

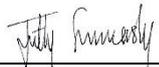
Attendance Policy



**THE LADDER
SCHOOL**

Redefining alternative provision



Date of Creation (first edition)	November 2018
Date for Review	October 2021
Date posted on website	December 2020
Policy updates and amendments	See Version Control
Member of staff responsible for the policy	Chris Bury
Date adopted by the Local Governing Body	December 2020
Signed by Principal	
Signed by Chair of Governing Body	



Version Control

Version	Author	Date	Changes Made
1.0	CB	Nov 2018	First Edition
1.1	RW	May 2020	Changes to present tense
2.1	JA	June 2020	Changes made to reflect Service Level Agreement with LA and updated roles in relation to attendance management.
2.2	CB	October 2020	Policy updated onto the new format

Mission Statement

The Ladder School is a safe, well ordered and caring environment for learning. It delivers high quality education to all its students and supports them to develop their individual potential for growth, self-worth and self-control.

High quality outstanding teaching, and clear and consistent guidance and support, facilitates students in succeeding in education. Our broad and balanced academic and vocational curriculum will provide students with access to a broad range of accredited qualifications as well as educational and social experiences, which will address their learning and emotional needs (including SEND and Mental Health support). Our purpose is to support every student to develop their true potential, make positive contributions to their families and find fulfilment in employment.

Values

1. Alternative Provision doesn't mean a dumping ground...it's mainstream with the reasonable adjustments to succeed
2. High standards and high expectations are incredibly important and are the corner stones to a successful school
3. The Ladder School should become the go-to place for educators from across the country to see best practice
4. Good simply isn't good enough
5. Learning is about a journey and there is more than one way to get to the destination
6. Qualifications, manners, respect and opportunity should be the foundations for students that need a second chance.

School Ethos



High Standards



Daring to Dream



Traditional Values



Success



Personalised Support



High standards – students are pushed to achieve beyond their potential, and staff work to ensure everything that we do is better than people expect.

Daring to Dream – students at The Ladder School may have been in an educational setting where they lacked aspiration to be successful, at The Ladder School we challenge students to reach their potential and go on to further education and employment.

Traditional Values – some things often get forgotten in education, at The Ladder School we pride ourselves on mutual respect, good manners, making a positive contribution, supporting one another and an orderly, litter free environment.

Success – can come in many virtues, at The Ladder School we celebrate the small steps every day and tell students when they are doing well. We ensure that students can have a successful future.

Personalised Support - all students at The Ladder School have a Learning Coach who guides them, sets them bespoke targets and supports them in making social and academic progress.

Statement of Purpose

This policy is designed and encouraged to promote excellent attendance and punctuality for all students at The Ladder School. Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community. We promote attendance through a personalised and differentiated curriculum and stimulating learning resources, in order that students can value their time and make progress whilst at The Ladder School.

Legal Framework

The following legislation enforces expectations on how schools should deal with attendance and punctuality;

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013;
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of the School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments; and The Education and Skills Act 2008.



- Local Authority Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices September 2017.
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that students attend school unless prevented by illness;
- To reduce absence from lessons;
- To improve punctuality to school;
- To ensure that staff, parents/carers and students are aware of their responsibilities with regard to attendance;
- To ensure a consistently and fair approach to managing and supporting attendance to school.

Key Principles

Students should attend school every day, except when there is illness or other abnormal circumstances;

- Attendance at school should be enjoyable;
- Students should feel that they are achieving, they are safe and they are supported;
- Great attendance will be rewarded;
- Students will be made aware of their own attendance percentage;
- Students will be taught about what good attendance is and why it is important through skills and assemblies;
- The electronic registration program follows a code system appropriate to social inclusion legislation;
- Being late is unacceptable except in genuine, unavoidable circumstances;
- Where appropriate, suitable adjustments are made to ensure students can attend school;
- The school will provide parents/carers with regular updates with their child's attendance and punctuality via text message, phone calls, letters and the school report;
- Staff and parents should encourage and support students to attend school;
- Staff promote attendance by demonstrating excellent attendance themselves.

Admissions Register

School keeps an admission register which records the date that each student joined the school and their personal details. The Ladder School can only remove a student's name from this register where they have:

- been taken out of school by their parents/carers and are being educated outside the school system, for example home education;
- moved to a new school;
- ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- a medical condition certified by a medical professional that the student is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;



- been in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period;
- The place at The Ladder School has broken down and all parties involved have agreed that the student will return to their home school or,
- been permanently excluded. The Ladder School will notify the Local Authority in advance of any exclusion.

The importance of good attendance

Statistics show that good attendance leads to good attainment. Students with attendance below 90% are likely to underachieve against their target levels/grades by the end of each year. National statistics suggest that students who have low attendance are less likely to be successful when they leave The Ladder School, based on the number of qualifications they achieve.

