

# CELC Attendance Policy

Coventry ELC aims to ensure that all children attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all our students.

The School believes that irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places children at risk and, in some cases, it can result in students being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour. Coventry ELC thus has a strong system in place to enable those in it to do everything in their power to promote the philosophy of regular attendance.

We believe that good attendance is important, because:

- It is a promotes a successful school experience
- It is an achievement in its own right
- It is important in preparing students to be responsible adults

It is important that everyone – students, parents, and staff work together to enable it to happen. Promoting good attendance must be a priority.

### Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of children at school.
- To improve children's attainment through good attendance.
- To monitor attendance concerns and escalate these where children are persistently absent or missing from education
- To encourage parents to ensure that children arrive at school on time.
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the school, including parents, students, teachers and governors.

To achieve these aims for our students, we are committed to the following:

- a welcoming, stimulating and safe learning environment;
- for all staff to feel happy to come to school to work with students, developing them to their full potential;
- high expectations of our students and all staff;
- a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum;
- recognise and celebrate achievements in all areas of school life;
- equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and school life;
- high quality teaching using a variety of teaching strategies;
- a range of resources that are effectively used to support and challenge learning;
- provide experiences, which will develop our students' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding;
- support, guidance and training for all those who teach and work with our children;
- foster and maintain links with our wider community

## **Legislative Framework**

Parents of registered students have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (sec 444) to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to a full-time education that 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.

## **Expected Levels of Attendance**

Attending school regularly and on time has a positive impact on learning, progress and therefore the best life chances for students. Research shows that attendance and punctuality are important factors in school success. At Coventry Extended Learning Centre, we expect all children to achieve attendance that is at least 90%.

## **Attendance Partnership Expectations**

**We expect the following from all our students:**

- To attend school regularly;
- To arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day, having eaten breakfast or attend breakfast club;
- To tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

**We expect the following from parents and carers:**

- To ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually;
- To ensure contact is made with school, as soon as is reasonably practical, whenever their child is unable to attend;
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day, having eaten breakfast.

**Parents and students can expect the following from school:**

- Early contact with parents when a student fails to attend school without providing good reason;
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance;
- Follow up support if needed.

## **Roles and Responsibilities for Attendance**

- Coventry ELC has a named senior member of staff with responsibility for attendance issues.
- Members of school staff, both teaching and non-teaching, have responsibility for attendance issues in school. For detailed roles and responsibilities please see Appendix 3.
- Attendance matters are reviewed by the Head Teacher and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Attendance issues are reported, on a minimum termly basis, to the Management Committee.
- Coventry ELC uses Local Authority Attendance Officers to provide the legal monitoring services and support that will help reduce the number of persistent absent students and improve whole school attendance.
- Coventry ELC works with Central School Attendance and Welfare Service Ltd (CSAWS) to support the school with the processes associated with students' attendance at school.
- We believe that through attending school every day on time, young people will get the best possible start in life.

## **Procedures**

We will follow the following process for rewarding attendance and addressing attendance concerns of all students:

- Registers are taken for both morning and afternoon sessions
- Contact made with parents on the first day of a student's absence
- Attendance is monitored daily by student keyworkers
- Attendance figures are monitored each week by the Leadership Team
- Attendance figures are produced for Management Committee meetings
- Attendance figures are monitored and evaluated termly
- Attendance awards are linked to rewards within the school
- Targets may be set for individuals where attendance is poor
- Attendance and Punctuality is recorded on each students' report

Attendance data will be analysed daily, weekly and half-termly to establish patterns of irregular attendance and focus areas of action. This analysis will include students with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; regular lateness; periods of extended absence. If concerns are raised as a result of this analysis, parents will be contacted both through telephone calls to the parents/carers and formal letters stating the attendance of the child and that there is an issue. Where this issue persists then a meeting on site or a home visit may be arranged, with the possible outcome of further action/intervention e.g. outside agencies, parenting contracts and legal action. Coventry ELC reserves the right to issue fixed term notices to parents.

## **Absence**

If a child is absent from school parents should contact the school on the **first day of absence** to inform the school of the reason for absence. Parents are expected to maintain contact with the school throughout the absence.

At 9.30am school registers are checked for any absences where there has been no contact by parents and reason given. A notification email is sent out to all staff in the centre team to update them on students present or absent.

School staff will make phone calls and/or send text messages to parents to ascertain a reason for the child absence from school.

