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<b>Document No:</b>	<b>CR013</b>
<b>Issues No:</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Issue Date:</b>	<b>2023-02-01</b>
<b>Renewal Date:</b>	<b>2024-07-31</b>
<b>Originator:</b>	<b>Head of Personal Development</b>
<b>Responsibility:</b>	<b>Vice Principal Student Programmes and Apprenticeships</b>

## **STUDENT/APPRENTICE ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY AND PROCESS (NON-HE)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE**

**This Policy applies to all further education students and apprentices. The associated policy for Higher Education (HE) students is CR014.**

- 1.1 High levels of attendance and punctuality at all scheduled sessions of learning are vital to student/apprentice progress, development and ultimately achievement and success. Good attendance and punctuality are predominantly achieved through choice, which is built on positive behaviour and attitudes. The College is committed to identifying and providing support to all students/apprentices to attain high levels of attendance.
- 1.2 The College has a diverse student/apprentice group, including under 16s, 16 to 19-year-olds, adults, student/apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities and student/apprentices with a wide range of cultural and religious differences, all with varying needs and circumstances. It is acknowledged that students and apprentices may have commitments outside of their studies that affect attendance and punctuality and these need to be addressed appropriately to ensure students/apprentices are given the resources and support to catch up on missed learning. This is also the case in the event that a student/apprentice is suspended from College whilst an investigation into their behaviour is undertaken. However, the expectation is that all students/apprentices will commit to 100% attendance.
- 1.3 The main focus of the policy is to ensure that management and close, continuous monitoring is undertaken by the College, with sensitivity to individual needs and the challenges faced by students/apprentices. Poor attendance may be a symptom of underlying issues and may provide an early sign of support needs. The policy provides a framework within which to operate.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all student/apprentices (apart from Level 4+ prescribed and non-prescribed HE programmes/Higher Level Apprenticeships), and must be applied fairly and appropriately according to the age of the student/apprentice and their circumstances.

- 1.5 It is essential that staff set a good example in terms of their attendance and punctuality - all learning sessions and meetings must start and end on time, a slight change or deviation from this may seem supportive but can mean that expectations are lowered, risking misconceptions and leading to poor punctuality which can impact on other behaviours.
- 1.6 For students/apprentices who enrol at the age of 16-19 and are studying on a Study Programme (EPYP), attendance and punctuality relates to all elements of their programme i.e. Vocational/Technical qualification, English, maths, Personal Development and any other prescribed time.

## 2. PRINCIPLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The pattern and frequency of absence or lateness will determine the approach to be taken. For example, a one-off/authorised absence or one-off occurrence of five-minute lateness may require no action other than to acknowledge the absence or lateness, mark the register accordingly and provide any missing information or work. For some students/apprentices, this may require the arrangement of a short discussion/1:1 at the end of a future session. In the case of apprentices, it may be more appropriately raised in a review meeting.
- 2.2 Support (in the form of staff-led discussion, mentoring, coaching or alternative) must be provided by all involved in the student/apprentice's programme of study/course. Personal Development/Behaviour and Attitudes targets should be set to ensure that the student/apprentice has the best chance of making good progress on their chosen programme of study/course. The College will not take formal action (the 'Stages' within the Behaviour and Conduct Policy) with a student/apprentice without first giving them an opportunity to change their behaviours and/or overcome barriers, facilitated by following **Appendix 1** of this policy.
- 2.3 If support interventions have failed to impact on poor attendance or punctuality, the formal Stage 1 of the student/apprentice Behaviour and Conduct policy should be utilised. For study programmes this is led by the core aim/vocational Programme Area to maximise the amount of contact and support offered to the student/apprentice after each stage. It is advised that the Programme Area invites other departments such as English, maths, ALS as necessary who can support the necessary restorative actions. Parents/carers are to be informed at this stage for all those under the age of 18.
- 2.4 The first process in managing attendance and punctuality is notification via the College auto-alert system which notifies students/apprentices and their parents/carers (if under the age of 18), where there is unauthorised absence (register mark A). Learning Coaches (or teachers/managers on other types of programme) should respond to trends in attendance/punctuality by facilitating learning opportunities to encourage positive change and set relevant SMART targets, under the direction of the PAM/PL. If necessary, the assigned Learning Mentor (or equivalent) will support the student/apprentice to overcome barriers they may be facing.
- 2.5 Programme Areas must abide by the **Attendance Management Process (Appendix 1)**, however, each area will have additional procedures/processes in place to monitor and address attendance issues, using support services available within the College.

