Attendance Policy
2023-24

Approved by:	Governing Body	Date: 29/01/2024
Last reviewed on:	11/11/2022	
Next review due by:	November 2024	
Head Teacher:	*K Vernon*	
Chair of Governors:	*J S Andrews*	

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1. Aims

At The City of Leicester College, we have high expectations with regards to school attendance. We work closely with our students and parents/carers to promote, instil, and celebrate ambitious attitudes towards a child's attendance and punctuality because we know that the child who has excellent school attendance is more likely to be the child who progresses well and achieves their full potential.

We promote the importance of ambitious attendance through a clear and consistently applied Attendance Matters strategy that focuses on knowing and supporting the child and their parents/carers well.

We are determined in our work to promote excellent attitudes and standards of attendance by:

- Taking every opportunity to promote and celebrate improving and excellent attendance

- Raising the thresholds and expectations of what we mean by ambitious attendance

- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

- Ensuring we make excellent use of attendance and absence data to identify and monitor trends and patterns at school, group, and individual level

- Ensuring we communicate priorities around attendance with all staff, so that all can contribute towards improve attendance and reducing absence

- Ensuring every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled

- Acting early to address patterns of absence

- Building strong relationships with families to ensure students have the support in place to attend school

- We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

The City of Leicester College recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school and its community. Therefore, our Attendance Policy should not be read in isolation and should be viewed in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Safeguarding and Child protection
- Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying
- Mental Health Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- SEND

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve school attendance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance 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 (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

It also refers to:

› [School census guidance](#)
› [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
› [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3.   Roles and Responsibilities

The City of Leicester College believes that improved attendance at school can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, students, and the wider school community.

3.1   The Governing Body

the Governing Body will:
- Promoting the importance of ambitious school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- Annually review the Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Agree School attendance targets and submit these to the Governing Body each year, and report on performance.
- Monitor whole school attendance figures, including that of vulnerable and key groups.
- Ensure that the School has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Request and hear reports on all matters related the college's progress on attendance on a termly basis at the relevant Governing body sub-committee.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive

3.2   The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:
- Ensure that the importance and value of ambitious attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a named member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to lead on attendance.
- Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Monitor whole school attendance figures, including that of vulnerable and key groups and ensure the senior leader in charge of attendance has a clear strategy to improve the attendance of these students.
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies.
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

3.3   The Senior Leader in charge of Attendance

The Senior Leader in charge of attendance is Jill Walton (Senior Deputy Headteacher)
- Ensure that the importance and value of ambitious attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers.
- Ensure the consistent and effective implementation of this policy at the school.
- improve whole school, key group, and individual attendance to agreed targets as set by the governing body and in line with national trends.
- Analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and to achieve.
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to students and their parents/carers and maintain good working relationships.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Ensure that attendance data is collated, analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence, devise solutions to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Senior Education Welfare Officer and Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated.
- Line manage the Attendance Welfare Officer
- Ensure attendance data is used well by leaders and tutors to address declining attendance at group and individual student level.
- Ensure attendance data is used well by leaders and tutors to celebrate improving and good standards of attendance at group and individual student level.
- Report attendance and other related issues to the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive

3.4   Attendance Welfare Officer

The Attendance Welfare Officer is Reshma Thakrar
- Ensure that the importance and value of ambitious attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers.
- Work with the Senior Leader in charge of Attendance to improve whole school, key group, and individual attendance to agreed targets as set by the governing body and in line with national trends.
- Be proactive in the early identification of increasing absence at individual and group level.
- Ensure that The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Use systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students in KS3, KS4 and KS5, including those who are educated off-site are implemented.
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Senior Education Welfare Officer and Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

- Use regular and prompt recording of attendance.
- Oversee the student admissions process, including reporting information to the local authority.
- Analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Have good communication and contact with parents/carers, addressing concerns when there is a pattern of a student failing to attend school regularly without a good reason.
- Work specifically to improve the attendance of those students identified as persistent absentees.
- Review students' attendance with the Head of Year and identify any key groups and/or emerging patterns.
- Attendance Officer will meet with the EWO in accordance with the agreed meeting schedule.
- Make decisions around fixed penalty notices in conjunction with the Senior Leader in charge of Attendance and the EWO.
- Work with families to identify why their children are not achieving full attendance. ascertain the probable causes of the absences and suggest and assist in the implementation of plans/action to resolve the situation, working closely with college staff, the child and the child's family.
- Organise and run attendance panel meetings with parents/carers.
- Improve the attendance of those student who display inconsistent and poor habits towards school attendance.
- Work specifically to improve the attendance of those students identified as SEND and Disadvantaged whose attendance is at risk of falling below 90%.
- Make first day absence calls for RED vulnerable students.
- Work with HOYs to identify and implement a range of strategies and interventions that lead to the improvement of an individual's attendance.
- Take responsibility for the college attendance rewards programme and promote this accordingly with the students, parents/carers, and staff.
- Manage the attendance rewards budget.
- Line manage the Attendance Officer.
- Support the attendance team with the day-to-day management of whole school attendance.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive

3.5   Attendance Officer

The Attendance Officer is Karamjit Kaur
- Ensure that the importance and value of ambitious attendance is promoted to students and their parents/carers.
- Be a point of contact for the attendance line for parents/carers.
- Check register accuracy.
- Compile a daily list of those not completing registers and inform the Attendance leaders of where action needs to be taken.
- Make first day absence calls for RED vulnerable students.
- Ensure text messages are sent for absent students on first day.
- Complete the administration around fixed penalty notices.
- Support the attendance team with the day-to-day management of whole school attendance.

3.6   Heads of Year

- Actively promote the importance and value of ambitious attendance to students and their parents/carers and maintain good working relationships.
- Work with the Attendance Team to improve year group, key group, and individual attendance.

- Analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Have good communication and contact with parents/carers, addressing concerns when there is a pattern of a student failing to attend school regularly without a good reason.
- Review students' attendance with the Attendance Welfare Officer and identify any key groups and/or emerging patterns.
- Provide information, guidance, and advice around attendance for the team of year group tutors.
- Talk to students about the value of education and the importance of attendance.
- Promote attendance promotions, competitions, and rewards with the year group.

This list is not intended to be exhaustive

3.7   Tutors/Teachers will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of ambitious attendance to students and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with students and parents/carers, discussing where appropriate patterns of absence and lateness with the student and their parent carer and how these can be improved.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good attendance at school, with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all students to attend and achieve.
- Comply with The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation.
- Analyse attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support students and their families.
- Complete all registers accurately within the first 5-10 minutes of the morning registration period and/or lesson, notifying the Behaviour and Team of any missing students.

3.8   Parents and Carers
- Actively promote the importance and value of ambitious attendance to their child.
- Talk to their child about school, taking a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Contact the school by 8.15am if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected. date of return; follow this up with a note where possible.
- Where the school raises a concern about attendance, work with the school to develop improved habits towards attendance.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences; wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists, etc. outside of school hours.
- Ensure their child has a well-established morning routine, which supports the college's expectation of excellent punctuality to school and to lessons.
- Instil the value of education; encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with the College and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both The City of Leicester College and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time. If there are exceptional circumstances, they will write to the Head Teacher.

3.9 Students

At The City of Leicester College, we recognise that not every child can achieve an attendance of 100% due to personal barriers and limitations, such as hospital appointments and extended illness. However, all students are expected to:

- Have personally ambitious attendance to school, demonstrating through TCOLC Character, excellent or improving habits towards their attendance and/or punctuality.

- Have understanding that ambitious attendance is directly linked to performance and achieving one's potential.

- Attend every timetabled session on time to ensure they make the most of their learning opportunities.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance register
We will keep an attendance register and place all students onto this register.
We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session, this will commonly be referred to as the child's AM and PM mark. By recording attendance, it will mark whether every student is:
- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent

- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- For students in Years 7-11, whether the absence is authorised or not

- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity

- The nature of circumstances where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.
Students must arrive in school by 8.30am on each school day.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30am and will be kept open until 9.30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12.25pm and will be kept open until 1.25pm.

See appendix 1 for the full list of DfE attendance codes

4.2 Unplanned absence
The parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of their child's unplanned absence by 8.15am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school (0116 2413984 option 2) and reporting your child's absence. You should be prepared to give a specific reason for your child's absence.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness and/or the authenticity of the illness is in doubt; the school may ask the student'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 school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and can provide evidence of this appointment, e.g., a screen shot or photo of the appointment letter. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary, so that lost learning time is kept to a minimum.

To notify the college of planned absence the parent carer should either phone the college (0116 2413984 option 2) or email office@tcolc.aspirelp.uk

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student 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

When a student is late after the 8.30am bell and a valid reason has not been provided for their lateness, a detention will be issued. When poor punctuality becomes a habit, parent/carers should expect the school to contact them to discuss how improved attitudes towards punctuality can be established; the child should also expect increased monitoring, e.g., punctuality report, agreement for the child to attend breakfast club.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any student we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the student's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.

