



# Astrea Academy Trust

INSPIRING BEYOND MEASURE

**Attendance Policy 2023-2024**

**Netherwood Academy Attendance Policy**

**Date policy Adopted :**

**Next review date: September 2024**

<b>Attendance Team members:</b>	
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Miss S Carnevale	Attendance & Safeguarding Officer
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## 1. Core Statement

Netherwood Academy recognises the importance of maintaining regular and punctual attendance for all students.

Research shows a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment which in turn gives students better lifelong opportunities.

'Outstanding Attendance' is considered to be 98% and above. Anything below 95% is a cause for concern and would trigger an investigation into the circumstances with a decision being made as to whether further action should be taken by the Academy.

Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' in line with government classification. If their attendance falls to this level we may make a referral to Education Welfare Service who will work with the family to improve attendance or we may take legal action where necessary. Students who meet this criterion will be monitored and if their attendance fails to improve a Penalty Notice fine may be issued. (Appendix 1)

- The attendance target for each student is **97% or above**.
- The Academy operates a first day of absence notification to reduce truancy.
- Netherwood Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Responding to attendance concerns is a safeguarding matter and will be treated as such.

## 2. Aims

- To improve the quality of school life and to create a culture in which good attendance is expected and normal.
- To demonstrate to students, parents and staff that good attendance is valued by the Academy, and to recognise that regular attendance is an achievement in itself.
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- To value the individual.

## 3. Objectives

- To secure genuine student involvement on attendance issues.
- To communicate effectively with parents in relation to attendance issues.
- To recognise and support the roles of staff in encouraging, promoting and monitoring good attendance.
- To achieve an effective working relationship with the Education Welfare Service via the targeted support service.
- To set, monitor and review appropriate strategic objectives which are currently identified as whole school figures of 97% attendance and punctuality

#### 4. Statutory and regulatory framework

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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:

- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 Update](#)
- [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [School Attendance Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools and Local Authorities May 2022](#)
- [Working Together to Improve School Attendance May 2022](#)
- [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures Jan 2015](#)
- [Children Missing in Education Sept 2016](#)
- [The Education Act 2011](#)
- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

#### 5. Associated Policies

This policy should not be seen in isolation and as such should be read alongside the following Netherwood Academy policies which can all be found [here](#) :

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

#### 6. Penalty Notice

In September 2019, the Academy introduced Penalty Notices in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2007 to parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Their child(ren) is/are truanting from the Academy

- Their child(ren) is/are absent from the Academy due to a holiday (above 10 sessions/ 5 days in total),
- Their child(ren) has/have attendance below 90%
- Their child(ren) is/are found to be in a public place during the first five days of exclusion.

Any request for a Penalty Notice to be issued will go through the Local Authority and any money received through the issuing of the Penalty Notice will go to the Local Authority and not the Academy. The Academy has put a range of interventions and support in place and works closely with parents and carers to improve low School Attendance. However, if Attendance does not improve after these procedures have been followed, the Academy will then refer to the Local Authority who will implement their own procedures which may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice and court action.

The penalty is £120 per child per parent if paid within 28 days, this reduces to £60 per child per parent if paid within the first 21 days. There is no right of appeal by parents/carers against a Penalty Notice. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28-day period, the Local Authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice. This could lead to a fine of up to £1000 per parent per child.

The Local Authority will not issue more than 2 Penalty Notices per calendar year to any person taking more than 2 periods of unauthorised absence. Where further absences occur or where the Local Authority deem it appropriate enforcement will be dealt with directly by the court.

## 7. Punctuality

All students are expected to attend the Academy when it is in session. Students are expected to be on site by 8:25am. Form begins at 8:30am and lessons begin at 8:50am prompt.

Students arriving late will be given a late mark. Morning sessions will be unauthorised after 9.25am

The Academy operates a 'late book' system during the course of the year to improve punctuality. The Academy reserves the right to apply an appropriate sanction such as monitoring report, detentions (including no notice end of day detentions) and referrals, however each case is judged upon its circumstances. In any case, parents/carers will be informed.

