Attendance Policy

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Version	**4**

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Introduction

Liberty College is committed to providing high quality education and training, supporting young people to succeed in the workplace. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to give clear instruction and guidance on how to work with young people to help them stay engaged and maximise their learning opportunities.

Liberty College expects learners to attend regularly in order to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It can also place learners at risk. It is accepted that a proportion of the learner population will be absent on any one day, for legitimate reasons, but unauthorised absence is unacceptable.

Liberty College is committed to encouraging all its learners to attend regularly: absence affects not only the individual learner but can also adversely influence the pace and scope of teaching and learning in a class.

Liberty College sees the measuring of attendance rates as a key task and we believe that the goal of regular attendance should be pursued both in relation to individual learners and the College as a whole. It is part of the College's responsibility to support attendance and to take seriously any problems which lead to non-attendance.

Liberty College will set high expectations for the learner's attendance and punctuality at all timetabled sessions. An individual attendance of above 95% is expected from all learners not experiencing a major medical condition. The Department for Education has an 85% attendance benchmark for vulnerable young people. If a learner struggles with attendance due to severe anxiety or reasons relating to their EHCP, we will set up an individualised timetable where the planned hours for the course may not be realistically achieved.

Liberty College supports learners to understand the importance of good time keeping and attendance as part of their journey into adulthood and the links with gaining and maintaining employment.

Liberty College will work in partnership with learners and their families/carers to make sure they attend regularly and are punctual, by way of identifying support in a co-produced way.

Liberty College will monitor attendance and take action to improve attendance and punctuality where necessary. Failure to maintain good attendance will be dealt with according to the guidelines in this policy. We expect to be given a good reason, backed up with evidence, for all absences. Employers value attendance and punctuality highly and we endeavour to embed this in the ethos of our course.

Liberty College recognises the influence of an engaging and enjoyable curriculum on promoting good attendance and maintains that the College ethos and holistic approach also has a significant impact on learner attendance. Coupled with effective follow up of absences, this will deter a significant number of potential absentees.

A record of lateness is maintained to record the time of arrival of learners late to college and their reason for being late. If a learner arrives after registration has closed without satisfactory explanation, this may result in an unauthorised absence being recorded.

Implementation of Policy

Liberty College will ensure that:

- Learners are registered accurately at the start of each morning and afternoon session using the agreed system of recording;
- The college will set attendance targets for absence which will be reviewed at least termly;
- Individual learners will be given individual attendance targets where appropriate and progress towards the achievements these targets will reviewed;
- Parents/carers will be contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unacceptable;
- A daily call system of either texting or phoning will form an integral part of the Colleges monitoring of attendance and contact with parents and learners;
- Learner's attendance and lateness will be measured, and contact made with parents as appropriate;
- A system to that identifies tiers of non-attendance assists in identifying the intervention required for both parents and learners;
- The management team will be informed of all attendance related issues.
- Vulnerable learners with specific problems will be supported with regard to their attendance achievements;
- In addition to registers, the college uses an electronic signing in system to monitor learners in the building;
- Appropriate resources are available to ensure the policy is implemented.

If no reason for an absence has been received on the day of absence, a text message will be sent or contact by telephone will be made. If the school still receives no response, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. In some circumstances a home visit will be carried out.

The College will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. This policy will be developed and implemented throughout the College.

Aims

- To comply with current regulations that govern the admissions and attendance registers that we must keep;
- To ensure all learners attend college regularly in order for them to fulfil their potential;
- To promote good attendance, reduce absence and especially persistent absence;
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy;
- To work with other colleges and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Role of Head of College

The Head of College has:

- appointed a Learning Support Coordinator and Pastoral Lead who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team along who will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the attendance system;
- ensured that the Learning Support Coordinator is line managed by the Head of College who will oversee their management of attendance;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all college personnel and visitors to the college are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility to:

  - ensure every learner has access to full-time education;
  - inform parents of their legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory college age attend college regularly;
  - promote good attendance, reduce absence and persistent absence;
  - monitor patterns of absence and to respond accordingly to rectify any problems;
  - enter learners on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which they start college;
  - inform the local authority of any learner who is going to be deleted from the admission register.

- responsibility for ensuring that the college complies with all Equalities legislation;
- made effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- work in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team to ensure all college personnel, learners and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- work closely with the Senior Leadership Team, Office Manager and the Admin staff;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- the responsibility of involving the Youth Participation Group in:

  - determining this policy with the Head of College;
  - discussing improvements to this policy during the college year;
  - organising surveys to gauge the thoughts of all learners;
  - reviewing the effectiveness of this policy with the Head of College.

