

Attendance Policy

[Paragraph 7, Part 3 ISSR]

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| Regulatory / Statutory Authority(ies) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR). ▪ Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) - Para 7, Part 3 ISSR – Safeguarding. ▪ Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023. ▪ School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2020), published by the Department for Education (DfE). ▪ Coventry Local Education Authority (LA) guidance, regarding school attendance, available on the Coventry.gov.uk website. ▪ DfE guidance, 'School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures (2015)' ▪ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. |
| Related Policies, Procedures, and/or Documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Behaviour (and School Code of Conduct) Policy ▪ Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy |
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VERSION HISTORY

| Version Number | Amendment(s) Or Formal Review | Date [Month/Year] | Summary of change(s) |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1.0 | Formal Review | October 2022 | Formal Review and Approval at Full Governing Board |
| 1.1 | Update | March 2024 | Updated Role Descriptors / Titles; Converted to new policy template and structure; Review and update of websites/links; New section (7): Children at Risk of Becoming CME. Draft , pending approval at next formal governors' review. |



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1 INTRODUCTION

For pupils to benefit fully from the educational opportunities provided by Coventry School Foundation, ["CSF/Foundation Schools"] they must have high levels of attendance and punctuality. Ineffective registration or poorly executed follow-up procedures can increase the risks of truancy and educational underperformance, which can negatively affect personal and social development among pupils. A child going missing from school is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect or in itself may indicate that a pupil is at risk of significant harm. Consequently, attendance and registration arrangements are hugely important and must be seen to be regarded as such by pupils, parents and staff.

1.1 Policy Aims

This policy aims to provide a clear, consistent and cohesive framework which conforms with statutory requirements and that promotes high levels of attendance and punctuality of pupils at Foundation Schools, as well as outlining clear procedures for identifying and addressing situations where pupils fail to attend regularly or punctually, or go missing, so that:

- Procedures and lines of responsibility within the Schools are clear as regards:
 - Attendance and Registration;
 - Authorisation and Clearance of Absence (including Exeats) and Lateness;
 - How sanctions are used to reinforce expectations of attendance and punctuality;
 - How and when to report concerns, including identifying and addressing any situation
 - Where a pupil goes missing from School;
- Staff, parents and pupils are aware of, understand and can readily comply with statutory regulations and the Schools' rules governing attendance;
- Absences and instances of lateness are identified and recorded systematically and accurately and followed up quickly and appropriately in ways that promote high levels of attendance and punctuality and enable action to be taken quickly to identify and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- The Schools fulfil their responsibility to notify the local authority when pupils join or leave outside standard transition times.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to staff, pupils and parents of pupils in all Schools that form Coventry School Foundation, including parents of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Foundation Schools comprise Bablake Senior and Junior, King Henry VIII Senior and Junior, and Bablake and King Henry VIII Pre-Prep.

2 STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The legal framework governing school attendance is summarised in School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2020), published by the Department for Education (DfE). The Foundation Schools also comply with guidance published by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate (ISI) and advice published by the Coventry Local



Education Authority (LA), regarding school attendance, which can be found on the Coventry.gov.uk website. Responsibilities of parents towards their child's attendance are outlined in DfE guidance, '[School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures](#) (2015)'.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents with a child of compulsory school age have a legal duty to make sure that their child receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and ability (and to any special education needs they may have). Compulsory school age lasts from the term after a child's fifth birthday up to the last Friday in the month of June in the academic year of their sixteenth birthday. Since September 2015 all children have been required to continue in education or training until their eighteenth birthday.

Parents are responsible for informing the school on any occasion when their child is unable to attend due to illness, a medical appointment or pre-agreed work experience, providing the reason for non-attendance. This should be done by emailing the School as far as possible in advance and by the very latest by 8.25am on the morning of the absence.

Parents wishing to take their child out of School for exceptional reasons (such as attending a funeral or wedding, religious observance, elective surgery, or involvement in a regional or national extracurricular competition) must seek authorisation for the absence from the School by writing to the Head at least a week in advance of the proposed date(s) of absence. The Head will confirm whether the circumstances meet the definition of 'exceptional circumstances' for which leave of absence may be granted by the School. Exceptional circumstances will be considered by the Head on a case-by-case basis. Whilst the Head of the relevant site will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused. The DfE has not provided any guidelines as to what they would consider to be exceptional circumstances. This is solely at the discretion of the Head. Where possible, CSF will look to have a consistent approach to all leave of absence requests - to try to make sure that requests for siblings who attend different sites are met with the same response by each Head who receives a request.