Students who are late will receive a 30 minute same day detention and parents will be notified by 1:55pm via school comms (MCAS).

Students are expected to stay on the premises all day, including lunchtime and only leave at the end of the Academy day, unless other arrangements have been made with the Academy. Failure to comply with this will lead to parent/carer being notified that the student has left the premises without authorisation, as well as notifying the Police. Furthermore, a sanction maybe be issued upon the student's return.

## 8. The Punctuality and Attendance Process

Netherwood Academy Attendance team members will be on duty for late books daily from 8:30am until 9:00am. **After 9:00am, all students arriving late must sign in at the Attendance Office before going to lesson.**

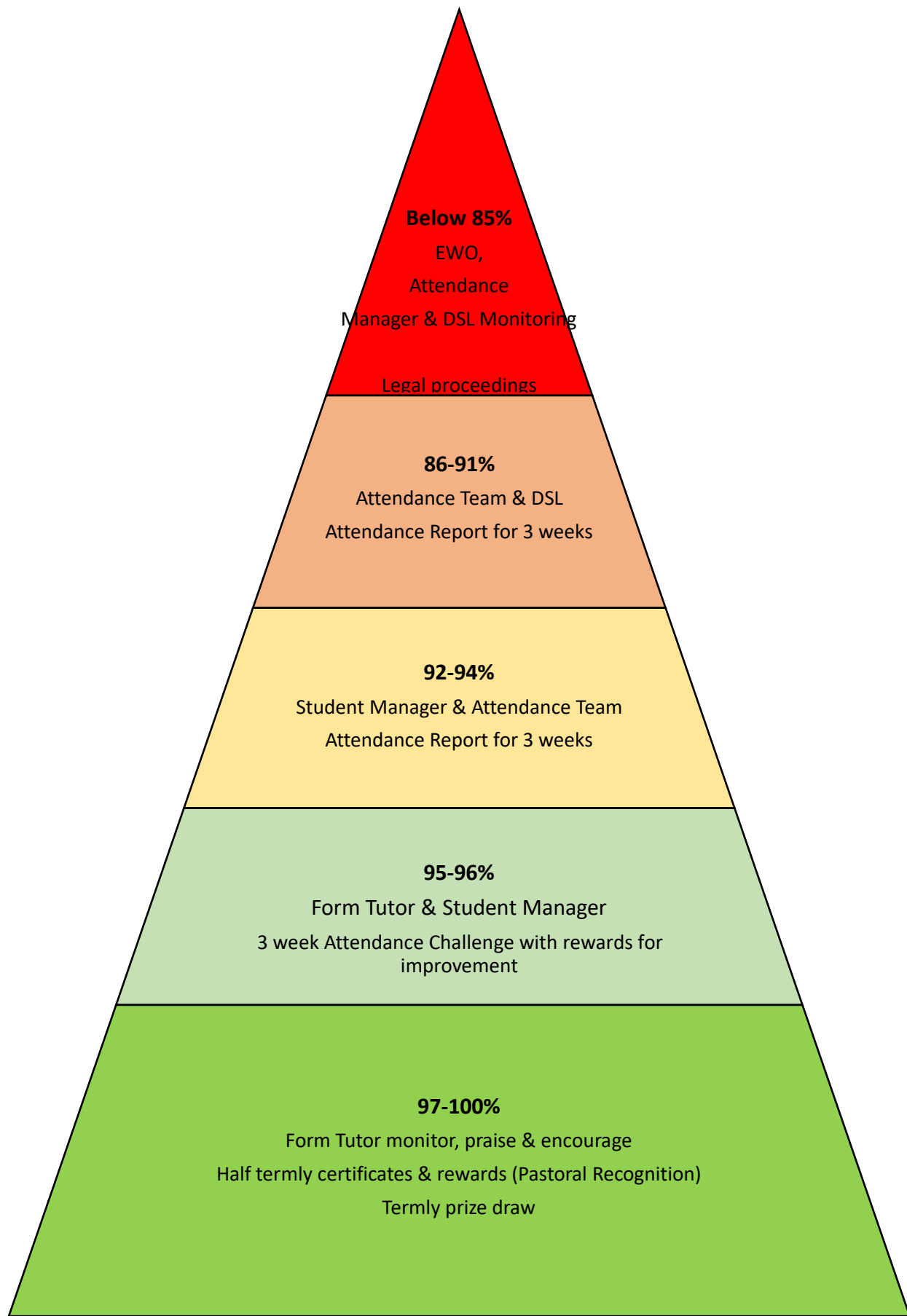
Graduated responses will be initiated for repeat offenders (both punctuality and attendance) which will include:

