STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

Nidderdale High School aims to work together with parents, carers and students in order to ensure the achievement of high levels of attendance and punctuality. With the intention of enabling all students to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and understanding the clear link between attendance, attainment and student well being, Nidderdale High School aims to encourage maximum levels of attendance and punctuality. Problems affecting attendance will therefore be identified and addressed promptly and effectively.

Aims and Objectives

- To ensure that all statutory guidance for attendance is in place and that this guidance and all school procedures are clearly understood by the appropriate stakeholders.
- To ensure that attendance is a high priority for all stakeholders and that in promoting high levels of attendance the connection between excellent attendance and high achievement is embedded in all practice.
- To ensure that all students have the opportunity to attend school feeling safe and secure.
- To support students and/or parents/carers to address situations that might impact on attendance and to ensure that the support they require from both school and external agencies is available so that the best possible levels of attendance can be achieved.
- To remove the barrier to poor attendance and the resulting impact on students' life chances.
- To work with outside agencies to give an effective structure to absence procedures.
- To enable Nidderdale High School to move towards a whole school target of at least 96% attendance.

The Policy in Practice

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school of their child's absence

Attendance will be monitored

- On a daily basis by the form tutor.
- On a daily basis by the Attendance Officer, who will make First Day Absence Calls where necessary.
- On a daily basis for Looked After Children and vulnerable learners by the Attendance Officer
- On a weekly basis by the Attendance Officer, who will make follow-up calls where necessary.
- On a weekly basis for all other students by the Pastoral Officer.
- On a weekly basis at Vulnerable Learners meetings (standing agenda item).
- On a regular basis by the Senior Pastoral Officer who, with the Attendance Officer, will initiate attendance panel meetings and initiate the fast track process, involving the Headteacher as necessary.

When a student is absent

- A reason must be established for each day of absence, for example by letter, a telephone or email message. If no reason is supplied, this will be followed up by the Attendance Officer who makes the first day absence call.
- If the school has not heard why a student is absent, the Attendance Officer will make a First Day Absence Call by 10.00 am.
- If attempts to obtain the reasons for the absence fail, then it will be deemed unauthorised.

Cases of a pattern of absence resulting in an absence rate of over 10% will result in:

- Intervention by the Attendance Officer by discussing absence with parent through letter and/or telephone call.
- Continued monitoring of absence by tutor, Attendance Officer, Key Stage Learning Manager and outside agencies.
- The Senior Pastoral Officer inviting parent/carer into school to discuss reasons for absence.
- If there is no improvement, the fast track process will be initiated

Unauthorised absence

- Absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher
- The fact that the parent/carer has written a note does not automatically authorise the absence, the reason for absence may not be appropriate and this would then lead to the school contacting parents/carers to explain why the absence is unauthorised.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The form tutor will:

- Complete the register at 8.50 am. A mark must be recorded.   It must be remembered that the register is a legal document. It is therefore essential that the register be taken in silence to ensure that students are not mistakenly marked as absent or present. All clubs must finish in time to enable students to reach registration. A tutor cannot mark a student present unless they actually see them.
- Take the register electronically or write in **ink** if using the paper copy.
- Ask for absence notes and check that the note is written and signed by the parent/carer and pass this to the Attendance Officer to be verified and filed.
- Initial and date the absence note and leave it in the register.
- Pass any concerns regarding absence/truancy to the Key Stage Learning Manager.
- Be alert to any situations that prevent a student attending school or being punctual.
- Ensure that students know that if they leave the premises during the day they must have authorisation to do so and should sign out at the office and sign in again before returning to classes. This must be verified via a call home and not just a note to ensure parents are aware.

The subject teacher will:

- Take a register at the beginning of every lesson, this should be done on SIMS at the start of lesson 4 for p.m. registration.
- Admit the students promptly to ensure a purposeful start to the lesson after meeting and greeting at the door.
- Dismiss the class at the correct time at the end of the lesson in an orderly manner.
- Follow up any students who are late to the lesson and any unaccounted absences and issue detentions if necessary.
- Pass any concerns regarding absence/punctuality on to the Key Stage Learning Manager.

