

COWLEY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Status	NON-STATUTORY
Responsible Governors' Committee	Pupil, Behaviour & Wellbeing
Responsible Person	Assistant Principal
Review Cycle	Annually
Review date	Spring 2023
Next review date	Spring 2026

AIMS

- To raise levels of achievement by improving levels of attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure a whole college approach to attendance and to give it a high profile within the college and the community.
- To enhance the ways in which attendance is monitored in order to produce accurate information on which to base intervention.
- To reward good attendance.

RATIONALE

- Parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory college age receive their entitlement to a suitable education either by regular attendance at college or otherwise. It is the responsibility of the Local Authority (LA) to ensure that parents meet these requirements.
- Attendance improvement is a high government priority – supported by the college.
- Attendance is at the heart of the college standards.
- There is a direct and well-proven correlation between attendance and examination performance.

OBJECTIVES

- To keep an accurate and up to date record of attendance.
- To inform parents of attendance issues.
- To raise the profile of expectations around attendance and the link to attainment with students, staff and parents.
- To identify the causes of non-attendance and take appropriate action where necessary.
- To improve attendance in individuals, groups and the college.
- To support vulnerable families and to improve attendance.
- To monitor attendance and investigate data on a regular basis to look for new ways to secure improvement.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

Mr M Bennett (Assistant Headteacher)

- To liaise with staff and governors on all issues related to college attendance and ensure it is given a high priority across the college and community.
- To ensure that attendance is a regular agenda item in all meetings at all levels.
- To promote good college attendance with students and parents / carers.
- To have a general overview of all aspects of attendance data and management and produce an action plan.
- To work with the local authority to ensure the expectations stated on the summary table of responsibilities are being upheld and to ensure there is a collaborative approach to improving overall attendance and the attendance of key cohorts.
- To ensure that parents / carers and all students are fully aware of all matters and routines related to attendance. These should especially include:
 - Procedures and timings of registration
 - Lateness procedures
- To ensure that all team tutors and team members are fully aware of any procedures and routines related to attendance.
- To ensure all team tutors are fully aware of the legal documentation related to attendance and how it is used.

Attendance Data Officer

- To liaise with the Assistant Headteacher and all relevant college staff, EWOs, external agencies, parents and students on attendance matters.
- To support the Assistant Headteacher and year teams in promoting the importance of good attendance with all parties.
- To liaise and act accordingly where there are serious concerns about attendance issues related to individual students.
- To inform the Assistant Headteacher and / or Leadership Team about attendance on a regular basis.
- To prepare reports and statistics in consultation with the Assistant Headteacher, for the Leadership Group, Governors, DfES and the Local Authority.
- To manage ALL 'Requests for Leave of Absence'.
- To manage the electronic reporting systems and ensure that all data is reliable.
- To monitor punctuality on a daily basis.
- To comply with government legislation regarding the accurate collating and recording of students attending all off-site provision.

Family Liaison Officers

- To work with students and their families to support outcomes and provide effective advice and guidance.
- To liaise and act accordingly where there are serious concerns about attendance issues related to individual students.
- To promote good attendance with all students and families. Make home visits to students of concern and offer a range of support that will lead to an improved sustained attendance.
- To facilitate a multi-agency approach and encourage partnerships that benefit the students and families.

Head of Achievement / Year Co-ordinators

- To ensure that parents / carers and all students are fully aware of all matters and routines related to attendance. These should especially include:
 - Procedures and timings of registration
 - Lateness procedures
- To ensure that all team tutors and team members are fully aware of any procedures and routines related to attendance.
- To ensure all team tutors are fully aware of the legal documentation related to attendance and how it is used.
- To monitor teams and individual student attendance on a regular basis using data supplied by the Attendance Officer.
- To liaise with team tutors on all matters related to attendance and to assist in difficult cases related to: truancy and unauthorised absences and parent / carer liaison.
 - To liaise with the Attendance Officer, Family Liaison Officers and EWOs in all matters related to attendance.

