



# **Sixth Form Attendance Procedure**

## **Students and Parents**

## **1 Aim**

Our aim is to encourage and support all Post 16 students to attain 100% attendance.

Full attendance at school is important for students' development and achievement and our expectation is that students, parents/carers and school will work together to ensure that students attend school and access the appropriate Post 16 education.

Attendance is a whole school issue which is linked to safeguarding and is a shared responsibility. Parents/carers should ensure that their children attend school and provide reasons for absence for each day.

There is a strong link between attendance and achievement. Students who attend school are offered access to high quality learning and teaching opportunities which will enable them to achieve qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities. Students who maintain a high attendance achieve higher grades and achieve more academically than those whose attendance is low.

Absence, whether long term, frequent or occasional, leads to missed experiences and learning, having a negative impact on achievement and social and emotional wellbeing.

At Thorpe St Andrew Sixth Form

- We aim to deliver a motivating, relevant, inclusive curriculum to all students
- All staff maintain high expectations in relation to attendance; all students should be aware that their presence is appreciated and that their absence is noted
- We employ systems of rewards for achievement which are often linked to high attendance

## **2 Context**

Thorpe St Andrew Sixth Form operates within guidance from the council and in partnership with other local schools as well as the Yare Trust.

## **3 Procedures**

Procedures are informed by the following appendices. (Circumstance may require more frequent modification to specific procedures.)

Appendix 1 Responsibilities linked to Attendance

Appendix 2 Monitoring Absence

Appendix 3: Sixth Form Attendance Policy Flowchart

Appendix 4: Promoting Good Attendance: A Guide for Parents / Carers

Appendix 5: Application for Leave of Absence during Term Time

Appendix 6: Onset of Student Illness or Emergencies during the School Day

## **4 Evaluation**

This policy will be evaluated every three years to ensure it is still fit for purpose. Circumstance may require more frequent modification to specific procedures.

## **5 Authors**

This policy has been updated by Brigitte Bernard Deputy Principal – Sixth Form) in September 2020

## **Appendix 1: Responsibilities linked to Attendance**

### **Governors have a responsibility to:**

- Monitor the School's attendance data

### **The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that:**

- The school provides a welcoming and safe environment that encourages good attendance
- The school has developed procedures that meet statutory requirements

### **The Deputy Principal – Sixth Form has a responsibility to ensure that:**

- All members of staff are aware of the attendance policy
- Regular evaluation of all attendance procedures is carried out
- An ethos of high attendance is promoted
- Sixth Form attendance strategies are identified and implemented to ensure regular attendance
- Data is reviewed on a regular basis

### **The Sixth Form team has a responsibility to:**

- Follow school procedures to promote regular attendance and the welfare of students
- Challenge low attendance
- Monitor individual student absence
- Liaise with parents / carers to work collaboratively in meeting a student's individual needs
- Promote an ethos of excellent attendance at Sixth Form and implement strategies that ensure regular attendance

### **Personal Development (P.D.) Tutors have a responsibility to:**

- Follow school procedures to promote regular attendance and the welfare of students
- Challenge and counsel students with low attendance
- Be aware of potential barriers to regular attendance of students in their P.D Group
- Liaise with parents / carers to work collaboratively in meeting student's individual needs
- Liaise with the Sixth Form team with regard to any attendance concerns for members of their P.D. Group

## Appendix 2: Monitoring Absence

**Ongoing** P.D. Tutors review and monitor the absence of students within their P.D. Group, reporting any identified patterns of absence or lateness to the Sixth Form team. The Sixth Form Team will also make P.D. Tutors aware of any students who have dropped to 95% and therefore Stage One of the attendance procedure so they can have discussions with the student.

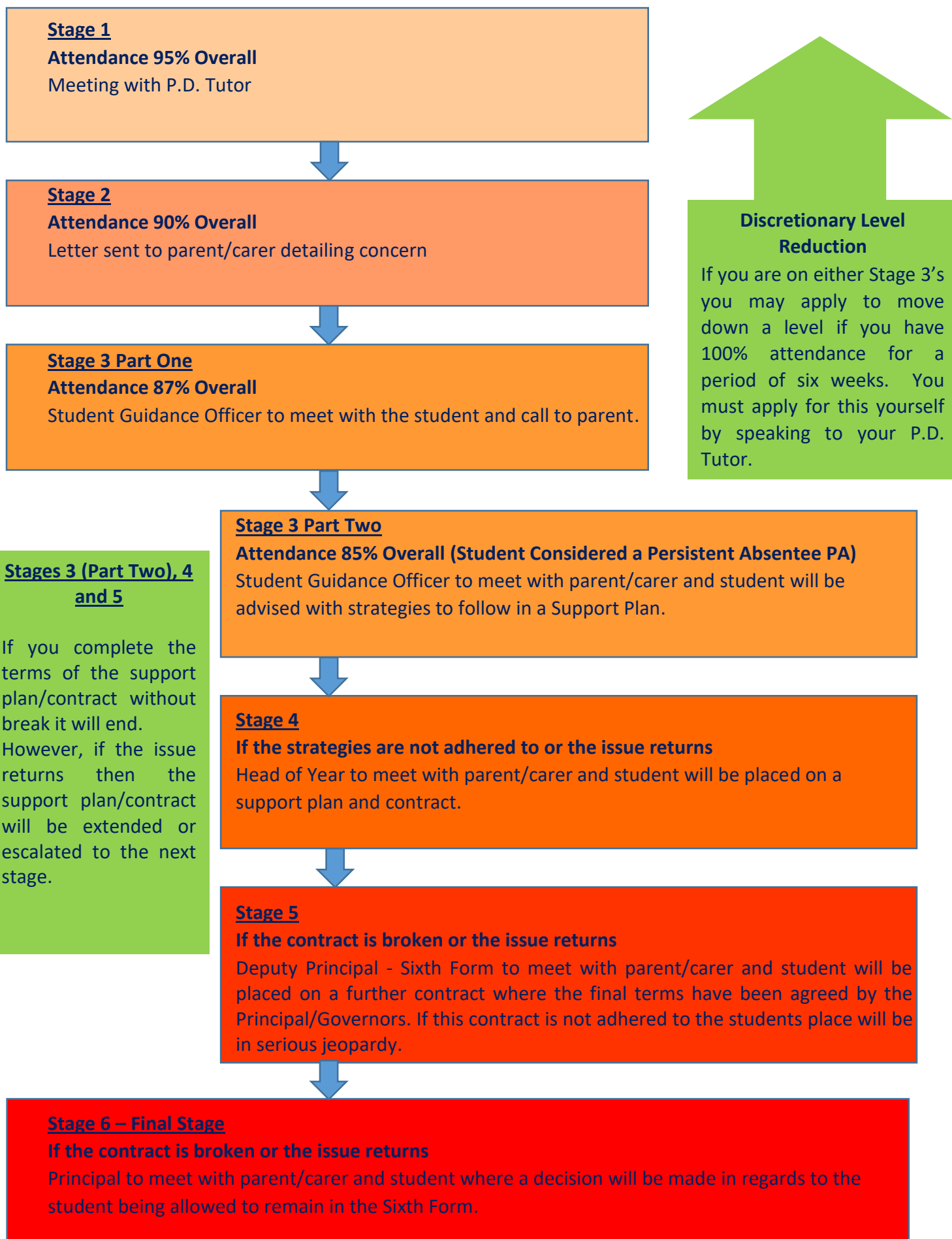
Attendance and punctuality to school and lessons is monitored by all staff.

**Weekly** The Sixth Form team meet and review attendance and punctuality of students of each year group ensuring strategies are discussed and put in place for students who are failing to meet school attendance expectations (see Appendix 4 for information on the attendance stages).

**Half Termly** Student Guidance Officer meets with Deputy Principal - Sixth Form to monitor and review attendance patterns by year group, ensuring strategies are in place when issues arise.

**Termly** Whole school attendance targets are set. The Deputy Principal, reports attendance figures to Governors.

## Sixth Form Attendance Flow Chart



## Appendix 4



# Promoting Good Attendance: A Guide for Parents and Carers

## **Introduction**

Thorpe St Andrew Sixth Form is a successful school where students play their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this document sets out how we will achieve this together.

## **Expectations**

Every student at Thorpe St Andrew Sixth Form is expected to attend 100% of their timetabled lessons. These include:

- A Level and Vocational Courses
- Personal Development Sessions and Assemblies
- One-to-One Mentoring sessions with Tutors
- Enrichment Courses (Year 12 only)
- Academic Coaching (Year 12 only)
- Extended Learning Lessons (ELL)
- AOPE Lessons if applicable (Year 12 only)
- iStudy Lessons

Research has shown that achievement is directly linked to attendance. Students with a high level of attendance invariably perform better in class and in examinations.

## **Why Regular Attendance and Punctuality is so important:**

### **Learning**

Any absence affects the pattern of student's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence or lateness disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law.

### **Safeguarding**

Students may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each student is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for students encompasses:-

Attendance

Punctuality

Behaviour Management

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Anti- bullying

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

## Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/carers, students and all members of school staff.

### To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you access to attendance data via '[My Child at School](#)'
- Register students in every timetabled lesson and for Personal Development sessions

## Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by parents/carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required via a phone call or email to school from parents/carer.

***Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.***

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the post 16 place being withdrawn, and include:

- Truancy before or during the school day
- Not attending Personal Development sessions
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Students who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Driving lessons
- Looking after other children including siblings (unless this is an unforeseen emergency)
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Paid employment being undertaken during the school day
- Leisure activities
- Birthday or similar celebrations
- Shopping

Whilst any student may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents/carers and the student. If students are reluctant to attend, it is best to discuss the issue with The Sixth Form Team to establish ways for full attendance to resume.



