

LYCÉE FRANÇAIS CHARLES DE GAULLE DE LONDRES ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed at least every school year unless there is a change in legislation

Created: May 2021

Date of review: September 2024

Next review: November 2024

This policy is publicly available on the School website and is available in hard copy on request.

This is the attendance policy of Lycée Français Charles deGaulle de Londres (the “School”).

This policy applies to the School’s four sites, to all pupils of the School, including those pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (*maternelle*).

Introduction

Going to school regularly is important for a child's future.

Good attendance at school is not just beneficial, it is essential. Attending school is directly linked to improved academic performance, which should in turn lead to further learning opportunities and better job prospects. As well as this, going to school helps to develop:

- Friendships
- Social skills
- Team values
- Life skills
- Cultural awareness
- Career pathways

Any absence affects the pattern of a child’s schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning.

The School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

The School recognises the importance of working in partnership with families to find supportive routes to improve attendance.

The school will support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Parents/carers are responsible for making sure their children of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 to 16 year olds) receive a suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

It is the responsibility of local councils’ education departments to ensure that parents/carers meet these responsibilities.

Monitoring absences of pupils is one of the ways the school fulfils its duty of safeguarding children.

Throughout this policy, except as otherwise specified, the term ‘parent’ is understood to include carer and legal guardian.

Unless otherwise specified, the provisions of this policy apply to absences in the School’s primary schools and in the School’s secondary school.

1. Recording by the School of attendance and absences

The *Proviseure* is required to maintain two registers: an admission register (also known as the School roll and which contains a list of all the pupils registered at the School); and an attendance register.

In addition, an attendance check is taken:

- at the start of each morning session and afternoon session at the School's primary schools;
- at the beginning of each class at the School's secondary school.

On each occasion, the School's primary schools and the School's secondary school record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

For the recording of attendance, the *Proviseure* is assisted by the Deputy Heads, the *Conseillers Principaux d'Education* (Heads of Year, hereafter each a "CPE"), and the *directeur/directrice* of each primary school.

- In each primary school, the assistant(s) to the relevant *directeur/directrice*, or the *Vie Scolaire* team, in each case under the supervision of the relevant *directeur/directrice*, is in charge of contacting parents as soon as a pupil is absent without having been notified by such parents beforehand.
- In the secondary school, the CPE (Head of Year) for the relevant school year or class, assisted by the *Vie Scolaire* team, is in charge of contacting parents (and host families in the case of *élèves boursiers de mobilité*) on the day a pupil has been marked absent if they have not been notified by such parents (or host families) beforehand.

All absences, regardless of the cause or explanation, will be noted in the attendance register, and in the secondary school their number will be noted in the pupil's file.

In order to keep an accurate record of pupils' attendance, each primary school and the secondary school use *Pronote* (a specific online communication system).

For secondary school pupils, parents/carers can view on *Pronote* on a real time basis whether their child has been marked absent.

When marking a child absent from the School, each school will use the current government approved authorised absence codes.

2. Lateness, authorised and unauthorised absences

2.1 Lateness

Punctuality is demanded of pupils.

- In the primary schools, late pupils will be accepted in class, after following the process described in the relevant primary school's school rules.
- In the secondary school, late pupils will not be accepted in class. Only in exceptional circumstances will pupils be allowed in class upon presentation of a late slip supplied by the *Vie Scolaire*. An accrual of non-justifiable late arrivals will result in disciplinary measures.

2.2 Lessons are mandatory

All lessons are mandatory.

2.2.1 Optional lessons

Once optional lessons have been selected and accepted by the School, attendance at all such lessons is compulsory.

2.2.2 Sport lessons

Written exemptions from sport lessons from a doctor or parents/carers can only arise on a punctual basis. The pupil's sport teacher advises the pupil what they should do during the PE session or sends the pupil back to the CPE (Head of Year). In no case shall the pupil be allowed to leave the school without the consent of the CPE (Head of Year). In the event of an exemption from sport lessons of 2 weeks or more, pupils must provide a medical certificate to their sport teacher. For pupils in *Terminale*, exemptions from sport lessons of more than 1 week established by a doctor must be validated by the school doctor. In order to do this, pupils must go to the infirmary to make an appointment with the school doctor. Please refer to the procedure on the School's website under "service medical".

2.3 Holidays

The dates of all school holidays are published at the beginning of each academic year.

These must be strictly adhered to; the School does not permit parents/carers to take children out of school on term days to go on holidays. If parents/carers intend to take a child out of the School for a family event during term or directly before or after official breaks, the family must request permission in writing from the *Proviseure* or *directeur/directrice* of the relevant primary school well in advance. This will only be granted in very exceptional circumstances. School holidays are designed to provide regular and healthy breaks for pupils every 6-7 weeks and ensure a balanced life. Families are then responsible for their child keeping up with the class progression and turning in any required classwork. In such a case, communication with teachers is paramount and the sole responsibility of the family.

