appendix 8: Letter for Improvement in Attendance

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

Dear

Re: School attendance of.....

We are writing to inform you that <<chosen_forename>>'s percentage attendance has risen to <<percentage_attendance>>% since the last attendance check when it was <<percentage_attendance>>%.

We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate <<chosen_forename>> on improving their attendance and to thank you for supporting the school with this.

As you are aware, school attendance is a high priority for us here at The Lakes School. We are keen for all of our students to achieve their full potential, and good school attendance is a significant factor in achieving this. Statistically students with good school attendance go on to achieve better grades at school and subsequently often have more opportunities in their further education and career plans.

The Department for Education (2012), in relation to attendance, stated that:

'Children with lower attendance are less likely to succeed academically and they are more likely not to be in education, employment or training (NEET) when they leave school. There is a clear link between lower attendance at school and lower academic achievement. Of students who miss more than 50% of school, only three % manage to achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including Maths and English. 73% of students who have over 95% attendance achieve five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C.

We are confident that <<chosen_forename>>'s attendance will continue to improve but if you feel you would like further support regarding school attendance, please feel free to contact a member of our pastoral team on 015394 40810.

Yours sincerely

Ms S Rainey

Deputy Headteacher

Appendix 9: CCC Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

PENALTY NOTICE

Code of Conduct

Cumbria Children's Services Local Code of Conduct under The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007, The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and Subsection (1) Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

This local code sets out the procedures, necessary requirements and terms under which penalty notices can be issued in Cumbria.

The code must be adhered to, to ensure that the powers are applied consistently, transparently and fairly.

Any authorised person should issue penalty notices in compliance with this code of conduct.

Cumbria Children's Services is responsible for the overall administration of the penalty notice scheme and this code sets out our arrangements for the practices required to ensure the operation of the scheme.

Guidance and Legislation

Authorised persons using this code must adhere to the following legislation and guidance:

***Human Rights Act 1998* - Cumbria Children's Services, schools and the police must apply their powers fairly and consistently, having regard to this guidance and, in the case of penalty notices this local code of conduct. Inconsistency or unfairness may lead to challenges under the HRA.**

Equality Act 2010

Special Needs Code of Practice 2003

Data protection Act 1998

Safeguarding Children 2004

Education Act 1996

Children Act 1989

Crime and Disorder Act 1998

Ensuring Regular School Attendance: Guidance on the Legal Measures to Secure Regular School Attendance 2003

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996: Definition of a Parent - The education-related provisions of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act apply to all parents who fall within the definition set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This defines 'parent' as: all natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a

parent in education law. Throughout this document, references to 'parent' mean each and every parent coming within the definition (whether acting jointly or separately) and should not be taken to mean that provisions only apply to 'parent' in the singular.

Section 7 Education Act – Places a duty on the parent to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs, the child may have. This can be by regular attendance at school or by education otherwise.

Compulsory school age is defined as commencing at the start of term commencing on or after the child's 5th birthday. Concluding on the last Friday in June in the school year that the pupil becomes 16.

Section 437 Education Act – Cumbria Local Authority will apply for a School Attendance Order where a child is not receiving suitable education.

Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 – If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent may be guilty of an offence. Penalty notices can be issued under this offence.

Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000) – A parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000). This offence requires proof that the parent knew of their child's non-attendance and failed to act. Under this aggravated offence, a warrant can be issued compelling a parent to attend court and conviction can lead to a custodial sentence.

(Children Act 1989, section 36)

An LA must consider applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) before prosecuting a parent. A Local Authority may apply for an ESO instead of/or as well as prosecuting the parent.

Section 444A and Section 444B – Enables authorised personnel to issue penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution under section 444 and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty.

The parent cannot be prosecuted for the particular offence for which the notice was issued until after the final deadline for payment has passed (42 days after receipt of the notice) and cannot be convicted of that offence if s/he pays the penalty in accordance with the notice. Penalties are to be paid to Cumbria County Council.