- Tutor and Student Manager conversations with student and phone calls home.
- Punctuality detentions – will be issued where students arrive more than 5 mins late
- Punctuality/Attendance report to tutor and Student Manager/KS Attendance & Safeguarding Lead.
- Attendance concern Letter 1 sent - meeting with Student Manager and parents where agreed targets are set, report to Student Manager for 3 weeks.

- Attendance concern Letter 2 sent - meeting with KS Attendance & Safeguarding Lead, Student Manager and parents where agreed targets are set, report to Attendance Manager for 3 weeks.
- Attendance Concern Letter 3 sent - ISAP Meeting with KS Attendance & Safeguarding Lead, DSL and parents where agreed targets are set, subsequent 3-week monitoring of agreed targets.

Should any unauthorised attendance be recorded at each stage, automatic progression to the next stage will be initiated. Failure to meet these targets will result in a referral to the EWO.

### **Summary of Attendance Monitoring**



Summary of procedures for following up absences

Absences will **not** be authorised without medical evidence after 3.5 days absence being recorded in a term. Further unauthorised absences at any point will be deemed as unacceptable progress and statutory procedures may commence.

**96% or Below**

**Form Tutor & Student Manager** contact parents/carers (ACL1)

Attendance Challenge targets established & monitored for 3 weeks with weekly updates to parents/carers via telephone. First Day absence calls as required.



**94% or Below**

**Student Manager / KS Attendance & Safeguarding Lead** contacts parents / carers (ACL2)

Initial ISAP meeting takes place to set targets, minutes recorded & signed. Attendance report for 3 weeks with weekly telephone updates to parents/carers followed by Review ISAP meeting. First Day absence calls as required. Review Pastoral Support needs. Discuss with / refer to School Nurse for persistent medical absences.



**91% or Below**

**Attendance Team & DSL** meet with parents/carers (ACL3) minutes recorded & signed. Daily PA monitoring commences.

Referral to **EWO**. Offer Early Support Assessment if appropriate.

Home visits conducted if absent. Consideration given to statutory proceedings



**Statutory Procedures Commence**

Parent/Carer contracts

Penalty notices

Legal Proceedings

NB. Where parents/carers fail to respond to AC letters/fail to attend meetings, Attendance Manager to follow up with **Missed ISAP meeting letter**



The Academy deem the following as **ACCEPTABLE** reasons for absence:

- ✓ Genuine illness – NOT minor ailments such as headache, hay-fever or sore throat!
- ✓ Medical appointments – doctors, dentist, orthodontist (please make appointments outside of school hours where possible)
- ✓ Bereavements

The Academy deem the following as **UNACCEPTABLE** reasons for absence:

- ✗ Holidays – the Academy does not automatically agree to give time off during term time
- ✗ Birthdays – You should come to school on your birthday and enjoy the day with your friends
- ✗ Shopping – this can be done after school or at weekends
- ✗ Babysitting / Caring for relatives

### **9. Holidays in term time**

We understand that it is often more expensive to take a family holiday during the school breaks however, the law says that parents do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time.

**The Academy will not authorise term time holidays.**

### **10. Leave of absence**

Leave of absence requests should be submitted in writing to the Principal with evidence to support your case. Leave of Absence request forms can be obtained from the Attendance Manager.

Absences for religious observance **must** also be requested in writing as a leave of absence. One day religious observance (Code R) may be granted however any additional days of absence, for example travel would be unauthorised.

