

ATTENDANCE POLICY

RATIONALE

This school believes that high levels of attendance enable students to make full use of the educational opportunities offered to them, to fulfil their academic potential and to develop the skills and personal characteristics necessary for success in their future career paths.

PURPOSES

To provide procedures which will help to:-

- i. maintain the highest possible levels of attendance to ensure continuity of education
- ii. check that all absences are accurately accounted for
- iii. monitor inconsistent patterns which may indicate truancy or other difficulties
- iv. ensure prompt and effective communication with home and with outside agencies when attendance levels fall
- v. plan and implement structured and rigorous interventions to improve poor attendance
- vi. ensure that the school fulfils the guidelines on attendance as laid down by DFE
- vii. provide statistics on an individual or group basis as required

GUIDELINES

1. The school will acknowledge, celebrate and reward excellent and significantly improved attendance via communication with parents/carers, student certificates and badges, and a range of raffle prizes awarded to those with the best or most improved attendance.
2. All tutors will complete accurate registers promptly during the morning registration session.
3. Tutors will promote good attendance by ensuring that attendance graphs for each tutor group within a year group are displayed prominently in the tutor base. The value of good attendance will also be promoted via assemblies and posters in key locations around school.
4. Heads of House and the Head of Sixth Form will ensure that tutors within their teams are fully informed of the regulations referring to attendance and (un)authorised absences, and an agreed list of codes will be used by all tutors consistently.
5. Tutors will monitor the attendance of students in their groups, and communicate with the relevant Pastoral Team where there are concerns that a student's attendance is starting to fall.
6. In the case of a student's attendance falling below the school's minimum expected standard of 97%, the tutor will discuss this with the student on their return to school to try and identify any causes for concern relating to the student's absence. Where agreed in advance with the Head of House / Sixth Form, the tutor may make telephone contact with parents / carers to discuss the student's attendance and to offer support in ensuring attendance improves.

7. Where there is no improvement in attendance following the tutor's intervention, the Head of House / Sixth Form, in consultation with the Pastoral Learning Mentor, will trigger written communication with home to offer support in improving the student's attendance levels.
8. Should attendance continue to fall following the staged letter process initiated by the House / Sixth Form Team, the Head of House will be responsible for the following triage process:
 - a. The Head of House / Sixth Form and/or Pastoral Learning Mentor invites the parents / carers to meet in school to discuss the student's attendance and offer support.
 - b. Referral to Pastoral Attendance Lead (see point 10 below)
 - c. Referral to Educational Welfare Officer (see point 11 below)
9. Heads of House / Sixth Form and Pastoral Learning Mentors will meet fortnightly to monitor attendance levels and patterns of absence within the House / Sixth Form. This will enable effective interventions to be implemented to address poor attendance as per the triage process outlined above. A fortnightly meeting will also take place between each House and the Pastoral Attendance Lead / Educational Welfare Officer to ensure that these key staff members are working with the students on whose attendance their intervention can have the most positive impact.
10. The Pastoral Attendance Lead will maintain regular telephone and face-to-face contact with parents / carers of students whose attendance levels remain a cause for concern. As well as contributing to the recognition and reward of students maintaining high or improved levels of attendance, the Pastoral Attendance Lead will be responsible for implementing a four-week action plan and review process, ensuring that support is targeted to meet the needs of the individual student concerned. The Pastoral Attendance Lead will also collaborate with House staff on School Support Plans (SSP) and Team around the Family (TAF) processes where attendance is one of the key concerns. Where appropriate to support the family, home visits may also form a key part of the work of the Pastoral Attendance Lead.
11. The Educational Welfare Officer will be based at Neston High School for one day per week and will work largely with students who are officially categorised as persistent absentees. During this time, she will support the House teams in formal panel meetings with students and families. In addition, the EWO will meet with each House team to monitor and review attendance levels of all open cases, ensuring that intervention to address deteriorating attendance of these students is prompt, structured and thorough.
12. Where reasons for absence are not known, the Attendance Officer will make the initial contact with parents/carers to investigate. Where this proves unsuccessful in establishing the cause of the absence, the House / Sixth Form team will initiate more formal communication with home, liaising with the Pastoral Attendance Lead or Educational Welfare Officer as appropriate.
13. Subject Staff should complete their lesson registers promptly (within the first 10 minutes of a lesson) and accurately, and alert the Attendance Officer of any lesson to lesson discrepancies. This is a vitally important mechanism in safeguarding our students. Subject staff will update previously

saved registers if a student arrives late to a lesson for any reason to ensure all registers are accurate.

14. Subject staff should monitor patterns of attendance and absence within their lessons, rewarding good attendance and reporting to the respective Head of Department, Head of House / Sixth Form or Pastoral Learning Mentor where there is cause for concern.
15. Where students are withdrawn for study support from their normal lessons, the member of staff leading the withdrawal is responsible for ensuring that the student is accurately coded on the register.
16. Staff leading Educational Visits should ensure that lists are provided at least one week in advance of the visit for the Attendance Officer, the School Office and the Educational Visits Coordinator so that attendance can be credited accordingly. If a student due to take part is absent on the morning of the visit, a message must be delivered to the Attendance Officer to confirm this.
17. Heads of Department will induct trainee staff in the Registration procedures for the duration of their stay at Neston High School.
18. Truancy of a lesson will result in a red card being issued to the student, and parents / carers being invited into school to meet with the relevant Head of Department to discuss the school's concerns. If the truancy involves multiple subject areas, the Head of House will take the lead on this parent / carer meeting.
19. The school will ensure that parents are fully informed of the regulations referring to attendance. This can be done via newsletters, the website, and parent information evenings. An information booklet on attendance will be distributed to all parents / carers at Induction Evening in July so that those who are new to the school are familiar with our expectations regarding attendance and absence protocols.
20. For Years 7 - 13 the school operates an automated first day absence call system to confirm that parents are aware of the absence. Parents / Carers are asked to telephone school on the first day of absence and to keep the school fully informed as to the reasons for non-attendance on every day thereafter. On the child's return to school, a written note is required from parents / carers to confirm the reasons for absence. This note will be kept on the student's file.
21. Students are not permitted to leave the premises during the school day unless parents / carers make a written request to the student's Head of House / Sixth Form. If permission is granted following such a request (e.g. medical appointment), students must sign out at reception and sign in again on their return. This is an essential safeguarding measure.
22. Holidays during term time will not be authorised apart from in exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers must write to the Headteacher to make a request for authorisation of a planned holiday to be considered.

23. Where concerns regarding attendance persist despite all of the interventions outlined above, Pastoral Leaders should liaise with the member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for whole-school attendance for further support and guidance.

Additional points relating to Sixth Form attendance only:

1. Sixth Form students are expected to attend all lessons, including Personal Development, unless absence is authorised. Students are expected to arrive at tutor bases by 8.40am and must register for PM registration either with their class teacher if they have a lesson, or by swiping in at one of the electronic registration points.
2. If a member of staff is absent, students must swipe in at one of the electronic registration points and collect the work set, which should be completed in the LRC.
3. Parents / carers will be notified prior to examinations if study leave is to be granted.
4. Driving lessons should be organised out of school hours.
5. Whilst we will take each student's circumstances into consideration, any student whose attendance falls below 85% without a valid reason will be charged for examination entries and may forfeit their place to continue studies into year 13.

Name of Policy	Attendance
Name of lead member of staff	SNT
Committee & Date of Review	Liaison 05.10.17
Equality Impact Assessments	September 2016
Date of next planned review	Summer 17/18