



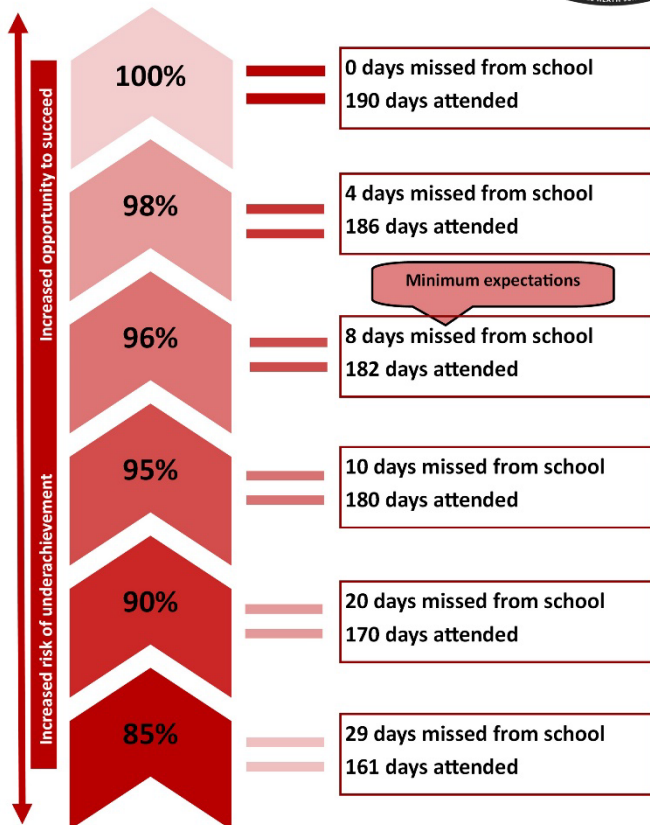
## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY EXPECTATIONS

### Introduction

In Sixth Form, at Little Heath School, we firmly believe good attendance and arriving on time are crucial factors in students achieving their full potential, staying safe and getting the most out of the whole school experience. There is a clear link between high attendance and high academic achievement, therefore absence, for any reason, has a negative effect on learning. Attendance is the responsibility of every stakeholder at Little Heath School: it is in everyone's interests and it is everyone's business. In Sixth Form, we believe that continued positive and consistent communication between home and school is central to improving and maintaining high levels of attendance. When joining Sixth Form at Little Heath School students receive a copy of our home school agreement which they are expected to read and sign to show their agreement when joining our Sixth Form.

### Attendance

#### The impact of attendance...



We expect Sixth Formers at Little Heath School to attend school regularly, on time and be prepared for a day of learning. We set all Sixth Form students a minimum target level of 96%, in line with other students across the school. We make attendance and punctuality a priority for students, parents, teachers and governors and have developed a systematic approach with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. This promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks relating to attendance.

Students with consistently high and improved attendance receive praise and rewards in line with our current praise strategy. Sixth Form attendance is monitored and reviewed by the Sixth Form; students who are identified as needing support to improve their attendance are placed on our 'Steps to Success' scheme, as detailed in appendix 1.

An attendance rate of 90% is the equivalent to missing half a day of school per week or one full day per fortnight.

Research proves there is a strong negative link between absence and attainment.

The diagram illustrates the impact that missing

school during the academic year can have on academic achievement.

In line with the Department for Education, Little Heath School operates the following definitions in relation to students' attendance:

- Persistent absence: A student is considered to be persistently absent if their attendance is 90%. This includes authorised absence, unauthorised absence or a combination of both. An attendance rate of 90% is equivalent to missing half a day of school per week or one day per fortnight.
- Severe absence: A student is considered to be severely absent if their attendance reaches 50%. This includes authorised absence, unauthorised absence or a combination of both.

As a Sixth Form, we understand and offer empathy and support to students who are working to improve and sustain excellent levels of attendance, but we do not accept continued, low, unexpected or unexplained absences.

