



Outcomes
First Group

Student Attendance Policy

For Acorn Education & Options Autism colleges

Syon Manor College

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

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Terminology - please note that the terms “our teams” and “team member/s” include everyone working in Outcomes First Group’s services in a paid or unpaid capacity, including employees, consultants, agency staff and contractors.

This policy applies to all Acorn Education and Options Autism colleges.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

We recognise that the children and young people we educate, and support have often had difficult collegeing experiences previously, and that this can create additional challenges for college attendance. An inclusive trauma-informed, neurodivergence-affirming ethos is at the heart of our approach. We seek to understand and support our children and young people to help them enjoy and achieve the best outcomes from college.

We also recognise the importance of understanding the context of a child or young person's absence from college and the impact of language used. We therefore differentiate between:

- Truancy refers to a young person's deliberate or unauthorised absence from college without a valid reason. It is often associated with disengagement or a lack of value placed on education. Addressing truancy typically involves a structured approach that includes understanding underlying barriers, re-engagement strategies, and clear expectations around attendance.
- Emotion Based College Avoidance (EBSA) - describes a young person's difficulty attending college due to overwhelming emotional distress, such as anxiety, sensory sensitivities or past trauma. EBSA is not a choice but a response to perceived threat or discomfort, requiring a compassionate, trauma informed approach that prioritises emotion regulation, relationships, and gradual exposure to the college environment.

We are committed to promoting good attendance and punctuality to:

- enable and facilitate opportunities for a good education
- provide our children and young people with the support they need.
- Enhance quality of life, well-being and development of life and social skills
- Effectively safeguard our children and young people
- Reduce the likelihood of involvement in anti-social behaviour or other criminal activity

2.0 AIMS

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to college attendance by:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all students
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence and severe absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure students have the support in place to attend college
- Address EBSA with a trauma informed and neurodiversity affirming supportive approach

We will support parents and carers recognising their legal duty to ensure regular attendance for children of compulsory college age. At the same time, we recognise the complexity of individual student needs and understand that promoting punctuality and regular attendance requires a sensitive and supportive approach. Our commitment includes working collaboratively with families and professionals to identify and address any barriers to attendance, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive within a learning environment that acknowledges and accommodates their unique challenges.

[Working together to improve college attendance](#) highlights the benefits of regular attendance at college, particularly:

- the correlation between high academic performance and high attendance
- it is an important protective factor for more vulnerable children and young people

With this in mind, we will consistently work towards the most regular attendance for our children and young people. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance in a supportive way. This policy contains within it the procedures that the college will use to meet its attendance targets.

Our college is committed to promoting consistent attendance through the implementation of targeted, responsive measures designed to support every student's ability to engage fully with their education. These include:

- **Accurate Registration:** Ensuring students are registered efficiently and reliably each day
- **Target Setting:** Establishing realistic and motivating attendance targets for individual students and year groups
- **Prompt Communication:** Contacting parents/carers on the same day when absences are unauthorised or reasons are unclear
- **Ongoing Monitoring:** Regularly reviewing student attendance and punctuality data, with timely support meetings following prolonged absence
- **Supportive Reintegration:** Holding 'return to college' meetings to ensure smooth transitions back into the classroom
- **EBSA-Informed Practice:** Advancing our approach to Emotion-Based College Avoidance (EBSA), applying it where appropriate and needed
- **Pattern Tracking and Thematic Analysis:** Monitoring attendance trends, identifying recurring themes such as anxiety, illness, or social barriers, and using this insight to inform tailored support plans
- **Transparent Reporting:** Sharing attendance statistics with parents/carers, local boroughs, and the Department for Education, as appropriate

Our approach is underpinned by empathy, collaboration, and a shared commitment to helping each child and young person to thrive.

3.0 LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE

This policy has been developed in line with:

[Working together to improve college attendance](#) (DfE statutory guidance)

[College Attendance Parental responsibility measures - GOV.UK](#) and

[All Wales attendance framework | GOV.WALES](#)

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern college attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [The College Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#) which also refers to:
- [College census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a student's attendance: guidance for colleges](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [College Standards and Organisation \(Wales\) Act 2013](#)
- [Education \(Scotland\) Act 1980](#)

This policy must be read and applied in line with the college's

- Safeguarding Policy
- Student/Carer Communication Policy
- Behaviour Policy (Person-centred and Neurodivergence-affirming)

4.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body is responsible for holding the headteacher or equivalent to account for the implementation of this policy, including:

- Setting high expectations of all team members, students and parents / carers
- Ensuring college leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - college attendance is recorded accurately in the register for morning and afternoon sessions, and the required information is shared with the DfE and local authority
 - the college works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of college attendance across the college's policies and ethos
- Making sure the college's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for students who need it most by prioritising team members and resources
- Ensuring the college has high aspirations for all students, but adapts processes and support to students' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping college leaders focus improvement efforts on individual students or cohorts who need it most

