



Limehurst Academy Policy Document

Attendance - Students

Date Approved by Governors:

Review Date:

August 2024

Headteacher's signature:

Chair of Governors' signature:

INTRODUCTION

At Limehurst, we recognise the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. Regular attendance is critical if our students are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance for all our students and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality, including certificates and vouchers. It is our intent to ensure maximum attendance for each student, as there is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance and low levels of achievement.

Limehurst is committed to ensuring that parents/carers and students understand the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-academy links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

There will, inevitably, be occasional issues that impede full attendance and these will be identified and addressed promptly. We will strive to work in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

We believe staff, parents/carers, students and all members of the Limehurst community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality, ensuring students attend to achieve.

AIMS

At Limehurst, we are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence.
- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school.

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Government expects schools to promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents/Carers are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and arrive to school on time.

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient fulltime education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

- present
- absent
- present at approved educational activity or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

SAFEGUARDING

At Limehurst, we are committed to Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of all its students. Each student's welfare is of paramount importance. We recognise that some children may be especially vulnerable. Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of the Academy, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses attendance, behaviour management, health and safety and access to a broad and balanced curriculum.

RESPONSIBILITIES

At Limehurst we will:

- Expect students to attend the academy regularly, on time, properly equipped and ready to learn.
- Maintain an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to maintain or improve their attendance and timekeeping.
- Encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents/carers as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.
- Promptly investigate all absenteeism and lateness.
- Conduct home visits where contact cannot be made by phone.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and students to resolve issues which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.
- Include students' attendance in reports to parents/carers on achievement, at least annually.
- Will enforce the requirement to attend school punctually and reserve the right not to authorise absence for persistent offenders or where there is no reasonable explanation.
- Will involve appropriate outside agencies to support vulnerable students and their families.

Limehurst students will:

- Attend the school regularly and on time.
- Attend all lessons punctually.

Parents/Carers of Limehurst students should:

- Ensure their child regularly and punctually attends school, fulfilling their legal responsibility.
- Telephone the school on 01509 263444 before 9.30am on the first day and every subsequent day of absence, informing the school of the reasons for absence and stating an expected day of return.
- Work actively with Limehurst staff and relevant multi-agency staff, to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.
- Notify Limehurst if they intend to remove their child for a leave of absence i.e., family holiday. It should be made clear that this is not a parental right and such requests will only be authorised in exceptional

circumstances in line with the guidance issued later in this document. No leave will be authorised for students during their time in Year groups 10 and 11 at the school.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 determine the admissions and attendance registers that all schools must keep. They also regulate the power schools have to grant leave of absence.

By law, schools are required to record in the attendance register, once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon, whether the student is present, absent, engaged in an approved, supervised educational activity off-site, or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

At Limehurst Go4Schools is used (School Information Management System), enabling the management of student and staff information across all areas of school life including registration, timetabling, progress tracking and assessment, and whole School communication.

Students are required to register at the start of the morning registration session and again at the beginning of each of the five daily lessons.

AM registration takes place during tutor time and lesson 1, opening at 8.45am and closing at 9.30am.

PM registration takes place during Period 4 between 12.15pm and 12.30pm.

Limehurst expects its teaching staff to take a register on Go4Schools every lesson. If this is not possible due to computer failure, then paper registers are taken and sent to the Attendance Officer, who manually adds them to the system. Only the Attendance Officer will alter the attendance register; there are only three occasions when the attendance register can be altered:

- If it is discovered that an error has been made.
- Where an unexplained absence has since been satisfactorily explained.
- Where a student's name has been legally changed.

A student cannot be removed from the attendance register unless they are removed from the admissions register at the same time.

REGISTRATION SYMBOLS

The following symbols are used in registers in line with the Department for Education guidance:

Code	Description	Authorised absence?
/	Present	Yes
L	Late (before registers close)	Yes
U	Late (after registers close)	No
B	Educated off-site	Yes
D	Dual registration	Yes
C	Other authorised circumstances	No
E	Excluded	No
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	No
G	Family holiday (not agreed)	No
H	Family holiday	No
I	Illness	No
M	Medical/Dental appointment	No
N	No reason yet provided for absence	No

O	Unauthorised absence	No
J	Interview	Yes
P	Approved sporting activity	Yes
V	Educational visit or trip	Yes
W	Work experience	Yes
R	Religious observance	No
S	Study leave	No
T	Traveller absence	No
Y	Enforces closure	Yes
Z	Student not yet on roll	No
#	School closed to students	No

