



GROUNDWORK
CHANGING PLACES
CHANGING LIVES



R2W Attendance Policy GWSNT – COL12

This policy applies to all Route2Work learners and staff.

Regular and punctual college attendance is very important. Learners need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Groundwork fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure learners are in college and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours. Attendance of learners is also monitored by our funders, ie DfE and Local Authorities and they have the authority to withdraw funding should attendance not be satisfactory.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head of College, Staff and Governors work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all learners are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Learners who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning and frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet their learning expectations.

Our policy applies to all learners enrolled at this college and this policy is made available to all parents/carers and learners.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff, learners, parents/carers and Governors in our college are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

- Improve learner achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve 100% attendance with a minimum of 95%
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the college
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and learners of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a learner's education
- Work in partnership with learner's, parents, carers, staff and agencies so that all learners realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which learners feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage them to develop a sense of responsibility for their attendance
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties

- Recognise the key role of staff in promoting good attendance
- Identify any Safeguarding concerns that may be highlighted by patterns and/or trends of learner absences

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among staff, parents, carers and learners
- Ensuring that parents/carers understand the responsibility placed on them for making sure that the young person attends regularly and punctually
- Equipping learners with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good college attendance and punctuality
- The learner's ILP (Individual Learning Plan) which includes an attendance target to support them to achieve and develop skills needed for good attendance
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents/carers, learners, staff and Governors on college attendance matters
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents/carers, learners, staff and Governors on college attendance matters
- Supporting learners who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at college which are preventing good attendance
- Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at college

Definitions:

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a learner has been away from college for a legitimate reason and the college has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a learner has been unwell and the parent/carer telephones the college to explain the absence
- Only the Head of College can make an absence authorised. Parents/carers/learners do not have this authority, consequently not all absences supported by parents/carers will be classified as authorised

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a learner is away from college without the permission of the college
- The absence is unauthorised if a learner is away from college without good reason, even with the support of a parent/carer

Lateness

- Learners arriving 15 mins after the start of their first session will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late and is documented on the register for each learner. Any learner who arrives late will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning.
- Learners who have attended a dentist or doctor's appointment and subsequently come to college afterwards will be marked as having attended a medical appointment.
- Learners who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each learner is expected to achieve.
- Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the college will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

First Day Contact

Where a learner is absent from college and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent/carer, then we initiate a first day contact process. Attendance is checked daily to identify those learners who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the learner is absent and we will contact the parent/carer to check the reasons for the absence. Staff will start to contact learners and parents/carers at 9.30am.

Procedures:

Our college will undertake the following to support good attendance:

- Maintain appropriate registration processes
- Maintain appropriate attendance data
- Communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, Board members, parents, carers and learners
- Follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the college
- Inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence
- Strongly discourage unnecessary absence such as holidays taken during term time
- Work with parents/carers to improve individual learner's attendance and punctuality
- Report attendance statistics to the Local Authority and the ESFA/DfE if requested
- Ensure all staff are aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Management Team/Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance

Responsibilities

All members of college staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher/tutor

Class teachers/tutors are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by learners and their parents/carers.
- Keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any learner who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of each session. The Arbor register must be completed within the first 10mins of a session.
- Informing the Management Team where there are concerns
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Emphasising with their learners the importance of good attendance and promptness
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register
- Asking for and storing evidence of medical appointments and/or other necessary appointments
- Discussing attendance issues at parent/carer consultation evenings where necessary

Head of College

The Head is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of college attendance
- Identifying trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the college Governors
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance

- Organising home visits where necessary

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends college regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment
- Contacting the college on the first morning of absence before 8.30am. Then, contacting the college on every day of the learner's absence. When parents/carers notify us of the absence it is important that they provide us with details and reasons why the learner is absent.
- Informing the college in advance of any medical appointments in college time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor, dentist, hospital etc (Appointment card/letter)
- Making formal requests to the Head of College for authorised absence and /or holiday. The Head will only allow this leave of absence if they are satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist. Any request for leave of absence and/or holiday during term time must be submitted in writing to the college at least 4 weeks before the requested leave date and families/carers need to understand that the Head of College may refuse. (see Leave of Absence Request Form)
- Talking to the college as soon as possible about any reluctance to come to college so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with

The Route2Work Facebook page and/or texts should **not** be used as a method of reporting absence.

Appendices:

1 Attendance Monitoring Escalation Procedure.

- Text to parent/carer and learner after 9.30am on day of absence and a further text/e:mail sent during the day if no response is received. If absence continues with no communication from home a telephone call will be given on day 3 of absence.
- If poor attendance continues over a two-week period, (for example, trends/patterns of days off, learner timetable states 7 sessions and attends less than half or learner's attendance is considerably lower than 95%) a letter sent to parent/carer. (Letter 1)

- If attendance does not improve, a home visit/contact will be organised within one week. (Letter 2)
- Home visit/contact carried out with two members of staff. (Noted on Arbor)
- If a home visit is unable to be organised, an unannounced home visit will then be carried out. If contact is still unsuccessful an appointment card will be left stating a visit was attempted. (Noted on Arbor)).
- If the unannounced home visit is unsuccessful a letter will be sent advising of referral to Connexions/LA Advice Team. (Letter 3).

Policy review

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