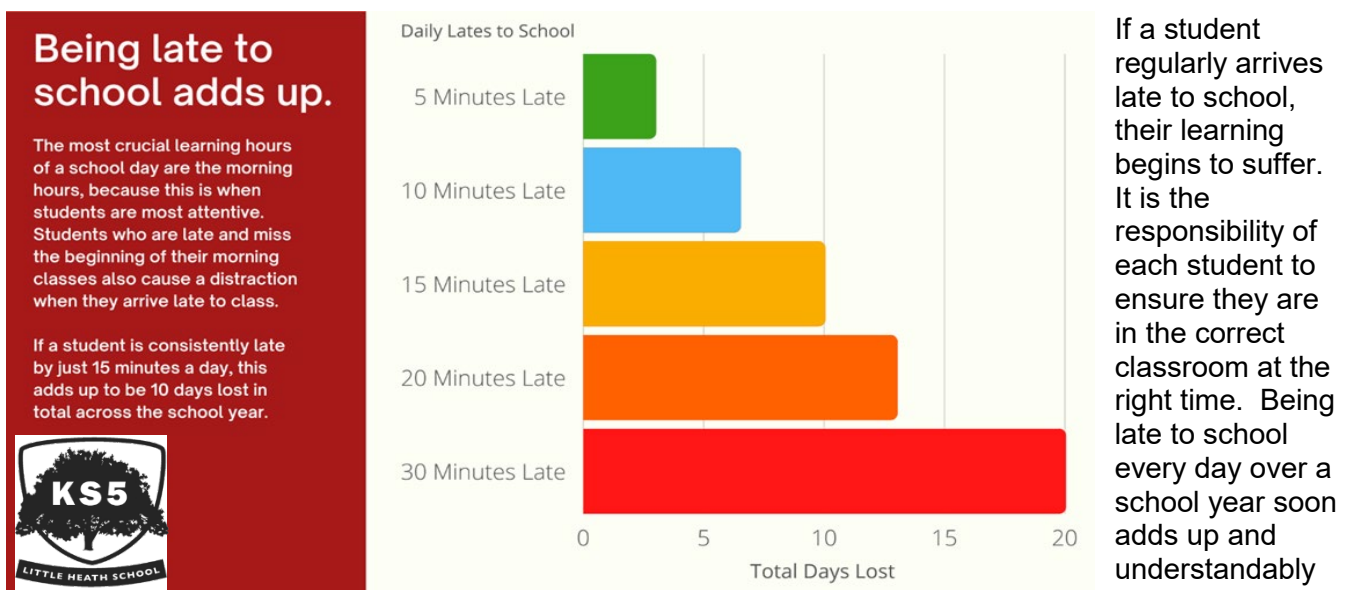
Research clearly identifies a negative link between attendance and attainment at all key stages within schools. We strive for all our students to fulfil their potential; ensuring regular attendance is the first step.

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a parent’s legal responsibility, but helping to maintain a regular pattern of attendance is everyone’s responsibility – parents, students and all members of school staff (Appendix 1). We are keen to work with parents, students and the local authority to ensure attendance is as good as it can be to improve the chances of the young people in our care. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Good attendance and punctuality also show universities and potential employers that a young person is reliable.

## Punctuality

**The information below applies to all students in Sixth Form, unless Home study has been awarded.**

Punctuality is a very important part of time management and self-discipline. It is the responsibility of students and parents to ensure they arrive to school on time. Where students use public transport to get to school, they must ensure they catch a bus that allows them to be in registration for 8.50am.



At Little Heath we believe that arriving to lessons punctually helps create a positive environment for learning and shows that our students are ‘Ready to Learn.’

The school day begins promptly at 8.50am and students should be sat in their tutor room ready for morning registration. Students have their second registration mark of the day at 2.05pm and again should be in their form rooms by this time. The vast majority of students arrive promptly and move between lessons with pace and purpose. Students can only enter school through the Sixth Form or Main Gate; it is their responsibility to ensure they arrive in plenty of time to enter the school grounds and be in their tutor rooms by 8.50am and 2.05pm.