### **Persistent Absenteeism (PA) – See Appendix 3 (Stage 3)**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 15% or more time across the school year for whatever reason (authorised and unauthorised). Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any students educational prospects and we need the fullest support and co-operation of parents/carers to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our PA students and their parents/carers are subject to the attendance procedures detailed in Appendix 4.

### **Absence Procedures**

#### **If a student is absent the parent/carer must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and each subsequent day;
- You can call the school on 01603 497722
- You can email [sixthformtsa@yare-edu.org.uk](mailto:sixthformtsa@yare-edu.org.uk)
- Please note students are not able to call themselves, this has to be done by a parent/carer

#### **If your son/daughter is absent we will:**

- Telephone or text you every day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with a member of the Post 16 team if absences persist;
- If there are concerns regarding your child's attendance, absence may not be authorised without relevant or medical evidence. (For example: a medical appointment card or information from your medical practitioner.) You will be informed of this decision if applicable at attendance meetings.
- Formally categorise your situation as one of Persistent Absenteeism if attendance moves to or below 85%.

### **Telephone numbers**

There are times when we need to contact parents about various issues, including absence, so we need to have your correct contact numbers and email at all times. It is important that you ensure we always have an up to date number – if we do not, then we may be unable to contact you if there is an emergency. Equally we will need your up to date personal email to ensure regular contact can be maintained.

### **Onset of Student Illness or Emergencies During the School Day**

Should students need to leave the school during the day for an emergency appointment or illness, they must sign out at the following location:

Sixth Form Study Centre

The school will not allow a student to leave until they have spoken to a parent to confirm the appointment or the action being taken in regards to the student illness.

If illness persists, parents should inform the school of the absence on each day of illness, via the absence line, 01603 497722.

Please see Appendix 6 for further information

## **Lateness**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If students miss the start of the lesson they can miss vital information and disrupt the rest of the class.

Lateness over 30 minutes per month will result in students being asked to make up the missed time before or after the school day.

## **APPENDIX 5: Leave of Absence in Term Time**

We expect parents/carers not to knowingly affect their son/daughter's progress by taking them out of school during term time. Please remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday/visit.

In a situation where taking your child out of school during term time is unavoidable, you must apply for Leave of Absence. All applications must be made in advance, by completing the Application for Leave of Absence, accessible by clicking [here](#). These must be submitted **three days in advance**.

Although these absence forms are available, they are unlikely to be approved in term time, except in exceptional circumstances.

At our discretion, leave of absence may be authorised in exceptional circumstances. In making these decisions, the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time. Evidence, such as confirmation from employers, will be required to support these applications.

Requests for absence for activities such as university visits or employment interviews are usually authorised. Please note that a maximum of five university visits will be authorised which equals to the number of choices students can make on a UCAS application. It is advised that students try to complete all university visits in the summer term of Year 12. Leave of absence request forms are available [here](#). These must be submitted **three days in advance**.

If you have any questions about attendance or punctuality, please contact:

- The Personal Development Tutor
- Student Guidance Officer
- The Head of Year
- The Head of Sixth Form

## **Outside of School Commitments – Finding the Balance**

A balance between school study, evening/weekend paid work and social commitments must be maintained. Students Personal Development Tutors are there to help if students need assistance in setting targets and priorities.

Students must not be employed or take driving lessons during school hours, even outside timetabled lessons.

Research has shown that students who work nine hours per week achieve, on average, **one grade lower in their Key Stage 5/A Level results**.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES OR IN CASES WHERE A STUDENT IS NOT WELL ENOUGH TO MAKE THEIR WAY TO NORTH SITE MEDICAL ROOM UNAIDED**

- If the student is not well enough to go un-aided to the Medical Room, a Medical Officer should be alerted and they will attend to the student
- The Medical Officer will assess the student's needs. If the student cannot be moved, further medical assistance will be sought and parents informed
- In extreme circumstances an ambulance may be called and the student accompanied by a member of staff or parent / carer / nominated contact
- Students will be regularly monitored whilst awaiting the arrival of the ambulance or the parent / carer / nominated contact

The Staff Notice Board and Student Reception First Aiders' Notice will be kept up to date by the medical team.

Medical officers will log all details in the medical register including date/time of arrival, nature of illness and action taken and/or accident form if appropriate.

**The Medical Room**

The Medical Room is located on the North Site within the Sixth Form building

The Medical Room is equipped with a chair and basic emergency equipment with cleaning regularly taking place during the school day.

**NB Medicine may only be dispensed if already stored with parental consent.**

THIS PROCEDURE IS NOT FOR MEDICAL EMERGENCIES OR FOR STUDENTS WITH KNOWN ILLNESS WHO HAVE A MEDICAL PLAN IN PLACE. IN THESE INSTANCES, PROCEDURE AS OUTLINED ABOVE OR IN THE STUDENT'S 'INDIVIDUAL CARE PLAN' WILL APPLY.

STUDENTS WHO TELEPHONE PARENTS / CARERS THEMSELVES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE SCHOOL UNLESS THESE PROCEDURES ARE FOLLOWED.

**Due to COVID there are changes to this procedure, please see relevant health and safety amendments which detail these changes**