

## **Attendance for Learning Policy**

At Aspire we recognise the role that attendance has in helping our learners by:

- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward learner successes and achievements
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which learners feel safe, secure and valued
- Providing learners with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning
- Raising awareness of the importance of excellent attendance
- Monitoring attendance effectively and consistently and promptly recording reasons for absences.

### **Aim:**

The Attendance for Learning Policy aims to support each learner to aim high and achieve the highest outcomes possible.

### **Procedures and Practice:**

The Aspire Federation Attendance Policy has been written to reflect current laws and latest statutory guidance produced by the DfE, Department for Education, September 2018.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/739764/Guidance\\_on\\_school\\_attendance\\_Sept\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739764/Guidance_on_school_attendance_Sept_2018.pdf)

At Aspire full attendance is promoted whole school, including EYFS at Landgate and both schools' post-16 departments.

The Aspire Federation regularly examines its attendance figures, measuring the impact of policy and practice, and sets attendance targets yearly, reflecting both national and local attendance targets and guidance.

The Federation constantly monitors and reviews its systems for improving attendance to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

### **Absence**

At Aspire the safeguarding of all learners is of utmost importance and is a priority in all we do.

Any learner marked absent at morning registration or at the start of the afternoon session must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or a member of staff acting on their behalf can

authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as 'N' code.

At close of registration an identified member of staff will contact parents / carers before 10.00am to ascertain the reason for absence.

If there is a continued absence of two days without contact from parents then school will action a home visit, if contact cannot be made then a welfare check will be requested to an external service i.e. Social Care, Police. The LA guidance and protocols for Children Missing in Education will be completed and sent to the LA the same day.

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Schools/School-Absence/Children-Missing-Education.aspx>

## **Lateness**

- Morning registration will take place during Form Time, registers will remain open until the end of Form. Any learner arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation.
- Afternoon registration takes place at the start of the first afternoon session.
- Learners arriving after the start of school/college but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.
- Learners who arrive late after the register has closed will be given a late mark ('U' code) for that session.

## **First Day Absence**

- If a child is absent from school/college, for whatever reason it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform School by 9.00am on the first day of absence by telephoning Oakfield 01942 776142 or Landgate 01942 776688. (see Parent / Carer Responsibilities section)
- If the parent/carer does not contact School an identified member of staff will contact the parent/carer before 10am to ascertain the reason for absence (First Day Absence phone call).
- If School is satisfied with the reason provided for the learner's absence it will be recorded in the register as an authorised absence. If no reason is provided or School is not satisfied with the reason given it will be recorded in the register as an unauthorised absence.
- Parents/carers cannot authorise a child's absence from school/college, it is School's decision to authorise absences.

## **Continued (or sporadic) on-going Absences**

- If a child continues to be absent from school/college or has further absences the child's Pastoral Manager will contact parents/carers to discuss concerns.
- If absence continues the child's Pastoral Manager will contact parents/carers to arrange a meeting to ascertain any issues and possible resolutions, this may be in the form of a 'home visit'.
- If the child is in compulsory education the school's Start Well worker will become involved, liaising with the Pastoral Manager to monitor absence.
- If a pattern of absences develops the child's Pastoral Manager will make a referral to School's Pathways to Success, where strategies will be identified to address the absenteeism.

- Parent/carers will be encouraged to contact School to discuss their child's absence.

### **Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)**

Learners are categorised as being a 'Persistently Absent Pupil' if they accumulate a specified number of absences (or greater) within each half term period. This absence equates to the learner having 10% or more absence in any academic year (DfE guidance September 2015).

For learners whose attendance falls into the 'persistent absence' category, parents/carers will be contacted by the child's Pastoral Manager and invited into school for an 'Attendance Support' meeting.

Following this, if there is no significant improvement in attendance the issues will be brought to the attention of the Head of School. This may result in a meeting being arranged with the Head of School, a School Governor and Start Well worker.

Throughout this process, in consultation with the Start Well Service, Education Penalty Notices Warnings will be used where appropriate.

### **Onward referral to support services (Start Well etc.)**

Any learner who is absent without an explanation will be discussed with the school's Start Well worker. The school will record details of the action that they have taken. If necessary a formal referral will be made to the Start Well Service.