The Sixth Form vehicle gate closes at 8.15am and the pedestrian gate remains open until 8.50am. Any Sixth Form students arriving late after 8.55am must enter through the Sixth Form pedestrian gate where their name will be recorded by a member of the Sixth Form team and their mobile phone will be confiscated for the day. The students must then tap in to confirm they have arrived on site, and make their way to form or lessons.

Students who arrive after the registers have closed at 9.15am, again tap in at Sixth Form. They must hand in their phone upon arrival they will be marked on the register as 'O'. This counts as unauthorised absence for the morning session as registers have closed. This will therefore impact on a student's overall attendance. Parents and carers should inform the school as soon as possible if there are exceptional circumstances that caused their child's late arrival. All phones handed in are logged and stored in a secure cabinet for collection by the student by the end of the day.

Equally students are expected to arrive to lessons on time. If students are late to lessons, departments address lateness with an appropriate sanction. Further lateness results in escalated sanctions. Where there is a persistent problem with getting to lessons or morning and afternoon tutor time punctually, we will discuss with parents and further consequences will be put in place.

### **Daily Routines in Sixth Form at Little Heath School**

The Sixth Form Centre is open from 8.00am in the morning and students are welcome to use the library, café and common room before morning registration. Breakfast can be purchased from 8.15am in the café.

Students are welcomed into school in the morning at the Main and Sixth Form gate from 8.30am by members of our Senior Leadership Team. Morning registration begins at 8.50am and finishes at 9.00am. Unless in receipt of home study, students are expected to register each morning with their mentors during this time.

Students and parents have a responsibility to update us of any absences (please see below for details about types of absence). We ask that a phone call is made to 01189 427337 or an email is sent to [Sixthform@littleheath.org.uk](mailto:Sixthform@littleheath.org.uk) by 8.30am which includes the student's name, tutor group and reason for absence. This enables us to update our register, maintain accurate records and crucially, safeguard our students. Please be aware it is not enough to simply state 'illness' or 'poorly', we require further information about the specifics of the illness for our records.

If there is an unexplained absence, we operate a same day contact system in Sixth Form. If students are marked absent or have not tapped in, in the morning, the Sixth Form team will contact the student in the first instance. A message is also sent to parents/carers to inform them their child has not registered or tapped-in to record their presence on site. If the communication is unsuccessful, the absence will be marked as unauthorised, until a valid reason is provided. In the case of students who we have identified as vulnerable, a priority phone call, directly to the student and parent, is made. If unsuccessful, a follow up call will be attempted later.

Where students and families require support to improve attendance, we are able to create a personalised plan including support from internal and external agencies. Ultimately, our goal is for all students to regularly attend school to maximise their chances of fulfilling and exceeding their potential.

### **Types of absences**

There are two formal registration windows each day in every school – morning and afternoon registration. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by schools as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why it is important we have clear information about the reason for absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence. In addition, where attendance drops below 95% we may request medical evidence for the absence.

**Authorised absences**, set by the Department for Education, are mornings or afternoons away from school for a genuine reason like:

- ✓ The student is too ill to leave the house;
- ✓ The student has a hospital appointment;
- ✓ The student has an emergency dental appointment;

- ✓ A day of religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carer belongs;
- ✓ The student is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause;
- ✓ There is a close family bereavement;
- ✓ University / apprenticeship / employer open days;
- ✓ Interviews for university, apprenticeships or employment that will begin after the end of their time in Sixth Form. Students will not be allowed to miss lessons to attend interviews, shifts and inductions for part time work;
- ✓ Work experience;
- ✓ Driving test. **Students will not be allowed to miss lessons to attend driving lessons.**

**Unauthorised absences** are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes:

- Parents / carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive too late at school to get a mark e.g. due to sleeping in; minding the house; looking after other children or pets; shopping, or celebrating birthdays;
- Holidays in term time (Absence request forms can be found at: [Little Heath School - Attendance](#) \*)
- Minor illnesses e.g. a tummy ache or a slight headache;
- Excessive illness without medical evidence;
- Part time work;
- Truancy (including leaving the school site during the day) – the consequence of truancy is a Same Day Sanction of 60mins after school.