- 2.6 Patterns of attendance that are unexplained or where contact has not been possible with the student and/or emergency contact should be referred to the Safeguarding Team as a concern, for further investigation. Additionally, any discussions with students/apprentices or parents/carers relating to absence that highlight any potential wellbeing or other safeguarding issues should be referred to the Safeguarding Team, in line with normal reporting procedures (**Appendix 2**).

### **3. LEGAL AND FUNDING REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 Timely, accurate register marking is a legal necessity, and an important health and safety and safeguarding requirement.
- 3.2 Registers may be used as evidence in possible criminal/safeguarding proceedings, or to support other external agencies, and must be accurate for this reason.
- 3.3 Accurate registers must be available to support funding claims and provide audit evidence.

### **4. RECORDING AND REPORTING EXPECTATIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 4.1 Absence and lateness should always be recorded on the register (for more information on the appropriate codes to be used, refer to the College Register Policy and Procedure).
- 4.2 When pre-16 students are absent from a group, the relevant PAM must be contacted immediately so that the school/Local Authority can be informed without delay.
- 4.3 It is the individual responsibility of all staff to complete registers in line with College expectations **within the first 30 minutes of each session**. It is imperative that the College has a clear and accurate picture of student/apprentices in sessions, so that absence can be monitored and addressed in a timely manner. The College's auto-alert system will only trigger once a register has been completed within this timescale.
- 4.4 Student/apprentices will **never** be excluded from sessions due to lateness. In situations where student/apprentices are late to practical workshops or have missed demonstrations and relevant Health and Safety information, they will need to be accommodated within the class but not allowed to perform potentially dangerous operations or tasks without adequate preparation. Teachers/tutors/learning facilitators should be prepared for late comers and support students/apprentices at the point they arrive to a session.

### **5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- 5.1 Attendance data should be monitored using relevant reports at all levels of the organisation to enable informed decisions to be made on areas for improvement.

5.2 The outcomes and conclusions drawn from College-wide quality assurance processes will also identify relevant objectives to improve the attendance and punctuality of student/apprentices.

## **6. REVIEW OF POLICY**

6.1 The Vice Principal for Study Programmes and Apprenticeships is responsible for reviewing the Student/Apprentice Attendance and Punctuality Management Policy annually with the Head of Personal Development.

## Attendance/Punctuality Management Process

At induction, students/apprentices should be given the absence notification telephone number and instructions on how to use the ProPortal notification system.

All students/apprentices should be encouraged to notify absence prior to their first timetabled session. No other method of absence communication (such as message through friends or calling the curriculum area directly) is permitted. Students/apprentices should be requested to notify absence on each day of their absence unless a pre-arranged absence is approved by the Programme Lead or delegated (who should notify the rest of the team via ProMonitor Comments).

**N.B. for under 16s non-attendance must be reported to the PAM immediately in order for this to be recorded with the relevant school/LA process.**

**The College EBS system will auto-alert a student/apprentice (and for those under 18, their nominated Parent/Carer) once a register mark of absence has been made and submitted within the first 30 minutes of a session.**