- 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 5 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 school will consider involving an education welfare officer

- Where the absence continues without an explanation, safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

- If the school cannot reach ascertain contact, including that of the student's emergency contacts, the school may use the following:
  - Complete a safe and well check home visit
  - Speak to neighbours to ascertain family whereabouts
  - Call the police
  - Call children's social care/duty and advice
  - Speak to the college's Education Welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Parents/carers may access daily attendance data about their child via the SIMS Parent app. In addition, we report attendance data, including absence and number of lates once per term through the child's performance report.

However, should a parent wish to discuss their child's attendance and/or absence in further detail and what support is available from the school then they should either contact their child's tutor via email

Example: (insert tutor's initial and surname)@tcolc.aspirelp.uk e.g., jsmith@tcolc.aspirelp.uk

Or a parent/carer may wish to speak to the college's Attendance Welfare Officer, Reshma Thakrar

rthakrar@tcolc.aspirelp.uk

01162 413984 ext.144

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student 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 student is authorised to be absent for.

The school 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 8 weeks before the absence The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, 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 school, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision

- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the [headteacher/head of school] may grant term-time holiday
- Study leave
- Representing the country in an international sports tour

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school 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 headteacher, 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 student 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.Support Systems

The City of Leicester College recognises that poor and/or declining attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and/or at The City of Leicester College. We encourage parents/Carers to communicate with the College and to make a us aware of any difficulties and/or changes in circumstances affecting their child's attendance and or behaviour in school. By working with the parents, we can ensure that we support the child in the best way possible and identify interventions that can make a real difference to the child.

a. The City of Leicester College also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with physical or mental health needs, looked after children and those who are recognised as particularly vulnerable.

b. The College will implement a range of universal and bespoke strategies to support improved attendance and punctuality which includes:
- Tiered intervention system
- Breakfast club
- Tiered system of letters
- Discussion with parents/carers and student
- TCOLC Character programme
- Attendance panel meetings with the TCOLC Attendance Welfare Officer and EWO
- Recommended referrals to support agencies, E.g. Early Help
- Family liaison support
- Behaviour support
- Informal parental meetings, including appointments available at parents' evenings
- Reintegration support packages
- Time limited part time timetables and adjusted timetables
- Universal and bespoke Rewards
- Home visits
- Early morning calls
- Funded transport
- Mentoring
- Mental health support through the schools mental health team

The above list is not exhaustive

c. We will meet with families where there are concerns, 'we' will listen, review and work with parents to ensure the support is right. Support offered to families will be centred around the student and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents/carers and students.

d. Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, The City of Leicester College will discuss with the Senior Education Welfare Officer who will consider a referral to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service.

For more information regarding the Local Authority information can be found at:
- https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/school-and-colleges/attendance-behaviour-and-welfare/

7. Attendance monitoring

At the City of Leicester College, we use attendance and absence data well to identify academic trends and students and cohorts that require additional support with attendance. Empowered with this information, we can act swiftly to intervene and support groups and individuals to reduce the risk of further absence from school.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data on a weekly, monthly, half-termly, termly, and yearly basis across the school, group and at an individual student level

- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Student-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 school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families

- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to all staff because all staff at The City of Leicester College have a role to play in improving attendance. This enables all staff to be equipped with the information and knowledge they need to facilitate discussions and celebrations with students and their families.

- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of students who the school (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. For example, provide funded transport to school; support the parent/carer with an Early help referral, embed daily check-ins with the parent/carer and the child and/or short term adapted timetables.

8. Strategies for promoting attendance

At The City of we believe in recognising and celebrating improving and excellent attendance. We promote the importance of ambitious attendance and punctuality through our TCOLC Character programme, and personal development offer. We emphasise to our students that excellent attendance is a behaviour that should not only be thought of whilst at school, but one that should be habitual for life. Furthermore, we support students and their parent/carer to understand that attendance and performance are undeniably linked and those students who achieve their potential and make the most progress are also the ones who have the best attitudes towards attendance.

We have a range of universal and bespoke reward strategies to acknowledge the efforts that students go to improve their attendance and/or to secure ambitious attendance, these include:

- Termly Year group trophy competitions
- Random acts of kindness
- November dip competition
- Festive competitions
- 100% attendance
- Most improved and improving attendance
- Annual Attendance
- Tutor group
- Jump the queue passes for improved attendance
- 1-week challenges

The above list is not exhaustive

9. Monitoring and reviewing the policy.

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every 12 months] by Jill Walton (Senior Deputy Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Appendix 1 - Absence Codes

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e., student attending another establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
K*	No Kit	Present in lesson
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
Q*	Not in timetabled lesson	Present in lesson
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Education visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendance
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendance
Z	Student not on admission register/ Register set up but student has not yet joined the school	Unauthorised absence
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendance
*TCOLC School attendance codes		