Dental and medical appointments are valid reasons for missing registration and constitute authorised absence. If the pupil leaves for an appointment after registering, no absence needs to be recorded. The School may, exceptionally, sanction limited absence for young carers until other arrangements can be made. The Head will set a time limit for such absences in consultation with the Senior Team and the appropriate Head of Year. The Head may also seek advice from other appropriate agencies before coming to a decision.

The Head will review application for limited absence for religious observance reasonably and may consult with senior staff, the appropriate Head of Year, the Local Authority and the parents. The School expects advance notice since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

If a pupil is absent for which leave has not been granted by the School, the absence will be regarded as an unauthorised absence.

Parents are committing an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at school or otherwise. Prosecution could result in a fine of up to £2,500, a jail sentence of up to three months or



a community sentence. Alternatively, LA Attendance Officer, Police Officers and head teachers have the authority to issue penalty notices to parents of between £60 and £120.

Where parents need support to prevent their child from truanting or habitually arriving late, the School may offer to enter into a Parenting Contract. This is a voluntary agreement between the parent and school under which the parent agrees to comply with certain requirements and the School agrees to provide them with the support that they need.

Where parents fail to ensure regular attendance, do not engage with support services or a Parenting Contract, a parenting order may be requested by the LA or imposed by Magistrates. This is not a voluntary agreement and requires that parents attend parenting classes for a maximum period of up to 12 weeks. The order may be given for a period of up to 12 months and would require parents to have regular contact with a supervising officer – usually the LA Attendance Officer.

When parents/guardians are to be away from home overnight during term, they are required in the contract with the school to inform us in advance of the name and contact number for a temporary guardian.

4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PUPILS

Pupils have a responsibility to attend school when they are fit and well and to arrive at School in time for registration (morning and afternoon) each day during term time.

Each site will have age-appropriate rules that pupils (and parents) must follow if they need to leave the site during the school day.

Failure to attend school regularly or punctually, or failing to attend registration without good reason, or leaving the School without following the correct procedures is a breach of the School's Behaviour Policy and may lead to formal disciplinary action being taken.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The School has a legal responsibility for taking and maintaining an accurate School Register of all pupils twice each day throughout term time: once at the beginning of the morning session and once in the second (afternoon) session. Every entry in the School Register must be preserved for at least six years after the date on which the entry was made. The register must be kept from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the School. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the School must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, the school must record in the admission register:

- The name of the other school
- The date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.



The School is also required to inform the LA via the CME (Children Missing from Education) [referral form](#) on the Coventry.gov.uk website of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a period of 10 days or more (Children at Risk of Missing Education). The Local Authority has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

The School will also inform the relevant LA and/or Children's Social Care (CSC), as appropriate, immediately if:

- A single absence raises child protection concerns (see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy);
- A pupil has ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence);
- A pupil of compulsory school age is to be deleted from the school register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

5.1 Pupil De-Registration outside Standard Transition Times

The School must inform the LA of any names of children being admitted to or leaving the school outside standard transition times, including the reason for withdrawal. Once this has been done, this needs to be noted in iSAMS, ticking the 'informed LA' box.

A statutory age pupil should not be taken off the roll at a non-standard transition point until their new school name and start date have been confirmed, and new home address and start date if they have moved home address. In cases of pupils moving abroad, the new school name and start date will suffice. Although it is not a statutory obligation, ISI also recommend that the child's own local authority be informed if it is other than Coventry. Standard transition times for CSF are 11+ (for entry only), 16+ (for entry only) and 18+ (for leavers).

5.2 EHE (Elective Home Education)

When notified by a parent that they wish to home educate, a discussion must be had to understand the rationale. If parent(s) wish to continue, the School will let the Local Authority know when statutory-age pupils are withdrawn from school to receive EHE (elective home education). This is because the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure all statutory-aged pupils in Coventry in elective home education are receiving efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special education needs. The EHE checklists and deregistration letters should be sent to ehcoventry@coventry.gov.uk. Parents can also use this email address to find out more about EHE. Parents rights and responsibilities under the Education Act 1996 can be found at <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/elective-home-education/educating-child-home-elective-home-education/6>



If a new school is not known and the CME referral has been submitted, the EMAS team will notify the school when it is safe to remove them from roll after completing all enquires. This responsibility is statutory, and the School therefore has a duty to make sure that names are shared with the Local Authority within the prescribed timescales. For deletions at non-standard transition points, the Local Authority must be notified no later than the day when a pupil's name is deleted from the school register and within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register.

We will monitor the attendance of any pupil who is attending CSF under a sponsored Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) and in addition to the other actions in this policy, will notify the Home Office if the attendance rate of any such pupil falls below 80% for the academic year. We will also notify the Home Office if any such pupil has 10 consecutive dates of unauthorised absence.

