

TRINITY ACADEMY NEWCASTLE TRUST

ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Approved by the Committee – November 2022
On behalf of the Board**

Next Review Date – November 2023

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Introduction

Our job at Trinity Academy Newcastle Trust (The Trust) is to prepare your child for life. The well planned curriculum looks at the child as a whole person, preparing them for adulthood, relationships and the possibility that one day they may become a parent. Our aim is to give each learner knowledge and wisdom to make informed decision. Positive school attendance is central to raising standards in education and ensuring all learners can fulfil their potential. Learners who attend school on a regular basis and are offered access to high-quality teaching and learning opportunities will usually leave school with qualifications and access to greater employment opportunities. The links between attendance and achievement are strong, and high levels of attendance at school should be a right of each learner.

The Trust’s Attendance Improvement Strategy

The Trust is focused and is striving to improve our overall Trust attendance. We believe in a proactive approach, this will be supported if we can reduce the percentage of our population who fall into PNA (persistent non-attendees) category. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have strategically recognised that a more flexible, responsive and personalised approach towards the curriculum could provide enhanced impact. This approach will further support our capacity to engage and educate our hardest to reach cohort. We will continue applying our corroborated strategies to improve attendance whilst looking to develop further strategies to support an overall attendance improvement.

Learners should aim for 100% attendance.

When they are in The Trust they can:

Feel a sense of safety, acceptance and belonging and are therefore SAFE; Access support, advice and opportunities to develop and grow physically, socially and emotionally in order to be HEALTHY; ENJOY and ACHIEVE through the experience of a stimulating and challenging educational environment which promotes, recognises and celebrates all achievements and therefore have greater opportunity to and realise later ECONOMIC WELL-BEING; Make a POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION to our responsibilities, and beyond.

Good attendance is inextricably linked with academic attainment and personal fulfilment. At The Trust we will strive to provide an ethos and environment, which:

- Is welcoming, caring and supportive wherein all our learners feel valued and accepted;
- Is stimulating and challenging wherein all our learners are encouraged toward achieving their fullest potential;

- Promotes supports and celebrates learner attendance and achievement.

Policy Aims

- To promote and encourage full Trust attendance for all learners;
- To reduce learner absence, including persistent and severe absence (Persistent absence at under 90% and severe attendance under 50%);
- To make attendance a priority for all those associated with the Trust, including learners, parent/carers, staff and governors;
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks;
- To establish a system for responding effectively to learner absence;
- Acting early to address patterns of absence;
- To provide support, advice and guidance to learners and parent/carers;
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data;
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and the Trust;
- To build strong relationships with families to ensure learners have the support in place to attend school;
- To implement a system of rewards and sanctions where appropriate;
- To promote effective partnership with the Local Authority and with other services and agencies.
- To safeguard all of our learners when it comes to attendance related issues.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the *working together to improve attendance* from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school *attendance parental responsibility measures*. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of *The Education Act 1996*
- Part 3 of *The Education Act 2002*
- Part 7 of *The Education and Inspections Act 2006*
- *The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)*
- *The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.*

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the schools census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Entitlements & Responsibilities

Staff responsible for leading Attendance in each school within the Trust

Trinity Academy Newcastle	Trinity Academy New Bridge	Trinity Academy Solutions
Mark Kennedy	Mark Flint	
Alex Sweeney	Alan Stevenson	

Learners	
Are entitled to:	Are responsible for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefit fully from the educational opportunities available to them; • A stimulating and challenging curriculum that is geared to meet their individual needs; • Experience a sense of safety and security; • Feel a sense of belonging and participation within the Trust community; • Have access to systems of learner representation; • Have their attendance recognised and celebrated; • Support to overcome attendance difficulties; • Be treated with respect and dignity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending the Trust and all lessons regularly and punctually; • Completing missed work owing to absence, where applicable; • Informing Trust staff, parent/carers and/or other significant persons of difficulties affecting Trust attendance; • Accepting the support made available to address attendance difficulties