If your request for a term time holiday or other absence is refused and your child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a penalty notice will be actioned.

**Parents/carers need to be aware that any leave of absence authorised by the Academy is still an absence and is counted against the child's attendance record.**

## 11. Responsibilities

The Principal and SLT understand their role and recognise that many conditions encourage good attendance; they will therefore seek to ensure that the conditions and climate are appropriate. Due consideration will be given to the quality of the Academy, its ethos and classroom experience; appropriate curriculum opportunities; effective pastoral care; quality relationships; and good communication systems with parents and external agencies.

The Education Act 2002 places the responsibility for enforcing school attendance on the Local Authority. This responsibility is delegated to the Academy who will utilise a wide range of available options including:

- Family Services referrals
- Penalty Notices
- Attendance panel meetings with parents/carers
- Court Action under Section 444(1) and (1)(a) of the Education Act 2002

Court action can be initiated swiftly against parents/carers in relevant circumstances should the Local Authority deem it necessary.

**Parents/carers** have a duty to ensure that their children receive full-time education. The responsibilities of parents/carers are listed below:

- The child attends the Academy regularly and on time, arriving at the Academy by 8:25am. Students who are late due to a late drop off will be sanctioned in line with the Academy's policy.
- To contact the Academy immediately if their child is going to be absent; on each day of absence.
- All absences are explained in a parental note/completed slip in the child's planner, **which should be given to the attendance office**, on the child's return to the Academy.
- Medical evidence is provided for absences of 5 days or more. This can be a doctor's appointment card, prescription label, doctor's letter, hospital discharge letter etc. Failure to produce evidence following 5 or more days of absence will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.
- To notify the Academy of any known absence in advance e.g. medical appointments with evidence.
- Refrain from taking their child out of the Academy during term-time. The Academy does not authorise absence unless for medical purposes or in exceptional circumstances. The Academy will determine if an absence can be authorised and reserves the right to decline any request for absence that is deemed to be detrimental to a student's attendance and affect their education e.g. holidays. It is also encouraged that if a student is going to be absent from the Academy, s/he collects work from the relevant teachers, completes this and hands the work to the teacher/s for marking upon their return, to help them avoid falling behind in lessons.
- If a student is going to be absent due to illness for more than five days, e.g. following an operation, please inform the Academy immediately as we will be able to direct the student to the appropriate area of online learning. We will also send specific work if it is deemed appropriate for assessments and or examinations. Upon return, the Academy will review and consider any reasonable adjustments that may be required to support their learning.
- To contact the Academy if there are any issues relating to the child's wellbeing which affect attendance / punctuality so that support can be put in place.

A penalty notice may be issued to parents/carers for the following reasons:

- Their child is truant from the Academy
- They take holidays within term time

- Their child is found to be in a public place during the first five days of exclusion