6 REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Each of the Foundation Schools has its own registration procedures which will be set out in the staff handbook. For all sites, the register will record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved education activity, absent or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. The School will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason; make sure the appropriate safeguarding action is taken; identify where the absence is approved or not; and identify the correct code to use. The behaviour policies on each site will also document the procedures and sanctions for lateness.

6.1 Registration Codes

The following codes must be used on all sites:

Present

/ - Present in school am \ - Present in school pm

B – Off-site educational activity

C – Other Authorised Circumstances

D – Dual registration

J – Interview

L – Late (before registers closed)

P – Supervised sporting activity

V – Educational visit or trip

W – Work experience

Authorised Absence Codes

E – Excluded

H – Authorised Holiday

I – Illness

M – Medical or dental appointment

R – Religious observance

S – Study leave

X – Non-compulsory school age absence



Y – Exceptional circumstances

Z – Pupil not yet on roll

- School closed to pupils

Unauthorised Absence Codes

G – Unauthorised Holiday

N – Reason for absence not yet provided

O – Unauthorised Absence

U – Arrived in school after registration closed

6.2 Local Arrangements

When registration is taken.

What happens if someone is not present.

What happens if a pupil is late.

What happens with games afternoons.

7 CHILDREN MOST AT RISK OF BECOMING ‘CME’

NEW - DRAFT - SECTION: pending FGB approval at next formal policy review.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education and the list below presents some of the circumstances that may lead to children becoming CME (this list is not exhaustive):

7.1 Pupils at Risk of Harm/Neglect.

Children may be missing from education because they are suffering from abuse or neglect. Where this is suspected, Schools should follow local safeguarding children’s procedures. Local authority officers responsible for CME should check that a referral has been made and, if not, they should alert children’s social care. If there is reason to suspect that a crime has been committed or the child’s safety is at risk, the police should also be involved.

7.2 Children of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) Families.

Research has shown that many children from these families can become disengaged from education, particularly during the secondary school phase. It is therefore vital that schools inform the LA when a GRT pupil leaves the school without identifying a new destination school, particularly in the transition from primary to secondary so that they can attempt to facilitate continuity of the child’s education. Although many are settled, some GRT families move regularly, and their children can be at increased risk of missing education. Local authority Traveller Education Support Services (TESS), where these exist, or named CME Officer with the LA, can advise schools on the best strategies for ensuring the minimum disruption to GRT pupils’



education, for example, dual registration with other schools or the provision of electronic or distance learning packages where these are available.

7.3 Families of Armed Forces.

Families of members of the Armed Forces are likely to move frequently, both in the UK and overseas and often at short notice. Schools and local authorities should contact the Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS), part of the MOD's Directorate of Children and Young People's (DCYP), for advice on making arrangements to ensure continuity of education for those children when the family moves:

Website: [CEAS](#) (Children's Education Advisory Service);
Email: DCYP-CEAS-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk
Telephone: +44 (0)1980 618244 / 94344 8244

7.4 Missing Children/Runaways.

Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education.

7.5 Children and Young People Supervise by the Young Justice System.

Children who have offended or are at risk of doing so are also at risk of disengaging from education. Local authority Young Offending Teams (YOTs) are responsible for supervising those young people (aged 8 to 18). YOTs should work with the local authority CME Officer to ensure that children are receiving, or return to, appropriate full-time education. Where a young person was registered at a school prior to custody, the school may keep the place open for their return.

7.6 Children Who Cease to Attend a School.

There are many reasons why a child stops attending a school; it could be because the parent chooses to home-educate their child. However, where the reason for a child who has stopped attending a school is not known, the school must investigate the case and ensure the child is receiving suitable education. Once the school has undertaken reasonable enquiries and the pupil's whereabouts are still unknown, the school must refer the case to the CME Officer and follow the referral procedures outlined in this policy.

8 REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

The Principal has strategic oversight of this policy which is reviewed every two years unless otherwise required owing to a change in policy/legislation or guidance; once reviewed, the policy is presented to the Education Oversight Committee for their formal recommendation to present it to the Full Governing Board for final approval.

Parents/carers will be issued with a hard copy of this Policy on request. This Policy will also be made available to parents/carers via the Schools' website; and, published to the ISI Portal.



9 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy may need to be read in conjunction with the following Foundation/School policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

And/or with reference to the following legislation or governance provisions:

- The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSR).
- Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) - Para 7, Part 3 ISSR – Safeguarding.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023.
- School attendance: Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (2020), published by the Department for Education (DfE).
- Coventry Local Education Authority (LA) guidance, regarding school attendance, available on the [Coventry.gov.uk](https://www.coventry.gov.uk) website.
- DfE guidance, '[School behaviour and attendance: parental responsibility measures](#) (2015)' The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this policy.

END