If a student is absent from school for longer than 5 consecutive days due to illness, students/parents/carers will be asked to provide medical evidence to support the student's absence.

\*Please note the DfE issued new guidance for schools in May 2022. They state that head teachers should, *"only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances - it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday."*

## Signing In and Out

It is a legal requirement that we know who is in the school building at all times. Students must make sure they 'tap in' with their identity card each time they arrive or leave the school throughout the school day. If students are repeatedly not tapping in or out, it will be viewed as a disciplinary matter. They will receive sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy.

Students at Little Heath Sixth Form are expected to be in school all day from 8.50am – 3.25pm, unless home study has been granted (parents/carers are informed if their child has been granted home study). One of the privileges of our Sixth Form Students is students being allowed to leave school at lunch time. They must tap their identity card to sign out and back in again and ensure they return promptly at 2.05pm for afternoon registration. If students regularly return late from break or lunchtime, they will lose this privilege.

### Requests for short-term absence:

Dental and medical appointments should, wherever possible, be made outside of school hours. If a student needs to request a short-term absence, for example:

- They have an unavoidable appointment (medical, driving test, music exam);
- or
- They would like to attend a university open day.

They should complete a 'Signing Out Form' from Sixth Form reception and hand it to the Sixth Form Study Manager at least 24 hours in advance of the date of absence. Students may be asked to provide evidence of the appointment.

When the time arrives for the student to leave school, they should tap out at Sixth Form or Main Reception and then tap back in again when they return. Please be aware, that although these may be an authorised medical appointment, if your son or daughter misses a morning or afternoon registration, the appointment will affect a student's overall attendance percentage.

### Important Contacts in the Sixth Form

Please note all calls are via the school office – 0118 9427337

Person	Role	Contact Detail
Mrs Pauline Kink	Attendance Officer	0118 9427337 (& select report absence) / attendance@littleheath.org.uk
Mrs Dawn Wombwell	KS5 Study Manager	0118 9427337 ks5studymanager@littleheath.org.uk
Sixth Form Mentor	Twice daily check-in with students and completes statutory am and pm registration	Please contact the KS administrators if you are unsure of how to contact your child's mentor
Mrs Helen Hickman	KS5 Progress Leader	ks5progressleader@littleheath.org.uk
Mrs Angelina Wilson / Mrs Carolina Taplin	KS5 Administrator	sixthform@littleheath.org.uk
Miss Katie Nicholson	KS5 Student Services	ks5studentservices@littleheath.org.uk
Mr Toby Jessop	Head of Sixth Form	tjessop@littleheath.org.uk
Mrs Samantha Chaventre	Deputy Head in charge of KS5	schaventre@littleheath.org.uk
Miss Kayley Button	Safeguarding Lead and SENCO	kbutton@littleheath.org.uk
Mr David Ramsden	Head Teacher	dramsdn@littleheath.org.uk

*Please remember all absence should be report on first day of absence before 8.30am.*

### Promoting and Incentivising Good Attendance

We encourage excellent attendance and punctuality with students through tutorial work and assemblies focusing on the benefits of good attendance. Posters outlining the importance of good attendance and punctuality are displayed in each tutor base. Positive messages regarding the importance of good attendance and promoting inter-house attendance competitions are displayed on the digital signage. Assemblies that celebrate success in relation to attendance and punctuality are held regularly each half term.

Reward schemes for good attendance and punctuality at Little Heath include:

1. Weekly house points for 100% attendance and excellent punctuality.
2. Praise letters to recognise good or improved attendance.
3. Half-termly prize draw for students with 100% attendance.
4. Inter-form competitions to encourage competition in attendance.
5. Inter-form competitions to celebrate excellent punctuality.
6. Letters home to praise improved punctuality and attendance.
7. Home Study – a hybrid approach to Sixth Form study that is awarded to students who apply, who have met their attendance and study targets.