- Working with college leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole college and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the college's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting students' needs
- Where the college is struggling with attendance, working with college leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Ensuring all team members receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that team members understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The college's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The college's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific students, where appropriate
- Ensuring dedicated training is provided to team members with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data

4.1 Those responsible may include the team members below, but will be college specific:

4.1.1 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the college
- Monitoring college-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting team members with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Instructing the relevant Local Authority to issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Working with the parents / carers of students to develop specific support approaches for attendance impacted by SEND, including where college transport is regularly being missed, and where students with SEND face in-college barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a student has challenges in attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the student's needs
- Communicating the college's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to students and parents / carers through all available channels

4.1.2 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader at our college is Matt Ayling and is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the college
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all team members
- Liaising with students, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with students and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to students and families

4.1.3 The attendance officer

The college attendance officer at our college is Helen Blundell and is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to team members and reporting concerns about attendance to the Heads of Key Stage / Assistant Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding lead, Designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
 - Arranges calls and meetings with parents/carers to discuss attendance issues
 - Ensures registers are pre-coded for known absences and have been completed and coded correctly.
 - Makes daily calls or sends texts to parent/carer of children who have not contacted the college to let us know where they are.
- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when it may be appropriate to consider advising a Local Authority to issue fixed-penalty notices

4.1.4 Heads of Key Stage and Assistant Headteachers

- Ensure that tutors are provided with Attendance data weekly
- Ensures that attendance is a standing item during Key Stage Meetings
- Arranges and actions 'return to college' meetings as per appendix
- Takes overall ownership and accountability of Year Group attendance.

4.1.5 Mentors

Mentors are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information to the college office on the same day via ISAMS

Form Tutors are responsible for making weekly contact for those students who are not present at college for long periods of time and are responsible for collating the educational materials for these students so that they can access education from home should this be required. This could then be provided to the key stage leads to ensure it gets to home.

Mentors are responsible for ensuring that any information which they have from the parents/carers should be documented on the register in the notes section to ensure this has been captured on the legal document. This includes information passed to parents/carers through any other agreed communication channel.

Class Teachers will remind parents/carers that they are to follow the college absence policy - contacted directly through email or calls should be made to the college on 0208 5889610 **before 9:30 on every day their child will be absent.**

Mentors will remind parents/carers who contact them directly with evidence of appointments, or reasons for their child/young person to be absent for college to email syonmanorenquires@syonmanorcollege.co.uk

4.1.6 College admin team members

College admin team members will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the college system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the mentors or pastoral lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

5.0 EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS, CARERS, AND THOSE WITH PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

To support their child's regular college attendance, parents, carers, and those with parental responsibility are asked to:

- Ensure their child attends every scheduled college day or timetabled session punctually
- Notify the college of their child's absence by [insert time, e.g. 9:00am] on the first and each subsequent day of absence, providing an expected date of return
- Supply the college with more than one emergency contact number for their child, where possible
- Arrange medical and other appointments outside the college day whenever feasible
- Adhere to any attendance contracts agreed with the college and/or local authority
- Seek support when needed by contacting [insert role, e.g. Head of Year, Pastoral Lead, Family Liaison Officer] via [insert telephone number/email address]
- Engage proactively with the college's designated contact (e.g. Family Liaison Officer), maintaining open and regular communication to clarify needs and co-develop effective support plans

By working in partnership with the college, families can help ensure their children feel safe, supported, and ready to thrive.

5.1 Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of college at 9-9:30 The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. After this, registers will be marked as L if students arrive after 9:30 but before **insert time**. However, any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence and missing the session of college. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

Students arriving after the start of college but before 9.30am will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

The college will commit to supporting parents/carers/those with parental responsibility should lateness occur through college transport issues, but lateness caused by transport will be marked as late in the registers in line with this policy.

Students are supported to attend college on time every day.

6.0 RECORDING ATTENDANCE

6.1 Attendance Register

The college will keep an attendance register and all students will be listed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each college day, and once during the second session using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the [College Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) or national equivalent, whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment
- We will keep entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not.
- The nature of the activity if a student is attending an approved educational activity.
- The nature of the circumstance where a student is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

6.2 Unplanned Absence

- The student's parent/carer must notify the college on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:30 or as soon as practically possible.
- Parents/carers should phone the college 02085889610 and leave a message or speak to an administrative team member to let them know that their child will not be attending college with the reason.
- We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the college has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the college 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.
- Department for Education guidance states that if the college 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.

6.3 Planned Absence

- Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the college in advance of the appointment and provides evidence of the appointment.
- Evidence of appointments, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence, should be emailed directly to syonmanorenquires@syonmanorcollege.co.uk
- However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of college hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of college for the minimum amount of time necessary.
- 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. This is addressed later in the policy to find out which term time absences the college can authorise.

6.4 Following up absence

When a child is expected to attend college does not attend, or stops attending, the college will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by sending a text, email or a phone call.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use
- Where appropriate, offer support to the student and / or their parent / carers to improve attendance
- Identify whether the student and / or their family needs support from other organisations as quickly as possible and make the necessary referrals
- Conduct home visits where necessary

6.5 Medical or dental appointments

It is the statutory duty of every parent/guardian to ensure that their child attends college regularly and on time, (Section 444(1) [Education Act 1996](#)).

