



Coombe Academy Trust

Attendance Protocol (CGS and Sixth Form)

Equality Analysis Impact

Title of Policy: **Attendance Protocol**

Considered at Governors’ Committee meeting: **Pastoral Committee November 6th 2012**

Date: **ADOPTED:** November 2012 Amended April 2013
REVIEWED : November 2013, Summer 2014, June 2015, June 2016, June 2017, June 2018, June 2019
Next Review: Summer 2020

Is there relevance to equality?

- 1 Does the policy have an adverse effect on employees, pupils or the wider community and therefore have a significant effect in terms of equality? If yes, then please answer questions 2 and 3. **No**
- 2 Does the policy have an adverse effect upon a group with protected characteristics? (Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage/Civil partnership, Pregnancy/ Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Sex, Sexual orientation)
- 3 Does the policy affect one or more of the equality objectives set by the school? (Please refer to the Equality Policy)

If the answer to question 2 or 3 is yes, a full equality analysis will need to be completed by the SLT Lead before the next committee meeting.

Please detail the objective and explain the relevance of the policy to the objective and protected characteristics below.

Coombe Academy Trust

**Coombe Girls' School
and**

Coombe Boys' School

Attendance Policy

2019/2020

Coombe Girls' School recognises the strong link between attainment and attendance and the important role parents play in ensuring that it is as high as possible.

A student's progress is severely hampered if s/he does not regularly attend school. To illustrate:

- 90% attendance is an average of one day out of school per fortnight over a school year.
- 90% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is 1/2 a school year missed.
- 80% attendance over 5 years at secondary school is the same as one whole school year missed.

Coombe Girls' School: Attendance Definitions	
98-100%	Expected
95-97%	Satisfactory
Below 95%, but above 90%	A cause for concern
Below 90%	A serious cause for concern.

It is clearly understood that there are exceptional circumstances when levels of attendance may fall below 98% or even 95% for reasons beyond the student and parents' control. That said, these are very rare exceptions rather than the rule.

Getting Help

It is very important that parents speak with the relevant Head of Year or Assistant Headteacher i/c of the Key Stage at the earliest opportunity if they have any worries at all about ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their son/daughter. However, whilst we will provide support and guidance, it is ultimately the parents' legal responsibility to ensure his/her regular attendance.

1. School attendance is subject to education legislation and this policy is written to reflect the law and the guidance produced by the DfE.
2. Annually the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets.
3. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals as part of the Governor's Pastoral committee agenda.
4. This policy contains the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

School Procedures

5. Any student who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or the Head of Centre acting on her behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Punctuality/Lateness

6. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other students in the class. It is paramount therefore that all students arrive at school by 8.20.
7. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.30am. Students arriving after this time will be registered as late and must sign in at reception.

8. Persistent lateness to school and lessons will be dealt with through the school's behaviour policy and detention systems.

Absence from School

9. Parents **must** telephone or text the school **by 08:20 on the first day** of their daughter or son's absence and **every day thereafter** and follow directions on the answering service to record the absence. Parents must record (i) their daughter's or son's name, spelling them both (ii) her/his form and (iii) the reason for her/his absence. The attendance officer will transfer this information each day to the registers.
10. A text message will be sent, by the attendance officer, to the Parents/Carers of all students who are marked absent for registration and for whom a note/phone call or text has not been received.. Phone calls may also be made should absence be of a particular concern.

Continuing Absence

11. Should a student be absent for more than a day without parental contact, this will be treated as a matter of concern and a potential safeguarding issue. Contact will be made by the school and external agencies will be involved where necessary.

Frequent Absence

12. It is the responsibility of the relevant Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.
13. In cases where a student begins to develop a pattern of absence, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s, but at the same time may have to ask for the provision of medical evidence (e.g. a doctor's stamp in the student's planner / a photocopy of a prescription / a medical certificate) or indeed contact the GP's surgery ourselves. The assistance of external agencies may also be required, or in rare cases, legal measures might have to be taken. See Appendix 2 for further details.

Attendance Panels

14. In order to alert parents formally of the school's concern regarding attendance parents/carers may be invited to attend an attendance panel to discuss the issues and plan for improvement. This will be undertaken in liaison with our Educational Welfare Officer). A parent/carer's absence from/refusal to attend the meeting will not be seen as an excuse to delay any further formal proceedings.

School Refusal

15. The relevant Head of Year or the Assistant Headteacher of the Key Stage oversees all cases of poor attendance. With the support of parents, relevant Head of Year, and outside agencies where appropriate, a programme of re-admittance will be set up for the student.
16. It is important that on return from an extended period of unavoidable absence the student is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other students. The relevant Head of Year or Deputy Head of Year will oversee this process.

Absence Requests

17. Absence requests are rarely granted and almost never to those whose attendance is below 98%. Therefore, requests for all forms of absence (including medical appointments) must be made well in advance and in writing. Parents must complete the necessary pro forma and return it to the school; we ask for a month's notice. Mr Platt will then make a decision as to whether the absence is approved or not and this decision is final. Any absence taken without authorization, without suitable notice, or taken after the school has refused permission, will be treated as unauthorized. A pattern of such absence, or a one off absence of more than one day, will trigger further intervention.
18. The school will always inform the appropriate staff at the Local Authority about any unauthorized absences.

Promoting attendance

19. The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their full education. The school has systems to reward excellent attendance.

Holidays in term time

20. Holidays in term time will not be authorized.

Sixth Form

21. An absolute minimum of 95% attendance for each subject is required by all students to guarantee entry to the relevant examinations.

Registration Procedures for Teachers

22. It is the responsibility of Form Tutors to take the session register each morning and afternoon.
23. All lessons must be registered using SIMS and marked with one of 3 codes ONLY:

Codes:	"/"	present
	"N"	absent
	"L"	late

This advice summarises the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explains how they apply to local authorities, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5);
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011; and
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

Potential Safeguarding Concerns Related to Attendance

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

25. Year teams and associated staff have an awareness of FGM and the potential attendance indicators associated with it. These are likely to present themselves through non-attendance or parental Leave of Absence requests at the end of the summer term. Where a student has been subject to FGM, they may also suffer irregular attendance through ill health at the start of the autumn term. Where suspicions arise, the school will investigate thoroughly and inform the relevant services immediately.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

26. Sporadic attendance is often an indicator of possible CSE, particularly amongst vulnerable students. It is important that we liaise with the agencies which support vulnerable students.

Children Missing in Education

27. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff members will follow the school's procedures for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect including sexual abuse or exploitation and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future. If a child fails to attend school for 5 school days or more without permission and there has been no contact from parents/carers, the school will notify the Education Welfare Service and contact the relevant local authority children's social care. The school will make reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child during this period.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

[a] To his age, ability and aptitude and

[b] To any special needs he may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in The Education [Student Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorization of Absence

Any student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. **Unauthorised absence**

This is for those students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. **Authorised absence**

This is for those students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. **Approved Educational Activity**

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of

the school. NB Students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities arranged by the school
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

4. Compassionate leave is granted in exceptional circumstances and would be for the shortest possible time. It would never be granted for more than a few days. This would be an authorized absence.

APPENDIX 2

Actions under the Education Act

Poor attendance at Coombe Girls' School is rare. However, where it does occur, we will engage with students and their parents in order to bring about improvement.

Ultimately this may necessitate the exercising of our statutory powers as defined by law. The school will never take such action lightly. Currently we do not issue fixed penalty notices however, we will keep this under scrutiny and, if we feel we need to, we may go along this route.

Parents commit an offence if their daughter fails to attend the School regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (those for which the School cannot, or has not, given permission). Such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.