ATTENDANCE AND CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION POLICY 2026



Approved by:	Mica Coleman Jones	**Date:** 01.09.2026
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Approved by trustees:		
Signed by Chair of Trustees		

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Foreword

Lilya's Clarendon School and Lilya's Goldsmith School are both sites for Alternative Provision. Whilst neither site holds school status, they are often referred to as schools for the benefit of students.

1. Aims

The Lilya Lighthouse Education Trust recognises that some children find the school environment difficult. We want to work with our local schools to provide support with creating environments which may lead to improved school attendance. To ensure good attendance at our own provision, we are committed to co-creating an education provision which works for everyone.

Our attendance policy will meet the requirements of Nottingham City Council's Common Attendance Protocol and will be clearly communicated to all staff, students, and their families so that we can ensure good attendance together.

In line with Nottingham City Council's 'Attendance Improvement Strategy 2023/24', our policy aims to support good attendance, which we believe will:

- Support children to achieve more at school – academically, emotionally, and socially
- Help children build positive, long-lasting friendships and lead happy lives
- Improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and their families
- Reduce the risk of child exploitation and abuse, anti-social behaviour, and crime
- Increase chances of success in further or higher education or apprenticeships

For information on the Education Welfare Service, please use the following link: School Attendance - Nottingham City Council

2. Key Principles

Lilya's Clarendon School and Lilya's Goldsmith School are both sites for Alternative Provision. Whilst neither site holds school status, they are often referred to as schools for the benefit of our students.

We will establish strong links with families and use appropriate communication systems to quickly address any concerns about attendance. The quickest and most preferred methods for contacting parents and carers will be identified before a student starts a placement at our provision.

Non-attendance will always be followed up as soon as possible after a register is taken, with a target time of completing this within 15 minutes of the absence being noted. When the school has not been informed of a student's absence, a phone call will be made to ensure that the student is safe. If we cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, we may contact the police.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- It also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trustees

Attendance data will be monitored and reported to trustees. Trustees will regularly review and challenge attendance data and seek assurance that:

- Leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Attendance is being effectively managed in line with policy
- Staff receive adequate training on attendance

Trustees will hold the Head of Provision to account for the implementation of this policy

Our link trustee for attendance is Peter Handford.

4.2 The Head of Provision

The Head of Provision is Responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to trustees
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Reporting the attendance of students at our Alternative Provision sites with commissioners
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

4.3 The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is currently Mica Coleman Jones and can be contacted via mcolemanjones@lilyalighthousetrust.co.uk

4.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance each session, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to senior leaders.

An attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. Non-attendance will always be followed up as soon as possible after a register is taken, with a target time of completing this within 15 minutes of the absence being noted.

Some students have later start times and will therefore have their attendance reported at an agreed time with the home school/commissioner.

When the school has not been informed of a student's absence, a phone call will be made to the child's parent/carer to ascertain the reason and ensure that the student is safe. If we cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts, we may contact the police.

4.5 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

4.6 Students

Students are supported to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time
- Seek help from staff when attendance at school might otherwise be difficult for emotionally based reasons

5. Recording Attendance

5.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity (EO - offsite; EH - at home)
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will also record:

- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

5.2 Unplanned Absence

The student's parent/carer must notify us to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence and advise when they are expected to return. The home school for the student will be informed of this absence.

Where the absence is longer than 5 days or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, we will refer the matter to the student's home school.

5.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Requests for leaves of absence should be made to the head of provision which will then be passed on the home school of a student

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

5.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed, and is not authorised to start later in the morning, will be marked as late.
- After the register has closed, and is not authorised to start later in the morning, will be marked as absent.

5.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the student's emergency contacts, the school may contact police
- The matter would be referred to the home school who will determine whether the absence is approved or not and the correct attendance code to be used
- Liaise with home school to determine whether a home visit would be appropriate

5.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents/carers about their child's attendance and absence levels. The quickest and most preferred methods for contacting parents and carers will be identified before a student starts a placement at our provision.

5.7 Reporting to schools and Local Authority

Commissioners will receive attendance updates twice daily.

6. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

As an Alternative Provision, we are responsible for recording and monitoring attendance. However, the decision whether to authorise an absence lies with the home school or local authority.

6.1 Students who choose to leave site

See Appendix 1 to see how staff respond to students who abscond.

7. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Attendance is one of the topics covered at the referral meeting, keyworker meetings, and review meetings. At The Lilya Lighthouse Education Trust, we believe that by co-creating an education provision which works for everyone we can provide a better school experience which can lead to better engagement and attendance.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance will lead on attendance across the provision and build relationships with parents and carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues. Where needed, the leader for attendance will create and deliver targeted intervention and support to students and families to address areas of poor attendance.

8. Attendance Monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual student level.
- Identify whether there are groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with students and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies

8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of students who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

9. Children Missing Education (CME)

The Lilya Lighthouse Education Trust is committed to working in partnership with schools and the local authority to proactively reduce the risk of children falling out of the education system.

Children who are missing education is defined as, ‘Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is not on a school roll being education otherwise (e.g. at home, privately, or in alternative provision) and who had been out of any education provision for a substantial period of time’ (DfE).

A child being absent from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may be absent or become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse, exploitation and neglect, including sexual exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named, and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being absent, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and annually as a minimum by the head of provision. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- Understanding and Supporting Behaviours Policy

Appendix 1: Students who choose to leave site