Parents/Carers	
Are entitled to:	Are responsible for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel welcome and valued in the Trust; • Know about the Trust's attendance policy; • Be informed promptly about attendance concerns; • A named contact person responsible for attendance matters; • Receive attendance data on their child's attendance record; • Support to overcome attendance difficulties; • Be treated with respect and dignity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that their child attends the Trust every day and punctually; • Ensuring that the Trust is promptly informed of any reason for absence via the school office; • Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for learners • Ensuring that any holidays are not booked during term time. • Working with the Trust staff to resolve attendance difficulties/issues.

Staff with specific responsibilities for managing attendance	
Are entitled to:	Are responsible for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expect that learners will attend regularly and punctually; • Support and guidance from the LA in managing attendance; • Be treated with respect and dignity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that an attendance register is taken twice daily; • Having clear registration procedures; • Monitoring individual and overall attendance; • Coordinating support to learners and parent/carers to maintain regular attendance; • Developing positive communication/relationships with parent/carers; • Ensuring that the Trust attendance policy establishes effective systems and procedures for encouraging regular attendance and investigating the causes of poor attendance; • Setting attendance and absence targets; • Promoting an attendance culture; • Establishing systems to monitor and control post-registration truancy.

Trust Staff	
Are entitled to:	Are responsible for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expect that learners will attend regularly and punctually; • Clear guidelines and expectations re-their role; • Support from senior management as necessary to fulfil role; • Be treated with dignity and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting the importance of attendance to all learners and parent/carers; • Sharing information with attendance colleagues that may impact upon attendance; • Ensuring that daily routines, lessons, events are adequately supervised and well organised; • Ensuring that the curriculum and its delivery motivates and challenges learners and meets their individual needs; • Holding high expectations of learners behaviour and achievement; • Creating a sense of security, acceptability and belonging for learners. • Safeguard all of our learners and conduct regular 'safe and well' calls/visits where necessary.

Senior Management And Trustees	
Are entitled to:	Are responsible for:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance from the LA on policy and practice issues; • Be treated with dignity and respect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support, advice and training, as necessary, to enable Trust staff to fulfil their role; • Promoting, reviewing and endorsing the Trust attendance policy annually • Monitoring attendance and absence rates and setting targets for improvement within the Trust Improvement Plan • Make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties • Safeguard all of our learners and conduct regular 'safe and well' calls/visits where necessary.

Registration Procedures

We will keep an attendance register and place all learners onto this register.

Registration

Teacher/tutors are responsible for the twice-daily completion of the class/group manual registers. Registers are to be completed once during the morning (before 9am) and again during the afternoon (before 1pm).

Registers are closed after a thirty-minute period, the maximum time recommended by the DfE. The attendance data is input into the Arbour MIS system by teaching staff. Learners will be coded whether present, attending off site Alternative Provision, absent or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances (see coding page 7).

The Pastoral team will use the registers on Arbor to invoke the Trust's absence response continuum as necessary (see below)

Off-site learning provision

Where learners are educated off-site and/or are in receipt of work related learning then external providers are required by the Trust to submit a weekly breakdown of attendance, including details of any absence. The relevant data information is submitted on Friday afternoon via e-mail and input into the electronic register on Arbor. It is incumbent upon external providers to provide the Trust with immediate notice of any learner's absence – irrespective of reasons for the absence.

Un/authorised Absence

The Trust is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Telephone conversations and/or letters from parent/carers do not in themselves automatically authorise an absence. The appropriate Deputy Head/Pastoral Manager will authorise an absence on occasions when they are fully satisfied as to the validity of explanation/s offered by parent/carers.

Late Arrivals / Punctuality

Learners arriving at the Trust late, post-register closure (after 8.45am), will be allocated a late mark in the electronic register on Arbor. Learner punctuality is regularly promoted. Any

emerging patterns of learners 'lateness' will be promptly addressed by the site designated site lead for attendance and/or Pastoral team.

