

# THE CREDO SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

### Version 1

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Approved By:	Emma Mills	September 2026

Abbreviation /Acronym	Definition
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
DfE	Department for Education
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
EBSA	Emotionally Based School Avoidance
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
LA	Local Authority

This Policy is for The Credo School.

## 1. Policy Statement

At Credo School, we recognise that regular school attendance is essential for safeguarding, wellbeing, academic progress and social development. However, we also acknowledge that children with Special Attendance Policy

Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), particularly those with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), may experience significant and complex barriers to attendance.

We are committed to a supportive, trauma-informed and individualised approach. We recognise that attendance difficulties may reflect unmet needs rather than parental non-compliance, and therefore prioritise support, partnership and understanding.

The Credo School is covered by the same legal and statutory framework as Birchwood Community High School. This policy should therefore be read in conjunction with the mainstream attendance policy.

## 2. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Education Act 1996
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE 2024)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Equality Act 2010

We recognise the duty to promote attendance alongside the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND.

## 3. Understanding Attendance in SEND Contexts

We recognise that pupils with autism and/or SEMH needs may experience barriers including anxiety, sensory sensitivities, trauma and communication differences.

At Credo School, attendance is viewed as a safeguarding and support issue first, not a compliance issue.

## 4. EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance) – Warrington-Aligned Approach

We recognise EBSA as a key factor impacting attendance. In line with local authority expectations, we:

- Identify early signs of anxiety-based absence
- Work collaboratively with families
- Develop gradual reintegration plans
- Use flexible timetables and reasonable adjustments
- Provide access to safe spaces and regulation strategies
- Engage external agencies such as Educational Psychology and CAMHS

We recognise EBSA is not wilful absence and requires support-focused responses.

## 5. Attendance and Punctuality Expectations at The Credo School

We have high expectations for both attendance and punctuality at The Credo School. Our attendance target is for all students to attend over 90%, although we recognise some students will attend much higher and some will be below due to additional needs.

We expect all students to be punctual to school. We recognise that some students arrive on SEND School transport and as such, if they are late, this is beyond their control. However being on time is important.

Morning registers close 30 minutes after the school start time and after this point, a late mark will not be given – the students will receive an unauthorised absence mark. This is in line with the legal framework.

Centre	Meliora	Consilium
<b>School Start Time</b>	8.50am	9.15am
<b>Morning Register closes</b>	9.20am	9.45am

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

**Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team:** Ensure statutory duties are met.

**Centre Teams:** Record daily attendance, provide pastoral support and liaise regularly with parents as required.

**Attendance Officer:** Monitor attendance and liaise externally when required due to agreed trigger points.

**Parents/Carers:** Work in partnership with school.

**Local Authority:** Support through SEND and attendance services as requested.

## 7. Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is monitored daily. Patterns are reviewed regularly to identify early concerns and respond proportionately.

## 8. Graduated Response to Attendance Concerns

**Stage 1** – Below 90% (Early Support)

- Centre lead will contact parents/carers to arrange a meeting
  - Additional support is offered if required and added to the student's support package

**Stage 2** – Below 85% (Attendance Team and/or LA Involvement)

- Attendance Officer involvement. The Attendance officer will discuss the concerns with the Centre lead. A letter may be sent to parents if required
- Discussion with Warrington Local Authority if appropriate

**Stage 3** – Below 75% (Multi Agency Approach)

- Formal meeting with parents, SEND and attendance teams if required
- Review of provision and potential EHCP review if deemed appropriate

## 9. Legal Intervention

Legal action is a last resort and will not be pursued where absence relates to SEND needs or provision issues. Support and reasonable adjustments will always be prioritised.

## 10. Safeguarding

Persistent and severe absence is considered within safeguarding procedures and appropriate referrals will be made if necessary.

## 11. Partnership Approach

We work collaboratively with families, Warrington LA and external professionals to support attendance and wellbeing.