ABSENCE REPORTING

First Day Absence

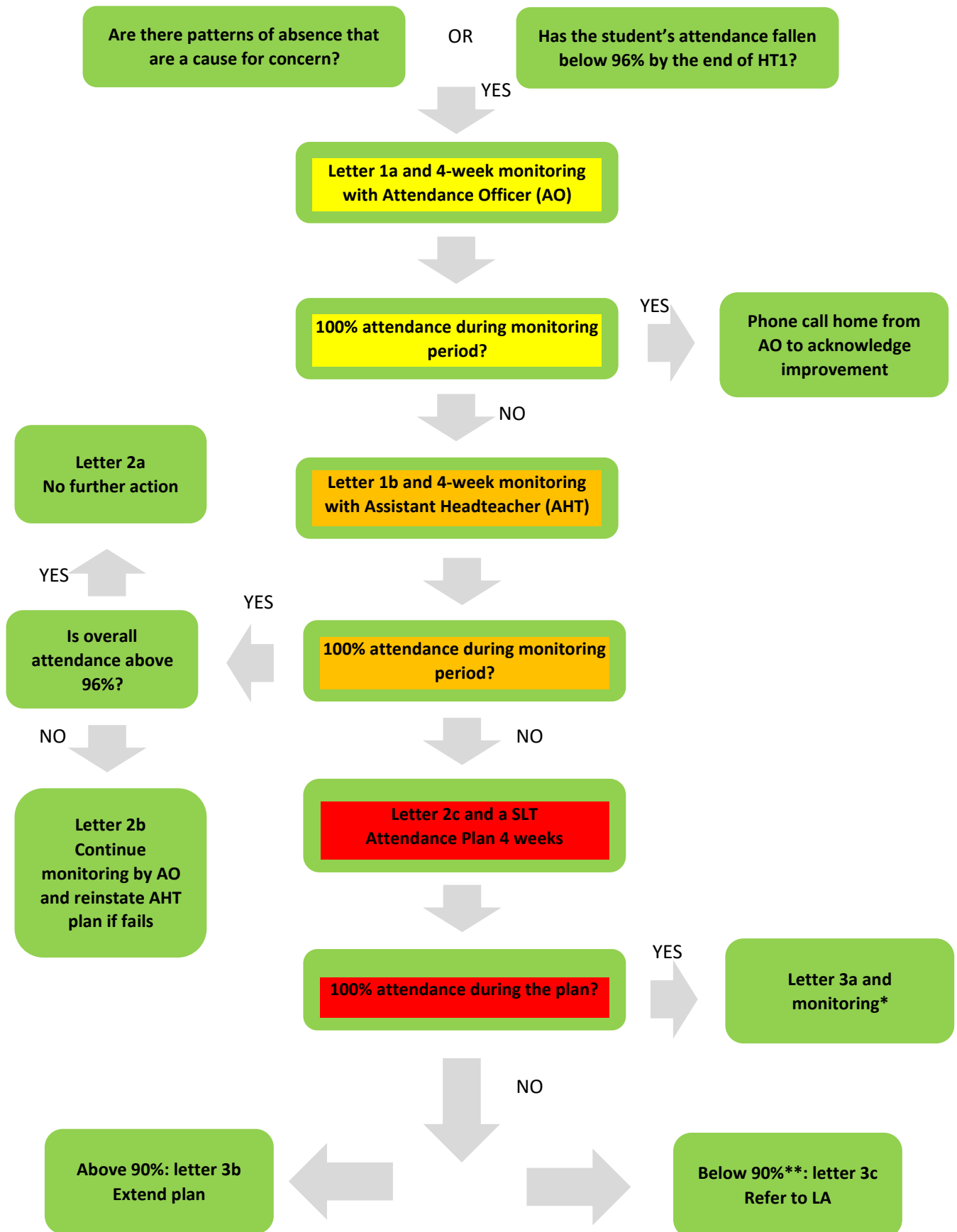
Parents/carers should ring the school on 01509 263444 before 9.30am to report a student absence, giving the reason and likely duration of the absence. The Attendance Officer will input information in Go4Schools when such information is received.

The Attendance Officer will run an attendance report just after 9.30am to identify any absence where parents/carers have not contacted school. Contact will be made to these parents/carers by the Attendance Officer from 9.30am onwards by text message or if this is unsuccessful by a phone call. If the school does not receive contact, a home visit may be conducted by the Attendance Officer and the Assistant Headteacher between 9.45am and 10.45am. If there is no answer then a note will be left to contact the school at the earliest opportunity.

If contact has not been made by the second day of absence and a note has not been received, Limehurst will request that the Attendance Officer and Assistant Headteacher make a home visit that day.