If staff are concerned about a child's absence, or there is no response to text messages, they will follow the process in detailed in Appendix 1. This includes telephone calls to parents, other emergency contacts, home visits, referrals to the Attendance Officers, and to the police for a safe and well check.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual student to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated (DFE Attendance guidance 2019).

**It is imperative that up-to-date contact numbers and details are provided to school.**

**Schools are required to hold more than one emergency contact per child (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019). Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the student normally resides.**

## **Illness**

Not all illness requires an absence from school. For minor childhood ailments such as coughs, colds, ear aches we would not expect children to be absent. However, when a parent makes the assessment that their child is unfit for school, they should follow the absence process above.

It is a school's decision whether to accept a reason for a child's absence and whether to authorise that absence. In the majority of cases, a parent's explanation of their child's illness can be accepted without question or concern. In circumstances where there are concerns about a child's attendance or reason for absence, further evidence of a child's illness may be requested. School will challenge parents' statements or seek additional evidence if they have any concerns regarding a child's attendance.

It is good practice to have clear systems in place to escalate any concerns about high levels of absence due to illness, including agreements about accessing additional services in order to provide appropriate support to students, particularly for long term illness.

### **The types of scenarios when medical evidence may be requested include:**

- Attendance is less than 90%
- There are frequent odd days of absence due to reported illness
- The same reasons for absence are frequently repeated
- Where there are medical problems and school may need evidence to seek additional support/provide support

### **Medical appointments**

- Parents should avoid making routine medical and dental appointments during the school day. In most cases, appointments can be made outside of the school day/during the school holidays.
- Where appointments must be taken during the school day, only the time for the appointment and travel to and from will be classed as an authorised absence. Students are expected to return to school for the remainder of the day/attend school prior to the appointment.
- Where appointments have been taken during the school day, parents are required to provide evidence in form of a copy of the appointment letter, or card, prior to the day of the appointment.

### **Other reasons for absences**

- Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school on each occasion. Notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. The school will follow DFE guidance and not authorise absences for shopping, birthdays or child minding.

### **Religious Observance**

- Coventry ELC acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. However, parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. Religious bodies maybe contacted to verify these occasions.

### **Traveller Absence**

- The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.
- School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must advise school of

their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen, and inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

- School will authorise absence of Traveller children if their parent(s) are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place and has given indication that they intend to return.
- Where Traveller children are registered students at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any student.

### **Leave of Absence (Holidays during Term Time)**

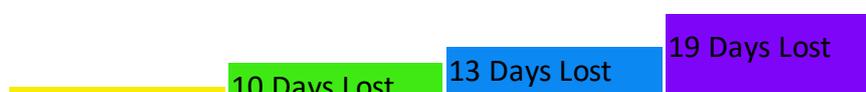
*The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013* have amended Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a student except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Leave of Absence will therefore not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays do not constitute exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised by the school. Where leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a student can be away from school. It is for the Head Teacher to decide what he/she views as 'exceptional' and it is at their discretion if the circumstances warrant the leave to be granted. If the leave is granted, the Head Teacher is able to determine the number of school days a child can be absent for. The school can only consider Leave of Absence requests which are made by the 'resident' parent. Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

Where applications for leave of absence are made in advance and refused, the child will be required to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, which may result in legal action being taken against the parent(s), by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Failure to make an application for leave in advance can also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to the parent(s).

Parents are asked to respect the new regulations under which the school must work and if there is a need to take a child out of school during term-time, a Leave of Absence Form must be completed in advance to make clear how the circumstances are exceptional.

### **Punctuality**

It is important that students are punctual so that they do not miss out on the beginning of each school day. Children must attend on time to be given a present mark for the session. If a student arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.





*5 Minutes Late 10 Minutes Late 15 Minutes Late 20 Minutes Late 30 Minutes Late*

To access the most out of the school day we ask parents to ensure that their children school for 9.00am. Coventry ELC opens for Breakfast Club at 8.30am, so students are welcome to come in early.

Students arriving after 9.00am will be late for school and will be marked with an 'L' code.

School registration closes at 10.30am (2.00pm, for the afternoon session); where a student arrives after the register closes this will be classed as an unauthorised absence (code 'U' as per DFE compulsory attendance codes).

The registers are monitored daily and to identify students who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

The following procedures are put in place for lateness:

- 5 U codes = a letter sent home.
- 10 U codes = parents/carers and Attendance Officers.
- 20 U codes = The School Leadership Team may instigate legal proceedings.

### **Reintegration of Long-Term Absentees**

Absence can significantly interrupt the continuity of students learning, and positive strategies should be employed to minimise such effects.