Term Time Holiday absence

Learners are not entitled to holiday absence during term time. Holiday absence may only be granted by the Head of School in exceptional circumstances. Any request must be made in writing to the Head of School.

Valid reasons for authorised absence can include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observation – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the learners parents/carers belong. If necessary the school will seek advice from the parents/carers religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller learners travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showman (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the learner is attending educational provision.

Responding To Unauthorised Absence and escalation route (Flow Chart Appendix 1)

A designated member of staff is responsible for managing the absence response continuum on each key stage site. The site Pastoral Manager, where the functions are separate, will maintain an overview of this process.

Stage 1

On the first day a learner is absent, without notification, then the designated lead member of staff will contact home on the same morning, elicit reasons for absence and allocate attendance status accordingly. Should they fail to make contact by telephone then the Trust will continue to try establish contact.

The Trust will notify Children's Services if there is an unexplained absence of a learner on a Child Protection Plan of more than two days duration (or one day following a weekend); or as agreed as part of any Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan.

Stage 2

Should a learner remain absent without explanation following this then further phone calls will continue and 3rd day of absence a Safe and Well home visit will be made to try source a reason for learner absence.

Stage 3

If there are frequent shorter periods of unauthorised absence, then the trust will inform parents via Attendance letters (u95%, Attendance Improvement letter) and then parents/carers will be invited in for a meeting with the Pastoral Manager/Officer. This will result in a Parenting Contract, which will outline the commitment from the parent/carer as well as the expectations and support from the Trust. The Head of School will be informed and the academy will continue to support/track the impact of the Parenting Contract. Within a parenting contract meeting school will offer the family Early Help support or a referral to Children and Young People Services (CYPS) to try support around any issues with learner attendance if external factors are identified. A referral can then be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to support the family. If the parents/carer accept to work with Early Help on a voluntary basis, the

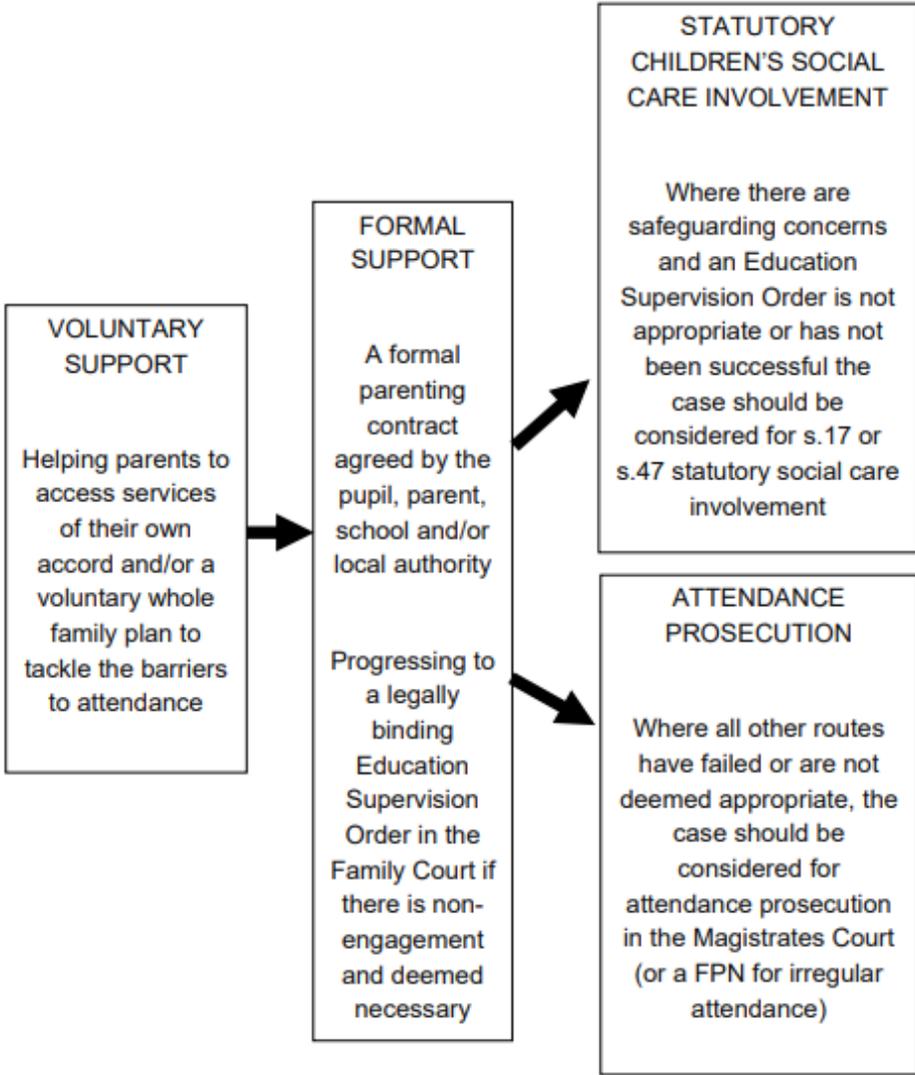
Early Help team may be able to then support the family with any barriers to the learning attending school.

