

High Tunstall College of Science



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Attendance Policy

Revised	-	May 2021
Stakeholder Consulted	-	Admissions and Safeguarding Committee
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Responsibility for Review	-	Headteacher/Attendance and Safeguarding Officer

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Statement of intent

High Tunstall College of Science believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend college.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure our students are safe.
- Rewarding regular attendance.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any SEND they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
- DfE (2019) 'School attendance'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2021) 'Keeping children safe in education (2020)'
- DfE (2021) 'Improving school attendance: support for schools and local authorities'

1.2. This policy operates in conjunction with the following college policies:

- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Children Missing Education Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Students with Additional Health Needs Attendance Policy

2. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at college after the register has closed.
- Not attending college for any reason.

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the college has granted leave.
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during college time, for which the college has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the college has granted leave.
- An absence due to a family emergency.

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off college unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the college day.

- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at college after the register has closed.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Leaving college for no reason during the day.

Persistent absenteeism (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the academic year for any reason.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1. The governing body has overall responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of the college.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the college's Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

3.2. The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and all relevant procedures of the college.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the college's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every student has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.

3.3. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following the attendance policy, and for ensuring students do so too.
- Ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.

- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual students to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
 - Teaching staff are expected to take the attendance register during Period 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and the tutor will take the register during tutor time. Registers will be completed within the first 5 minutes of each lesson/tutor time.
- 3.4. The attendance officer is responsible for informing the LA of any student being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:
- Are being educated from home.
 - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
 - Have an authorised medical note.
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
 - Have been permanently excluded.
- 3.5. Parents are responsible for:
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
 - Providing the college with more than one emergency contact number.
 - Updating the college if their details change.
 - The attendance of their children at college.
 - Promoting good attendance with their children.
- 3.6. Students are responsible for:
- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at college.
 - Arriving punctually to lessons when at college.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. The college will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk students as part of their inductions and annual refresher training.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on this policy as part of their new starter induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.
- 4.3. Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from college could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns will be managed.

5. Student expectations

- 5.1. Students will be expected to attend college every day they are required to be at college. The college will also expect all students to attend lessons punctually.
- 5.2. Students will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff.

6. Students at risk of persistent absence (PA)

- 6.1. The college will ensure it provides support to students at risk of persistent absence (PA), in conjunction with all relevant external authorities where necessary.
- 6.2. In order to ensure the college has effective procedures for managing PA, the SLT will:
 - Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
 - Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
 - Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
 - Establish robust escalation procedures which will be initiated before absence becomes a problem by:
 - Sending letters to parents.
 - Having a regular tutor review.
 - Engaging with LA attendance teams.
 - Using fixed penalty notices.
 - Creating attendance clinics.
- 6.3. The governing body will engage in attendance panels to reinforce messages and outline relevance in terms of training and employment.
- 6.4. Where a student becomes at risk of PA, the college will:
 - Welcome the student back following any absence and provide catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps in learning.
 - Meet with the student to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
 - Establish plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
 - Lead regular check-ins to review progress and assess the impact of support.
 - Make regular contact with the student's parent to discuss progress.
 - Consider what support for re-engagement might be needed, including with regard to additional vulnerability.

- 6.5. Where a student at risk of PA is also at increased risk of harm, the college will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the student in line with the college's duty of care.
- 6.6. The college attendance system will be used to give an accurate and informative view of attendance, reasons for absence and patterns within groups, including:
 - Children in need
 - LAC
 - Students who are eligible for FSM
 - Students with EAL
 - Students with SEND

7. Absence procedures

- 7.1. Parents are required to contact the college via telephone as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.
- 7.2. Parents are required to place a note in their child's planner on the first day their child returns with a signed explanation as to why they were absent. This must be done even if we have already received a phone call.
- 7.3. We will send text messages to parents whose children have not been marked present at the start of the college day, if we have not been notified of their absence.
- 7.4. If we do not receive a message a telephone call will be made to the parent of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend college.
- 7.5. If we are unable to contact home and there are additional vulnerabilities identified then a home visit will be made in an attempt to establish contact and reasons for absence.
- 7.6. The college will always follow up any absences in order to:
 - Ascertain the reason for the absence.
 - Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
 - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
 - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the college census system.
- 7.7. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Team.