#### Key Principles

- We should always keep in touch with a student/and his/her family during a long absence.
- We should always make sure he/she is welcomed back
- We should never make sarcastic comments about an absence – a thoughtless word can destroy hours of work by staff.

The Leadership Team and Pastoral Managers will consider a phased return where appropriate. This needs to be considered in line with Coventry ELC's process and procedure, which includes seeking expert advice from relevant professionals and coordinating a multi-agency meeting. Consideration needs to be given to any special needs the student may have, and appropriate support identified. Consideration must be given to a package of support which may include referrals to outside agencies.

Keyworkers and Class Teachers should ensure that the student feels welcomed back to school in an appropriate way and take any necessary steps to support their re-integration.

## **Attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing or absent from Education**

A child missing or absent from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. Coventry ELC will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children that go missing or are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

All schools are required to make the Local Authority aware of every registered student who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 10 school days education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 regulation 12).

Schools are permitted to remove compulsory-school-aged children from roll on the limited grounds set out in regulation 8 of the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

Removing a child from the school roll is a very important decision. Children who fall out of the education system are likely to have poor outcomes and may be exposed to increased risk of harm. Schools must follow correct procedures to ensure that they do not breach their legal and safeguarding duties. In September 2016, the Department for Education updated the statutory guidance to reflect the 2016 amendments to the Education (Student Registration) (England) 2006 Regulations.

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a student's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the 2006 regulations (as amended).

Schools must make reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child jointly with the CME officer, before deleting the student's name from the register if the deletion is under regulation 8(1), sub-paragraphs (f)(iii) and (h)(iii).

This attendance policy is part of a broader suite of safeguarding policies including the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

### **Truancy within school**

Coventry ELC monitor attendance to each lesson period of the school day, in order to ensure all students are safe in school and whereabouts known. If a student does not present to scheduled lessons/activities staff are alerted to find missing student. If students cannot be located and are suspected of leaving school premises, parents will be informed, and the police notified of a missing child.

### **Alternative Education Providers**

A number of Coventry ELC students will be accessing an alternative education provider agreed by the school for all or part of their timetable. Whether this is full or part-time, the student will remain on roll at Coventry ELC. Attendance to approved alternative providers is monitored and reflected on school registers. The responsibility of ensuring students are safeguarded and receiving appropriate education remains with Coventry ELC.

## **Registers**

An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions. The register is a legal document and must be kept accurately. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with legal requirements, local authority guidelines and school regulations

Every half day of absence from school must be classified by the school as either authorised or unauthorised. Authorised absence can be given only when the Leadership Team has either approved in advance for a student of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence. All other absences, including persistent lateness, must be treated as unauthorised.

Absence can only be authorised by a person designated to do so by the Head Teacher [see The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (SI No.2006/1751) – reg 7(1)].

There are procedures in place to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks. School complies with and uses the DFE Compulsory National Attendance Codes to categorise absence (Appendix 2).

## **Use of Attendance Data**

All schools must provide their attendance data to the DFE, most schools use their management information systems to send their data via school census. The figures returned are then published by the DFE as part of the annual publication of school statistics.

We collect, use and store attendance information about our students and may receive information about you from your previous school. The information we keep regarding attendance includes name, contact details, attendance records, late records and any relevant medical information.

Where there is cause for concern, this information is shared with Local Authority Attendance Officers during regular attendance meetings held at school. The Attendance Officers then follow up attendance concerns with parents and carers on school's behalf.

## Appendix 1 Coventry Extended Learning Centre Absence Procedures

### **Admin Daily Actions**

- All arrivals, including late arrivals, recorded and details added to Bromcom, to complete the morning register by 10.30am. **Admin**
- First day phone call/text sent for all children where reason unknown/inadequate. **Admin**
- Email sent to on-site staff and SLT, outlining the day's attendance details. **Admin**
- Vulnerable list children identified, and Social worker/relevant lead professional notified. **Admin**
- Morning register opens at 9:00 and closes at 10:30. Afternoon register opens at 12:30 and closes at 14:00. Students arriving after 9:00 must be L coded. Students arriving after 10:30 (or 14:00 in PM) must be U coded. **Admin**
- Bromcom input and sending of the daily absence email must be completed by 11:00. **Admin**

### **Second Day Admin Action**

- Phone calls made to other contacts/emergency contacts when still unable to make contact by the second day. **Admin**

### **Third Day Keyworker Action**

- Phone calls made to parents/carers when no adequate reason is given for absence by third day. **Keyworker**
- Contact should continue to be attempted until successful. **Keyworker**

### **Weekly SLT/PMs/Attendance Officer Action**

- **SLT/Strategic attendance lead & PMs** to meet with **AOs** on a weekly basis.
- **AOs** to home visit students with more than 5 consecutive days 0% unauthorised absence.
- Cases identified for discussion/referral to **AOs** or police safe & well check.
- **PMs** to check and prompt attendance letters.