In addition, the importance of good attendance is promoted to parents at parent information evenings; in school reports; through the school newsletter and half termly attendance updates.

## **Home Study**

To help prepare students for a hybrid work pattern that many will experience when they leave Sixth Form, we have developed Home Study as a way to reward students who have secured good attendance, punctuality and study habits. Parents/carers are informed if their child has been granted home study.

Year 12 students can apply for Home Study to begin at the beginning of Term 3, after an initial transition period. If they meet certain criteria relating to attendance, punctuality, engagement with learning and recently recorded grades, they can submit a request to study at home for six periods across a fortnight. If successful, they must tap in and out whenever they enter or leave the school site. After receiving Home Study, if there are any changes to students' attendance, punctuality, engagement with learning or most recent grades, it may be withdrawn. If students are not successful in their application for Home Study, they receive feedback on their application and have a further chance to reapply each half term. Students in receipt of Home Study are still expected to uphold the same standards and targets detailed in this document, when expected in school.

Year 13 students can apply for Home Study during Term 1. If they meet certain criteria relating to attendance, punctuality, engagement with learning and recently recorded grades, they can submit a request to study at home for eight periods across a fortnight. If successful, they must tap in and out whenever they enter or leave the school site. After receiving Home Study, if there are any changes to students' attendance, punctuality, engagement with learning or most recent grades, it may be withdrawn. If students are not successful in their application for Home Study, they receive feedback on their application and have a further chance to reapply each half term. Students in receipt of Home Study are still expected to uphold the same standards and targets detailed in this document, when expected in school.

## **Procedures for return to school following a long period of absence**

Parents/carers are expected to arrange for their children to come to school every day whenever possible, even if there are on-going medical or other difficulties. If a child is recovering from an illness or injury and not strong enough to stand the full rigours of a school day, it may be possible to make special arrangements. However, the full quarantine for infectious diseases should be observed. Parents/carers should contact their child's mentor, Key Stage 5 Study Manager or Head of Year to discuss this.

Parents/carers should also contact their child's mentor, Key Stage 5 Study Manager or Head of Year if a long absence is known about in advance (e.g. after some operations). A personalised plan will be created in each circumstance to support the student through their absence and in their return to full time schooling.

## **Little Heath School Strategy for using data to improve attendance**

The Key Stage 5 Study Manager will monitor attendance and punctuality daily through the school's management information system (SIMs). Where a student's attendance is unexpected, the parent / carer will be contacted on the first day of absence and we actively seek to help the child return to school as soon as possible.

Key Stage 5 mentors use SIMs to check daily attendance and punctuality. Mentors discuss concerns during 1-1 meetings with their mentees during mentor periods. During 1-1 meetings, mentors praise students with consistently high attendance or excellent punctuality and discuss concerns with those who are not meeting expectations. Mentors discuss attendance and punctuality concerns with the Head of Sixth Form at fortnightly tutor briefings.

A series of weekly, fortnightly and half termly reports are produced to track and monitor attendance at Key Stage 5. The attendance reports are discussed at fortnightly Sixth Form attendance meetings to monitor and agree actions to improve and celebrate students' attendance.

Students are able to keep track of their attendance through the Satchel One app or web browser. Half termly attendance updates are sent to parents, in addition to them being updated if their child's attendance falls below key thresholds.

Attendance data is used diagnostically to track and monitor students' attendance. If students' attendance falls below 96%, they are placed on our 'Steps to Success' programme (see Appendix 2), created to support students and families to improve their attendance and meet the 96% target.

### **Little Heath's School Strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is defined as attendance below 90%. Severe absence is that which falls below 50%. These types of absence are potentially a serious problem for students. Much of the work missed during days off school is never made up, leaving these persistently absent students at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. Where a student is identified as having persistent or severe absence we would prefer to work with the students and parents / carers in line with our 'Steps to Success' program, rather than prosecute. However, students with continued, low, unexpected or unexplained absence below 90% are jeopardising their 16-19 education. Similarly, if students' attendance does not improve after moving through the 'Steps to Success' program by not meeting their required attendance targets, they too are jeopardising their 16-19 education. In both situations, students are at risk of:

- not being entered for their qualification;
- having their exam entries withdrawn;
- foregoing free examination entry and will need to pay for their own entry cost;
- losing their place at Little Heath Sixth Form.