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment may be counted as an authorised absence if advance notice has been given or evidence provided. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of college hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of college for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. See below for information relating to whether the college can authorise such absences.

6.6 Reporting to Parents

Parents can request a copy of their child's attendance record at any time.

We report to parents on their child's attendance record in Annual Review's and end-of-year reports. In line with the college's rewards scheme, monthly notification of their child's attendance will be sent home for those:

- 95% and over
- Improved attendance

In line with this policy, contact could be more frequent if we are working with you to improve your child's attendance.

6.7 Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the student, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period and scanned/noted on ISAMS.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the college has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the college may ask parents/carers to provide evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for evidence unnecessarily.

If the college is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents will be notified of this in advance.

6.8 Timeline of College Action for Low Attendance

Each student's attendance can be summarised as:

95% +	Excellent attendance. This will support all aspects of your child's progress in college. This will give them a good start in life and encourages a positive work ethic. Your child's attendance is at or above the college target. Keep striving for 100%.
90% - 94%	Good effort. This attendance rate is moving towards the target of 95%. Improved attendance will benefit your child both academically and socially. Your child's attendance is almost at the college target.
BELOW 90%	A student whose attendance is below 90% is defined as a 'persistent absentee' by the Department for Education. Unauthorised or Unsupported by Medical Evidence 1) Department for Education views that absence is now a concern and is at risk of significantly affecting your child's attainment and progress. You will receive an initial letter of support and be invited in to meet with the class teacher/Key Stage Leader to establish whether we can offer you any additional support to improve your child's attendance. 2) If attendance does not improve in the next month or falls even further within the academic year, a second letter inviting you to meet with the Assistant Headteacher will be sent. At this second meeting, a support plan and an attendance target will be set across an agreed timescale which will be monitored by the class team/Key Stage Leader. 3) If there is still no improvement or the attendance rate falls further within the academic year, parents will be invited to an attendance support panel meeting will be held where an agreement will be made between the college and the parents for how all parties will work towards improving the attendance of the student. 4) If the agreement put into place does not improve attendance a formal request needs to be made to the local authority regarding these concerns and possible legal consequences could follow as set out by the Department for Education. Medical reasons for absence – If your child has an ongoing medical condition that means they are unable to attend college; we apply their attendance figure with this knowledge. Therefore, discretion may be applied to the process above.

Attendance Targets

Our college target is: All students attend over 95% of the time.

Where students have been identified with specific medical or therapeutic needs who have a high level of absence, they will be supported by the following strategies:

Daily contact with parents/carers to correctly authorise absences.

- Provide support as part of the Universal approach from the college to support students where their reasonable adjustments need supporting with regards to their needs in order to support parents to get their children to college.
- Provide home visits where appropriate.
- Create contracts of agreed actions with parents and children, where possible, to improve their attendance – incorporating an attendance support plan.
- Working with the Local Authorities and other agencies to record such absences as authorised to reflect attendance as good as can be expected for these students and the college.
- Recognise that some students are not 'available for learning' and work with the LA and other agencies to allocate appropriate provision which may not be within our college.
- Recognise that these students may still be eligible for rewards for attendance with medical absences not applied to their overall percentage for the purpose of rewards.

6.9 Welcome Back

We recognise the importance of a supportive and inclusive return for all students following significant periods of absence. Our approach ensures that individual needs are considered carefully, promoting a smooth transition back into the college environment. This includes:

- **Routine Reintegration:** Supporting students as they adjust to the college's daily routines and expectations
- **Curriculum Catch-Up:** Providing opportunities to catch up on missed work and updating students on key information shared with peers during their absence
- **Phased Return Planning:** Where appropriate, implementing a phased return tailored to the student's circumstances, to ease the transition and promote sustained attendance

Our aim is to help every student feel welcomed, valued, and ready to re-engage with their learning community.

Team members should be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students. The college will:

- Inform all team members of the return to college process and involved where appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for clinical support if required.
- Consider peer support and mentoring as appropriate.
- Involve parents as far as possible.
- Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan.
- Include Children's Services, social workers, parents/carers and the student in return to college plan if appropriate.

7.0 AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

7.1 Approval for Term Time Absence

The headteacher or equivalent will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances' as set out in [The College Attendance \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#) or the national equivalent for the college.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion. The college considers exception circumstances to be:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with college holidays.
- Visiting a parent/carer who is imprisoned.
- Where an absence is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- The wedding of a close family member.

The college considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's (or equivalent) discretion. Although, if granted the leave would be authorised, the non-attendance would affect the overall percentage attendance for that child for that month.

The college considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account 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 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the website. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- a. Illness and medical/dental appointments where evidence is shown
- b. 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 college will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set part.
- c. 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 college, but it is not known whether the students attending educational provision.