The penalty is £60 from September 2013 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice, (a notice served by post is deemed to have been received on the second day after posting it by first class post).

If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period Cumbria County Council must **either** prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies **or** withdraw the notice. The prosecution is not for non-payment of the notice but is a prosecution for irregular attendance.

Prosecutions will be brought by Cumbria County Council, Children's Service's under section 444 Education Act 1996.

Cumbria Children's Services can only withdraw the notice:

- Where it ought not to have issued i.e. where it has been issued outside the terms of the local code of conduct or where no offence has been committed
- Where it has been issued to the wrong person

Justifiable Defences for Non-Attendance

- The pupil's absence was authorised by the school
- The pupil was ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- The absence was on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs
- The school is not within walking distance of the child's home and the Local Authority has not made suitable arrangement for:
 - The child's transport to and from school
 - Boarding accommodation at or near the school, or
 - Enabling the child to attend a school nearer their home
- The parent can show that their trade or business requires them to travel, and the child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business allows, and the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding twelve months.

NB: Authorised absence means that the absence has been authorised by the Headteacher, not by a parent

Authorised Persons within Cumbria who may issue penalty notices under the local code are:

- Cumbria County Council, Access and Inclusion Officers
- Cumbria Police, Community Support Officer and if applicable accredited persons
- Headteachers and Deputy and Assistant Headteachers

Penalty Notice

There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a penalty notice (although the regulations make provisions for the Children's Services to withdraw them in certain limited circumstances). Therefore, penalty notices must not be issued unless the parent has already had sufficient warning of the probability of a penalty notice and has been given 15 school days to address the situation.

Penalty notices can be issued to parent(s) who have the responsibility for a pupil and the pupil has accumulated 10% or more unauthorised absence during a four-week period.

An authorised person can only issue penalty notices after consideration of an Education Supervision Order by the Local Authority.

Number of Penalty Notices that can be issued

Two separate penalty notices can be issued to one parent in a twelve-month period

Every parent with parental responsibility can be served a separate notice

There are no limits to the number of penalty notice warning letters

Schools Roles and Responsibilities

Schools should:

- a) Adhere to the authorised/unauthorised absence guidance as stated in Ensuring Regular School Attendance: Guidance on the Legal Measures to Secure Regular School Attendance. [Ensuring Children's Right to Education - guidance on the legal measures available to secure regular school attendance : The Department for Education](#)
- b) Have a named senior member of staff responsible for attendance issues.
- c) Have effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular school attendance and investigating the underlying causes of poor attendance, which should be set out in the attendance policy. The attendance policy should also set out the circumstances in which the school will consider entering into a parenting contract and issuing a penalty notice. These systems should be reviewed regularly and modified where necessary to reflect the circumstances of the school.
- d) Make parents aware of the school attendance policy.
- e) Have systems and procedures for:
 - Registering pupils:
 - Categorising absence:
 - Collating and analysing attendance data to identify trends and enable action to be taken:
 - Determining in which exceptional circumstances leave of absence will be granted for holidays during term time:
 - Monitoring attendance and punctuality for all lessons:
 - Dealing with late arrivals:
 - Dealing with unauthorised absence (i.e. when contact will be made with parents: how and when standard letter systems will be used, what measures will be taken to re-engage disaffected pupils, what rewards/incentives will be used to encourage attendance, what sanctions will be taken including the circumstances in which the school will consider entering into a parenting contract and issuing a penalty notice):
 - Referring cases to Children's Services (i.e. when, how and by whom):
 - Reintegrating pupils who have been absent (e.g. providing pastoral support, the role of the Learning Support Unit, using learning/peer mentoring).

Administration of the Scheme

Usually Cumbria Children's Services who, in consultation with the school and other agencies, is responsible for the decision to serve a penalty notice on parents. This will ensure that there is no duplication of practice, human rights are adhered to and there is no danger that penalty notices are being served when the process towards prosecution is already underway

Where a school wishes to issue penalty notices themselves – through the local authority scheme, they must demonstrate that they have undertaken as a minimum the level of work outlined below.