**We would like to stress that we prefer to work with our students and families to improve school attendance and encourage our students back into school without having to resort to the consequences outlined above. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you are struggling to get your son / daughter to school and hopefully if we all work together we can ensure each student is in school receiving the education they deserve.**

### **Further Reading**

The Department for Education's new attendance guidance for schools can be located at: [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/672222/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

## Appendices:

### Appendix 1: The partnership between students, school and parents to improve attendance.

Expectations of LHS	Expectations of KS5 students	Expectations of KS5 parents/carer
<p>A Sixth Form education that is dependent upon regular attendance at school.</p> <p>Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school and regular encouragement and rewards.</p> <p>Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of absence.</p> <p>Prompt action when a problem has been identified.</p> <p>Personalised support plans to improve students' attendance.</p> <p>Regular communication with students, parents and carers.</p> <p>Follow a clear approach to managing any attendance issues.</p> <p>Convey clear messages about how absence affects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes.</p> <p>Empower staff to take responsibility for attendance.</p> <p>Ensure Governors have an accurate view of school attendance and engage in escalation procedures where appropriate.</p>	<p>Attend regularly, on time and ready to learn.</p> <p>Attend AM &amp; PM registration, lessons, study periods and free periods, unless home study is granted.</p> <p>Achieve a minimum of 96% attendance.</p> <p>To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school.</p> <p>Make every effort to arrange dental / medical appointments and driving lessons outside of school hours.</p> <p>Complete an absence request form if they need to leave early or request absence for half / full day.</p>	<p>Fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly, on time and is prepared for the day.</p> <p>To contact the school on the first day their child is absent for any reason and then on all subsequent days if the student is unable to contact school him/herself.</p> <p>To avoid taking holidays in term time.</p> <p>To speak to relevant members of staff if they know of any problem which may prevent their child from attending school.</p> <p>To provide evidence to support absences such as medical letters, or a note or email to explain the absences, where requested.</p> <p>Actively support the work of the school with any support and sanctions to improve students' attendance.</p> <p>Understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.</p>

### Appendix 2: LHS Sixth Form's Steps to Success Program to Improve Attendance

ATTENDANCE STEPS TO SUCCESS	
	Detail
<b>PRE-STEP</b>	<p>If a student's attendance drops below 96%:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This prompts a conversation from their mentor to ensure the student is aware of the implications to their learning and to ensure there are no barriers to learning.</li> <li>- Parents/carers receive communication to inform them that their child's attendance has been identified as needing improvement.</li> </ul>
<b>STEP-1</b>	<p>If a student's attendance does not improve or continues to fall, without explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance target set.</li> <li>- Informal daily monitoring card checked by the student's mentor.</li> <li>- Home Study withdrawn (if appropriate)</li> <li>- Parents updated via school communications.</li> </ul>
<b>STEP-2</b>	<p>If a student's attendance does not improve or continues to fall, without explanation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attendance target set.</li> <li>- Daily monitoring card via Key Stage Study Manager.</li> <li>- Parents updated via school communications.</li> </ul>
<b>STEP-3</b>	<p>If there is no improvement, or the student's attendance has fallen further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The student and parent meet with the Head of Sixth Form.</li> <li>- Attendance target set.</li> <li>- Daily monitoring report by Head of Sixth Form.</li> <li>- Parents updated via school communications.</li> </ul>
<b>STEP-4</b>	<p>Despite all interventions, and in the absence of any mitigating circumstances, if there is no improvement, or the student's attendance has fallen further:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A final meeting is arranged with the Deputy Head Teacher to agree final steps. The school reserves the right to withdraw students from qualification, charge for examination entries, etc.</li> <li>- If attendance is below 85% students may be supported in looking for alternative Post-16 provision.</li> </ul>