## 12. **Missing Children**

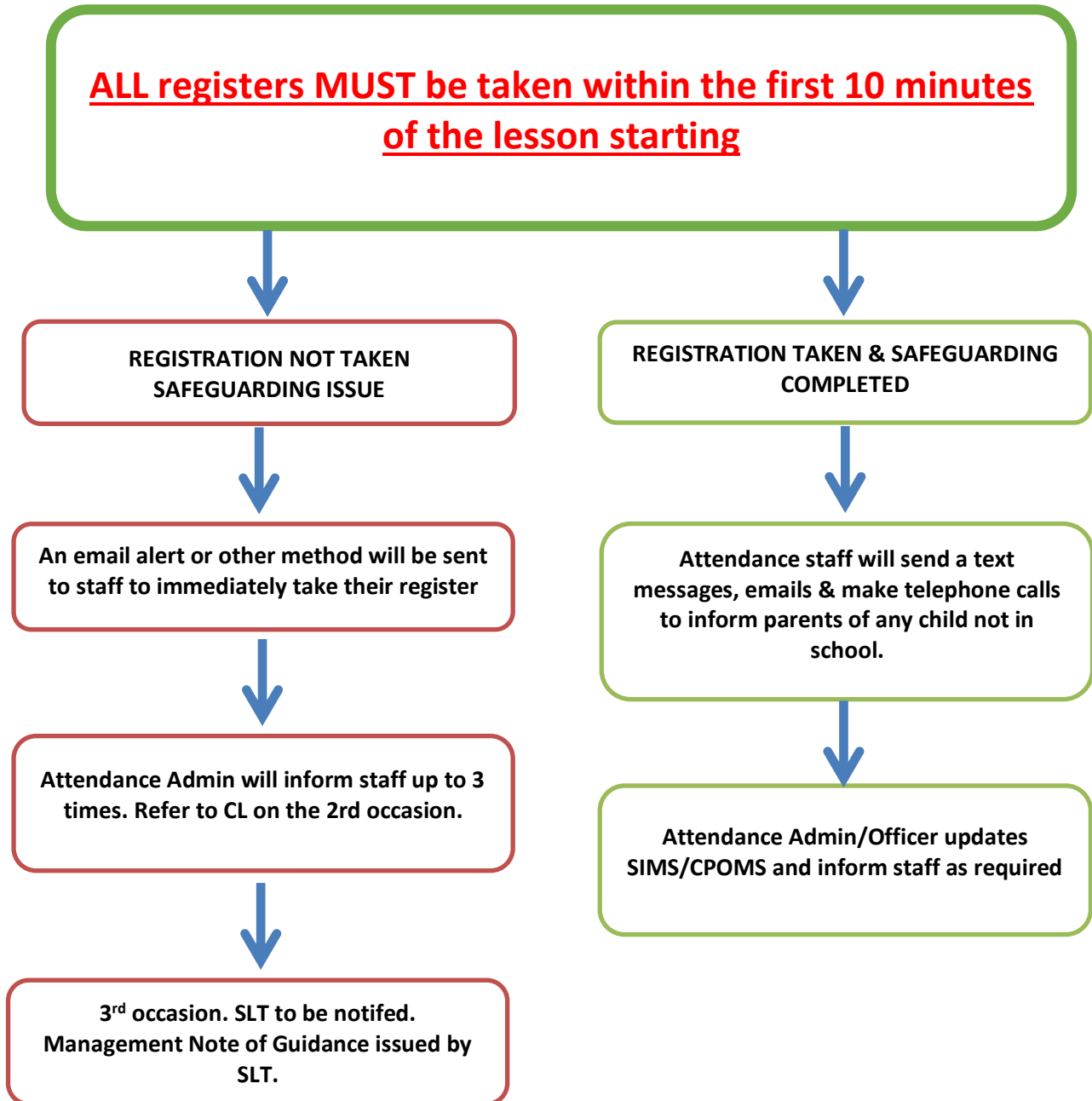
- After 5 days of absence and continued non-response, the Academy will issue an Attendance Concern letter.
- If no notification has been received from parents/carers regarding their child's absence after 10 school days, the Academy will report the child as 'missing from education' to the Local Authority for them to immediately investigate.

### 13. Staff Roles and responsibilities

Netherwood Academy staff will be consistent in their philosophy and approach to improving individual student and whole academy attendance. Whilst the Form Tutor, as first point of contact for students, has a major role to play in implementing this Attendance Policy, all staff have an essential role to play.

Attendance is an intrinsic part of Safeguarding, including accurate registration procedures.

## SAFEGUARDING & REGISTRATION PROCEDURE



## 12.1 Tutors

- To have a key role in promoting, maintaining and monitoring good attendance
- Use the allocated weekly timeslot to update attendance in planners and ensure parents are signing to show acknowledgment.
- To be on time for registration and ready to meet and greet students.
- To record student attendance/lateness, complete registers accurately at the **beginning** of Form time and update throughout if anyone is late.
- Liaise with the Year teams, Attendance Manager and Wellbeing Team as concerns arise regarding individual students.
- Be aware of the procedures related to failing to take a register.
- To act as a role model.
- Follow up short term absences and update the Attendance Manager immediately when a note is brought or confirmation of reason for absence is received from parents/carers.
- Recognise that returning to school after a period of absence can be an uncomfortable time for the child and for the rest of the class. A welcoming approach from staff and students is necessary. Use effective statements for example “I’m very pleased to see you back” and provide opportunities for the form group to welcome back their peers.
- Congratulate students who have achieved excellent or improved attendance and punctuality
- Discuss the link between school attendance and attainment with Tutor group and encourage aspirational targets.