- A full assessment of the case

- Casework intervention with the pupil and parent(s)
- Consultation with regard to other agencies
- An attendance review conference (which must be chaired by Cumbria Children's Services)

If a school issues a penalty notice, a copy must be sent to the Access and Inclusion Officer (Attendance).

All funding from penalty notices will go to the County Council to cover the costs of issuing or enforcing notices and the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

The Local Authority is required to produce an auditor's statement, as part of the usual audit procedure showing that income received from fines does not exceed enforcement as defined. The surplus, if any, must be surrendered to the consolidated fund.

The Children's Services Inclusion Team will run the financial administration of the scheme.

Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Holiday in Term Time

Penalty Notices will not be used as an **automatic** sanction against parents who take unauthorised holidays in term time but may be issued in certain circumstances. Each situation should be considered individually.

A person authorised on behalf of the proprietor of the school may only grant leave of absence. As from 1st September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amended Regulation 7 to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school from granting leave of absence to a pupil, except where an advance application has been made by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides, and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Schools must ensure that all literature provided to parents, such as Prospectus, Attendance and Behaviour Policies, Home School Agreements, Newsletters and website information include the warning that parents may be issued with a penalty notice if a leave of absence is taken without permission.

A letter to the parent confirming that a leave of absence has not been authorised must be sent by the Headteacher and include a warning that a penalty notice may be issued.

If the leave is taken, the headteacher may issue a fixed penalty notice for unauthorised leave of absence providing the following criteria apply:

- There have been 10 sessions (5 consecutive days) or more of unauthorised absence due to leave taking during an academic year.

and

- Attendance is below 95% during the preceding 12 weeks before the leave was taken, and the absence is unauthorised; or
- The leave was taken during the month of September; or
- The leave was taken during tests or examinations; or
- It is the second leave taken in any one academic year; or
- The pupil is in Year 6 or Year 11

If the headteacher issues an FPN, they should send a copy of the notice and the following documentation to the Access and Inclusion Officer (Attendance) for their school:

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

- A completed and signed witness statement
- A signed headteacher's certificate for the period of absence in question
- A copy of the leave request and the reply
- A copy of the advisory letter sent to the parent

No more than two penalty notices should be issued to a parent in a twelve-month period for unauthorised leave in term time. If the law continues to be broken around school attendance legal intervention process will be used. If the fixed penalty notice remains unpaid, any decision to prosecute rests with the local authority and tests of sufficiency evidence and public interest will be applied to each case individually. If the local authority is of the view that prosecution is not appropriate, then the local authority is required by law to withdraw the Penalty Notice and inform the parents concerned.

Appendix 10: Penalty Notice Warning Letter

WARNING LETTER

[Date]

[Parents Name and Address]

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear [Parents Name]

RE: UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL [Pupils Name and DoB]

I am writing in connection with your son/daughter, [Pupils Name] unauthorised absence from school.

This letter serves as a formal reminder of your legal duty to ensure regular attendance at school.

According to schools records, from [Week Period] to {End of Week Period} [pupils name] has been absent from school on [Number] occasions out of a possible [Number] attendances. Please note that one absence is one half day session at school.

Not all absences have been authorised by school therefore, you may be guilty of an offence under Section 444 (1) or Section 444 (1A) of the Education Act 1996. The maximum penalty for these offences is a fine of £2,500, 3 months imprisonment or both. Alternatively, the Local Authority/School may choose to impose a Section 444A Penalty Notice in the order of a fine instead of prosecuting for the offences given above. The amount of the penalty notice is £60.00 if paid within 21 days. If paid after 21 days but within 28 days the penalty notice is doubled to £120.00. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution except in limited circumstances.

To avoid any of these legal sanctions, please give your full co-operation and ensure your child attends school regularly from now on.