### For each timetabled session



## Monitoring Patterns of Attendance - Programme Areas

- ✓ Check students/apprentices' attendance at the **end of each week**, via identified reports
- ✓ If student/apprentice has missed sessions within a **one week** period (for EPYP, including non-voc/tech sessions), without authorisation (register mark A), appropriately address the non-attendance with that student/apprentice
- ✓ If a student/apprentice has missed sessions over a **two week** period (any part of the programme), a meeting should be arranged between relevant staff, which could include the PL (inc the English and/or maths PL as applicable), the Learning Coach (as applicable) and the student/apprentice (and parent/carer if under 18) to discuss patterns and reasons for non-attendance and identify any barriers. Unless acceptable reasons can be shown (or there are mitigating circumstances which are accepted) the student/apprentice should be marked as 'at risk' and a plan should be put in place detailing how any missed learning is to be addressed
- ✓ Personal Development targets should be set to evidence the agreed expectations and support required to overcome any barriers, which can be supported by Learning Mentors (if appropriate). These should be reviewed regularly
- ✓ If a student/apprentice ***fails to take positive action after all of the above has been undertaken***, the formal processes under the College's Behaviour and Conduct policy – Stage 1 should be invoked. No student/apprentice should reach formal stages of the Behaviour and Conduct policy without all of these interventions being evidenced
- ✓ Notice boards should be updated regularly with attendance and punctuality information - no individual student/apprentice names should be identifiable
- ✓ The consecutive absence reports should be used regularly at team meetings to monitor 'at risk' students/apprentices
- ✓ Sample audits should be undertaken by PAMs to monitor absence and punctuality related issues, manage restorative actions as necessary and ensure that the monitoring and management has positive impact on attendance and punctuality

## Procedure for Students Missing Education

### Introduction

Leicester College has put these guidelines in place, to ensure appropriate safeguarding responses to students who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing.

### Process for Students Missing Education

Due to the daily contact that staff have with students, as a sector we are often well placed to notice when a student has gone missing. When a student or sibling group are withdrawn from college, or appear to have gone missing, staff should raise a concern with the Safeguarding Team and make every effort to trace the student as soon as it is apparent that the period of absence is unusual in any way.

The College has the responsibility to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence;
- ensure every student has access to full-time education; and
- act early to address patterns of absence.

### Identifying safeguarding concerns

The following is guidance on when an attendance issue may require escalation to the Safeguarding Team. It is not exhaustive and any concerns about a student's welfare can be referred to the Safeguarding Team for advice:

- Student indicates home difficulties preventing attendance (e.g., caring responsibilities, pressure to work)
- Student/parent identifies relationship issues at College (e.g., bullying)
- Out of character pattern of absence (e.g., leaving class/college early, turning up late)
- Parental response outside of normal behaviour (e.g., threatening towards student, lack of interest)

Staff can discuss ANY concerns about a student with the safeguarding team if they are worried.

***See overleaf for the process for escalating attendance concerns in these situations***

Student is Absent from College

Is the student 'Vulnerable' e.g. EHCP, Care Leaver, Looked After Child, Young Carer and/or known to have safeguarding concerns?

NO

YES

Follow Attendance and Punctuality Process

**DAY 5 - STUDENT IS UNDER 18, OR A VULNERABLE ADULT**, absent and no contact has been made.

Tutor/administrator must:

- Report a concern to Safeguarding Team via email (safeguarding@) Include steps already taken to contact student / parent(s) / carer(s) & any other relevant information.

Day 1

- Contact the student via email; phone or Teams.
- Tutor/administrator call and email parent(s) / carer(s) and emergency contact(s).
- Log absence on Pro-Monitor.

Contact made?

NO

YES

- Contact Safeguarding team via email (safeguarding@) with details of absence and steps taken to contact student

- Pro-Monitor updated
- Contact safeguarding team via email (safeguarding@) if any concerns raised from conversation with student/carer/parent

Safeguarding team to check CPOMs for any further information

- Safeguarding Team to try and make further contact with student, parent, carer or agencies (where app.)
- Safe and well check to be considered where no contact made.

- Safeguarding Team to provide feedback to Curriculum team (via PM and email) to update on actions.

Attendance policy actions should continue alongside safeguarding team activity unless otherwise agreed between SG team and PAM/PL