

Attendance policy Coritani Academy



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1. Aims

At Coritani Academy we encourage learners to attend the academy, so that they are ready for learning and the next stages in life, whether that is attendance at college, punctuality at work or as an apprentice.

We promote attendance to ensure learners are safe and as part of ongoing safeguarding. By attending the academy, learners have the opportunity to meet their educational outcomes, have supportive adults in their lives and are able to share any concerns they have with staff who have a genuine interest in their development.

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 learner has access to the education to which they are entitled
- acting early to address patterns of absence
- building strong relationships with families to ensure learners have the support in place to attend school

We promote and support punctuality in attending the academy and to all lessons. It is routinely recognised that attendance figures at the Academy are higher than when learners were at link schools.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the “Working together to improve school attendance” document from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on school attendance and 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 (Learner Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Governors are

The Governors are responsible for:

- promoting the importance of school attendance across the academy’s policies and ethos
- making sure academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- monitoring attendance figures for the whole academy
- making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy

The link governor responsible for attendance is Ruth Eyre.

3.2 The Principal

The principal is responsible for:

- implementation of this policy at the academy
- monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual learners
- monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader is responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Adam Walker. They are responsible for:

- leading attendance across the academy
- offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- delivering targeted intervention and support to learners and families
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- providing regular attendance reports to academy staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Principal
- working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- advising the Principal (authorised by the principal) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance, Adam Walker, can be contacted via admin@coritani-iet.co.uk 01724 501020

3.4 Class teachers/Assistant teachers

Class teachers / Assistant teachers are responsible for reporting attendance. They will do this by informing the academy office of a learner's attendance. Attendance is recorded twice daily. This will be done within 30 minutes of the start of the first session, for either morning or afternoon.

3.5 Academy office staff

Academy office staff will:

- record the learner's attendance using the appropriate code on Arbor
- take calls from parents, carers and learners about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on Arbor
- transfer calls from parents, carers and learners about absence to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- call the parents or carers of a learner if they do not present themselves within 30 minutes of the start of the first session, either morning or afternoon. If the academy has not already received warning of the absence, the academy will attempt to make contact with home and ascertain a reason for the absence. It will then be recorded on the register on Arbor.

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends every day on time
- call the academy to report their child's absence before 09.15 on the day of the first absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- provide the academy with more than one emergency contact number for their child
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the academy day.

3.7 Learners

Learners are expected to:

- attend the academy every day, on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

Coritani will keep an attendance register and place all learners onto this register.

Coritani will complete the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every learner is:

- present
- attending an approved off-site educational activity
- absent
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include the:

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

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- whether the absence is authorised or not
- the nature of the activity if a learner is attending an approved educational activity
- the nature of circumstances where a learner is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

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

Learners must arrive in school by 08.45 on each academy day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09:00 and will be kept open until 09.30. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:00 and will be kept open until 13.30.

Learners arriving at other times of the day may be marked present if this is part of an agreed plan, for example as part of a learner's EHCP or at the request of a medical practitioner.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The learner's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.15 or as soon as practically possible by calling the academy's office staff (see also section 7) on 01724 501020

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask the learner's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the learner's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment.

Parents and carers must request leave of absence by calling the academy office on 01724 501020.

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

The learner's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence (see section 5 for details of what the academy can authorise).

The academy will consider the use of remote education for a specific period of time under the requirements of an EHCP or at the request of an Educational Psychologist or medical professional.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A learner who arrives late:

- before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- A learner identified as being persistently late will have a meeting called with parents to discuss reasons for lateness and how this can be rectified

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where a learner whom we expect to attend the academy does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the academy will:

- call the learner's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the academy cannot reach any of the learner's emergency contacts, the academy may contact the home school or attempt a home safeguarding visit.
- identify whether the absence is approved or not
- identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than five working days after the session
- call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the academy will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The academy will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels at review meetings held termly.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to a learner during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. As a guide, exceptional circumstances are considered to be those which are unlikely to happen again during the time that a child is at the academy.

A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion, including the length of time the learner is authorised to be absent for.

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request, the principal may require evidence to support any such request.

Valid reasons for **authorised** absence include:

- illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learner's parents belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- traveller learners travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Romani people, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision
- study leave
- part time timetables and transitions
- EHCP requirements.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The academy or Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Principal, Local Authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- the number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- where an excluded learner is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Staff at the academy are committed to promoting and achieving good levels of attendance in accordance with the Local Authority policy. Underpinning this commitment is a belief that only if learners attend the academy regularly can they take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

In addition, the academy promotes an environment where learners feel safe and valued. All learners are greeted in a respectful manner and are offered food on entry to the academy. The day starts with a shorter period ¹ where learners are able to discuss any issues that they may have. This helps remove barriers to attendance and enables them to feel ready for the day.

7. Attendance monitoring

The academy will:

- monitor attendance and absence data weekly, termly, and yearly across the academy and at an individual learner level
- identify whether or not there are particular groups of learners whose absences may be a cause for concern

Attendance is a standing item on the agenda at SLT meetings and learners or groups of learners who are a cause for concern are discussed and a plan is put into action.

Learner-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and Local Authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The academy will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

7.1 Analysing attendance

The academy will:

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

7.2 Using data to improve attendance

The Academy will:

- provide regular attendance reports to all teaching staff, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with learners and families
- use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.3 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a learner misses 10% or more of school. Severe absence is where a learner misses 50% or more of school.

The academy will:

- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- hold regular meetings with the parents of learners who the academy (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
- inform the home school of persistent and severe absence.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the Assistant/ Executive Principal. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Academy Oversight Committee.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Achievement and Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: Attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Learner is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Learner is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Learner arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Learner is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the academy
D	Dual registered	Learner is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Learner has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Learner is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the academy
V	Educational trip or visit	Learner is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the academy
W	Work experience	Learner is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Learner has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

E	Excluded	Learner has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Learner has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a learner will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Learner is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Learner is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 learner is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Romani, Roma, and traveller absence	Learner from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the academy
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Learner is on a holiday that was not approved by the academy
N	Reason not provided	Learner is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for learner's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Learner arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Learner of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or learner is in custody
Z	Learner not on admission register	Register set up but learner has not yet joined the academy
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial academy closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

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