



KEY SKILLS TRAINING

Attendance Policy

Management Team

Updated: December 2018

Ratified by Management Team: December 2018

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Key Skills Training Approaches to Attendance

Introduction

The Key Skills Training Attendance Policy aims to provide clear direction to staff and others about expected codes of behaviour in dealing with attendance.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the DFE Guidance on Attendance (November 2013).

The policy aims to make explicit the Organisation's commitment to the development of good practice and sound procedures. The purpose of the policy is, therefore, to ensure that attendance concerns and referrals are handled sensitively, professionally and in ways that support the needs of the student's wellbeing. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection Policy.

Our aims;

To work with each learner as an individual and improve their attendance by removing barriers to learning.

- On induction discussing individual plans which will improve attendance.
- Taxi provision where the learner meets the LA criteria.
- Monitor attendance on a weekly basis and put interventions in place if patterns are beginning to emerge.

To make the improvement of individual attendance a priority for all learners, parents/carers, staff and other stakeholders.

- By placing the improvement of attendance on the organisation development plan.
- By making sure that parents/carers are aware of the link between good attendance and good achievement.
- By placing attendance information around the organisation.
- By discussing attendance at relevant meetings.

To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.

- Members of the SLT will analyse data on a half termly basis and this will inform the actions on the organisation development plan.

To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and organisation

- Promote a positive working relationship right from induction.
- Involve parents/carers in decisions.

- Identify potential issues as early as possible, work in partnership with parents/carers to solve them.
- All staff to understand that many parents/carers are doing their best, often under difficult circumstances however, good attendance is non-negotiable.
- Parents to receive termly reports which include a printout of attendance.

To promote effective partnerships with the LA Attendance Team and other services and agencies to effectively remove barriers to learning and promote good attendance.

- Head of Education to act as liaison with individual agencies.
- The organisation will carry out a staged intervention before referring to the Local Authority.
- The organisation will gather and record relevant information to enable local authority intervention to be effective and meaningful
- Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the organisation

To recognise the needs of the individual learner when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence or an ingrained habit of low attendance at organisation.

- Be sensitive and show understanding of the circumstances of individual learners.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers involving them in decisions.
- Set up regular meetings either at the organisation, home or via telephone to evaluate the pupil reintegration plan
- Ensure that learner is placed in the best class to ensure success.
- Celebrate improvements and build confidence and self-esteem of the learner.

Procedures

We have a commitment to actively pursue each pupil's attendance by a system of daily phone calls at close of register. Each learner is an individual and our response to non-attendance depends on their own circumstances. Learners are sometimes reluctant to attend organisation for a variety of reasons – many of these reasons have little to do with organisation itself, but are often symptomatic of deeper barriers to learning e.g. mental health issues, substance misuse and addiction. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the organisation, the parents/carers and the learner. If a learner is reluctant to attend, we advise parents/carers not to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. A culture of openness about our thoughts and intentions will encourage good attendance.

Placements and Pupil Re-engagement Plans.

Where learners are involved with placements, the provider must inform the organisation of the learner's presence or absence. This can be done by a phone call, email daily. If a parent/carer knows that their child is unable to attend their placement

they must inform the organisation. The attendance support officer will carry out a quality assurance visit weekly to check attendance, behaviour and attainment.

In order to ensure that learners begin to improve or maintain attendance the organisation will occasionally decide in consultation with a parent/carer/Senior Leader that a Pupil Re-engagement Plan will operate for an agreed fixed term period. These arrangements are, for example, put in place following an exclusion to reintegrate a pupil back to the organisation. These timetables would only be negotiated through attendance Support Meetings or through reintegration meetings. These arrangements are kept under review with the aim that learner will return to full time education as soon as possible. There may occasionally be a need for a more permanent arrangement. The organisation will work with the relevant agencies and bodies to try and ensure that the needs of the individual are met.

For learners on a pupil re-engagement plan, there must a reduced timetable form signed by the pupil, parent/carer as appropriate and social worker if one is allocated to the pupil. The form explains specifically that the parent/carer takes responsibility for the learner when they are not present in the organisation.