Should [pupil's name] absences from school be caused by illness, you should contact the school and provide evidence of the medical condition or treatment plan. If the absence is due to illness the school will discuss options for maintaining education during this period.

The situation will reviewed in [select timescale] weeks and if there is no improvement in [child's name] attendance we will refer this matter to the Local Authority.

Yours sincerely

[Headteachers Name]

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Appendix 11: Home Education Letter to Parents

Date

Dear Parent,

Request to Home Educate

It has been brought to my attention that you are giving consideration to withdrawing your child from The Lakes School with the intention of providing home education. In line with the school's attendance policy, I would like to take this opportunity to set out the school's position in response to your intentions in the hope that you might reconsider home education.

Nationally, there has been a significant rise in the numbers of children being withdrawn from school to be home educated. Sadly, a significant proportion of these young people are then lost to the education system and spend a significant period of time out of education, employment or training. We would like to continue to work with you to ensure that this does not happen to your child.

The Lakes School ethos is rooted in comprehensive values and we believe in a strong educational foundation for all young people in the knowledge that securing strong achievement in a broad range of GCSE subjects provides the basis for a successful future. Achieving good grades in a range of GCSE subjects enables young people to easily access further education at college, sixth form, apprenticeship or employment with training.

By home educating your child, and withdrawing them from GCSE examinations, we believe that the opportunities available to them would be drastically reduced, as will the range of opportunities available as an adult when people naturally begin to explore a wider range of career opportunities.

The pastoral and teaching staff at The Lakes School feel that they have made significant progress with your child's attitude to learning and emotional needs. I would like to extend my thanks to you as I know that you have been supportive of the work of a range of staff who have worked closely with your child.

Whilst the school would ultimately respect your decision to home educate your child, I hope you understand that it is important for us to set out in writing the school's position in support of our recent discussions with yourself and your child.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter or seek advice on your intentions to home educate your child, then do feel free to contact myself or Ms Rainey, Deputy Headteacher, via the school office.

Yours sincerely

Andy Cunningham
Headteacher

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Appendix 12: Attendance and Punctuality Letter to Parents (July 2017)

Dear Parent

Attendance and Punctuality

The Governing Body of The Lakes School would like to request your support in improving attendance and punctuality at the school. You will note from our recent Ofsted inspection report that staff and governors are working incredibly hard to bring about improvements in achievement for all students and we are pleased that this has been recognised in the report. The report is extremely positive about the behaviour of students who demonstrate respectful relationships around the school. One member of the inspection team remarked that we had a lovely school and this was a view that was shared by our students and by yourselves. We very much value your support which has played a significant role in helping us

The school now needs to be judged as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted at the time of our next inspection and we know that you will do all that you can to work in partnership with staff and governors to secure the very best outcomes for your child. We would like to request your help in improving the school's overall attendance and punctuality figures which currently require improvement.

Since September 2016, staff at The Lakes School have secured marginal improvements in the attendance rates of all groups of students. Had this not been the case, the school would have been rated as 'Inadequate' by Ofsted. We believe that in many respects, The Lakes School is a good school and one that very much provides a caring, learning community for all students.

We need your help to improve whole school attendance and punctuality so that by the time of our next inspection we are not at risk of an 'inadequate' rating by Ofsted. The grade given by Ofsted for attendance is what is known as a 'limiting' judgement i.e. if attendance is graded as inadequate, then so is leadership and management and then so is overall effectiveness and this would be despite the good behaviour of our students, good GCSE and A-Level results, a good Sixth Form and students stating that they feel safe and well-cared for.

How can you help?

We would like to respectfully ask all parents to help us to secure a judgement of 'Good' at the time of our next inspection by taking two specific actions in relation to attendance and punctuality

1. Avoid taking your child or children out of school for holidays
2. Ensure that your child or children arrive at school in good time so that they are outside their tutor group room ready to be registered by 8.45am

Collectively, our students have missed 700 days of school due to holidays since September 2016 and we know this has a significant impact on a number of areas of a child's development. A child's absence from school impacts on a number of areas not limited to academic achievement, social development, friendships, feelings of isolation and lack of connectivity with peers and school life. Absence from school also has a significant impact on lessons as students often find they need to catch up and may feel as though the rest of their classes are further on with their learning.