Attendance Targets

Each year The Ladder School will set challenging targets to continually improve attendance, these will be shared with staff, governors, students and parents. For the academic year 2020/21 the school has set the following targets;

- Whole School Attendance Target (above): 95%
- Persistent Absentee Target (below): 13%

These targets will be tracked and reviewed regularly by the Senior Leadership Team and the Local Governing Body*.

*Please note that Alternative Provision attendance is measured against Pupil Referral Unit attendance, for 2018/2019 (the most recent published data) the average is as follows:

- National Average Attendance 64.7%
- Persistent Absence 74.6%

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875275/Absence_3term.pdf

Persistent Absence

From September 2015, the Department for Education has changed the threshold for categorising Persistent Absences, reducing it from fifteen percent to ten percent absence of any kind. Any student who has attendance below 90% is categorised as a persistent absentee. The Ladder School has an obligation to intervene when a student's attendance falls below this threshold. This may include a referral to the Local Authority to pursue a Fixed Penalty Notice after work has been done to support parents/carers to enable their child to attend. Parents/Carers will be alerted when attendance falls below 95% so we can work together to ensure good attendance.

Roles and Responsibilities



Parents/Carers

- Have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends and stays at the school, and that he/she arrives on time and should not make excuses for poor punctuality;
- Should ensure that their child is appropriately dressed and brings the relevant equipment;
- Should inform the school on the first day of absence, by email, telephone, text or in person stating the reason for absence and the expected duration of the absence. If the absence continues beyond the first day, the parent should make contact with either the Head of Learning Support or the Admin Support Assistant via telephone or in person.
- Where a student has been identified as having low attendance or will become a persistent absentee due to the absence, parents will be asked to provide medical evidence to support a continued absence from school (see Attendance Appendix).

The Ladder School

- Will encourage good attendance and recognise it through attendance awards;
- Will work with parents to address any problems which may lead to absence;
- Will monitor attendance via the Head of Learning Support who is responsible for Attendance;
- Will carry out a safe and well check on the student in cases where an issue has been identified with an absence.

The LA

- Will ensure that parents fulfil their legal duty. Educational Welfare Workers are employed by the Local Authority to carry out their statutory duties (which may include the initiation of court action where the absence rate is unacceptable) and to work with parents/carers and schools to resolve difficulties.
- Provides The Ladder School with a service level agreement where they will lead on specific coursework and oversee the legal process.

Contact Details

In the first instance, parents should contact the school office on;

- Reception 01922 285848
- Head of Learning Support 01922 285848

If parents require further assistance, please contact the Principal

Fixed Penalty Notices

A fixed penalty notice can only be issued in the case of unauthorised absence or if a student is present in a public place during school hours whilst in the first five days of exclusion. The specifics are outlined below.

A fixed penalty notice can be issued in any of the following circumstances:

- If a student has 8 or more sessions of unauthorised persistent absence, excluding unauthorised holidays (absences do not have to be consecutive O or G codes);
- For unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) that is not authorised by the school;



- If a student has been persistently late and has unauthorised absences as a result of lateness.
- This equates to 4 days within a 6-week period.

There will be no limit on the times a penalty notice will be used for unauthorised level of absence in an academic year.

If a parent/carer is issued with a fixed penalty warning notice or a formal fixed penalty notice for persistent absences or lateness, this will be restricted to one notice or warning in an academic year.

The Local Authority Code of Conduct is published on the Ladder School website for further details regarding fixed penalty notices. <https://link.walsall.gov.uk/Local-Authority/Student/Education-Welfare-Service-and-Elective-Home-Education/Walsall-Penalty-Notice-Code-of-Conduct>

The Ladder School will refer cases to the Local Authority to issue a fixed penalty notice to any parent/carer that takes their child out of school for any length of time if the absence is an unauthorised request. Equally if a parent/carer is not truthful about a child's absence, they could face prosecution.

Leave of absence requests

In some exceptional circumstances leave of absence requests will be authorised by the Principal. These absences will not be referred for a fixed penalty notice. If this is the case, the leave of absence will be coded accordingly (depending on the nature of the absence). Examples of absences that could be authorised are;

- A funeral of a direct family member
- A wedding of a direct family member
- Time off for students whose parents are service personnel
- One off special event for example an award ceremony for the student
- Participation in a sporting activity/representation of the school
- Time off for religious observance

All leave of absence requests will be considered on an individual basis. The school will aim to be fair and consistent for all students. The amount of time authorised will be at the Principal's discretion. For example, one day's leave of absence may be authorised, for the wedding (in the UK) of a close relative. To enable the school to make a decision we ask that parents/carers provide as much information as possible when they submit the leave of absence request. In some instances, the school may ask for further information.

Appendix

- Times of the School Day
- Lesson Procedure



- Late Procedure
- Planned Absence
- Leave of Absence
- Request for Medical Evidence
- Examples of Medical Evidence
- Attendance Letter One
- Attendance Letter Two
- Late Letter
- Staff responsibilities in supporting students
- Registration Codes