Other reasons the college may allow a student to be absent from the college site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to) attending

- an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the college
- another college at which the student is also registered (dual registration)
- provision arranged by the local authority
- work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the student not to attend college, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the college premises are closed

7.2 Reducing persistent absence

It is outlined in the appendices the college's approach to supporting attendance.

In addition:

- a. A student becomes a 'persistent absentee (PA)' when they miss 10% or more collegeing across the college year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and cooperation to tackle this.
- b. All absences are monitored thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.
- c. PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our attendance officer, and we also combine this with the progress they make against their EHCP outcomes where absence affects attainment. All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan, and the plan may include; an individual incentive programme, support from the pastoral team, participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Participation team in the local authority.
- d. Parents will be expected to make agreements with themselves and their child for how they will be supporting their attendance at college. These will be captured during the attendance panel meeting as the action plan to support improved attendance.

7.3 Legal Sanctions

The Department for Education recommends that our college will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

The local authority may recommend a fine for parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from college, where the child is of compulsory college age.

Before advising a Local Authority to issue a penalty notice, the college will consider the individual case, including whether:

- the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 college weeks)
- a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that student
- further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- any obligations that the college has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during college hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the college has notified the parents that the student must not be present in a public place on that day).

7.4 Monitoring attendance

The college will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) termly and yearly across the college and at an individual student, year group and cohort level. Data and related actions will be reported and monitored using the Termly Head teacher Report to Governors and Governance Meeting formats.

Specific student information will be shared with the DfE on request.

The college will benchmark its attendance data at whole college, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

7.5 Analysing attendance

The college will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify students whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.6 Using data to improve attendance

The college will

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual students, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the students it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to Mentors to facilitate discussions with students and families, and to the governing board and college leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with local authorities and other partners where a student's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe where appropriate

7.7 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 10% or more of college, and severe absence is where a student misses 50% or more of college. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the college's strategy for improving attendance.

The college will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- Hold regular meetings with the parents / carers of students who the college (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at college
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available

- Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
- Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to OFG Clinical Support or external support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these students. In doing so, the college will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

8.0 STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

Regular college attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend as regularly as possible (recognising illness is inevitable). Students who miss college frequently can fall behind with their work and have less progress towards their EHCP outcomes. Good attendance also shows the reliability of students in more senior years to show future employers that the student is reliable.

Unauthorised absence in the first month of college can predict poor attendance throughout the college year. Half the students who miss 2-4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of college throughout the year.

To ensure excellent attendance at our college we will:

- Deliver clear messages about expectations, routines and consequences to new students and families through prospectus and admission/transition events
- Use physical presence to reinforce routines and expectations on arrival and departure including greeting students in the morning and having a consistent morning routine.
- Regularly communicate expectations for attendance and punctuality and college performance against EHCP targets through the regular channels of communication on Isams (and Class dojo if appropriate) with team members, students and parents/carers.
- Monitor implementation of policy and practice through form time drop ins by the key stage leads and assistant headteachers.
- Monitor whole college data regularly to identify reasons for absence, patterns, attendance of particular groups and the impact of interventions.
- Establish, implement and monitor robust arrangements to identify, report and support children who are absent from education.
- Develop good support for children with medical conditions (including the use of individual healthcare plans), mental health problems and their own special educational needs (SEND).
- Engage students in consultation on attendance policy, practice, rewards and sanctions through the student voice committee and through their own student voice in annual review if attendance is of concern.

9.0 CHILDREN ABSENT FROM EDUCATION

DfE Statutory guidance regarding Children absent from education states that children absent from education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation and becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) later in life.

Our college takes the following steps:

- All students are entered on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the college has agreed that the student will attend the college. This register is kept up to date and checked for accuracy, on a monthly basis.
- If a student fails to attend the college, the college will undertake reasonable enquiries to establish the child's whereabouts (following the steps listed in the above DfE guidance) and consider notifying the local authority at the earliest opportunity **or at the point that 10 consecutive days have been missed.**
- The college monitors students' attendance through daily registration. Daily absence is followed up by the college administration team who attempt contact with home to request a reason for absence. The college monitors attendance closely and addresses poor or irregular attendance. The college notifies local authorities of students who fail to attend regularly or have missed ten college days or more without permission.
- College will work with external agencies including the Local Authority, Participation Teams and Social Care to support families whose children have missed ten consecutive days of education. Whilst meetings and support are being implemented, the college will keep the child on roll. If engagement with home ceases despite support being offered, or support offered is subsequently declined then college will call an emergency Annual Review to discuss the placement and may consider giving its six-week notice period to end the placement subject to confirmation that the Local Authority are aware.
- College will continue to retain contact with students who have left the college to monitor the success of the next placement and to ensure any relevant records are passed on.
- Where a student has not returned to college for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent from college without authorisation for twenty consecutive college days and when the college and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the child, with the full knowledge of the local authority responsible for placing the child with us; and the relevant referrals have been made to the child's safeguarding team; the college reserves the right to consider terminating the placement by giving six weeks' notice to the Local Authority. At this point the student would be removed from the admissions register.
- The college remains committed to working with all agencies to establish the safety of the missing child even after their removal from the college roll.

10.0 THE MONITORING SYSTEM

This Policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authorities or government bodies is updated, and as a minimum annually by a member of SLT in liaison with the Designated Lead for Attendance and the Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and shared with the governing body.

10.1 Registration Process and Attendance Codes

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each college day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity



- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

The college uses a Management Information System (iSAMS) for keeping the college attendance records.

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on college attendance](#) and should be used by colleges in England. Colleges in Scotland and Wales should check with the required codes with local authority:

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the college		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Student is attending a place other than a college at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the college
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the college
W	Attending work experience	Student is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Student is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered

Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Student is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during college hours, approved by the college
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Student has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in college	Student of non-compulsory college age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Student is not in college due to having a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Student is a 'mobile child' who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Student is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)



E	Suspended or excluded	Student has been suspended or excluded from college and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend college because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Student is unable to attend college because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at college
Y1	Transport not available	Student is unable to attend because college is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Student is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of college premises closed	Student is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole college site unexpectedly closed	Every student absent as the college is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Student is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Student's travel to or attendance at the college would be prohibited under public health guidance or law

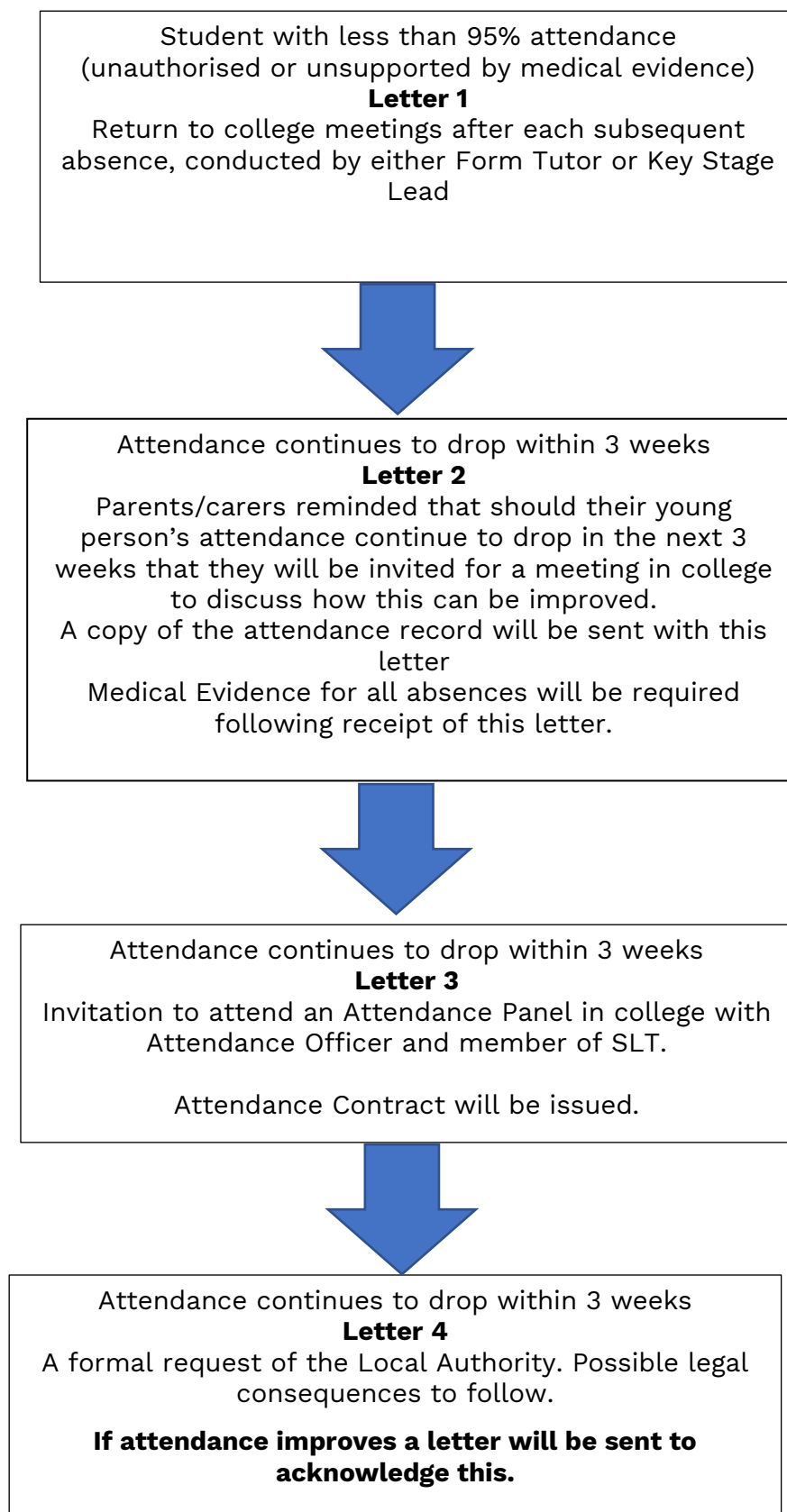


Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
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Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the college	Student is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the college
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the college isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in college after registration closed	Student has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective student not on admission register	Student has not joined college yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-college closure	Whole-college closures that are known and planned in advance, including college holidays