Punctuality

You may have noticed that our fencing is nearing completion, and this will help to improve some of our routines. It will also help us monitor punctuality more effectively and ensure that students are arriving at tutor time and lessons in a timely manner. As a reminder, Tutor Time begins at 8.45am and any student who is not present is marked as late. We would like to thank the vast majority of students who consistently arrive at school on time ready to learn.

Please find below our revised arrangements for monitoring and improving student punctuality. Whilst these arrangements might seem quite 'blunt' we are aware that the vast majority of students arrive at school on time and will therefore not be affected.

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path:

Arriving at School

1. At 8.40am, the external entrance gates will be closed outside the dining area and at the car park next to the technology department.
2. All students should be in the school before 8.40am to ensure that they arrive at Tutor Time at 8.45am.
3. Students who have not arrived in school before the gates are closed will need to enter school through reception.
4. Our attendance staff will greet students who are late and will issue a detention for the same day which will take place at break time, lunchtime or after school. The length of the detention will be the number of minutes late multiplied by three.
5. Students who are persistently late present the same safeguarding concern as those students with persistent absence. A referral may therefore be made by the school to the Cumbria County Council Inclusion Team.

We recognise that for some students the arrangements above may require some adjustment to their morning routines. With this in mind, we will issue detentions for lateness from Monday 2nd October 2017. Prior to this date, we will speak to students who are late and remind them of the new arrangements but not issue any detentions.

Leaving School During the Day

1. Your child may have an important reason for leaving school during the school day such as a medical appointment, although we would ask that wherever possible such appointments are made for after the end of the school day.
2. The system for leaving the school for such a reason remains the same in that parents should notify the school in advance and your child should sign out and wait at reception for you to collect them.
3. This system ensures that we can keep your child safe.

Leaving School at the End of the Day

1. The school gates near the dining area will be opened at 3.00pm.
2. Students will be able to leave the school site at 3.10pm via reception, the dining area, technology department or by walking up the side of the school buildings from the Maths and Art blocks.

In closing, we would like to thank you for your support in helping us achieve our ambition of becoming an outstanding school where we do everything we can to support and care for your child so that they can achieve their potential.

Yours sincerely

Andy Cunningham
Headteacher

Appendix 13: Leave of Absence Request Form

The Lakes School Leave of Absence Request Form

The Lakes School believes regular attendance to be vitally important and parents are asked for their active support in this matter. Leave of absence can only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

The Governors have issued the following statement about leave of absence in term time.

'Removal of students from school during term time can cause disproportionate damage to their education. It is therefore expected that parents will NOT arrange family holidays except during school holidays. While governors recognise that there may be considerable educational opportunities to be had from travel, they feel that these cases are the exception rather than the rule. The Headteacher has been asked therefore to actively discourage parents from causing their children to miss schooling.'

Having read the above governors' statement, I still wish to request permission for my child to be absent from school, because of an exceptional circumstance.

Part 1: To be completed by parent/carer

I am writing to ask permission for my child to be absent from school between the following dates. This absence is exceptional, and I will ensure that he/she catches up on any work missed.

Please explain the EXCEPTIONAL circumstance:

Name of Child	Year Group	Tutor Group

First date of absence	Total no. of days of absence

Signature of Parent or Guardian	
Print Name of Parent or Guardian	
Relationship to child	

Part 2: To be completed by Attendance Officer

Current Attendance	Attendance last year	Number of days of authorised leave of absence so far this year

Please forward this form to Mr A Cunningham, Headteacher

Part 3: To be completed by Mr Cunningham and returned to attendance officer to complete register and reply to parent.

Authorised

Not authorised for the following reasons...

Signed	Date

Title:
Author:
Date:

Path: