

2015

# Attendance Policy



**FUTURES**  
Community College

## Review Framework

The policy should be reviewed annually and targets updated

	<b>Date</b>
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## ***Appendix 1***

Attendance Posters

## Introduction

Futures Community College is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all students and embraces equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and carers should work closely with the school to overcome any issues that may affect their child's attendance.

For a student to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of over **96%** attendance for all students. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. If there are problems which affect a student's attendance, we will work in partnership with parents and students to resolve the problems as quickly and effectively as possible.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school's attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education. The school will examine the attendance figures monthly and set targets in accordance with the decision of Governors. The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving set goals.

We will adhere to the Code of Conduct under the Provision of the Education (Penalty Notices) Regulations 2004

## Promoting Attendance

The school will use as many opportunities as possible to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure their children receive their education.

We will also reward and celebrate attendance by:

- Asking students to complete a questionnaire to obtain their views on what makes a good reward
- Having inter-form competitions
- Rewarding overall attendance and improvement
- Awarding attendance certificates and sending letters to parents/carers half termly [gold 100%, silver 98-99%, bronze 96-97%, purple for improvement]
- Having a **100% club**, which allows specific privileges for students with 100% attendance
- Celebrating and publicising good and improving attendance for all years, in Tutor sessions and Assemblies
- Promoting good and improving attendance in all rooms and shared spaces in the school

## School Registration Procedures

- Registration in the morning begins at 8.40 am and ends at 9.00 am. Registration will be closed at 9.15am. Tutors are responsible for taking accurate registers on SIMS before 8.45am. Any student arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence, unless the school has received appropriate communication from a parent/carer detailing an appointment or other authorised absence, in which case the appropriate absence code will be entered by the Attendance Officer.

- Students registered after the start of school [8:40am] but before the end of the registration period [including up until 9.00 am in the morning], will be treated as present, but coded as 'late before the registers close'.
- All students must be marked as either present or absent on all registers. Staff must take care to record the mark on SIMS carefully, so that missing marks do not occur. All registers must be completed for both safeguarding and for data purposes.
- Registration in the afternoon will take place within 10 minutes of the start of Period 5 and will be carried out by the teacher teaching the students during that lesson.
- Students will be registered on SIMS for each teaching period and this will take place within **10 minutes** of the start of each lesson.
- If for any reason a register cannot be taken on SIMS a paper register will be taken and forwarded to the Attendance Officer **within 15 minutes of the lesson start**.

**School Registers are legal documents and should be marked with accuracy.**

- An extract of the register is used to prove non-attendance when the Local Authority Service prosecutes parents in the Magistrate's Court. A case can be thrown out of court if the defendant/lawyer can prove the register is incorrect. Corrections should be made **as soon as possible on the same day**.
- The register information is used by school administrative staff to contact parents about their absent children and if incorrect can result in embarrassment to the staff and distress for the parent/carer.
- If there should be a fire in school, an inaccurately marked register could result in a life being lost.

## **Punctuality Procedures**

- Any student who is absent from school at the morning registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. If there is no known reason for the absence of registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.
- Punctuality must be recorded on SIMS in right click comment boxes, staff must record the number of minutes late a student is. The Attendance Officer will analyse patterns and in liaison with the Head of Year will put in appropriate interventions to prevent persistent lateness to school, and to lessons.
- Students who are late for school will be issued with 'Payback' time [detention]. This will be on a sliding scale relating to the number of minutes late and may be at break/lunchtime or after school. Text messages will be sent to parents/carers giving details if the Payback occurs after the school day.

## **Student Absence Protocol**

- SIMS data will be analysed after each registration period has closed, first day absent contact made, and the Attendance Officer will be aware of all of that day's absences including reasons as known. The Attendance Officer will update the registers with any received information. If no

contact is made with the school during a student's absence, the student may receive an unannounced visit by the attendance team or truancy patrol.

- Parents / carers are advised to contact the school via the schools' absence line or by email direct to the Attendance Officer. In the event that no contact is made and after the registers have been closed, the school will make contact with the named parent/carer as indicated by SIMS.
- Any student who is absent for 5 days without contact being made by parents/carers will be notified to the Local Authority by submitting a referral for "A Child Missing from Education". This will be filled in by the Attendance Officer. After 20 days of no notification absence, a student could be taken off roll by the school. A welfare check by the police may also be made to check on the safety of the student.
- Internal truancy will be tracked by Heads of Year and the Student Support Team.

## **A Welcome Back**

It is the responsibility of the form tutor to welcome back all students in their forms after an absence. They must remind the student to catch up on missed work and must also bring the student up to date on any information that has been passed to other students.

It is the responsibility of the form tutor to complete a return to school interview form where the reason for absence will be recorded as will any concerns or further support needed at school.

We will work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued, sending a clear message that if a student is absent, he/she is missed.

## **Frequent Absence Procedure**

It is the responsibility of the **Form Tutor** to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. This should be reported to the Heads of Year and the Attendance Officer, who will discuss what action to take.

Students with attendance between **93-96%** will be invited with their parents to a level 1 meeting in school with their **Head of Year**, to discuss patterns of absence and identify any needs for early help and support

Level 2 meetings will be held if attendance reaches the trigger of **93%**. Identified students will be sent a level 2 letter requesting a parent/carer attend a meeting with the **Attendance Officer and LA CFEIT Officer**. An attendance action plan will be completed and a 100% target and 4 week review date will be agreed during the meeting. All parents that do not attend will receive a cold call home visit from the CFEIT Officer.

For cases not meeting attendance targets at level 2 reviews, a referral will be made to the CFEIT team to work with at level 3. They will carry out weekly home visits with the aim to support families to remove barriers to attendance and reduce persistent absence.

For cases identified at level 2 with no complex needs or recognised barriers to attending school an **Attendance Panel** can be arranged. The criteria for this includes those where parents have not attended level 2 meetings, engaged or communicated with school and evidence of further

unauthorised absences. At least 19 unauthorised absences within a 24 week period are needed to have an Attendance Panel [Southend Code of Conduct – Penalty Notices].

Attendance Panels must be held with a **senior member of staff, school governor and chaired by CFEIT Team Leader**. Parents will be issued with a **Final Warning Notice** and issued a **Penalty Fine** on the next unauthorised absence in the next school half term.

All cases held at level 3 that do not make **significant** improvement with attendance and do not have mitigating reasons for absence will be heard at a **Pupil Planning Meeting** chaired by the CFEIT Team Leader, a school member of staff is expected to attend as well as the student and his/her parent/carer. The school will need to bring to the meeting an up to date attendance certificate. This is a formal meeting with a caution to parents regarding outcome could include a penalty notice or referral to magistrate's court. The primary aim being to agree an action plan with parent/carer and school with immediate return to regular attendance. A **first warning letter** will be issued at the end of the meeting. Following a first warning a review will be held to look at improvement if there is no substantial improvement parents will be issued with a **Final Warning Notice** and issued a **Penalty Fine** on the next unauthorised absence in the next school half term or evidence may be gathered to take the parents to court.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Governing Body**

In addition to the Local Authority and DfE [Department for Education] the Governing Body will establish, in consultation with the Headteacher, staff, students and parents, the policy for the promotion of attendance and punctuality and keep it under regular review. It will ensure that it is communicated to students and parents, is non-discriminatory and the school's expectations about student attendance and punctuality are clear. Governors will support the school in maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher will be responsible for the school's policy and procedures, and may delegate aspects of its day to day implementation and management to a designated member of the school's leadership team.

### **All Staff**

All staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for ensuring that the policy and procedures are followed, and consistently and fairly applied. Mutual support amongst all staff in the implementation of the policy is essential. Staff have a key role in advising the Headteacher on the effectiveness of the policy and procedures. They also have responsibility, with the support of the school leadership team, for implementing the agreed policy and procedures consistently.

The **Governing Body, Headteacher and staff** will ensure there is no differential application of the policy and procedures on any grounds, particularly of ethnic or national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexuality. They will also ensure that the concerns of students are listened to and appropriately addressed.

### **Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance and punctuality of their child both inside and outside the school. They will be encouraged to work in partnership with

the school to assist the school in maintaining high standards of attendance and punctuality and will have the opportunity to raise with the school any issues arising from the operation of the policy.

### **Students**

Students will be expected to take responsibility for their own attendance and punctuality and will be made fully aware of the school policy, procedure and expectations.

### **Absence Notes**

These must be collected by the form tutor and passed immediately to the Attendance Officer who will use the information to amend SIMS. They will then be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If a student has been highlighted as either a 'persistent absence' or below 90% attendance, or other attendance concern, then their absence notes will be kept until they leave the school.

### **Unauthorised Leave during Term Time**

Following amendments to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2013, Headteachers may **not** grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*.

If the decision is made not to authorise, a letter will be sent to the parent confirming this fact and that a penalty notice may be issued. If a holiday is then taken without authorisation, the school will complete a request to the Child and Family Early Intervention Service who will decide whether to issue the penalty notice.

The current penalty notice stands at £60 rising to £120 [if not paid within 21 days] to **each** parent for **each** child taken out of school.

Further details can be found on the Local Authority website: [www.southend.gov.uk](http://www.southend.gov.uk)

### **Attendance Targets**

Our school targets are **96%** attendance rate for 2015-2016, and a P.A. rate of **(<85%) of 5%**. The progress towards our target will be analysed weekly by the Deputy Headteacher, in conjunction with the Attendance Officer.

### **Fire Drill**

SIMS fire drill register proformas are printed on the sounding of the fire alarm. The Attendance Officer will take the attendance registers to the assembly point for collection by the Heads of Year, who will in turn distribute them to the tutors.