## 12.2 Subject Teacher

- To be on time for all lessons.
- To support student attendance by keeping accurate class registers on Lesson Monitor at the beginning of each lesson, saved to Bromcom within 10 minutes of the start of lessons, and updating throughout for anyone who is late (remember to include minutes late).
- To be aware that legal pm registration takes place at the beginning of Period 4. (Completed between 12.20 and 12.30).
- To act as a role model.
- To positively welcome students who have been absent for a period of time and assist with catching up missed work.
- Be aware of the procedures related to failing to take a register.

## 12.3 Student Managers/Progress Leaders, Attendance & Safeguarding Leads

- To ensure students who arrive late to school arrive at lessons as soon as possible ready to learn (with correct uniform, equipment)
- To oversee and monitor overall year group attendance working with tutors and Attendance Manager/SLT.
- To promote and recognise positive attendance through our rewards system

- To monitor student attendance patterns – identifying students in danger of becoming PA, implementing Attendance Monitoring and Follow up procedures.
- To co-ordinate action with the tutors, Wellbeing Team, Attendance Manager and parents.

To encourage students to discuss concerns/problems with pastoral staff before/after school and during social times rather than missing lessons

#### **12.4 Attendance Manager /Attendance Admin assistant**

- To manage the Late Book each day from 9:00am and liaise with Attendance and Safeguarding Officers and the Pastoral team regarding any sanctions, trends and concerns.
- To compile the registration data on a daily basis using electronic registration
- To spot and check any anomalies (including missing marks or incorrect codes) in registers.
- To email staff re missing registers and liaise with DSL regarding persistent missed registers.
- Monitor and record the attendance of students at off-site provisions, trips, work placements and those on part time timetables.
- To ensure the Attendance Tracker is up to date and accurate, including exclusions.
- To record details from parents who phone in with absence information.
- To contact parents/carers to ascertain reasons for absence using the following priority: - Students at risk - Looked after children - Free School Meals Students - Serious known absentees - Students below 80, 85, 90% attendance
- To liaise with DSL, Pastoral Team and Form Tutors on a regular basis to share information on absentees, holiday applications, social problems and attendance panels.
- To be the main point of contact for parents re absence.
- To refer and liaise with DSL, Wellbeing Officer & EWO for students whose attendance drops below 90%.
- To arrange and attend all attendance panels and to follow up lack of parental engagement
- To undertake home visits as necessary.

#### **12.5 Medical /first aid**

- Ensure any students attending return to lessons as soon as possible with a note in planner explaining where they have been and time left.
- Ensure Bromcom registers are completed where students are out of lesson.

#### **12.6 SENDCO**

- To liaise with Form Tutor, Pastoral team, Safeguarding & Wellbeing team regarding additional support needs which may contribute towards a student's attendance

### **12.7 Early Help (Safeguarding & Wellbeing Officer) & Attendance & Safeguarding Officers**

- To liaise with the DSL, Head of Years, Mentors and SENDCO regarding concerns about student absence through providing monthly updates for all referred students.
- To offer and complete Early Help Assessments with families to identify support needs and most appropriate agency referrals.
- To act as Lead Professional for Internal EHA cases
- To meet regularly with the SLT Link, DSL and the Attendance Manager to deal with attendance issues.
- In association with DSL/SENDCO to attend relevant inter-agency meetings as required.

### **12.8 The Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- Responsible for the consistent implementation of the Attendance Policy by all staff and monitoring/reviewing the Attendance Policy at regular intervals
- To liaise with Heads of Year, Student Managers, the Attendance Manager & EWO.
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is a regular item at Pastoral meetings.
- Monitor use of Part Time Timetables and reintegration support
- Monitor incomplete registers and follow up on staff that repeatedly fail to take them

Other external agencies including Social Services, Looked After Children Team, the Home Tuition Service, Health Services, the Education Psychology Service, Children & Young People's Services and the Inclusion Support Service will be involved as appropriate.