Important Definitions

- 1 college day = 2 sessions. This means that one day off a week will make a child's attendance for that week 80%.
- If a child has 9 days off over the whole year their attendance will be approximately 95% for the year.
- Authorised Absence means an absence has been classified as authorised when a child is away from college for a legitimate reason and the college has received notification from a parent/carer.
- Authorised absence still affects overall attendance figure and will impact on qualification for reward trips.
- Unauthorised absences mean an absence when a child is away from college without the permission of the college.

11.0 ATTENDANCE ACTION FLOW CHART

12.0 APPENDIX 1 – ATTENDANCE LETTER

Dear [INSERT NAME]

Re: [INSERT NAME]

DOB:

Current Attendance Academic Year 2024/25:

At [INSERT COLLEGE], we are committed to giving [INSERT NAME] the best possible education to support [INSERT NAME] to achieve the best outcomes for his future.

To ensure this happens, it is important we support you with [INSERT NAME] attendance by initially making you aware of [INSERT NAME] current attendance level.

[INSERT NAME] college attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to and as a result, we are becoming concerned that [INSERT NAME] is missing a significant part of learning.

No doubt you are aware that regular attendance is important so that [INSERT NAME] can maximise educational opportunities.

To enable us to monitor attendance across the college we use a banding system. The bands are:

- **95% and above = Green**
- **90.1% - 94.9% = Amber**
- **90% and below = Red (cause for concern)**

[INSERT NAME] is currently in our **Red (cause for concern)** banding level.

I will continue to monitor [INSERT NAME] attendance over the next three weeks and will write to you again if there is no improvement. We are aware that some of [INSERT NAME] recent absence has been due to ongoing medical concerns. Please ensure we have any doctor's/medical correspondence, so we can identify if there are any other avenues of support that we can explore with you.

You may be aware of Emotion Based College Avoidance (EBSA) – which describes a young person's difficulty attending college due to overwhelming emotional distress, such as anxiety, sensory sensitivities or past trauma. We recognise that EBSA is not a choice but a response to perceived threat or discomfort, requiring a compassionate, trauma informed approach that prioritises emotion regulation, relationships, and gradual exposure to the college environment.



Our Lead Clinician – [INSERT NAME], is available should you wish to understand more about EBSA, particularly if you think this is something that [INSERT NAME] may be experiencing and could be contributing to [INSERT NAME] feeling like he/she is not able to come to college.

Please find attached along with this letter a copy of [INSERT NAME] 2024/25 attendance report so you have an overview since September 2024.

If there are any particular circumstances that the college are not aware of which are having an influence on [INSERT NAME] attending college regularly, please do not hesitate to contact [INSERT NAME], Attendance Officer – so we can arrange a meeting to discuss your concerns and support you and [INSERT NAME] further.

Yours Sincerely,

Matt Ayling

Principal

13.0 APPENDIX 2 – ATTENDANCE LETTER 2

Dear (Parent's Name)

Re: (Student Name)

DOB: (Student DOB)

Attendance:

At Syon Manor College we are committed to giving your child the best possible education to support them to achieve the best outcomes for their future. To ensure this happens, it is important we support you with your child's attendance by making you aware that their current level of attendance has not improved since our previous communication. We are now requesting that all further absence must be supported with medical evidence of the reason that your child is not attending college.

You must be reminded that regular attendance is important so that students can maximise their educational opportunities. To enable us to monitor attendance across the college we use a banding system.

The bands are:

Ø 97% and above = Green

Ø 90.1-96.9% = Amber

Ø 90% and below = Red (unsatisfactory)

(forename) is currently in our (band level))

If there are any particular circumstances that the college are not aware of which is having an influence on (forename) attending college regularly, please do not hesitate to contact the attendance officer, so we can arrange a meeting to discuss your concerns and support you and (forename).

College will continue to monitor your child's attendance closely for the next 3 weeks and if there is, no significant improvement further correspondence will follow to invite to an attendance panel with a member of the college's SLT. If you require support with anything, please contact us so that a meeting can be arranged beforehand to discuss any concerns.

A copy of your child's attendance record has been attached to this letter for your reference.

Yours faithfully,

Syon Manor College Attendance Team

14.0 APPENDIX 3 – INVITATION TO ATTENDANCE CONTRACT MEETING

Dear (Parent's Name)

Re: Formal invitation to an Attendance Panel to discuss

Re: Student's name

DOB:

Attendance:

As a result of your child's continued failure to attend college regularly, COLLEGE NAME has deemed it necessary to convene a College Attendance Panel.

You are formally requested to attend the panel on (date) to be held at (time).

The venue will be at your child's college.

Your views and, where appropriate, those of your child will be sought and taken into consideration by the Panel when drawing up an Agreement, the terms of which will be negotiated.