Stage 4

Where a Parenting Contract is in place, but the expectations within it have not been fulfilled, then the Pastoral Manager/Officer should again meet with parents/carers to address any issues or concerns. Regular liaison between the Trust and the LA Attendance Team should also take place in order to decide if and when formal attendance monitoring should begin (this is the stage that must precede a prosecution). If the learner fails to achieve the targets stipulated in their Parenting Contract and/or fails to respond positively to the formal monitoring process, then the Local Authority may decide to prosecute the parent/carer.

Effective monitoring of attendance is essential. Key staff, such as the learner’s teacher and/or support workers may have some valuable insight into factors, which may contribute to non-attendance and truancy in particular cases. If so then they are obligated work collaboratively with senior staff, parents and the learner to address the situation.

At any stage following the first day of absence the Pastoral Manager/Officer and/or Head of School may sanction a home visit by an appropriate member of Trust staff (in most cases this would be the Pastoral Team and/or Attendance Officer), where such a visit could be productive in supporting a learner’s attendance.



Strategies for Prioritising and Maintaining Good Attendance

Within the Trust good attendance is prioritised, supported and maintained in a variety of ways. The following practices are common to all Trust key stages sites, with a modicum of differentiation as suits the differing age and developmental stages within the key stage continuum.

Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on academy attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Learner is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Learner is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Learner arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Learner is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the academy
D	Dual registered	Learner is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Learner has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Learner is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the academy
V	Educational trip or visit	Learner is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the academy
W	Work experience	Learner is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Learner has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Learner has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Learner has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	Academy has been notified that a learner will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Learner is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Learner is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 learner is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Learner from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the academy

Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Learner is on a holiday that was not approved by the academy
N	Reason not provided	Learner is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	Academy is not satisfied with reason for learner's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Learner arrived at academy after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in academy	Learner of non-compulsory academy age is not required to attend Relevant X codes will be applied that are Covid related absences.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Academy site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or learner is in custody
Z	Learner not on admission register	Register set up but learner has not yet joined the academy
#	Planned academy closure	Whole or partial academy closure due to half term/bank holiday/INSET day

- As of January 2022 - the following guidance should be applied. *“After a learner tests positive for COVID-19 (LFD or PCR), they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school. They should continue to self-isolate in line with public health guidance.”*

Strategies for Promoting Attendance

Attendance Rewards

Each site operates an online reward system, Arbor which is explicitly geared to rewarding good attendance through Power of choice (the in-house rewards system). Points are awarded to learners for acceptable behaviour, attitude and acquired in every lesson across the week. A learner's points are allowed to accrue and totalled at the end of each week and if learners attend every day they give themselves the opportunity to acquire more points. Learners may then exchange points earned for access to a variety of planned activity options at the conclusion of each week. In the longer term points totals are more formally acknowledged, rewarded and awarded at end of term celebratory meetings.

Tutorials

Weekly tutorial sessions afford teacher/tutors the opportunity and time to meet regularly with learners to review progress and plan personal attendance targets. Where attendance is an issue then progress will be reviewed discussed with additional pastoral support and

intervention offered as necessary. Attendance is a priority during all weekly tutorials with learners and also parents/carers.

Weekly Celebrations

On each of the sites a weekly celebration is held with the singular purpose of publicly acknowledging and celebrating learner achievement. Both individual and collective attendance successes feature regularly. A weekly Attendance PowerPoint is shared with all tutor groups to prioritise attendance and review attendance for the week for individual learners.

Displays

The importance of attendance and learner achievement in attendance receive further public acknowledgement via display boards on each site. There is also a dedicated section on the Trust website promoting good attendance.

Celebrating good attendance

Good attendance is recognised and celebrated on both sites. Each school will hold a dedicated weekly assembly, ensuring that staff and learners have a good level of understanding and ownership of the site's attendance.

Curriculum

Good attendance will be continually reinforced through an engaging curriculum, with external speakers/agencies brought in as appropriate.

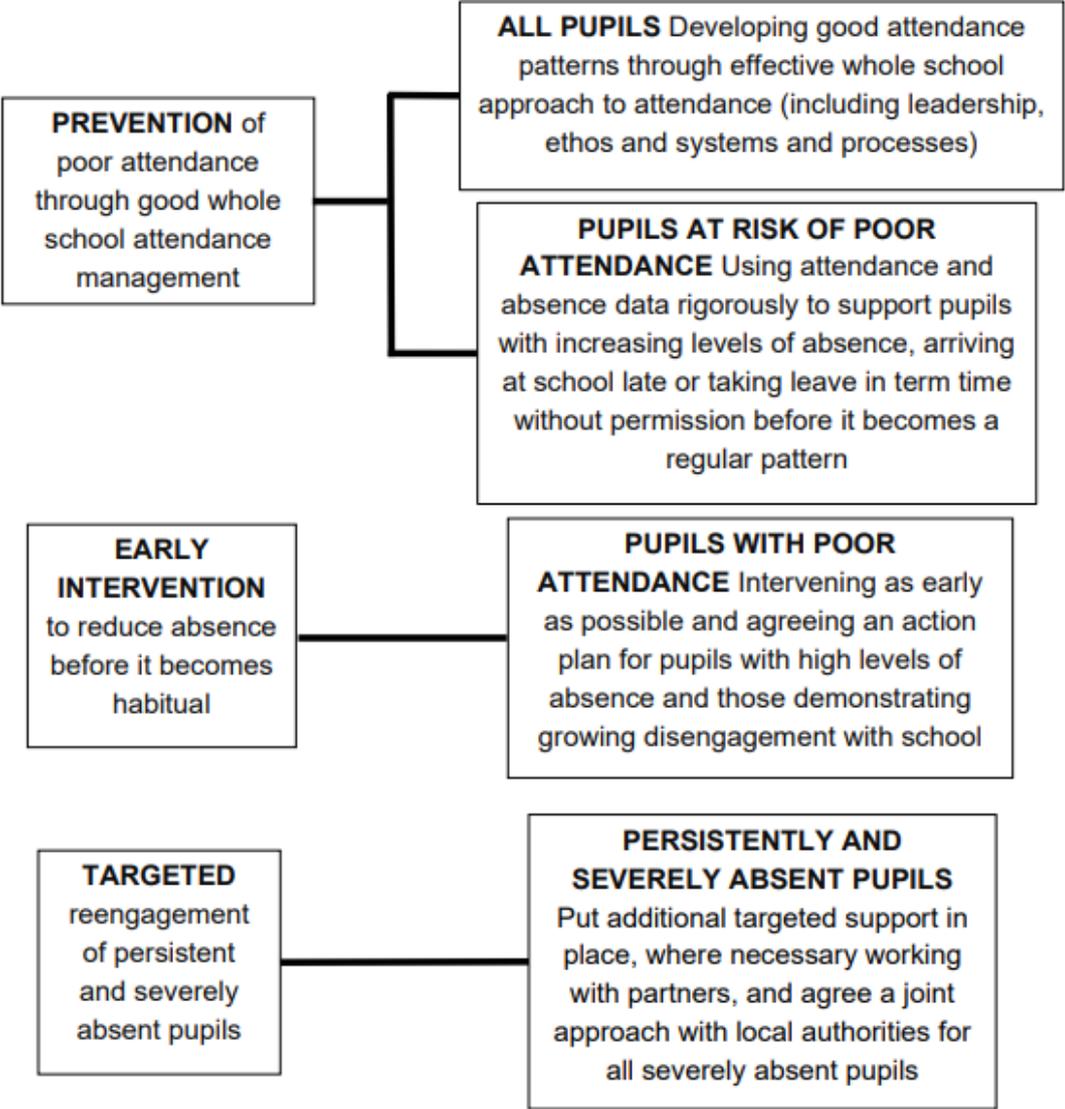
Working with parent/carers

At the Trust we actively promote and encourage the involvement of all parent/carers through regular consultation on all aspects of their children's education care and safety. Parental/carer involvement is fundamental to the fostering of good working relationships with parent/carers. We endeavour to achieve this in the following ways:

- Teacher/tutors are expected to maintain regular telephone contact, weekly at minimum, with parent/carers unless agreed otherwise, to keep them informed of progress and/or share concerns;
- Attendance to be discussed with parents/carers on each weekly tutor call;
- News and information about each site is relayed to parents and other stakeholders using the Trust's website;
- Parent/carers are encouraged to attend and contribute to attendance reviews and behaviour management planning meetings as required;
- Termly progress reports are sent to parent/carers – which include information on attainment, behaviour and attendance;
- Parent/carers are invited to attend end of term 'achievement celebration meetings';
- Any attendance concerns and associated targets to be enshrined in a Parenting Contract signed by all parties.

Pastoral Intervention

Each half term learners with poor attendance are identified by the Head of Site and Pastoral Manager and receive targeted intervention from the Pastoral Team regarding Attendance related concerns. The Pastoral team will follow the DfE guidance below around prevention and intervention in support of raising attendance for all pupils.



DfE Sept 2022 Working together to Improve School Attendance

Working with Others

To assist us in achieving the best outcomes for our learner we fully recognise the importance of working in partnership with our colleagues and other professionals within LA. Trinity Academy Newcastle are active stakeholders in the Secondary Attendance Network in partnership with the Local Authority.

Welcoming and Re/Integrating

All Trust staff share the responsibility for the creation of a safe Trust community wherein all learners, irrespective of presenting behaviour and circumstance, feel welcomed and wanted. Such an environment can contribute significantly to the minimising of non-attendance and the success of reintegrating learners following lengthy absence or period’s exclusion.

We recognise that most learners may benefit from additional support following a period of absence. The Pastoral Manager/Officer is responsible for determining and coordinating the support necessary to facilitate a satisfactory and welcoming return to Academy. The Pastoral Manager /Officer will therefore:

- Ensure that all cases are responded to sensitively and on the basis of individual need;
- Involve parent/carer/s and other relevant stakeholders in any subsequent planning and monitoring process;
- Agree reintegration plan, support package, behaviour contract and timescale as necessary.

Any additional support needs may be identified and addressed by respective teacher/tutors.