### **13. Rewards**

Although the Academy recognises the ultimate aim of student's achieving good attendance for their own intrinsic benefits, it also appreciates the importance of recognising good achievement with rewards.

Rewards will take the form of achievement points to those students meeting the agreed targets, positive contact with home to praise individual students, celebration assemblies and rewards. Half term and termly targets will be recognised at assemblies at the end of each half term/term and commendations will be awarded at the annual Awards Evenings.

95% - 100% attendance will allow entry to termly prize draws

### **14. Attendance Panels**

Attendance panels will be held with students having unacceptable attendance. There will be three stages of attendance panels:

- Tutor/Student Manager
- Attendance Team / Pastoral Team
- Attendance Team / DSL

Parents/ carers will be invited to attendance panels.

An attendance action plan will be agreed at all attendance panels signed by all parties and a three-week review meeting set.

Should all targets be met at the point of review, including an improvement in attendance, further action may not be taken but attendance will continue to be monitored.

If attendance has not improved during the three week review period, appropriate further action will be taken.

### **15. Quality Data**

The Academy will record attendance using an electronic system; clear guidelines for its use are issued to all tutors.

Subject teachers also keep records of student attendance at the beginning of every lesson using Lesson Monitor. The Attendance Manager is able to view the data and track patterns of non-attendance in lessons with the Pastoral and Safeguarding teams. There are established procedures for occasional checks on absconding and internal truancy.

Data from registers is linked to the Astrea Attendance Tracker and Athena which allows quality statistical analysis.

### **16. Review**

Reviews of Attendance issues will be undertaken on a regular basis by:

- students in one-to-one interviews with tutors
- all staff at their calendared meetings
- Pastoral / Year Teams with SLT Link
- the Leadership Group at key points in the year
- the Attendance Manager with key staff at half-termly intervals
- the Transition Management Board (TMB) at Half Termly meeting

### **17. Reintegration Policy**

When long-term absentees return to school it is important that they are sympathetically treated by all staff. Re-integration often fails because it is unplanned; the student is sent back to his/her original timetable as if nothing has happened. Staff should be reminded to **be sensitive, confine any remarks about the absence to 1:1 situations and to bear in mind the context of the attendance issue.**

For each student, the Student Manager and Progress Leader should liaise with others to draw up a re-integration action plan. This plan will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence, and may involve a reduced timetable in the first instance and temporary additional support within the Inclusion provision.

All staff who teach the student need to be advised in advance of an anticipated return so that they can plan how to re-introduce the student to their lessons. A risk assessment will be completed with the Student where necessary.





## Procedures for completing the class register

### Expectation:

- The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register
- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school by:
  - Having regard for the need to safeguard students' wellbeing, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks, which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- Netherwood Academy expects all staff to complete their class registers within the first ten minutes of the lesson. Failure to do so will result in the following process:

### **Procedures for Register Misconduct**

Register misconduct includes:

- An individual AM register missed

### **OR**

- A lesson register not completed within the first 10 minutes

The register misconduct will stay on record for 15 weeks

Step	Misconduct	Consequence
1	1 Register	Email reminder sent to staff member by Attendance Manager
2	2 Registers	A second email reminder sent to staff member with Curriculum Lead copied in stating this is the 2 <sup>nd</sup> time in x weeks, failure to complete another register may result in further action being taken
3	3 registers	An informal conversation with the individual and SLT link. A management Note of Guidance is issued. Further incidents may lead to formal disciplinary action being taken, as this is a reasonable management request
4	4 Registers	A formal invitation is sent to the employee and a meeting with the Principal takes place. A formal outcome is then recorded on file, in line with the disciplinary policy e.g. a warning may be issued
5	5 Registers	Progression to next stage in disciplinary system eg if a verbal warning has been issued, this would lead to a first written warning