- have expert knowledge of data protection law and practices;
- inform the college and college personnel about their obligations to comply with the GDPR and other data protection laws;

- ensure data management is strengthened and unified;
- monitor compliance with the GDPR and other data protection laws;
- manage internal data protection activities;
- ensure risk and impact assessments are conducted in accordance with ICO guidance;
- report data breaches within 72 hours;
- ensure individuals have greater control over their personal data;
- ensure that prior to the processing of an individual's data that:

  - the process is in line with ICO guidance;
  - the process is transparent;
  - the individual will be notified;
  - the notification is written in a form that is understandable to learners;
  - when sharing an individual's data to a third party outside of college that details for the sharing are clearly defined within the notifications.

- share an individual's data where it is a legal requirement to provide such information;
- process all written subject access requests from individuals within 40 days of receiving them;
- have in place a formal contract or service level agreement with a chosen data processor who is GDPR compliant;
- ensure the secure disposal of redundant data and IT hardware holding data in compliance with ICO guidance;
- train college personnel;
- conduct audits;
- be the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed;
- keep up to date documentation of all data protection activities;
- work closely with the Senior Leadership Team;
- annually discuss the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- ensure that everyone connected with the college is aware of this policy;
- attend training related to this policy;
- report to the Head of College every term;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy;
- ensure that the Admissions Register and Attendance Registers are kept up to date and comply with all regulations;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;

- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by speaking with learners, college personnel and parents;
- Review attendance weekly in Senior Leadership Team meetings;
- Monitor attendance regularly and discuss reduced timetable for vulnerable learners;
- Set action targets, on MIS SYSTEM, for to all staff to help with attendance monitoring.

Role of the Learning Support Coordinator

The Learning Support Coordinator will:

- lead the development of this policy throughout the college;
- work closely with the Head of College, Senior Leadership Team and Admin Team
- ensure that all admissions are recorded and that the attendance system is kept up to date;
- follow up all absences to:

  - ascertain the reason;
  - ensure the learner is safe;
  - identify is authorised or not;
  - ascertain the correct code to use.

- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- review and monitor weekly by;
  - Work closely with the Admin Team weekly to monitor attendance up to and including the previous week;
  - Export reports weekly on the Attendance Register to discuss with the Senior Leadership Team;
  - Actions will be set fortnightly, on MIS SYSTEM, for staff to complete to help improve attendance;
  - Learners with 100% in the previous week will be given an achievement point from their Tutor. Actions will be set following the procedure on a case-by-case basis;

Percentage	Action
Below 95%	Tutor monitoring, this means speak with the learner informing them of their low attendance and set targets on how they can improve.
Below 90%	A call home by the Tutor/TA or LSCO if no progress, plus monitoring

Below 80%	A letter will be sent home to parent/carer as well as monitored by Tutor, Admin and LSCO.
Below 70%	A home visit or meeting will be arranged with a member of SLT and Head of College to discuss and support strategies and targets put in place.
Absent for 2 consecutive weeks	A 28-day warning letter will be posted and emailed to parent/carer.
Absent for 28 days or more	Off roll, in line with guidance.

Attendance rewards in place are:

- Achievement points for attendance daily AM and PM;
- Certificates of excellence for improved attendance and achieving targets;
- Learners with 100% attendance in the previous term will receive a certificate from the Head of College and will be congratulated in the termly newsletter with their consent;
- Learners with attendance above 91% will receive a Grub Hub voucher valued at £1 for every percent over 90%. E.g., if a learner has 97% for the term, they will receive £7 Grub Hub voucher;

- half termly, provide attendance report to the Head of College and Governors;
- annually report to the Head of College on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the Administration Staff

The Administration Staff are responsible for:

- monitoring learner attendance and will make contact with parents if the college has not been informed of their child's absence;
- ensuring the following procedure is carried out each day:

  - Registers close 30 minutes after am/pm sessions start for full time learners, this is adjusted to accommodate individual part time timetables;
  - Monitor registers;
  - Listen to absence calls and text messages;
  - Read emails from parents;
  - Make a list of absence learners without an explanation;
  - Double check the list before calling learners or parents/carers to establish the whereabouts of absent learners;

- Contact absent learners once registration closes using phone calls, emails and other forms of communication;
- Contact parents/carers if they have not reported their child's absence;
- Contact parents/carers if a learner leaves early without authorisation;
- If unable to make contact with parents/carers then call everyone on the contact list;
- Leave voicemail and text messages in all cases;
- Use college intelligence to establish any information about the unexplained absence;
- If still no contact with the parents/carers then repeat the calls throughout the day until contact is made and an explanation is given;
- Contact the key worker if a learner is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the learner's absence;
- Inform the Head of College or Senior Leadership Team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead of the situation;
- Keep a log of all actions, saving to MIS SYSTEMand learner's file;

- Ensuring attendance information is reported to the SLT for them to analyse attendance issues and to look for possible patterns and missed support needs;
- keeping an up-to-date list of at least two emergency contact phone numbers and email addresses for different adults associated with each learner;
- monitoring individual and class attendance daily;
- keeping the Head of College informed of attendance figures and trends;
- organising meetings between the Head of College and parents to discuss their child's poor attendance;
- organising meetings between the Head of College and parents to discuss their child's truancy;
- organising meetings between the Head of College and parents to discuss their application for a term time holiday;
- compiling attendance data reports for the Head of College;
- ensuring registers are distributed to the teaching staff and are kept up to date.