Descriptor	Attendance	Equals absent number of days	Learning hours lost
Excellent	100%	0	0
	99%	2	10
Good	98%	4	20
	97%	6	30
	96%	7.5	37.5
Satisfactory	95%	9.5	47.5
Cause for concern	90%	19	95
	89%	21	105
	88%	23	115
	87%	25	125
Unsatisfactory	86%	27	135

Limehurst Academy Procedure Flow Chart



*Monitoring from the AO but one absence prior to the student returning to a 'good' attendance will result in being placed back on monitoring plan with attendance plan.

**Or relevant LA trigger

CONTINUED PERSISTENT UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Will lead to the issue of penalty notices and other legal consequences.

TRUANCY

Truancy checks will be carried out as part of the First Day Absence procedures and when the Daily Attendance report is run by the Attendance Officer. Additional random checks will be run and checks will also be made when there is information that a student may be truanting from school, or someone leaving a message on the absence line does not appear to be an adult or is the student themselves.

When a student has truanted from school, parents/carers will be informed and the Attendance Officer or Assistant Headteacher will:

- Interview the student and issue appropriate sanctions.
- Ensure the truancy is recorded on the student's record as an unauthorised absence.

LONG TERM ABSENCE, SUPPORT AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME

Long term absence may occur as a result of injury, planned hospitalisation, bereavement etc.

- Wherever possible, the Attendance Officer, Head of Year, Form Tutor, Subject Teachers and SENCO where applicable, will make arrangements for appropriate work to be collected for any student who is likely to be absent for a long period. This may also include online units of work.
- A relevant member of staff will liaise with subject teachers to arrange additional time and support for students to catch up missing work.
- A personalised plan (Individual Reintegration Programme) and timetable may be created under the direction of the Head of Year to ensure the seamless transfer back into lessons. Provision may be made for students to spend some time in Pupil Support if their mobility has been affected and there are lessons on the curriculum/timetable that they cannot access.
- The arrangements will be monitored and reviewed at appropriate times by the Head of Year.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Parents/carers do not have the legal right to authorise absence, as this is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

Student Leave of Absence/ In term holidays

Parents/carers requesting a leave of absence for their child/children must obtain a 'Request for leave of Absence Form' from reception. The form should be returned to the Attendance Officer at least 2 weeks prior to the planned absence.

The Attendance Officer will discuss any request for Extended Absence with the Headteacher, having considered the student's attendance, any previous requests and the examination schedule.

A Student Leave of Absence will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. The Attendance Officer will consult with the Headteacher where the circumstances are considered to be exceptional. A covering letter may be provided to accompany the Application for Extended Absence submitted and should give details on the exceptional nature of the circumstances.

Absence for the following reasons may be authorised by Limehurst where parents/carers have confirmed or provided evidence the absence:

- Illness
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement
- Interview
- Medical appointment (appointments should be made out of school hours where possible. Appointments made within the school day should be accompanied by a medical letter or appointment card. Students must attend school before and after their appointment where possible).
- Sporting activities at regional level or higher
- Performances which are linked to approved educational activities, i.e., musical performances

Absences may be recorded as unauthorised by Limehurst when due to:

- Family holidays, unless in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher
- Truancy
- Absences for reasons such as shopping, hair/beauty appointments, birthdays, no uniform etc.
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Absence for any commercial ventures

LATENESS AND PUNCTUALITY

A student who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the 'L' code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the 'U' code

Staff must mark a student as late on Go4Schools if they arrive after the following times without a valid reason:

Registration - 8.45am

Period 1 - 8.55am

Period 2 - 9.55am

Period 3 - 11.15am

Period 4 - 12.15pm

Period 5 - 2.00pm

KS3 Students arriving at school after 8.45am but before 8.55am will be marked as late and the following consequences will be adhered to on a weekly basis:

1st Late = Warning

2nd Late = 15 min same day detention

3rd Late = 30 min same day detention

4th Late = 45 min same day detention

5th Late = 60 min same day detention

KS4 Students arriving at school after 8.45am but before 8.55am will be marked as late and the following consequences will be adhered to on a weekly basis:

1st Late = 15 min same day detention

2nd Late = 30 min same day detention

3rd Late = 45 min same day detention

4th Late = 60 min same day detention

5th Late = 90 min SLT same day detention

Students arriving at school after 8.55am will be marked as late and the following consequences will be adhered to:

Arriving during Period 1 = 15 min same day detention

Arriving during Period 2 = 30 min same day detention

Arriving during Period 3 = 45 min same day detention

Arriving during Period 4 = 60 min same day detention

Arriving during Period 5 = 90 min same day SLT detention

The school office will contact parents/carers as students receive an after-school detention on the same day.