### **Elective Home Education**

At Aspire, if a parent chooses to home educate their child, we would support them in this decision by liaising closely with the Local Authority in accordance with LA and DfE guidance.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **Learners**

It is the responsibility of all learners to actively support the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy with support where appropriate through;

- Taking part in the class registration routine
- Getting to school on time
- Bringing equipment needed for lessons (e.g. PE kit/swimming kit)
- Giving the home/school planner to the form tutor
- Having a copy of the 'Home School' agreement in their home/school planner

#### **Parents**

It is the responsibility of all parents/carers to actively support the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy through;

- Be responsible for ensuring your child's entitlement to a full education
- Informing school on the child's first day of absence (see First Day Absence)
- Contacting school regarding ongoing absence (see Continued Absence)

- Supporting school by only taking holidays outside of term time. School holidays will not be authorised during term time.
- Attending an Attendance Support meeting with the Pastoral Manager if your child falls into the 'Persistent Absence' category.

## **Staff**

It is the responsibility of all staff to actively implement the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy through;

- Promoting Attendance for Learning and the link between attendance and achievement both socially and academically.
- Informing the School Office of attendance related comments (e.g. hospital appointments)

It is the legal responsibility of Form Tutors/Class Teachers to actively implement the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy by;

- Completing the register in the morning and afternoon before the registers close

## **Pastoral Managers**

It is the responsibility of Pastoral Managers to actively implement the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy through;

- Contacting parents/carers to discuss concerns if a learner has continued absence from school.
- Contacting parents/carers to arrange a meeting to ascertain any issues and possible resolutions, this may be in the form of a 'home visit'.
- Liaising with any involved Start Well workers to monitor absence.
- Making a Pathways to Success referral if a pattern of absence develops. During the Pathways meeting, strategies will be identified to address attendance.
- Inviting parent/carer of learners who fall into the 'persistent absence' category into school for an 'Attendance Support' meeting to compile an action plan with input from the parent/carer, learner, school and the Start Well worker. This may lead to the implementation of an Attendance Contract or other appropriate strategy being actioned through Pathways to Success. Targets will be agreed and reviewed until the learner is no longer Persistently Absent. There will be a link between attendance and attainment to the implementation of an Attendance Contract
- Tracking and monitoring attendance, liaising with SLT lead.

## **Senior Leadership**

It is the responsibility of Senior Leadership to actively implement the Aspire Attendance for Learning policy by;

- Setting attendance targets each year. The system for analysing performance towards targets is monitored by the Assistant Head who is responsible for ensuring all relevant information is presented to the Head of School, Executive Head and School Governors.
- The Assistant Head monitoring and tracking attendance. Attendance reports are discussed at Pathways to Success meetings, where learners with below target attendance are identified and planned action is implemented. A

'Traffic Light System' is used to identify learners whose attendance falls below target (**Appendix 1**).

- Sharing and celebrating attendance with learners, parents and staff when the opportunity arises and through the Attendance Reward System. Parents/carers will regularly be reminded (via newsletters, school website, parents evenings etc) of the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality.
- The Head of School may require a meeting with parents/carers of persistently absent learners whose attendance has not shown significant improvements in attendance. This meeting could include a School Governor and Start Well worker and would focus on solutions to the problem with a particular focus on the links between attendance and achievement.

### **Legal Proceedings for Non-Attendance** (Wigan local authority guidance)

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Schools/School-Attendance/Legal-Proceedings-for-Non-Attendance.aspx>

#### **How it works**

- Wigan LA will write to a parent/carer warning that they may be fined if their child's attendance does not improve in 15 days
- If there is no improvement a parent/carer will receive a £60 Penalty Notice Fine
- If this is not paid within 21 days, the fine increases to £120
- If this is not paid within 28 days Wigan LA can take a parent/carer to court under the Education Act.

There is no right of appeal against a notice, but a parent/carer can contact Wigan LA if they think the notice has been sent to the wrong person, or if they can prove the absence was due to illness.

#### **Defending the charges**

If a parent/carer is taken to court, there are only four reasons that they can defend the charges. These are if the child:

- Is ill or couldn't go to school due to an emergency
- Lives over a certain distance and Wigan LA haven't been able to help get them into a school nearer or help with transport
- Misses school due to religious reasons
- Has an authorised absence.

