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Attendance Newsletter to Parents and Carers Autumn Term 2025

This newsletter aims to promote good attendance for students in our school and to raise awareness of the importance of this to support their development and academic achievement. As parents/carers we need your help and support to ensure your child reaches their full potential.

Who to contact to report an absence or discuss any barriers that may impact on your child's attendance:

- Call the school attendance line 01503 262625 (option 2)

Please leave your child's full name and tutor group and a reason for the absence. This needs to be completed on each day of the student's absence.

- Senior Administrator Jackie Martin can be contacted on email jmartin@looeca.net if you have concerns about your child's attendance.

Did you know that you can use the  **ClassCharts** App to report student absence?

Here's how:

1. Click the orange circle (bottom right)
2. Select student by clicking the green circle
3. Scroll along the top tab until you find Report Absence 
4. Report new absence 
5. Attach any relevant medical evidence
6. Select the date of absence 
7. Submit 
8. You will receive an acknowledgement from school when your message has been processed.

It is important that parents/carers work with the school - keeping communication open will allow the school to best support your child. Registers will be updated the next working day.

On day 4 of an absence for sickness, and in line with the DofE guidance, we request that parents/carers attach medical evidence. This can be an in-date prescription, medication with a prescription picture or a screenshot of a doctor's appointment.

Please do not use Class Charts to inform school of a holiday – Please use the online form or pick one up from reception.

Is my child too ill for school?

It can be very tricky trying to establish whether or not to keep your child off school. Did you know that there are NHS guidelines to help you? These can be found at: [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS](#) (Click Ctrl and the link to open)

Does attendance really matter?

In short, YES! Regular attendance at school **will** impact on your child's academic progress - pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind.

Research shows that there is a direct link between poor attendance and poor achievement. A student who has only **90% attendance** misses almost **4 weeks of school every year**. That's over 100 hours of learning lost. If students do not attend school regularly, they will experience difficulty in keeping up with their studies. In addition, they also miss out on many activities and opportunities that we offer at Looe Community Academy that support the curriculum and nurture their growth into young adults. Students who do not attend school regularly are at a greater risk of becoming involved in crime or becoming a victim of abuse.

Attendance also matters because the law says it matters. As a parent/carer you are responsible for helping your child get into school on every day that it is open to them. We strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children.

Good attendance is so important because:

- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically,
- regular attenders find school routines, schoolwork, and friendships easier to cope with,
- regular attenders find learning more satisfying,
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary, school, secondary school, and higher education, employment, or training,
- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and attendance.

Progress & Achievement

Your child's attendance can directly affect their achievement in school. Evidence shows that a **student's progress and attainment is affected if their attendance falls below 97%** and statistics show that **if a student misses just 17 days (34 sessions) of school, their GCSE attainment is likely to drop by an entire grade.**



It is important that we help our students get into good habits that they will need in the workplace. Excellent attendance and punctuality are essential in their future employment. We can and do get asked by future colleges and employers for references regarding attendance and punctuality.

Students who develop a poor pattern of attendance and punctuality will be monitored by the Attendance Team and the School Attendance policy will be followed. As a parent/carer, you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends regularly and is punctual. If you fail to ensure this, you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence.

Please be aware that **even if an absence is authorised, percentage attendance is still affected**. However, with any attendance process this will be taken into account.

Persistent Absence is classed as any absence that equates to over 10% of the academic year at any given time. For students who are persistently absent from school and where interventions or strategies have had little or no effect in helping them improve attendance, an application will be made to our SMART (South East Cornwall Multi Academy Trust) **Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), Helen Priestley**, who will work with the student and family.

It is important that parents/carers and the school, work **together** to reduce absence and prevent legal action being taken as a result of persistent absence.

Looe Community Academy has a small, friendly team that manage attendance. They are:

SMART Director of Education – Kristien Carrington

Head Teacher – Paul Boyes

Deputy Head Teacher – Kate Jackman

Assistant Head Teacher – Ed Gilbert

Senior Administrator – Jackie Martin

SMART Educational Welfare Officer – Helen Priestley

Cornwall Council – Fixed Penalty Notice for Absence/Persistent Absence throughout the school year reminder:

There is a national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered. This is:

- 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days)
- Within a rolling 10-week school period (a school week is any week where school meets at least once).

This means that if you take one week's holiday during term time there must be the consideration of a penalty notice being issued.

The penalty fine is £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the 21st day, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower amount of £80.

If a parent commits a 3rd offence in a 3-year rolling period, then other enforcement options will be considered. This includes prosecution.

Common questions:

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school. In education law, anyone who:

- Lives with a child, and
- has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. This will include step-parents and partners.

Penalty notices are issued per parent, per child. Therefore, if there are:

- Two parents, and
- two children,

the fines will total £320, if paid within 21 days. This increases to £640 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (or for a second offence).

Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?

No – it applies to all unauthorised absence from school, including holidays.

Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as:

- Truancy
- Arriving late after the register has closed, and
- Failing to provide reasons for absence.

I want to request for my child to have leave granted during term time

You MUST submit an Absence Request Form before the proposed absence. It will be the Head Teacher who decides as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that will allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school.

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty is issued?

No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span over 2 terms (including between academic years).

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. There is an opportunity for a penalty fine to be settled out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

A Penalty Notice is a fine that can be issued under section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996. **The fine is issued per parent per child.**

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days.

If your child is further absent from school without authorisation within any 3-year period, you will be committing a further offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Cornwall Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Section 444A and 444B of the said Act.

Penalty Notices for a second offence are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £160, payable within 28 days.

Importantly, fines per parent will be capped to two fines within a 3-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other actions such as a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. If you are prosecuted and attend court because your child has not been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2500. Cornwall Council may also apply for the cost incurred in taking the matter to court, including legal cost.

Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates Court under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a custodial sentence. Cornwall Council may also apply the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court, including legal cost.

Money raised from fines is only used by the local authority to cover the cost of administering the system and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.