- 7.8. The college will inform the LA, on a half termly basis, of the details of students who fail to attend regularly, or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation.
- 7.9. If a student's attendance drops below 90 percent, the LA attendance officer will be informed and a referral may be made.
- 7.10. Where a student has not returned to college for 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from the college without authorisation for 20 consecutive college days, the college will remove the student from the admission register if the college and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the child after making reasonable enquiries.

8. Parental involvement

- 8.1. The college will build respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with students and their families about the expectations of college life, attendance and performance so that they understand what is expected of them. The college will liaise with other agencies working with students and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.
- 8.2. Parents will be expected to:
 - Treat staff with respect.
 - Actively support the work of the college.
 - Call staff for help when they need it.
 - Communicate with the college about possible circumstances which may affect their child's attendance or require support.

9. Attendance register

- 9.1. Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each college day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether students are:
 - Present.
 - Absent.
 - Attending an approved educational visit.
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 9.2. The college will use the national attendance codes to enable the college to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site educational activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in college
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- W = Work experience
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z = Student not on admission register
- # = Planned whole or partial college closure

9.3. When the college has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the college has set different term dates for different years, for example, induction days.

9.4. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment, and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

9.5. Every entry into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

10. LA Attendance Officer

- 10.1. If they are persistently absent, students will be referred to the local attendance officer.
- 10.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the local attendance officer has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecution or penalty notices.

11. Lateness

- 11.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 11.2. The college day starts at 8.40am; students should be in their classroom at this time.
- 11.3. Registers are marked by 8:45am; students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 11.4. The register closes at 9:00 am; students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend college before this time.
- 11.5. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.
- 11.6. After lunch, registers are marked by 1:45pm. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 11.7. The register closes at 2pm. Students will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.
- 11.8. Students attending after 2pm will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.

12. Truancy

- 12.1. Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from college, during which the college has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 12.2. All staff will be actively engaged about the regular attendance of students, and the importance of continuity in each student's learning.
- 12.3. All students are expected to be in their classes by 8:40 am and 1:30 pm, where the staff will record the attendance electronically.
- 12.4. Any student with permission to leave the college during the day must sign out at reception and sign back in again on their return.

12.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a student might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, our Attendance Team will be notified and they will contact the child's parents, in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending college.

12.6. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the student, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the LA Attendance Officer will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term time and persistent late arrival at college.

13. Missing children

13.1. Students will not be permitted to leave the college premises during the college day unless they have permission from the college and their parents are also aware.

13.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a student going missing during the college day:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing student will inform our Attendance Team immediately.
- The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the college premises
- The following areas will be systematically searched:
 - All classrooms
 - All toilets
 - Changing rooms
 - The HUB
 - Any outbuildings
 - The college grounds
- Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the college premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
- If the student has not been found after 15 minutes, then the parents of the student will be notified.
- Staff will also alert the Headteacher

- The college will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contacts provided.
 - If the parents have had no contact from the student, and the list has been exhausted, then the police will be contacted.
- 13.3. The Attendance Officer/Student Support Officer will log all information describing all circumstances leading up to the student going missing on CPOMS.
- 13.4. If the missing student has an allocated social worker, is a LAC, or has SEND, then the appropriate professionals will be informed.
- 13.5. When the student has been located, a designated member of staff will care for and talk to the student to ensure they are safe and well.
- 13.6. The Pastoral Team will take the appropriate action to ensure the student understands they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 13.7. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the student has been located.
- 13.8. Appropriate disciplinary procedures are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- 13.9. All actions taken will be logged on CPOMS and will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Team.

14. Term-time leave

- 14.1. Our aim is to prepare students for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents to observe the college holidays as prescribed. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example bereavement or serious illness, deemed so by Mr Tilling, Headteacher.
- 14.2. Parents are expected to complete a "Leave of Absence" request form for any planned holidays and they will receive a letter in return advising if the holiday request has been authorised or not.
- 14.3. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record for the previous 39 weeks will be taken into account.
- 14.4. If term time leave is not granted, taking a student out of college will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions such as a penalty notice. Penalty Notices will only be issued if irregular attendance (below 90%) is recorded, in the 39 weeks. prior to the holiday request.