If for any reason you cannot attend this meeting, you should contact Syon Manor College on the number below. Should you fail to attend this meeting a decision may be made in your absence by the Panel.

Continued poor attendance may result in Syon Manor College referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at [Insert name of Local Authority] for legal action.

Legal Action can be in the form of a Penalty Notice (currently £60 rising to £120) or a summons to the Magistrates Court.

A person found guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure that a child attends college regularly is liable to a fine currently not exceeding £1000

A person found guilty of an offence under section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 knowing that a child is failing to attend regularly at college and fails without reasonable justification to cause the child to attend college is liable to a fine currently not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months

In addition, the Court has power to make a Parenting Order requiring a parent to attend counselling or guidance sessions under the supervision of an appointed Responsible Officer.

Please bring with you any medical evidence such as a GP or Specialist letter or certificate. Also, any prescribed medication (not bought over the counter) so consideration may be given to your child's absences being authorised.

Yours sincerely

Syon Manor College Attendance Team

15.0 APPENDIX 4 – FAILURE TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE FOLLOWING ATTENDANCE PANEL

Dear (Parent's name)

Re: Student's name

DOB:

Attendance:

You and [Child's Name] were invited to an Attendance Panel meeting on [Enter Date] at [College Name] in relation to poor college attendance. At that meeting a plan was put together to improve attendance and you were made aware of the possibility of you being summoned to the Magistrates Court or a Penalty Notice issued should your child not attend regularly.

I have again examined the Attendance Registers and find that your child's attendance has again fallen to an unacceptable level. Up to and including this academic term, [Child's Name] has only attended _____ times out of a possible _____ sessions. A copy of your child's attendance record has been sent with this letter for your reference

Please contact me on [College Number] so that we may discuss the matter and agree any appropriate advice and guidance.

[Name of college] will no longer be authorising any of [child's name] absences unless you provide medical or other evidence that states that your child is unable to attend. The Head Teacher will decide whether your evidence is acceptable for authorisation.

It is my duty to remind you that you have a responsibility to ensure that your child attends college regularly and failure to comply may result in a prosecution under the Education Act 1996. The only acceptable reason for absence is when the child is ill covered by medical evidence if attendance is poor as requested by college, absence due to religious observance or in exceptional circumstances authorised by the Head Teacher.

I must inform you that unless your child returns to college immediately and attends regularly and punctually from now on, it may be necessary for the Attendance Support Service to consider legal action.

Legal Action can be in the form of a Penalty Notice (currently £60 rising to £120) or a summons to the Magistrates Court.

A person found guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure that a child attends college regularly is liable to a fine currently not exceeding £1000

A person found guilty of an offence under section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 knowing that a child is unable to attend regularly at college and fails without reasonable justification to cause the child to attend college is liable to a fine currently not exceeding £2500 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding 3 months.

In addition, the Court has power to make a Parenting Order requiring a parent to attend counselling or guidance sessions under the supervision of an appointed Responsible Officer.

Also, if the Local Authority is satisfied that a child is not being properly educated the matter may be referred to the Family Proceedings Court and an application made for an Education Supervision Order under the provisions of Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.

Please take notice that should it be necessary to refer for prosecution it will be for the original offence of non-attendance and not for non-payment of the Penalty Notice.

Your child's attendance will be reviewed on [Date] and if it remains unsatisfactory, further action may be necessary.

I require your co-operation in recognising your legal responsibility to ensure your child attends college regularly and punctually from now on. If you or your child wishes to express any views or discuss the situation, please contact me as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely

Syon Manor College Attendance Team

16.0 APPENDIX 5 – ATTENDANCE PANEL CLOSURE MEETING

Dear (Parent's name)

Re: Student's name

DOB:

Attendance:

At the College Attendance Panel on an agreement was signed stating that Childs Name should attend college regularly and punctually. The agreement took into consideration your views and those of your child, where appropriate.

The Panel has reviewed Child's Name attendance and punctuality. I am pleased that it has **improved**. The matter will not be progressed from here provided that improvement is maintained.

I will continue to monitor Childs Name attendance and legal action could be instigated by the Attendance Support Team at the local authority at any time should attendance deteriorate again.

Should you need further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Syon Manor College Attendance Team

17.0 APPENDIX 6 – LEGAL ACTION LETTER

Dear (Parent's name)

Re: Student's name

DOB:

Attendance:

Following the Attendance Panel on you were advised that your child's attendance and punctuality would be reviewed on

Your child has in fact only attended sessions out of a possiblesessions during the review period. The absences have not been authorised.

You are advised that as your child's attendance has not improved sufficiently, I shall now be referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at the (Local Authority) who will be instructing the Legal Department to issue a summons against you (both), for failing to ensure that your child(ren) attends college regularly and punctually.