#### **If found guilty**

If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they may be:

- Fined up to £2500
- Sentenced to three months in prison
- Given a Parenting Order. This involves going to Parent Support sessions for between six and eight weeks
- The child may also be taken to the Family Proceedings Court.

#### **Guest Learners**

All partner schools complete an Inreach school to school agreement. (**Appendix 1**)

#### **Absence notes**

Notes received from parents/carers explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the learner, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

### **Attendance Rewards**

School will use the following system to reward learners who have excellent attendance;

- Attendance figures are presented during assemblies.
- Attendance trophies/rewards are awarded to the class/form with the highest attendance during Achievement assemblies to promote attendance.
- Attendance figures are displayed on School's television system, website and newsletters.
- Learners with excellent attendance (98%+) are recognised and awarded with certificates half termly
- Students eligible for the 16-19 Bursary must attend College for the specified number of learning hours in order to receive payment.

### **Other relevant policies to be read in conjunction;**

Learning & Teaching, Behaviour for Learning, Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Equality & Diversity.

<b>Date approved:</b>	<b>30.04.2019</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>April 2021</b>
<b>Signed Executive Headteacher:</b>	<b>C Taylor</b>

## Appendix 1



### Inreach - School to School Agreement

This agreement is to confirm the terms and conditions for personalised provision at Oakfield High School and College/Landgate School with (name of school)

**Learner name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Identified days:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Duration of agreement: (start date) to (end date)**

**Costs: The cost of the provision will be £30 per learner per day and (name of school) will be invoiced in the January of each financial year.**

**As part of this agreement, The Aspire Federation agrees to:**

- Provide high quality provision;
- Give assessment and progress updates;
- Implement and support planned programmes;
- Provide a comprehensive evaluation of the programme;
- Inform (name of School) of any changes to any programme.
- Hold regular review meetings to discuss progress;
- Should a learner be absent Oakfield/Landgate will inform (name of school) via telephone call to school office by 10am the morning of each absence.

**As part of this agreement, (name of school) agrees to:**

- Complete a support referral form;
- Ensure all documentation / requested proforma are completed and sent to Outreach Co-ordinator;
- Inform the Outreach Coordinator of any issues, should they arise;
- Keep all records regarding programme for a minimum of 12 months;
- Inform Outreach Co-ordinator if they are aware that a learner is not going to be able to attend;
- Notify Outreach Co-ordinator of any changes to the proposed programme;
- Respect the fact that all materials, programmes are the result of a joint venture and as such remain the property of both parties.
- Provide a TA to support the learner at Oakfield/Landgate at least initially and until told no longer required by Oakfield/Landgate;
- **Will follow (Name of school) attendance policy when a learner is identified as absent.**

**Signed on behalf of Oakfield High School and College/ Landgate School:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signed on behalf of (name of school)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Print name :** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Print name:</b> _____	<b>Date:</b> _____
<b>Date :</b> _____	

## Appendix 2

### ATTENDANCE 'Traffic Light System' 2019-20

A 'Traffic Light System' is used to identify Learners whose attendance falls below target.

Category	% Attendance	Possible Actions
GREEN	98% - 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learner recognised &amp; celebrated in Assembly</li> <li>- Praise-call / text home</li> <li>- Attendance Certificate</li> <li>- Weekly Form Attendance Trophy</li> <li>- Monthly Form Attendance Trophy</li> </ul>
AMBER	95% - 98%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular contact home via phone, text, email</li> <li>- Monitoring of absence levels for 2 weeks</li> <li>- As below, if no improvement</li> </ul>
RED	Below 94%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal letter home where appropriate</li> <li>- Referral to Pathways to Success</li> <li>- Referral to Start Well</li> <li>- Meeting / home visit arranged</li> <li>- Intervention strategies planned to improve attendance</li> </ul>

### Post 16 Attendance Targets

- Students must complete the required number of Guided Learning Hours for each course undertaken.
- Bursary payments will not be awarded to any qualifying student who is absent unless there are extenuating circumstances, i.e. family funeral, Specialist medical appointment unable to be rescheduled.
- College targets are set in line with school's targets.
- A student's attendance at school will be considered when requesting a college place.