



# Attendance Policy

**Reviewed by: DHT Pastoral / Inclusion**

**Date of Adoption by Governing Body: FGB 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019**

**Chair of Governor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Date to be Reviewed: November 2020**

## **Guidance Principles**

The Joseph Rowntree School aims to ensure that all students receive an education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her true potential.

- The school aims to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels secure and part of a group.
- The school will establish an effective system of incentives, rewards and recognition which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping.
- The school will also challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- The school will support aspects of the Children Act 2004 'Every Child Matters' by implementing the Attendance Policy. The outcomes it addresses are:
  - staying safe
  - enjoying and achieving
  - making a positive contribution
  - achieving economic well being

The process for managing attendance in school is represented by the diagram provided at Appendix A.

Because the Sixth Form follow different lesson schedules to the main school there are some variations to this Attendance Policy that apply exclusively to Sixth Form Students. These are covered in Appendix B.

## **AIMS**

The core aim of this policy is to increase awareness amongst students, parents and teachers of the need to assist the provision of the best possible educational programme both by encouraging 100% attendance, and by planning the activities which enhance classroom learning, but take place elsewhere, in such a way as to minimise their impact on other lessons. The school aims to convey a clear message to all students – attendance for learning and classroom activities are the school's priorities. Whilst the school recognises the value of other activities that may take students away from their lessons these must not impact on the school's priorities. When absences, for whatever reason, takes students away from their lessons, it is in the knowledge that these absences may impact on the student's overall attendance and on their education.

## **RATIONALE**

Every student has a fundamental right to be educated – parents have a duty to ensure maximum attendance at school.

The overall quality of learning is aided by the provision of a structured and coherent programme of educational experience. It is difficult for the body of teachers involved in a student's education at any one time to plan effectively, and hence for students to achieve their potential if those students are not in the classroom when they are expected. Whether their absence is authorised or not, it may still have an impact on the individual student outcomes.

## GUIDELINES

- Parents and students should be encouraged to consider 100% attendance as the norm.
- All unplanned absences should be explained by a telephone call to school prior to 8.30am on the first and any subsequent days of absence. If absence is to be longer than three days it is helpful if the parent/guardian can advise the school of this as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for them to come in and collect work from the school.
- Where absence is due to medical reasons, a medical note will be requested by the school where it is an extended absence or where there appears to be a trend of absence appearing.
- All absences aim to be reported on a daily basis by 10:00am to the House Teams.
- Depending on circumstances (e.g. known truants or students with known conditions or circumstances) home may be contacted immediately by the Attendance Officer, the Progress Leader or the Pastoral House Manager). If a student who does not fall into any other category for contact and is off for more than three days, on the third day, the continued absence will be reported to the Progress Leader who may contact the home to find out the reason for the absence (or agree that the Attendance Officer/Pastoral House Manager contact home).
- Attendance figures will be reported to parents in the annual reporting of achievement.
- Subject teachers should identify absentees clearly each lesson, through the SIMS register system. Where a student on the immediate contact sheet or a student who appears to have been in school earlier in the day is absent, this must be highlighted through the support request system immediately.
- Absent students are required to copy up missed work. If absenteeism was unauthorised, then additional work may be appropriate. This will be co-ordinated, where more than one subject is affected, by the Progress Leader. Parents will be informed. The system will often include after school detentions to make up missed time in school.
- Where considered necessary, the Progress Leader or Pastoral House Manager will put a student on lesson report in order to monitor attendance.
- Leave of absence. Any and all leave of absence requests are assessed on an individual basis. If an absence is required for whatever reason, then a form should be collected, completed and returned to the school office well in advance of the requested leave. The attendance officer will contact the parent/carer to inform them of the outcome of their request. Under the current national guidance, very few requests are able to be granted.
- Holidays should not be taken in term time. Except under exceptional circumstances, all requests for leave of absence during term time will be declined and if the student is then absent from school, it will be recorded as unauthorised. Where a holiday is taken during term time, parents/guardians can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60, which if unpaid within 7 days, rises to £120. These notices are issued per parent/guardian and per pupil.
- Departments and teachers should consider whether the tasks, materials and atmosphere within the classroom are positive, and allow each student a sense of achievement. We do not wish to drive students into truancy. 'Attendance for Learning' should always be a priority.
- Parenting contracts and panel meetings are used at the school as ways of improving attendance. A parenting contract is an agreement between a parent/carer and either the L.A., or the governing body of the school. The parental meeting is a way for the

school, the family and the L.A. to work together to help improve the students' behaviour and attendance and practical support will be offered involving help from the school or outside agencies.