Yours sincerely

Syon Manor College Attendance Team

18.0 APPENDIX 7 – PARENTING CONTRACT AGREEMENT

(To be completed if Parent's attend the Attendance Panel Meeting)

Parenting Contract Agreement

(This document should be completed when a parent attends the colleges' formal attendance meeting)

Date of meeting:					
Full name of student:					
DOB:		Age:			
Full address:					
College Name:					
College year:					
CIN/CP:	Yes/No	SEND support:	Yes/No	EHCP:	Yes/No

Persons with Parental Responsibility *(this includes the birth parent(s) and persons with parental responsibility or who have day to day care of the child)*

Parental Responsibility	Full name	Tick to confirm present at meeting
Father		
Mother		
Other:		
Grandparent		
Carer		

All present at meeting

Professional	Full Name
College senior attendance lead	
College attendance officer	
Other professionals:	
Keyworker/Social worker/Housing officer/SEND Officer/ YOS Officer/ College Nurse/GP or other health professional/ Safer Colleges Police Officer	

Reason for Panel meeting

_____ attendance is currently _____% out of a possible _____ sessions.
_____ has only managed to attend _____ sessions.

1. Actions taken to date to improve student's college attendance:**2. Student's comments:**

(Where appropriate the student can attend the panel meeting. This may be with or with parents present)

3. Parent's comments:

(Use this space to capture the parent's comments as to why their child has poor attendance and any barriers they are experiencing)

4. How is this absence affecting the student's progress at college? What can we as a college do to support the student to attend regularly:**5. What is going well for the student in college:****6. What will parents do to support the student to attend college every day:**

7. Any other action or support provided by a named team member:**Decisions****Parent/carers:**

- Must ensure their child attends every day that the college is open for them and is on time for registration
- Provide medical evidence to the college if the child's absence is due to illness
- Must contact the college should there be difficulties with the above points.

College:

We will only authorise any absence through illness if supported by medical evidence. Alternatively, you can bring _____ into college if they are unwell and allow the college to decide whether _____ is well enough to stay in college. If the college feels that he/she is too unwell, then you will not have to provide medical evidence for that absence.

We will be available for advice and support during the review period. If the student named in the agreement does not attend regularly and punctually a referral may be made to the Attendance Support Team at the local authority who may consider:

- Issuing a Penalty Notice of £60.00 to each parent/carers
- prosecution at Magistrate Court
- an Education Supervision Order or
- a Parenting Order.

The student's attendance will be reviewed on:

I accept the parenting contract agreement decisions above and agree to comply with the requirements.

_____ Signed Parent/Carer

_____ Signed Parent/Carer

_____ Signed Student

_____ Signed Headteacher/ College Attendance Lead

_____ Witness

19.0 APPENDIX 8 – ATTENDANCE PANEL AGREEMENT FORM

(To be used if Parent's do not attend Attendance Panel Meeting)

Attendance Panel Agreement

(This document should be completed when a parent does not attend the colleges' formal parenting contract attendance meeting)

Date of meeting:					
Full name of student:					
DOB:		Age:			
Full address:					
College Name:					
College year:					
CIN/CP:	Yes/No	SEND support:	Yes/No	EHCP:	Yes/No

Persons with Parental Responsibility *(this includes the birth parent(s) and persons with parental responsibility or who have day to day care of the child)*

Parental Responsibility	Full name	Tick to confirm present at meeting
Father		
Mother		
Other:		
Grandparent		
Carer		

All present at meeting

Professional	Full Name
College senior attendance lead	
College attendance officer	
Other professionals:	
Keyworker/Social worker/Housing officer/SEND Officer/ YOS Officer/ College Nurse/GP or other health professional/ Safer Colleges Police Officer	

Reason for Panel meeting

_____ attendance is currently _____% out of a possible _____ sessions.
_____ has only managed to attend _____ sessions.

1. Actions taken to date to improve student's college attendance:**2. Student's comments:**

(Where appropriate the student can attend the panel meeting. This may be with or with parents present)

3. How is this absence affecting the student's progress at college? What can we as a college do to support the student to attend regularly:**4. What is going well for the student in college:****5. Any other action or support provided by a named team member:**

Decisions made by the panel in the parent's absence**Parent/carers:**

- Must ensure their child attends every day that the college is open for them and is on time for registration
- Provide medical evidence to the college if the child's absence is due to illness
- Must contact the college should there be difficulties with the above points.

College:

We will only authorise any absence through illness if supported by medical evidence. Alternatively, you can bring _____ into college if they are unwell and allow the college to decide whether _____ is well enough to stay in college. If the college feels that he/she is too unwell, then you will not have to provide medical evidence for that absence.

We will be available for advice and support during the review period. If the student named in the agreement does not attend regularly and punctually a referral may be made to the Attendance Support Team at the local authority who may consider:

- Issuing a Penalty Notice of £60.00 to each parent/carers
- prosecution at Magistrate Court
- an Education Supervision Order or
- a Parenting Order.

The student's attendance will be reviewed on:

I accept the Attendance Panel agreement decisions above and agree to comply with the requirements.

_____ Signed Student (if Present)

_____ Signed Headteacher/ College Attendance Lead

_____ Witness



Outcomes
First Group