Team Tutor

- To take the am: register in accordance with the set guidelines, using only the defined codes.
- To be proactive in notifying the Attendance Officer and Head of Achievement of concerns around the attendance of an individual student.
- To direct any requests for leave of absence to the Attendance Officer
- To keep a careful overview of team / individual student statistics in liaison with the Attendance Officer.
- To display the graphs / statistics / certificates in the form room as they are distributed.
- To carry out interventions such as target setting, calls home etc with identified students or cohorts.

- To promote good attendance.
- To be a good role model by arriving at group on time and engaging positively with students.
- Ensure all students understand and are aware of the procedures around lateness.

All Teachers

- To ensure a register is taken using the electronic system in every lesson taught.
- To be vigilant and notify the attendance staff/Incident Patrol immediately if students daily lesson attendance history shows anomalies.
- To be a good role model and actively promote good attendance in their lessons.
- To provide a positive learning atmosphere that promotes and encourages good attendance.
- To discourage internal truancy by the following:
 - Refrain from allowing students out of lessons unless absolutely necessary.
 - If a student is granted permission to leave class, the class teacher must give the student a note.
 - Not allowing students to go to the toilet during lessons unless they have a medical pass.
 - When a student is clearly ill they should be sent, with a note, to their year team. Should it be necessary to send a student home this will be done via the year team or another senior member of staff.
 - Students who arrive at the toilet without a note from the teacher should be sent back for one. However, in the case of a medical emergency, the priority must be to seek medical attention.

Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

Students are selected for referral at weekly year team planning meetings. Some referrals will be students with a history of poor attendance, some will be students whose attendance has started deteriorating; some referrals will be for pastoral reasons.

When a student is first referred to Education Welfare a College Referral Form is completed along with a printout of their attendance. Re-referrals are made by the EWO being given a printout of the student's attendance.

The EWO will provide a regularly updated summary of individual referrals to the Attendance Officer and Family Liaison Officers and will follow Local Authority guidelines which may lead to legal procedures.

PARENTS

Parents have a legal responsibility for ensuring that registered students of compulsory college age attend regularly. If a child does not attend college regularly then parents will be asked to provide medical evidence for absence. Action will be taken to try to improve the attendance, and the college will use all its powers in collaboration with the Local Authority such as Internal Attendance panels, or P.A.C.E. (Police and Criminal Evidence) the issue of fixed penalty notices, prosecution and contracts.

STUDENT REGISTRATION

The college is required to take an attendance register at the start of each lesson. Registers are taken electronically, and class teachers take lesson registrations electronically. For each student, the register must be marked either as a present or absence by the use of lesson monitor codes (1-4) see behaviour policy for further information on these codes. The Attendance Officer will record students who are engaged in an approved educational activity away from the college site, or record accordingly for any other reason.

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

Authorised absence is absence with permission **from the college**. This includes instances of absences for **which a satisfactory explanation has been provided (e.g. illness) when supported by medical evidence. Medical evidence will be requested for all absences once a pupil's overall attendance drops below the Cowley target of 97%.**

AUTHORISED ABSENCE

An absence is authorised by law if:

- The student is prevented from attending due to sickness which requires medical support.
- A day set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- The student is participating in work experience.
- The student is participating in field trips or educational visits at home or abroad if it is part of their current curriculum.
- Sporting activities (approved when supported by relevant documentation and based on individual attendance).
- Link courses with FE colleges where students attend for part of the time.
- Students receiving tuition at another college while remaining on roll at their donor college. Their attendance will be closely scrutinised and recorded.

An absence may be authorised **at the college's discretion** for:

- Attendance at an interview with a prospective employer or another educational establishment.
- Medical or dental appointments. However, here at Cowley we expect these to be made outside of the college day.
- Suspensions.
- Students attending another educational institution where they are also required to be on roll (dual registration).
- In some instances, personal family issues will be considered providing the students attendance remains above 97%.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from the college and includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

- Truancy - where a student is away from college without permission
- When the parent or adult does not have parental responsibility, the college can refuse to accept their reason.
- Lateness. Arrival after the morning register has closed unless late arrival is duly authorised.

COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITY

Stage 1

FIRST DAY RESPONSE

This has become an essential tool in tackling casual non-attendance and meeting rigid safeguarding processes. A class chart message is sent home to parents/carers. They can then respond to the message and attach any supporting documentation/medical evidence via class charts, explaining the reasons for absence. If there is no response, a phone call may take place or a home visit to identify the unauthorised absence/reason for non-attendance.

STAGED RESPONSE

Social Inclusion Process

Stage 2 – Letters to be sent home (staged approach).

To support and follow on from stage 1, a series of phone calls, letters and home visits will be completed for any prolonged periods of absence. Attendance data is analysed continuously to identify key levels of non-attendance referred to as Persistent Absence. This is highlighted and discussed during weekly year team planning meetings and appropriate actions are then completed.

Each Attendance Focus Week regular communications are sent home to students in the following categories:

- **Less than 90%** - Your child is currently classed as Persistently Absent from college. Their attendance is being monitored by year teams, family liaison officer, EWS and SLMT.
- **90 – 95%** - Your child is currently below the college target of 97%. They must make every effort to increase this.
- **97%** - Your child is currently reaching the college target. Well done! Keep up the good work.

STAGED RESPONSE

Attendance Officer

Stage 1

Letter sent home to students causing concerns with attendance below the Cowley target of 97%. Parents/carers are asked to provide medical evidence for any further absence and can contact the Family Liaison Officer/year team directly to discuss concerns. Welfare calls and possible home visits can be completed during this staged approach.

Stage 2

When student attendance remains a concern and as a result their attendance falls below 90%, parents/carers can be asked to attend an in-college meeting with the Family Liaison Officer, year team or attendance lead (SLMT) to discuss concerns. Parents are informed of the intention to take steps towards prosecution unless there is a marked improvement in attendance or ongoing medical matters where **ALL** absence **MUST** be evidenced by medical documentation.

Stage 3 (ESO3)

Students and parents/carers may be requested to be present at an attendance panel meeting with the attendance lead (SLMT) or in some cases a penalty notice can be issued. ***(From January 2017 Parents who repeatedly fail to attend EWO meetings in college with the EWS, will be referred to attend a PACE meeting in the presence of a Police Officer – this meeting is recorded on the student's attendance profile Parents/carers will also be liable for legal proceedings)***

PERSISTANT ABSENCE

Persistent Absence (PA)

Attendance data is analysed continuously to identify key levels of non-attendance referred to as Persistent Absence. This is reported to the Local Authority and governors each half term. Students who have reached Persistent Absentee status become a part of our PA cohort (Persistent absence is classed as below 90% attendance).

Strategies are put in place as soon as a concern is identified to support and improve the attendance at an individual level for each student. All students will be monitored weekly to check that they are not slipping into that category.

MONITORING OF PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Weekly analysis of attendance data through tracking documents to identify patterns of absence

Identification of students and analysis by group – Disadvantaged, SEN, EAL, CLA.

Intervention strategies, including one to one interviews by year teams and Family Liaison officers.

Half termly and termly reports to Local Authority and Governors.

ACTIONS INCLUDE

Individual Attendance Action Plans put in place during weekly planning meetings for students between 90 – 70% with named senior staff responsible for updating all stakeholders.

On-going communication between parents/carers Family Liaison Officer's s and year teams to help review and encourage continued improved attendance.

Meeting with both students and parents/carers held in college or at home.

Alternative support through multi agency network.

Referral to the Team around the College (Multi-Agency Team of Professionals – internal and external).

SEVERELY ABSENT

Attendance data is analysed continuously to identify key levels of non-attendance referred to as Severely Absent. This is reported to the Local Authority and governors each half term. Students who have reached

Severely Absent status become a part of our PA cohort (Persistent absence is classed as below 70% attendance).

Strategies are put in place to re-engage students back into full-time education. All students will be monitored weekly to check that they are not slipping into that category.