Reduced and Alternative Offer Plans and Parenting Contracts

A Reduced/Alternative plan may be agreed between the appropriate Head of School, Deputy Head, Outreach Teacher or Pastoral Manager/Officer and a learner's parents/carers. This will stipulate any special arrangements (including, where appropriate, a reduced timetable) that are set out to ensure that the learner can re-engage/maintain engagement in learning. This will be reviewed at the end of Stage 1 (6 weeks), with parents/carers invited to meet with the appropriate Trust staff. The aim should always be to return to a full-time timetable as soon as possible or appropriate.

A Parenting Contract is put in place specifically where an issue or concern with a learner's attendance has been identified, usually where a learner is classified as persistently absent. The Parenting Contract will provide a clear outline of the expectations on parents/carers and the securing of improved attendance from the learner. As with the reduced/alternative plan this should be reviewed half-termly, and can be brought to an end once the learner has demonstrated the capacity to maintain regular good attendance. Within a parenting contract meeting school will offer the family Early Help support to try support around any issues with learner attendance if external factors are identified. A referral can then be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to support the family.

Policies Supporting Attendance

- The consistent application of the principles, advice and procedures within the following policies collectively represent our endeavour to ensure, together with our School Improvement Plan, that our learners experience the Trust as a place wherein:
- Their rights and responsibilities are equally respected and promoted;
- Staff are found to be accepting, supportive and caring;
- The limits of acceptable behaviour are clear, rules are applied consistently and expectations are high;
- The environment is welcoming, safe and valuing;
- The curriculum and related activities are developmentally appropriate, stimulating and challenging;
- They feel their views and opinions are important and acted upon wherever possible;
- Where differences are celebrated and all forms of discrimination are prohibited;

- Systems are established to enable them to seek additional support, to make their views known and/or complain.

Anti-bullying	Behaviour & Discipline	Safeguarding Children
Equality & Diversity	Complaints	Health and Safety
Curriculum	Risk assessment	

Monitoring & Evaluation

In addition, weekly and termly attendance statistics are collated and disseminated via the attendance dashboard in relation to:

- Whole Trust targets for attendance and persistent absence
- The attendance and persistent absence rates of identified cohorts
- The rate at which learners are improving their attendance, both within the Trust and in comparison to their last educational placement
- Key themes and trends, such as difficulty of travel to the Trust
- The designated Trust lead for attendance will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of all systems on a termly basis.

The Deputy Head and Pastoral Manager/Officer will meet fortnightly to discuss attendance for all learners; current plans are evaluated and new strategies put in place where necessary. This data will formulate any actions required for supporting the improvement of attendance whether individual or selective cohorts of learners. Attendance improvements will then be tracked using the attendance dashboard which highlights individual learner weekly attendance trends and cohort weekly trends – Pupil Premium, Cared for Learners, Gender, Year group, Form tutors etc.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Improving attendance remains one of our key Trust priorities and as such has a specific place on our SIP.

Addendum for recording and reporting attendance due to COVID-19

This is an addendum to the non-statutory [school attendance: guidance for schools](#), which was updated on 4th April 2022.

This guidance sets out how schools should record learners who are not in school for reasons related to coronavirus (COVID-19) in the register.

Expiry or review date of this addendum

This guidance will be reviewed before August 2022.

Attendance Expectations

Attendance is mandatory. The usual rules on attendance continue to apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered learner
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct
- the duty on local authorities to put in place arrangements for identifying, and to follow up with, children missing education

Not attending in circumstances relating to COVID-19

In line with our transition to living with COVID-19, we no longer advise schools to record learners who do not attend for reasons related to COVID-19 using Code X. Learners with symptoms of COVID-19 are no longer advised to get a test, and most of the scenarios that this category was brought in to record no longer apply.

Learners who have symptoms or a positive test for COVID-19

Learners who have symptoms of COVID-19 should follow the latest government guidance about when they should stay at home.

Where a learner is not attending because they have symptoms of COVID-19 or have had a positive test, schools should record this using Code I (illness) unless another more appropriate code applies.

