

LONDON STEINER SCHOOL

Attendance and Children at Risk of Missing Education

Attendance

“Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government expects: Schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.”

Excerpt from [School Attendance Guidance August 2020](#) HM Government

London Steiner School’s ethos includes promoting a love of learning and this is encouraged by regular engagement with parents to inform them of their children’s attendance and education, clear policies and administrative procedures, raising staff awareness through trainings and Pedagogical meetings, and the efforts of the teachers to make the child’s experience of school engaging and insightful.

“The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission register and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, an attendance register.

All pupils (regardless of their age) must be placed on both registers. The proprietor of a school who fails to comply with these regulations is guilty of an offence and can be fined.

Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.”

Excerpt from [School Attendance Guidance August 2020](#) HM Government

The School will inform it’s Local Authority, Lambeth, within five days of adding a pupil’s name to the admission register and will provide all the information held within the admission register about the pupil. This duty does not apply to pupils who are added to the admission register at the start of the school’s youngest year - the first year of Kindergarten - unless the local authority also requests for such information to be provided.

The School will hold details of, and contact the parent or carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. This information is requested in the Application Form, and on subsequent occasions such as a school trip or a change of family circumstances.

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The school keeps a record of children's attendance twice a day, at the beginning of each session. On each occasion we will follow the guidance recommended codes to record whether each pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent;
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances; or,
- Not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

This register returns to the office when staff have entered present or absent, along with any concerns raised, and the office staff follow agreed procedures to:

- Monitor and record attendance for absences, communicate with Parents and Carers to:
 - Ascertain the reason;
 - Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
 - Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
 - Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's register.
- Administer and record any notifications and requests regarding absences, admissions and children leaving the school
- Liaise with Local Authorities and any other organisation to ensure children have the opportunity to engage with education

Children Missing Education or at Risk of Missing Education

“School governing bodies, academy trusts, and other school proprietors must have regard to the statutory guidance ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern. Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.”

Excerpt from [School Attendance Guidance August 2020](#) HM Government

“All staff should be aware that children going missing, particularly repeatedly, can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, which may include sexual abuse or exploitation and can also be a sign of child criminal exploitation including involvement in county lines. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. Staff should be aware of their school's or college's unauthorised absence and children missing from education procedures”

Excerpt from [Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020](#) HM Government

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Children Missing Education and Children at Risk of Missing Education can mean a child being taken off a school roll, failing to attend on the agreed admission date, a child not returning to school after an authorised absence or repeated absence.

The School will inform the School's, and in some cases, the child's Local Authority, in accordance with their requested procedures if:

- A child is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave
- A child is absent for 10 consecutive days without approved leave
- A child fails to attend school regularly

Parents should be aware that Local Authorities reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any Parents or Carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their child/children to school on a regular basis.

If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the Parents or Carers will be asked to visit the School and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, in some cases, the Safeguarding team will visit the home to establish whether the child is at home. If we cannot make contact, we will refer to the support services for the Local Authority (LA) where the child has normal residence, and the School's Local Authority, Lambeth.

A child leaving the school

“Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education. All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.”

“On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home. Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school”

Excerpts from [School Attendance Guidance August 2020](#) HM Government

The School seeks to obtain written confirmation from parents/carers if and when we find out that one of our pupils is being removed, using our 'Leavers Form'. When removing a pupil's name, we will use the Local Authority's forms for notification and will include : the full name of the pupil; the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives; at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives; the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with,

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and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable; the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

Children whose parents wish to Home Educate their child will be asked to complete the Local Authority form for this, and the School forward this to the appropriate Local Authorities. If the form is not returned, the Local Authority will be informed of this fact, along with any relevant details about the child.

Related Links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307867/Statutory_Guidance_-_Missing_from_care_3_.pdf

Related Documents:

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Data Protection Policy

Home-School Agreement

School Handbook

Monitoring and Review

Reviewed by/date	Helen Fraser September 2020
Approved by/date	College of Teachers
Approved by/date	Trustees and Management Group 08/20
Next review	August 2021