15. Religious observances

- 15.1. The college will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 15.2. Parents must inform the college at least 3 days in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.
- 15.3. The day(s) of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong.

16. Appointments

- 16.1. As far as possible, parents will be encouraged to book medical and dental appointments outside of college hours.
- 16.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the college.
- 16.3. If the appointment requires the student to leave during the college day, the student must be signed out by a parent.
- 16.4. Students must attend college before and after the appointment wherever possible.

17. Young carers

- 17.1. The college understands the difficulties young carers face, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity, as well as throughout their time at the college.
- 17.2. The college takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.

18. Exceptional circumstances

- 18.1. Exceptional circumstances include when a student is unable to attend because:
 - Transport provided by the college, LA or parent is not available and the student's home is not within walking distance.
 - There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the student from attending.
 - The student is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

18.2. The use of the 'Y' code is collected in the college census for statistical purposes.

19. Rewarding good attendance

19.1. The college acknowledges good attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- 100% attendance postcards home monthly
- Access to college trips and Prom
- Positive achievement points
- Year Team and House Rewards in Celebration Assemblies

19.2. College trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 95 percent, these privileges may be taken away.

19.3. Attendance at the Year 11 prom requires criteria set by the Year Team and parents will be informed of this on a yearly basis.

20. Monitoring and review

20.1. The College monitors attendance and punctuality throughout the year.

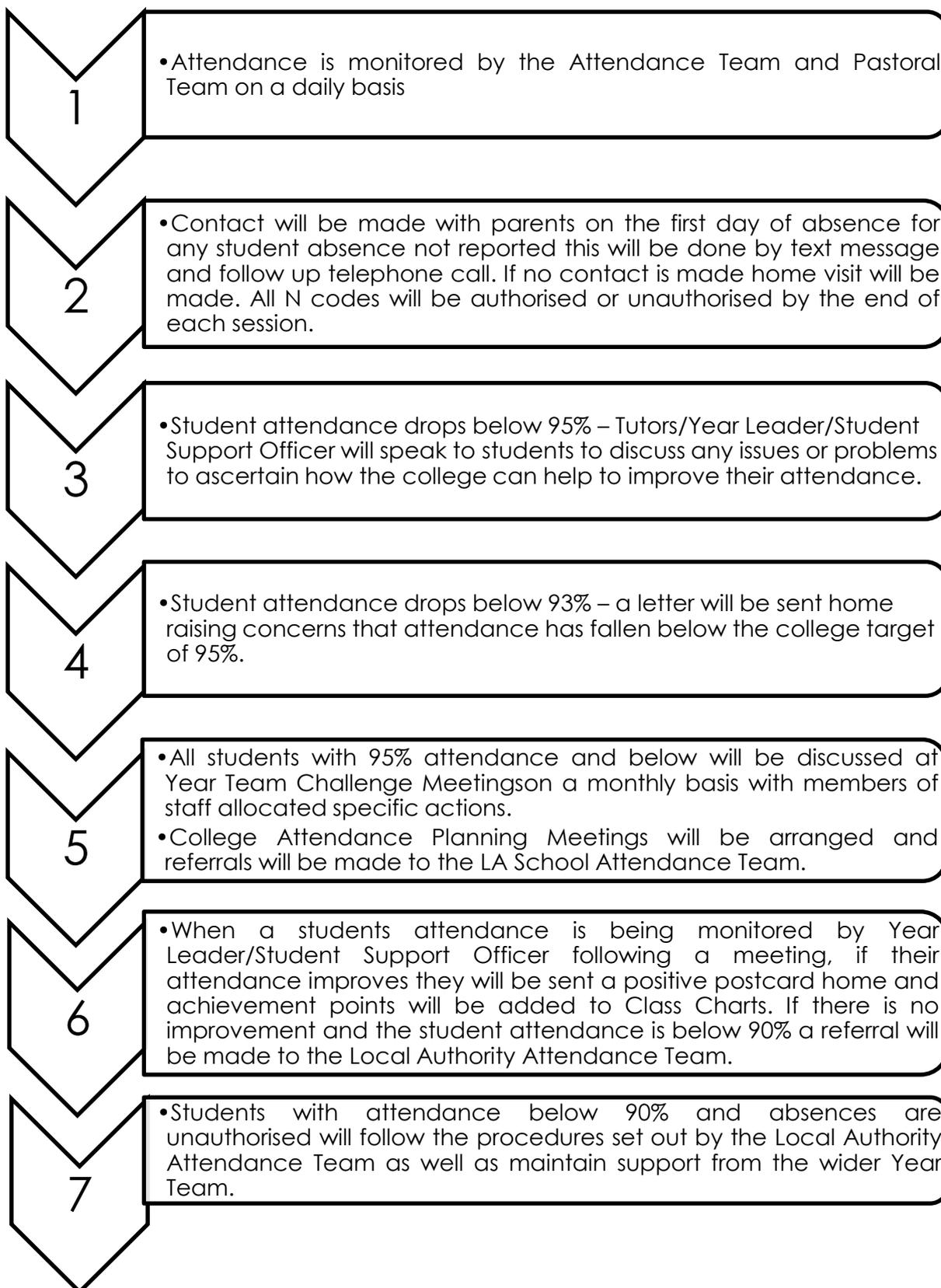
20.2. The college's attendance target is 95 percent each year.