- Where appropriate and in accordance with the LA Code of Conduct, the school can request the LA issue penalty notices. Penalty notices are issued under Sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996.
- The school is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the L.A. A parent/carer is committing an offence if he/she fails to make sure that his/her child attends regularly, even if they are missing school without their knowledge. Parents can be fined up to £2,500 or imprisoned for up to 3 months for failing to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Magistrates can also impose a Parenting Order which means the parent has to attend a parenting class.
- Any student with decreasing attendance, attendance below 96% and/or punctuality concerns, will be identified and managed by pastoral staff. Pastoral staff will determine if the student requires intervention, closer monitoring and/or whether or not a parental meeting is required in line with the whole school systems.
- Where school has attendance concerns about a student, it may be necessary for all absences to be recorded as unauthorised unless the school is provided with clear medical evidence to explain each absence event.

### **PUNCTUALITY AND NON-ATTENDANCE**

Students who are frequently late to lesson will be put on attendance report by their form tutor/Pastoral House Manager/Progress Leader. Persistent lateness will also lead to after school detention and the use of the Inclusion Room.

If a student is late to school (arriving after 8.45am) they will be issued with a red comment in their planner and will in the first instance be given a verbal warning. This will be indicated with a stamp in the front of the planner. From that point onwards, students will receive a late stamp, and will complete a break time detention on that day. Where students do not attend the break time detention, this will escalate to a lunch time detention on that day. If it persists tutors will pass this on to the Progress Leader who will arrange a detention and contact parents.

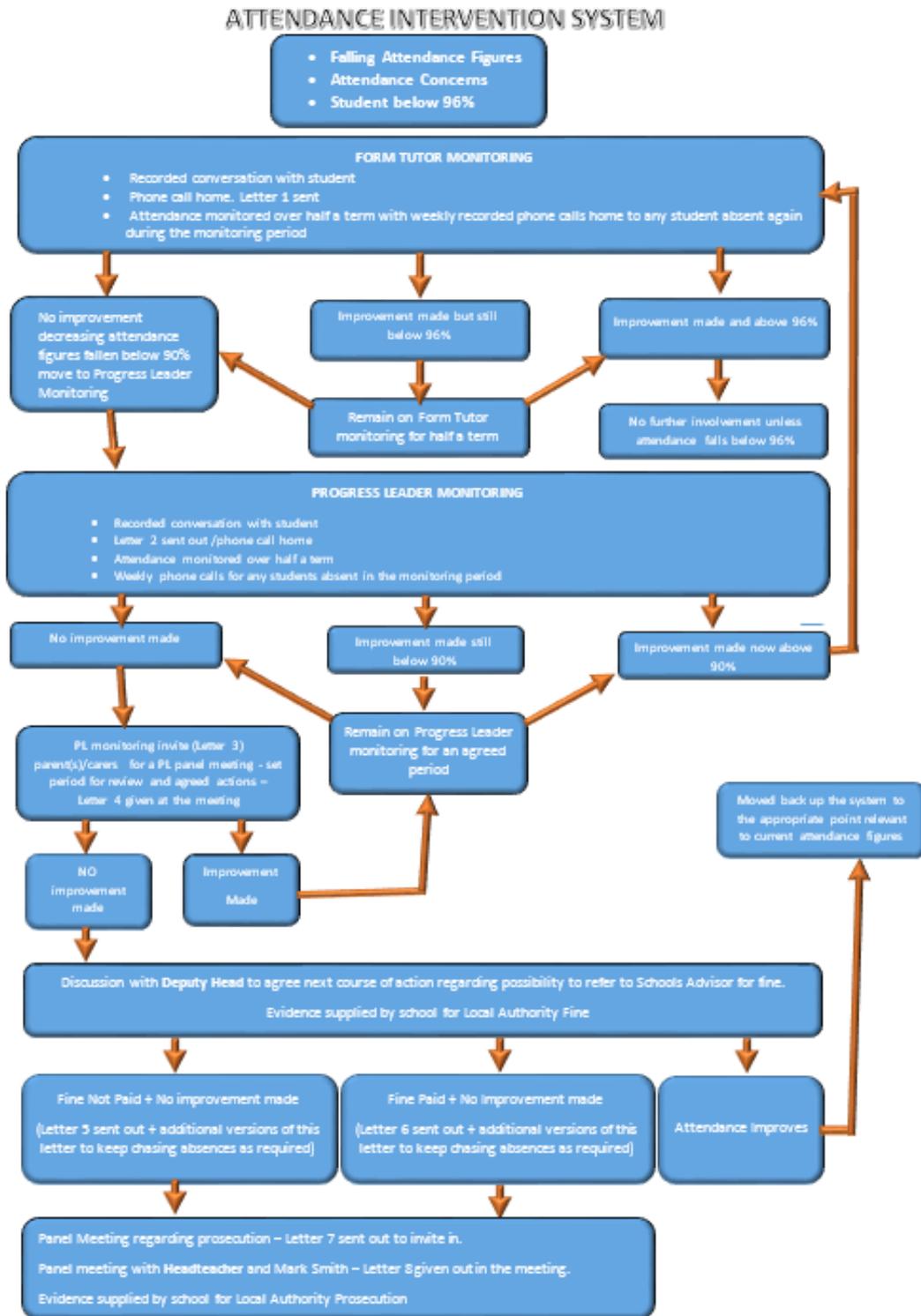
If a student is persistently late to school (after the register has closed at 9.05am) or persistently late on arrival (arriving after 8.45am), this may lead to a penalty notice being issued.