Admission Register

- The admission register must:

  - contain an alphabetical index of all the learners in the college;
  - register a learner on the first day that we expect them to attend;
  - record the following information for each learner:

    - Learner's full name;
    - Sex;
    - Gender;
    - Parent/carer's name, address and email address;
    - The name of the person who has custody of the learner;
    - Contact details for external agencies working with the learner e.g. Social Worker;
    - Emergency contact numbers of the parent/carer;

- Admission/readmission date;
- Name and address of the last college attended.

– when informed by a parent that their child will live at another address record:

- the new address;
- the full name of the parent with whom the learner will live;
- the date from when it is expected the learner will live at this address.

– when informed by a parent that their child is registered at another college or will be attending a different record:

- the name of the other college;
- the date when the learner first attended or is due to start attending that college.

– record every amendment which must include:

- the original entry;
- the amended entry;
- the reason for the amendment;
- the date on which the amendment was made;
- the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

– preserve every entry for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made;
– be available at all times for inspection by HM Inspectors, Ofsted inspectors and Education Welfare Officers;
– be preserved indefinitely.

Attendance Registers

- We have in place an electronic attendance register system that:

– records learner attendance at the start of the morning session and the start of the afternoon session
– on each occasion records whether every learner is:

- present;
- attending an approved educational activity;
- absent; or,
- Late;
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances;
- not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19)

- All absences will be followed up to:

– ascertain the reason;
– ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;

– identify whether the absence is approved or not.

Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
B	Education of site (no Dual reg)
C	Other authorised
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed)
H	Family holiday (agreed)
I	Illness
J	Interview
L	Late (before register closed)
M	Medical/dentist appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence
U	Late (after register closed)
V	Educational visit or trip
W	Work experience
#	Planned whole or partial school closure
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances or school closure
X	Non-compulsory school age not expected to attend
Z	Pupil not on admission register

- Attendance registers must be available at all times for inspection by Ofsted inspectors and Education Welfare Officers.

- Every year we publish individual learner reports which include the following information about attendance:

  – overall attendance;
  – the percentage of sessions missed through authorised absence;

- the percentage of sessions missed through unauthorised absence;

- All attendance registers will be retained for a minimum of three years.

Role of Tutors

Tutors will:
- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- ensure the attendance register is taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions;
- bring to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team any irregularities in learner attendance;
- implement the college's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the college community;
- Complete actions set by Senior Leadership Team to monitor attendance fortnightly.

Role of Learners

Learners will be expected to:
- Attend regularly and punctually;
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absence;
- Monitor their own attendance and ensure that this is as good as possible;
- Expected to catch up with any work missed as soon as possible;
- Sign themselves in and out of the building at reception in the Learner signing book;
- Parents/carers or learner must inform the Liberty College every day of absence, by telephone or text;
- Discuss planned absences with the school in advance (e.g. special occasions;
- During lengthy absences maintain regular contact with the college to assist with the regulation of the learner and the provision of work;
- In cases of predictable and allowable absence, a note should be received in advance;
- Holidays in term time must be requested completing the holiday request form and supported by a letter giving reason for the request.

If no reason for an absence has been received on the day of absence, a text message will be sent or contact by telephone will be made. If the school still receives no response, the absence will be marked as unauthorised. In some circumstances a home visit will be carried out.

The College will review the policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. This policy will be developed and implemented throughout the College.

Role of Parents

Parents will:

- be made aware of this policy;
- ensure that their child of compulsory college age receives suitable full-time education;
- ensure regular and punctual attendance;
- notify college on the first day of learner absence;
- have holidays in term time and authorised by college;
- support the college Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the college;
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the college.

If a learner is unwell then parent/carer must contact Liberty College as soon as they are aware the learner will not be attending. Messages can be left on the absence reporting line if the office is closed.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the College Handbook/Prospectus;
- the college website;
- the Staff Handbook;
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations and periodic curriculum workshops;
- college events;
- meetings with college personnel;
- communications with home such as weekly newsletters and of end of half term newsletters;
- reports such annual report to parents and Head of College reports to the Head of College;
- information displays in the main college entrance;
- Sharing with new college personnel;
- Sharing with all college personnel when updated/amended;
- Sharing on the MIS SYSTEMLibrary for ease of reference.

Training

All college personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion;
- receive training which specifically covers;

  - All aspects of this policy
  - Attendance and Truancy
  - Home-College Agreement
  - Admissions

- Data Protection
- Equal opportunities
- Inclusion

- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information;
- receive equal opportunities training on induction to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any learner and it helps to promote equality at this college.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Head of College.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Head of College for further discussion and endorsement.