Schools may continue to use the sub-code (I02) to record illness due to suspected COVID-19 although they are not required to.

Schools should refer to the [department's emergency planning guidance](#) and the latest [UKHSA guidance](#) for further information.

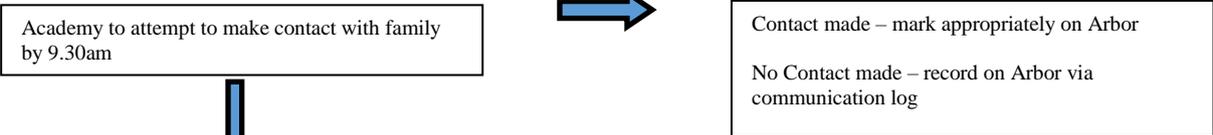
Remote education

Schools and colleges should continue to provide remote education to allow children and young people, who are well enough to learn, to keep pace with their education when in-person attendance in school or college is either not possible or contrary to government guidance.

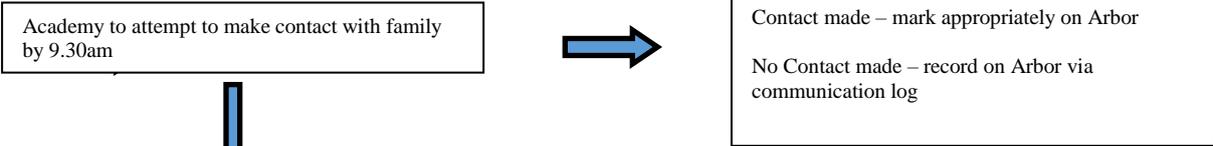
Schools should keep a record of, and monitor engagement with, this activity, but this does not need to be tracked in the attendance register.

Trinity Academy Trust Attendance Absence Procedures Flow Chart

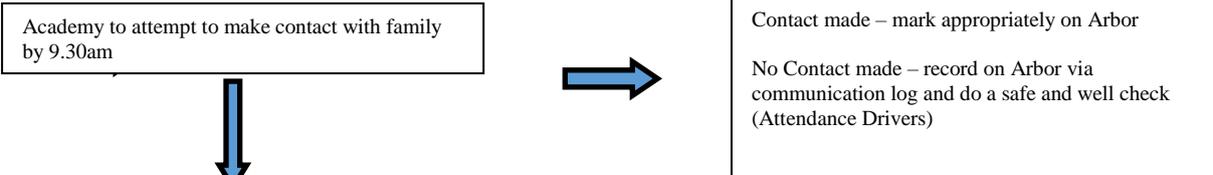
Day 1 of absence



Day 2 of absence

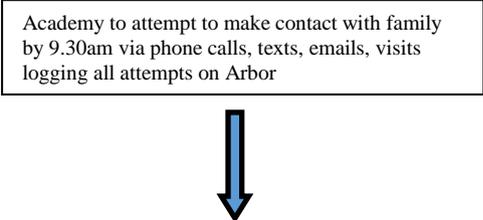


Day 3 of absence

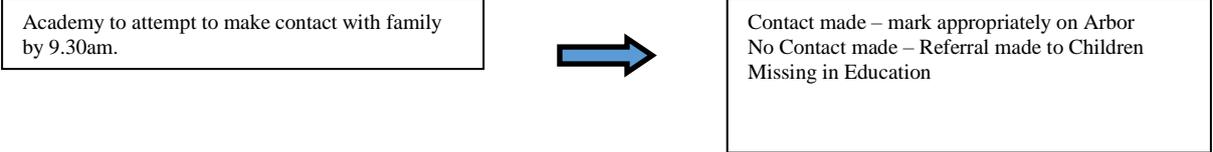


Note - If Child is known to CSC contact

Day 4-9 of absence



Day 10 of absence



Signed on behalf of the Trust:

Mark Flint - Acting Executive Head of School
Date: November 2022