If a student truants from a lesson then the subject teacher/Head of Department may detain the student via the School Detention System in order to make up the time missed.

### **SUMMARY**

A student's attendance is the foundation of the partnership between school and home (as laid out in the Home-School Agreement). The parent ensures the student attends, the school encourages this, monitors it and provides an appropriate structured programme of experience. All three elements are essential in following the route to the highest levels of achievement for each student.

# APPENDIX A – Attendance Intervention Process



## APPENDIX B

### Sixth Form Attendance

All students sign a Learning Agreement at the beginning of both Y12 and Y13, confirming that they have read the Attendance Policy, and the Partnership Agreement, both found in the Sixth Form Planner. The attendance policy is outlined below with additional guidance on acceptable reasons for absence and guidance on how absence is followed up.

#### The Attendance Policy

- Sixth Form students register **every Wednesday and Friday** morning at 8.45am.
- Students will have an individual meeting with their personal tutor at least once every half term.
- Y12 Enrichment is Tuesday lesson 5, week 1 and Y13 enrichment is Tuesday lesson 5, week 2.
- The School expects **punctual attendance** from its students to all lessons, including enrichment, registration and tutor meetings.

A poor record of attendance and / or punctuality may lead to the withdrawal of attendance concessions, exam entries. Ultimately a student's place within the sixth form may be reviewed if instructions from the Head of Sixth Form are not followed in relation to improving punctuality and / or attendance.

**Attendance concessions:** Other than on days with tutor time, students should arrive in sufficient time for their first lesson. They may leave before the end of the normal school day, once their lessons have finished, or between lessons during the day. If they wish to leave school due to feeling unwell, they must sign out with the Sixth form Administrator.

**Absence:** All absence until age 18 must be communicated to the Sixth Form Administrator by a **parent/carer** by either writing, telephone or email [agr@josephrowntree.york.sch.uk](mailto:agr@josephrowntree.york.sch.uk). For absence that cannot be foreseen, the Sixth form Administrator should be notified before 8.30 am on **EACH** day of absence. From age 18, students can self-certificate in the same way.

#### Authorised Absence

The following are examples that would normally be considered to be acceptable reasons for authorised absence.

- a medical e.g. hospital appointment that cannot be arranged out of school hours – this would **NOT** normally include a dentist or a doctor's appointment – appointment cards may be requested.
- a visit to a university to attend an open day or interview
- a religious holiday
- a funeral
- an interview for **FULL time** employment
- a driving test
- a work experience placement
- participation in an extra-curricular activity which reflects a significant level of personal achievement

The following reasons are examples that would **NOT** be acceptable

- Holidays/social events taken during term time.
- Routine medical appointments (acceptable in free periods)
- Driving lessons (acceptable in free periods)
- Missing lessons to complete coursework/homework/revision
- An interview for part time employment

### **Following up student absence**

Student absence/punctuality will be addressed in the following ways:

#### **Occasional Absence:**

Informal conversation between student/tutor/The Sixth Form Administrator.

#### **Recurrent Absence:**

Formal conversation with Head of Sixth Form/Lead Tutor to discuss attendance record provided by the Sixth Form Administrator.

Concerns shared with parents/carer and attendance record sent home.

Where a student has recurrent/persistent absence, permission to self-certificate from age 18 will be withdrawn.

#### **Persistent Absence:**

Meeting with student/parent/carer and Head of Sixth Form / Lead Tutor.

For students with persistent absence, medical evidence to support illness may be requested

Formal written warning.

Review of Sixth Form place.