The Attendance Officer will:

- Check the answer phone and email for messages regarding a student's absence.
- Close the morning and afternoon registers 5 minutes after tutor time/start of lesson 4
- Fill in all absence codes on a daily basis.
- Check registers and initiate First Day Absence Call by 10.00 am for students absent with no reason given.
- Report any concerns over absence/ patterns of absence to the Key Stage Learning Manager / Senior Pastoral Officer.
- Provide attendance data for weekly Vulnerable Learners' Meeting.
- Check attendance data on a weekly basis for patterns of absence.

- Be the link between school and outside agencies, in conjunction with Key Stage Learning Manager or Senior Pastoral Officer.
- In conjunction with outside agencies, and under direction of Senior Pastoral Officer, plan re-entry strategies for students where attendance is poor.
- Identify and investigate reasons for poor attendance and punctuality and follow these up with effective intervention.
- Initiate an attendance panel in cases where absence is over 10%.
- Refer all CME (Children Missing from Education) to Social Care.
- Ensure a consistent response to absence (authorised and unauthorised).
- Ensure that attendance and absences are recorded in an accurate manner.
- Ensure that tutors are aware that registers are legal documents and schools may be required to produce them in judicial proceedings.
- In conjunction with the Senior Pastoral Officer, liaise with parents/carers of students where attendance is poor and plan re-entry strategies for students where appropriate.
- Consult with the Headteacher before removing a child from the register.
- Collect and analyse attendance data both for internal use and for publication.
- Analyse attendance data for the DfE termly and annual survey.

The Senior Pastoral Officer with overall responsibility for attendance will:

- Oversee the monitoring of attendance with the Attendance Officer.
- Oversee intervention as appropriate when attendance levels of a student are a concern.
- Ensure that supply teachers and new staff are aware of the school's attendance policy and practice.

The Local Authority's Behaviour, attendance and social care teams will:

- Regularly monitor absence through contact with the Senior Pastoral Officer and Attendance Officer.
- Establish with the family reasons for absence and outline responsibilities and duties in order to resolve reasons behind non-attendance.
- Give feedback from home visits to Senior Pastoral Officer.
- In partnership with school and parents/carers facilitate reintegration to school for long-term absentees.
- Implement the Fast-track to Attendance Procedure when necessary.
- Undertake, where appropriate, legal procedures in accordance with principles of the Children Act 1993 e.g. Prosecutions, Education Supervision Orders, Attendance Orders and Fixed Penalties.
- To support students on re-entry to school after exclusion.
- Counsel students with attendance problems.
- Offer parenting support and advice and refer any concerns to other agencies.

Lateness procedures

If a student is late this will normally result in a 'late negative' on Classcharts. A student is deemed to be late if they arrive after the registers have closed. On arrival at school the student signs in, indicating time of arrival and the reason for being late. The Receptionist then puts the appropriate code in the register.

Authorised Absences:

- Students given permission for leave of absence by the Headteacher.
- Students ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
- Religious observance.
- Leave may be given to attend medical or dental appointment.

Even where absence is authorised the school will be alert to emerging patterns of absence and consider if this may seriously disrupt continuity of learning. Where parents/carers have condoned absences and

unjustified absences appear to be a problem, the school will work closely with the Local Authority's Behaviour and Attendance and Social Care team.

FAMILY HOLIDAYS

No parent/carer can demand leave of absence as of right. The Education regulations state that applications for leave must be made in advance by a parent with whom the child lives and can only be authorised by the school in exceptional circumstances. Each application is considered individually by the school, but would automatically be declined for students in year 10 or year 11, during examinations or during the transition period of the first half term of year 7.

The following are examples of the criteria for leave of absence, which may be considered as 'exceptional':

- Service personnel returning from active deployment
- Where inflexibility of the parents' leave or working arrangement is part of the organisational or company policy. This would need to be evidenced by the production or confirmation from the organisation/company
- Where leave is recommended as part of a parents' or child's rehabilitation from medical or emotional problems. Evidence must be provided
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis

Family Bereavements:

These will be treated with sensitivity.

Unauthorised Absences:

All other absence will be classed as unauthorised.

Rewards

Good attendance is rewarded on a half termly, termly and annual basis, as outlined in the Rewards Policy. The Rewards Policy is reviewed regularly from Student Voice activities.

Monitoring of implementation, evaluation of impact of policy

This Policy will be monitored by the Headteacher who will report annually to the Full Governing Body.

Approved by Full Governing Body 17 May 2021