Heads of Year must be informed **immediately** if a student is missing; they will then report this to the member of the Senior Leadership Team who is overseeing the evacuation, together with any information gained from the class e.g. reasons for absence, last location of any missing student etc.

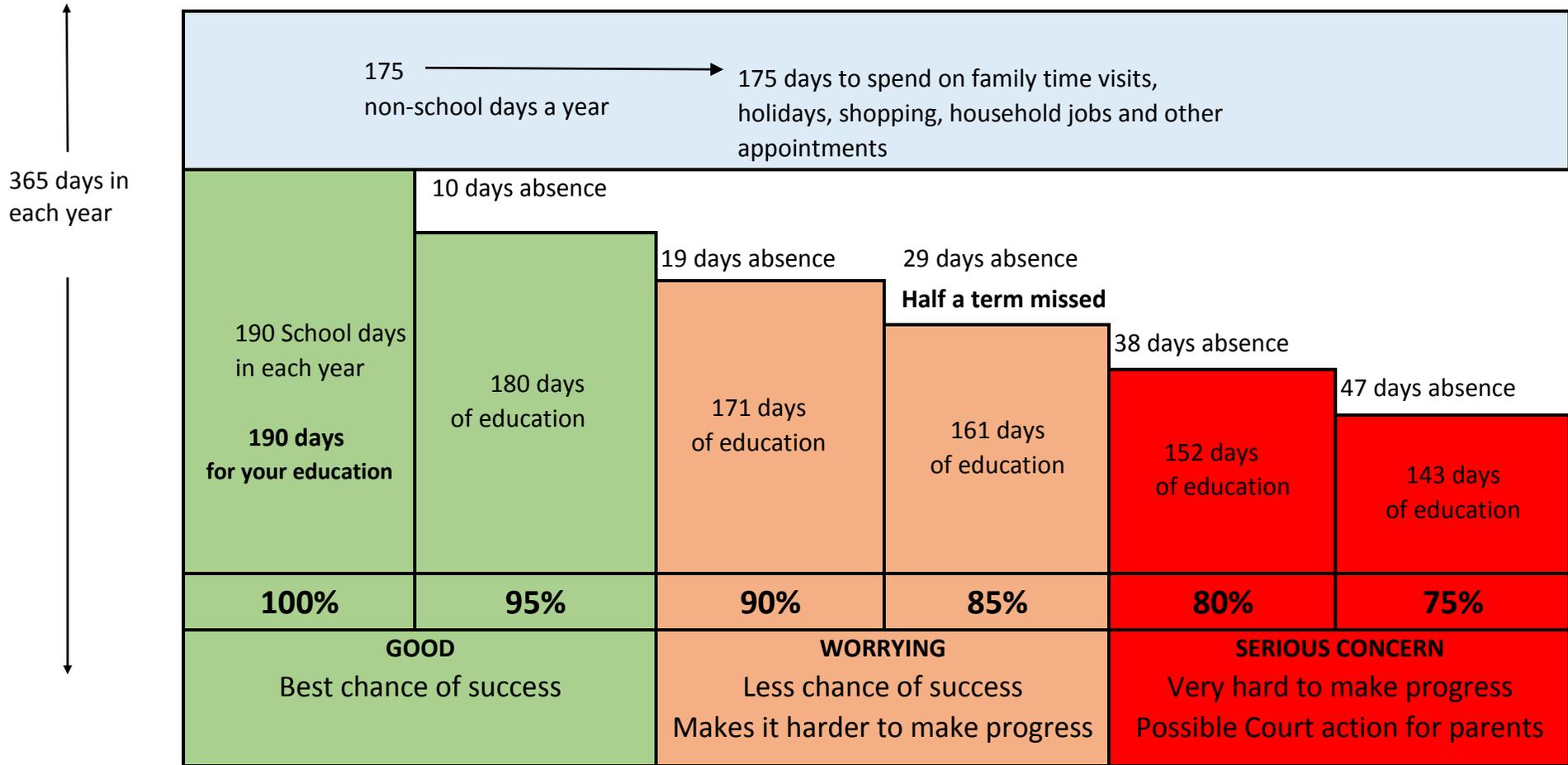
Registers are finally returned to the Attendance Officer.

### **Responsible Governor**

The Governor who currently supports the development of policy and procedure with regards to attendance is: Neil Bates

Appendix 1: Posters

Days off school add up to lost learning!



Every school day counts

## Why is good school attendance important?

My attendance	Chances of getting my GCSE grades
Over <b>98%</b>	Very good chance of getting at least 5 A*-C grades
<b>97%</b>	Good chance of getting at least 5 A*-C grades
<b>92%</b>	Slim chance of getting 5 A*-C grades
<b>90%</b>	Less than 50% chance of getting 5 A*-C grades
<b>88%</b> or less	Less than 35% chance of getting 5 A*-C grades Less than 30% chance

# ARE YOU TOUGH ENOUGH?

Attending school regularly is a  
challenge that makes you stronger.



P A S S

perfect attendance  
spells success