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ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE POLICY: CONYERS SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

Date of Next Review: Summer 2025

Responsible Officer: Headteacher

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1. Statement of intent

Conyers School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment at school, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance. We believe that pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.

Ensuring equality and fairness for all.

Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.

Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.

Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.

Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.

Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

The school's senior attendance champion is Angela O'Boyle and can be contacted via conyers@conyers.org.uk Staff, parents and pupils may contact the senior attendance champion for queries or concerns about attendance.

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's





- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools within the Trust.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.
- Ensuring school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

The Local Governance Committee supports school in monitoring pupil attendance throughout the academic year.

4.2 The Headteacher/Head of School

The headteacher/head of school is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Appointing a member of SLT to the 'senior attendance champion' role
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- To work with the local authority on issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels



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4.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- " Attend school every day, on time
Attend every timetabled session, on time

Sixth form pupils contact the school to report their absence before 8.50am on
the day: 01293525000 or email: 6form@stjohnsacademy.co.uk (DO NOT
include the word 'absence' in the subject line)



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The school day starts at 8.55am and ends at 3.40pm.

Pupils must arrive in school and be in their tutor room by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session (am) will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.25am. The register for the second session (pm) will be taken at 1.40pm and will be kept open until 2.10pm

Class teachers will also take registers at the start of each lesson period to ensure that pupils are attending all timetabled lessons. These registers will be analysed alongside formal registers in line with the section of this policy.

Pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

6. Absence procedures

6.1 Unplanned absence

Parents will be required to contact the school before 8:50am on the first day of their child's absence- they will be expected to provide an explanation for the absence and an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, support staff will contact the parent





The school will not request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In the case of PA, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the senior attendance champion. The school will inform the LA, on a termly basis, of the details of pupils who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.

If a pupil's attendance drops below 90 percent, the senior attendance champion will be informed, and implement necessary support and actions.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will remove the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries.

6.2 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request. Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The leave of absence request form can be accessed here: <https://forms.gle/MroATsCbTcPSX7PT7>.

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

The pupil's parent must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

7. Authorising parental absence requests

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for absence will be handled by the pastoral team and where necessary, in conjunction with the Head of School or Headteacher. The decision to grant or refuse the request will take the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the



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absence request form. The headteacher/head of school may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments

Religious observance

Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes **m** **m** This covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen





granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

8. Lateness and punctuality

A pupil 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

If late, students will follow the school procedure for lateness.

9. Reporting to parents

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Penalty Notices

The headteacher/head of school (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

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

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance





Inform the Local Authority if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.

Provide the Local Authority with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.

Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.

Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.

Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school /o consider:

Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.

Incorporating a pastoral support plan.

Carrying out strengths and difficulties questionnaire.

Identifying pupils' unmet needs through the Early Help process.

Using an internal or external specialist.

Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable.

Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.

Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.



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14. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at Visitors' reception and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, school will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

In the first instance, school will communicate with the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.

If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider a penalty notice. A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Children reported missing in school

1. Member of staff that notices the pupil missing informs the pastoral care team and potentially safeguarding@conyers.org.uk if the child has significant vulnerabilities.

2. Pastoral Care team working with the site team will conduct a search of school premises.

The following areas will be systematically searched:

- Classrooms
- Toilets
- Changing rooms
- The library
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds.

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18. Persistent Absence

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and Persistent Absence (PA), such as:



- share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

The board of trustees will ensure staff from different schools within the trust regularly share expertise and collaborate on interventions.

20. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will be offered regular and ongoing training as part of their CPD opportunities.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The governing board will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the senior attendance champion, attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role - this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

21. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year. The school's

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- Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 Codes

	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
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	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: In police detention Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or Detained under a sentence of detention
	Public health guidance or law	Di dJh fU Y hc cf UnYbXUw UnhY'gWcc`k ci `X' be prohibited under public health guidance or law
	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
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	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
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