



# Unity College Blackpool

## Attendance Policy

### Philosophy

Unity College is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a school, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Unity College will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Unity College will give a high priority to conveying to pupils and parents the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents/carers have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems that affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve these problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly, focussed, approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### PRINCIPLES

The school will:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures, registration regulations and education law.
- Complete electronic or paper registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.
- Complete electronic registers at the beginning of each lesson.
- Stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence.
- Display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all pupils.
- Set targets for attendance as outlined in the attendance action plan.
- Promote the role of the form tutor in monitoring and rewarding good attendance for pupils in their form.
- Promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence.

- Consult with all members of the school community and the PWO service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.
- Ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors.
- Include attendance and related issues in the newsletters sent to parents and pupils.
- Include in annual reports to parents.
- Report to governors each term.
- Work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed.
- Have in place procedures that will allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of others.

## **PROCEDURES**

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will:

- Contact the parent by telephone.
- Send a letter if an explanation has not been received after three days of unexplained absence.
- After five days of absence the Pastoral Manager/teacher in charge of attendance will incorporate the pupil in the weekly discussion with the PWO.
- After a maximum of 10 days absence, the Pastoral Manager/teacher in charge of attendance will ask the PWO to call at the pupil's home. The aim of this being to identify and resolve the difficulties that are preventing the pupil from attending the school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance.
- Initiate an attendance plan for pupils' whose attendance falls between 70 and 90 per cent. Attendance targets will be set which will be monitored by Form tutor with the support of the Pastoral Manager/teacher in charge of attendance and PWO. The parents/carers will be asked for their support in fulfilling the legal requirements regarding school attendance.
- Help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then an individual reintegration programme will be initiated by the Pastoral Manager/teacher in charge of attendance in conjunction with the Form tutor and the PWO.
- Pastoral Manager/teacher in charge of attendance will make a referral to the Pastoral Board as appropriate. The Pastoral Board will adopt strategies that include:
  - Long term absence from school will require the attendance Manager and Induction Mentor to be involved in the individual reintegration programme in order to write an effective 'Action Plan'.
  - Monitor attendance in lessons via monitoring check e.g. intense lesson by lesson, 2/3 spot checks through the day, 1 spot check daily monitoring.
  - Initial daily contact with parents to 'iron out' any problems occurring.
  - 'Wake up' calls in the case of truants.

- Positive rewards integrating into existing rewards scheme.
- Establishing a good relationship with parent/pupil in order to provide the support needed for `better` attendance or reintegration programmes.
- Register with the Attendance Manager or Induction Mentor at the `end` of the day.
- Reward good and improved attendance through:
  - Attendance rewards
  - Attendance trips
  - Attendance assemblies
- Reward good and improved punctuality through:
  - Punctuality rewards
  - Assemblies

### **Fast track to Positive outcomes**

Unity College, in conjunction with the PWO service, will identify cohorts of pupils whose attendance is lower than 90 per cent. These pupils and their families will then form part of the `Fast track` programme. The teacher in charge of attendance will identify this group of pupils in conjunction with the PWO. He will also be responsible for monitoring their daily attendance in conjunction with the Attendance Manager and represent the school as necessary in order to support the improved attendance of the identified pupils.

### **Non routine admissions**

Where long term absence from school has been a feature of the pupil's school history, prior to admission:

- The Assistant Headteacher responsible for admissions will:
  - Initiate the appropriate admission for the pupil, through liaison with the Induction Mentor. This may involve a reintegration plan or referral to the attendance Learning Mentors.
  - Initiate a planning meeting, to be chaired by either herself or a representative from the Local Authority as appropriate.
  - Liaise with both the Induction Mentor and the relevant Pastoral Manager to ensure the accurate transfer of information occurs prior to the pupil being entered on school role.
  - Ensure that the PWO service is involved with the more `difficult` cases.
  - Ensure that school records are requested by the office staff and that the information held within the records is distributed by the Induction Mentor to the appropriate member of staff.
- The Induction Mentor will:
  - Initiate an action plan that will monitor closely the attendance of the pupil.
  - Maintain regular liaison with the family of the pupil

- Facilitate the appropriate support that a pupil may need in order to attend school on a regular basis
- Monitor and review attendance for a fixed period of time
- Refer to Pastoral Manager if problems still exist after this period of time

### **Punctuality**

- The number of lates is based on 9 registrations. (Friday afternoon is ignored to expedite the administrative process).
- Notification from the office that a pupil is late more than twice in a weeks triggers late letter 1, signed by the Form Tutor (provided there is no genuine reason for lateness) and posted home.
- Repeated lateness triggers late letter 2, more strongly worded, again signed by the Form Tutor and again posted home.
- Continued lateness triggers late letter 3, signed by the Pastoral Manager and with mention of the involvement of the PWO in extreme cases and posted home.

### **Performance**

Unity College has been set attendance targets as identified in the school development plan (6.1).

When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved.
- Punctuality has improved.
- Parental response to absences has improved.
- Re-integration plans have been successful.
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community.
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within the school.
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal Development (PD) lessons or as a theme for any other lessons.

### **PRACTICE**

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately.
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data.
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance.
- Liaising closely with the school's PWO.
- Liaising with multi disciplinary team
- Recording carefully, all telephone messages.

**In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance and punctuality a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.**