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)

A Child Missing in Education (CME) is defined as a child or young person of compulsory academy age who is not attending school, not placed in alternative provision by an LA, and who is not receiving a suitable education elsewhere. This definition also includes children who are receiving an education, but one that is not suitable; this could include children who are not receiving fulltime education suitable to their needs, e.g., age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Children go missing from education for a number of reasons including:

- They don't start school at the appropriate time and so they do not enter the educational system.
- They are removed by their parents/carers.
- Behaviour and/or attendance difficulties.
- They cease to attend, due to exclusion, illness or bullying.
- They fail to find a suitable school place after moving to a new area.
- The family move home regularly.
- Problems at home.

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 18 to be in full time education.

Parents/carers responsibilities

Parents/carers have a duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age are receiving suitable full-time education. Some parents/carers may elect to educate their children at home and may withdraw them from school at any time unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order.

Where a parent/carer notifies the school in writing that they are home educating, the school must delete the child's name from the admission register and inform the local authority. However, where parents/carers orally indicate that they intend to withdraw their child to be home educated, the school should consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity.

Children with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCP) can be home educated. Where the EHCP sets out SEN provision that the child should receive at home, the local authority is under a duty to arrange that provision. Where the EHCP names a school or type of school as the place where the child should receive his or her education but the parent chooses to home educate their child, the local authority must assure itself that the provision being made by the parent is suitable. In such cases, the local authority must review the plan annually to assure itself that the provision set out in it continues to be appropriate and that the child's SEN continue to be met.

School responsibilities

Children missing from education can mean either a child being unenrolled or a child on extended absence.

As mentioned previously, the school will contact the parent/carer of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents/carers will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school may contact the Local Authority who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

Limehurst have a legal duty to inform the appropriate LA if:

- A child is absent for 10 days following on from a period of approved leave.
- A child is absent for 20 consecutive days without approved leave.
- A child fails to attend school regularly.
- A child is deleted from the register when the next school is not known.

Parents/carers should be aware that Leicestershire County Council reserves the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their child/children to school on a regular basis.

With due regard for Children Missing Education (September 2018), Limehurst Academy will notify local authorities when they are about to remove a student's name from the school admission register under any of the 15 grounds listed in the regulations, which include:

- When the family has apparently moved away.
- When the child has been certified as medically unfit to attend.
- When the child is in custody for more than four months.
- When the child has been permanently excluded.
- The child has been taken out of school to be home educated

This duty does not apply when a student's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points and/or when the student has completed the final year of education normally provided by us. When removing a student's name, the notification to the local authority will include contact details as well as the reason for removal. We will also notify local authorities within five days of adding a student's name to the admission register at a nonstandard transition point. This duty does not apply when a student's name is entered in the admission register at a standard transition point and/or at the start of the first year of education normally provided by us. We will obtain written confirmation from parents/carers, if and when we find out that one of our students is being removed to be educated outside of the school system. A copy of this will be forwarded to the appropriate Local Authority.

When a child has been referred to the CME Team, we will continue to make welfare checks following the process below:

Step	Actions
1	<p>Nominated person from the pastoral team calls home once per week. The student must be spoken to directly or whilst on speakerphone to the parent.</p> <p>Should there be no answer, a message will be left stating the reason for the call and requesting that the parent calls back as soon as possible.</p> <p>All contacts on SIMS should be tried.</p>
2	<p>Following two unsuccessful phone calls, a text message should be sent, "We have been trying to contact you to</p>

	check that you are safe and well, please make contact with school today.”
3	Message sent to student on Teams to request that they get their parents to call. Email sent to parent requesting that contact is made.
4	Text message sent home, “We have been trying to contact you to check that you are safe and well. Please make contact with school today. The next step will be to complete a home visit.”
5	Any external agencies involved with the family (e.g., a Social Worker, Family Support Worker or Youth Worker) are informed them that we have not been able to make contact and to establish if they have heard from or seen the family.
6	Text message sent home, “We have been trying to make contact to check that you are safe and well. As we haven’t heard from you, a staff member will complete a doorstep visit today.”
7	Doorstep visit completed. Repeated if unsuccessful. Note left at the home to record that a visit has been made and to make contact with school. Second visit note to record that a referral will be completed to Children’s Duty.
8	Referral to Children’s Duty. Text message sent home to inform parent that the referral has been completed.

This will continue until a Youth Worker is allocated and a plan is put together in conjunction the Inclusion Team.

PENALTY NOTICES

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 empowers designated LA Officers, Headteachers and the Police to issue penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absences from school. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2004 came into force on 27th February 2004.

Limehurst may request the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice to be issued in the following circumstances: If a minimum of 10 sessions or 5 school days of unauthorised absence are taken during the current term for:

- Overt Truancy - Below 50% attendance the DfE class this level as ‘Severely Persistently Absent’.
- Overt Lateness after 9.30am
- Parental Condoned Absences
- Holidays in Term Time (only in exceptional circumstances) not authorised by the Headteacher
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays without prior Academy agreement