20.3. This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the Attendance and Safeguarding Officer.

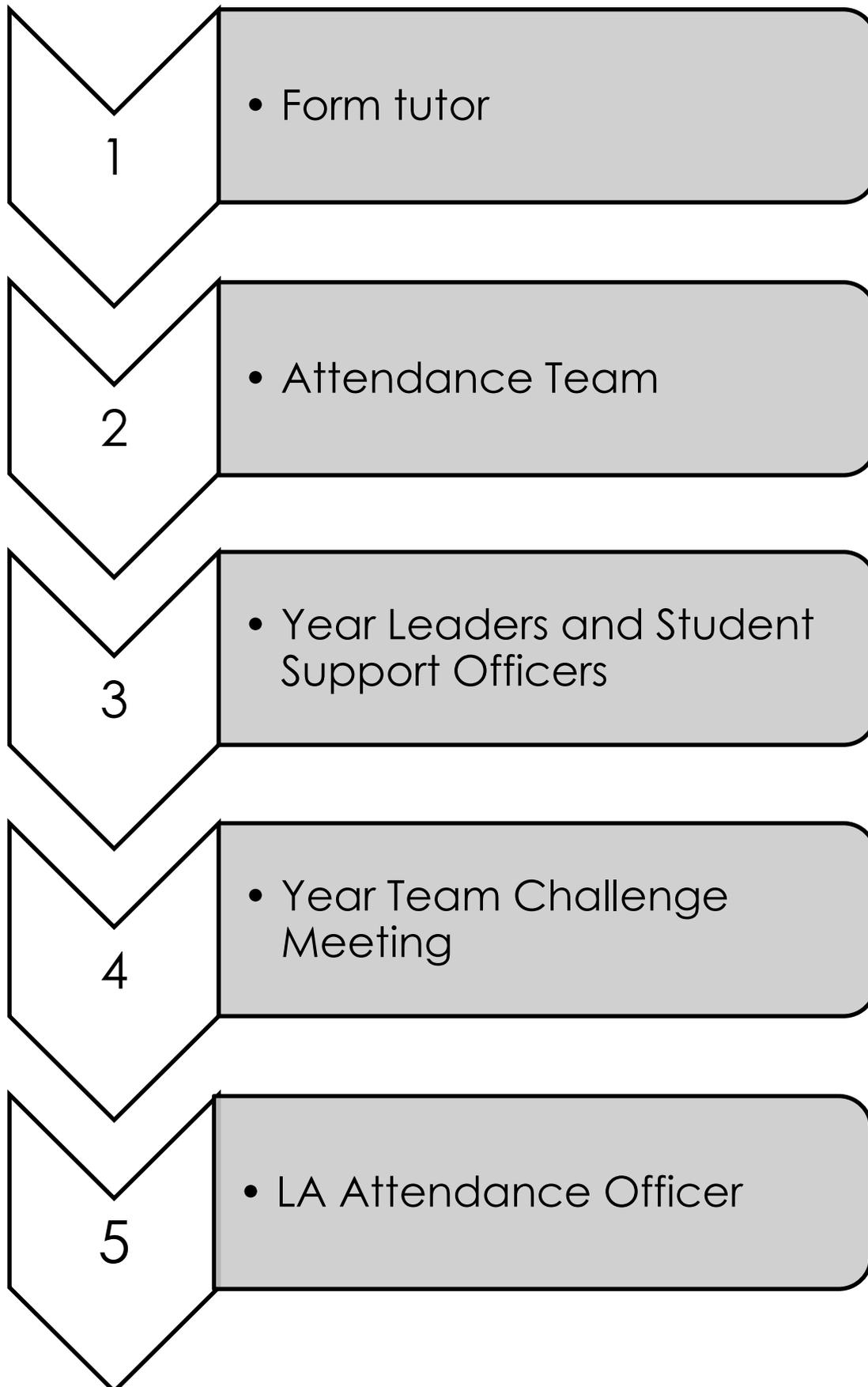
20.4. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