2.4 Authorised absences

An authorised absence is one for which the School has accepted as satisfactory an advance notice from parents/carers or an explanation offered afterwards.

Examples of authorised absences are: sickness, medical or dental appointments, the taking part in a day of religious observance, family bereavement or other exceptional family event, participation in exceptional athletic or artistic event.

3. Parent Responsibilities

3.1 Duty to ensure school attendance

If a pupil is 5 years old or older, it is the parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that the child under their care attends school regularly.

3.2 Notifying pupil absences

In case of a child's absence, it is essential that parents/carers notify the School as soon as possible from the 1st day of absence of their child, and parents/carers must provide an explanation to the School for such child's absence.

3.2.1 Unforeseen absence

Parents/carers are required to inform the School (*Vie Scolaire* or secretariat for the primary schools, CPE (Head of Year) or *Vie Scolaire* for the Secondary school) by telephone or by email on the day of an unforeseen absence.

3.2.2 Scheduled authorised absences

For scheduled authorised absences (such as medical appointments), parents/carers must give *Vie Scolaire* reasonable notice (24h). Failure to provide adequate notice will result in the pupil

being denied authorisation to leave the premises and a parent will be asked to attend school to sign a form absolving the school of any liability.

3.2.3 Long absences

A doctor's note is required by the school for any absence lasting over 1 week.

In accordance with Section 4 (Children missing from education), the School will report to social services/the local authority any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of 10 school days.

3.3 Parents'/carers' absence

Parents/carers who intend to be away from London for any length of time must inform the School and provide details of the person responsible for their child or children during their absence. In compliance with the UK child protection regulations, the school must notify the competent authorities of any breach of this obligation, when the pupil concerned is under 18.

3.4 Procedure for secondary school pupils returning to school after an absence

After any absence from secondary school, a pupil must provide the *Vie Scolaire* or CPE (Head of Year) with a late slip signed by their parent in their correspondence booklet excusing the pupil, or failing that a letter to that effect. The *Vie Scolaire* or CPE (Head of Year) then issues the pupil with a slip authorising them to attend class. Teachers cannot allow a pupil into their class if the pupil fails to provide this slip.

3.5 Procedure for primary school pupils returning to school after an absence

If a pupil is absent from a primary school during a school day and returns to school before the end of such school day, such pupil will be accompanied in their classroom by an adult.

4. School policy

It is the responsibility of the School to ensure that pupils attend classes regularly and can progress and develop physically, intellectually and emotionally.

Accordingly, it is the duty of the School to monitor and control school attendance. If a pupil is absent without notice from parents/carers, the *Vie Scolaire* School staff will contact parents/carers (and, in the case of *boursiers de mobilité*, host families) promptly.

Excessive absences as well as unauthorised or unexplained absences

- May be questioned by the *Provisoire* (or representative).
- Will result in the School working closely with parents/carers (and host families in the case of *élèves boursiers de mobilité*) to resolve the problem.
- May result in a report to the local authority (see Children missing from Education below)

Children Missing or Absent from Education

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full time education, which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to do so, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area.

Appropriate safeguarding policies, procedures and responses are implemented for children who go missing or who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions.

The School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy will report to social services/ the local authority any pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent, without the school's permission, for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 state that schools must inform their local authority of all deletions from their admission register when a child is taken off roll. Where a parent/carer has expressed their intention to remove a child from the School with a view to educating at home, the School tries to work with key professionals to coordinate a meeting with parents/carers. Ideally, this is before a final decision has been made, to ensure the parents/carers have considered what is in the best interests of the child.

All staff should be aware that children being absent from primary or secondary school, particularly repeatedly, and/or for prolonged periods, and children missing education can act as a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect such as 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, 'honour'-based abuse or risk of forced marriage. Early intervention is essential to identify the existence of any underlying safeguarding risk and to help prevent the risks of a child going missing in future. The School ensures that staff are made aware through regular safeguarding training of unauthorised absence procedures and children missing from or absent from education procedures.

Risk of prosecution and sanctions

Unauthorised absence from school carries with it the risk of prosecution.

In particular but without limitation, under English law, parents/carers found guilty of school attendance offences could also be subject to a fixed penalty decided by the local authority.

5. General

This document has been drawn up under Part III (17) of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 (as amended by the Independent School Standards Regulations 2012 and the Independent School Standards Regulations 2014) to clarify the policy of the School to inform parents and pupils of what that policy is. It is not intended to extend or alter the contractual or other legal rights that exist between the School and parents or pupils.

This Policy bears due regard to the following statutory guidance and other advice: DfE statutory guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' (2024); DfE statutory guidance '*Children missing education for local authorities*' (August 2024), and to the following statutory guidance: '*Working together to improve school attendance*' (August 2024).