MONITORING OF SEVERE ABSENCE

Weekly analysis of attendance data through tracking documents to identify patterns of absence

Identification of students and analysis by group – Disadvantaged, SEN, EAL, CLA.

Intervention strategies, including one-to-one interviews by year teams and Family Liaison officers.

Bespoke timetables to be investigated if appropriate for the student.

EWS involvements

Attendance panel meetings

Half termly and termly reports to Local Authority and Governors.

ACTIONS INCLUDE

Individual Attendance Action Plans put in place during weekly planning meetings for students between 90 – 70% with named senior staff responsible for updating all stakeholders.

On-going communication between parents/carers FLO's and year teams to help review and encourage continued improved attendance.

Meeting with both students and parents/carers held in college or at home.

Alternative support through multi agency network.

Referral to the Team around the College (Multi-Agency Team of Professionals – internal and external).

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

From September 2013 the guidance for colleges regarding the authorising of absences is much more rigorous and stricter guidelines have therefore been put in place. The reason for this is that any time missed in education has a significant impact on your child's progress and achievement.

As part of the new legislation, parents/carers can face a fine of £60.00, rising to £120 (if not paid within 28 days. Failure to pay after this time period could result in court proceedings) each per child for taking time out of college during term time without the college's consent.

The Local Authority will robustly monitor all college absences during term time, challenging Colleges and Parents/carers who do not adhere to the new legislation.

Therefore, Cowley International College encourage parents / carers to take holidays **(or trips away from home for any other reason)** during the college holidays, rather than during term time. As colleges are closed for 13 weeks a year it should not normally be necessary for children to miss college for these reasons. ***Leave of absence for any reason should only be requested in the most exceptional circumstances.***

What does the law say? The Government continues to discourage absences in term time and passed legislation abolishing the right of colleges to authorise specifically 'Term-time absences' that did not meet specified 'Extenuating Circumstances Criteria'. This means that any leave of absence for any reason can only be granted if the college is satisfied that extenuating circumstances exist. Colleges may still refuse if your child has a poor attendance record, or, if the proposed leave of absence is at a particularly important time, such as in the run up to exams or at the start of a new college year.

No term-time holidays will be considered. Sporting and extra-curricular activities will be considered on receipt of the original lettered logo complete with dates. However, all absences are scored against our child's overall attendance profile and monitored vigorously.

LONG TERM ABSENCE

Students who are absent for a long period of time or in hospital will have special arrangements to ensure that they have sufficient and appropriate work to do at home. Parents/carers should refer to the 'Children with health needs who cannot attend policy'. This is monitored during year team planning meetings. A reintegration programme will be put in place for their return to college.

MEANS OF ACHIEVING AIMS

- Constantly highlighting attendance as a whole college issue of the highest priority.
- Close monitoring by year teams and Family Liaison Officer's.
- Target setting - Individual students, Form groups, Year groups.
- Encouraging all staff to be vigilant and proactive in raising attendance anomalies and concerns.
- Letters / texts home.
- Interview with parents / carers.
- Involvement of EWO. In-house and external truancy checks.
- Celebrating attendance at assemblies and rewarding good attendance publicly.
- Data analysis and reports to Leadership Group and Governors on a regular basis.
- Competitions.
- Student Interviews.
- Mentoring.

REWARDS

Staged approach

Individual Students - each term

- 100% Attendance certificates and rewards at Celebration Assembly. Letters home each term.
- Above 97% Attendance message sent home to parents.

Each Class

- Weekly Attendance rewards.

MONITORING (METHODS)

- First day response / statistics.
- Letters / electronic messages to parents.
- Data analysis by PA, gender, ethnicity, CLA, SEN, EAL, disadvantaged Student Premium.
- Parents made aware of responsibilities.
- EWO works with the college.
- Regular year team planning meetings.
- All attendance and punctuality data sent weekly to team tutors.
- Punctuality lists to Head of College.
- Home visits carried out by Family Liaison Officer to support students and parents/carers