20.5. The next scheduled review date for this policy is May 2022.

Appendix A - Attendance Monitoring Procedures



Appendix B - Attendance Reporting Structure



Appendix C - Attendance During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

All students are required to attend college. As such, the arrangements set out in the main body of this policy (above) will be adhered to. This appendix has been developed in line with the latest government [guidance](#) to set out the additional measures that have been put in place to support student' attendance at college.

1. Attendance expectations

Attendance is mandatory for all students. This means the usual rules on college attendance (as set out in the main body of this policy) will apply, including:

- Parents' duty to ensure that their child attends college regularly.
- The college's responsibility to record attendance and follow up absence, in line with the procedures set out in the main body of this policy.
- The availability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices in line with the LA's code of conduct.

The college will ensure students do not attend the college site where they are displaying symptoms of, or have tested positive for, coronavirus, or are in a household, childcare or support bubble with an individual who is displaying symptoms of, or has tested positive for, coronavirus.

2. Shielding or self-isolating students

The college will stay up-to-date with all relevant national and local public health advice regarding shielding and self-isolation, communicating any changes to all relevant stakeholders.

Absences relating to students following clinical and/or public health advice will not be penalised. Where a student is unable to attend college because they are complying with clinical and/or public health advice, they will be immediately offered access to remote learning, in line with the Remote Learning Policy.

Absences due to shielding or self-isolation will be recorded with Code X. The college will request a copy of a shielding student's medical letter to confirm their status where necessary.

The college will follow the measures set out in the Infection Control Policy in all circumstances where self-isolation is required.

Where a vulnerable student is required to self-isolate, the college will notify their social worker (if they have one), secure a method of maintaining contact with the student, and ensure the student has access to remote education.

3. Reluctance to return to college

The college will remind parents of their legal duty to ensure their child attends college, and parents will be advised to contact the college if they have concerns about their child returning to college.

If a parent raises a concern, a relevant staff member will hold a discussion with the parent to discuss their concerns and provide reassurance on the measures that are in place to reduce risk in the college.

4. Monitoring attendance

The attendance officer will monitor the college's attendance rates once the college is open to all students. Any trends in non-attendance will be identified (e.g. due to anxiety) and measures will be put in place to re-engage affected students with college attendance.

The college will place particular emphasis on supporting the attendance and re-engagement of vulnerable students, students at risk of PA, and students who have not engaged regularly with college during the coronavirus pandemic.

An Attendance Officer will complete the '[Educational setting status form](#)' on a daily basis, based on the information on the attendance register.

The college will use the DfE's list of sub-codes in the management information system (MIS) to record non-attendance related to coronavirus. These are:

- Code X01: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school
- Code X02: Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus symptoms
- Code X03: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus inside the school setting
- Code X04: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus outside the school setting
- Code X05: Pupil required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory)
- Code X06: Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend school
- Code X07: Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in government guidance
- Code I01: Non-coronavirus related illness
- Code I02: Illness (confirmed case of coronavirus)

5. Monitoring and review

This appendix will be reviewed in line with any public health updates by the Headteacher and the Attendance and Safeguarding Officer.

Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is May 2022.