### **Weekly Keyworker Action**

- Should attendance remain below 90% over a one-week period then the first attendance letter is sent by the **KW** - the letter will include a two-week target.
- **KW/PM** to consider home visits, as appropriate.
- **KW** to update Attendance Thermometers with key students during key group.

### **Fortnightly Keyworker/Pastoral Manager Action**

If target is not met, keyworker to raise with Pastoral Manager. Pastoral manager to send the second attendance letter. Parents/Carers will be invited to a meeting within centre (Keyworker and Attendance Officers can also be invited). An internal attendance contract will be implemented (two-week time frame), regardless of parental engagement. Evidence for medical marks will be required.

### **Fortnightly SLT/Attendance Officer Action**

Where the internal attendance contract has been unsuccessful, then a Stage 3 SLT letter will be sent and SLT will discuss further actions with Attendance Officers.  
If there is no immediate improvement after a further home visit by Attendance Officers, then a Local Authority Parenting contract, or a Fixed Penalty Notice will be considered and discussed at the Attendance Meeting.

### **Half-Termly Keyworker Action**

Attendance Management Plans updated and completed, with families and students.

### **IMPORTANT:**

**All communication and information must be case noted and saved in the student file**

Attendance codes, Descriptions and Meanings

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (before registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school age absence (+ awaiting Covid result)	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

### Coventry ELC Roles and Responsibilities for School Attendance

Name	Role	Responsibilities
Management Committee Representation	Schools Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure compliance with relevant legislation (e.g. pupil registration, attendance registers).</li> <li>• Reviewing school attendance.</li> <li>• Agreeing and Reviewing School Policy.</li> </ul>
SLT Strategic attendance lead	SLT/PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis and Strategic Plan for attendance.</li> <li>• Leave of absence requests.</li> <li>• Management of Family Engagement Worker.</li> <li>• Overview of clear and escalating interventions.</li> <li>• Evaluation of interventions.</li> <li>• Responsibility for links with LA Attendance Team.</li> <li>• Producing attendance plans and reports.</li> </ul>
SLT Pastoral Managers Strategic attendance lead	SLT/ELT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line management of staff.</li> <li>• Evaluation of interventions.</li> <li>• Promoting school attendance.</li> <li>• Compliance with relevant legislation.</li> <li>• Implementing school policy and leading on whole school approach.</li> <li>• Authorising/unauthorising absences.</li> <li>• Contact with parents.</li> <li>• Attendance at LA attendance meetings.</li> <li>• Attendance letters.</li> </ul>
Strategic attendance lead	LDU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation of interventions.</li> <li>• Promoting school attendance.</li> <li>• Providing early warning of attendance concerns.</li> <li>• Compliance with relevant legislation.</li> <li>• Implementing school policy and leading on whole school approach.</li> <li>• Identifying students whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure.</li> <li>• Contact with parents.</li> <li>• Attendance at LA attendance meetings.</li> <li>• Monitoring Attendance letters.</li> <li>• Monitoring Attendance Management Plans.</li> </ul>
Catherine Pierce	Attendance, Data & Exams Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording attendance data.</li> <li>• Providing early warning of attendance concerns.</li> <li>• Completing Attendance Referral Forms.</li> <li>• Overseeing SIMS management.</li> <li>• Producing attendance reports.</li> </ul>
Keyworkers	Keyworkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting importance of regular school attendance.</li> <li>• Providing early warning of attendance concerns.</li> <li>• Positive role modelling.</li> <li>• Identifying students whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure.</li> <li>• Following policy and procedures consistently.</li> <li>• Regular meetings with key students to complete Attendance</li> </ul>

		<p>Thermometers and Management Plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact with parents.</li> <li>• Attendance letters.</li> </ul>
Admin Staff	School Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining registers.</li> <li>• First day calling/text messages.</li> <li>• Identifying students whose absence needs further follow up action in line with the school absence procedure.</li> <li>• Late arrivals.</li> <li>• Process for clearing registers.</li> <li>• Administration of school attendance letters, leave of absence letters etc.</li> </ul>