Pupils can only be recorded as receiving off-site educational activity (B) if the activity meets the requirements prescribed in regulation 6(4) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the organisation and supervised by someone authorised by the organisation. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

First Day Absence

If a child is absent for any reason, parents/carers must let the organisation know ASAP. This information will be placed on the register when it has been received. Every case of absence is examined, and safeguarding is paramount.

Authorised Absence

Every absence (am/pm) will be classified as authorised or unauthorised. This will be confirmed using the National Attendance Codes. Authorised absences include events such as:

- Illness
- Bereavement
- Interview
- Medical appointments (where every eventuality has been made to make this outside Organisation hours)
- Approved sporting activities.

Unauthorised Absence

'Unauthorised Absence' is a period of absence which the organisation does not consider reasonable and no leave of absence has been issued. This may include events such as:

- Family holidays
- Truancy
- Unexplained absences

A parent can offer an explanation for their child's absence, but the law clearly states that it is the Head's decision as to whether it is felt the explanation offered by a parent for an absence is justified. For pupils on non - attendance procedure stage 2 onwards absence will only be authorised when evidence can be provided.

Holiday Absence

Holidays in term time are classified as unauthorised and marked on the register as G. This should not change unless it is at the discretion of the Head and only under exceptional circumstances can a holiday be authorised.

Long Term Absence

If there is a long-term absence for medical reasons where external tuition has been put in place, for example hospital a 'B' should be marked on the register. If a child has been in hospital and discharged under medical supervision work packs should be provided for the learner for up to two weeks. If the learner has not returned to organisation a member of the Senior Leadership team should complete a home visit and discuss the appropriate intervention which needs to take place.

Young People Missing From Education

Key Skills Training follows DfE legal requirements for organisations in respect of recording and reporting of children who leave organisation without any known destination and work closely with relevant Council Attendance Teams.

Where a learner has 10 consecutive organisation days of unauthorised absence and responsible steps* have been taken by Key Skills Training to establish the whereabouts without success, the Head of Education will make an immediate referral to the Early Help Team.

*Reasonable steps include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other organisations where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visit where safe to do so
- Enquires through friends, neighbours etc. through organisation contacts
- Enquiries with any other service known to be involved with the family
- All contacts and outcomes should be recorded on Facility

Attendance Intervention Support

Organisation has a dedicated Attendance and family support officer who can work with the pupil and family to encourage good attendance. Those pupils whose attendance starts to decline due to regular unexplained absence, will be subject to discussion at the weekly attendance meetings. Strategies to improve attendance will be discussed and interventions recorded. For those pupils who fall below 90% and are classified as a persistent absentee (PA) and where unauthorised absence exists organisation may apply a staged intervention toward formal proceedings:

Stage 1
All learners will have their attendance monitored on a weekly basis. Where a concern is raised over an individual's attendance, a home visit will be made and parents/carers will be issued with a letter, setting out our concerns, and a certificate of attendance. This is followed by a monitoring period of up to 4 weeks which can include phone calls, text messages and home visits by the Attendance officer – all contact will be recorded. A pupil Re-engagement plan may be issued to re-engage learners or create a more suitable personalised timetable.
Stage 2
Following an attendance review over a period of 4 weeks and, if there is no significant improvement, a further home visit will be completed and a second letter will be issued informing parents/carers that if any further absences are to be authorised, then there needs to be medical evidence explaining the absence. A pupil re-engagement plan may be issued to re-engage learners or create a more suitable personalised timetable.
Stage 3
Learners who have reached stage 2 of the Attendance Procedures will be closely monitored. A formal meeting will take place and weekly targets will be set – these will be monitored on a weekly basis. A pupil re-engagement plan will be issued to re-engage learners or create a more suitable personalised timetable.
Stage 4
If all previous interventions have failed and following a final attendance review a letter will be sent out to notify parents/carers that an attendance referral will be sent to the Local Authority for a prosecution to be pursued.