

## Attendance Phases: information for parents/carers

The attendance target for every student in the Castle School is 95%. Excellent attendance is intrinsically linked to academic achievement and progress. Students who have regular absence, patterns of unauthorised absence, broken weeks of attendance and high levels of absence for minor illness are unlikely to achieve their academic potential. The Castle School prioritises the monitoring, support and robust action needed to secure high levels of attendance and works in close partnership with the Local Authority to place matters before the court in circumstances where parents/carers do not ensure that their child attends school regularly and punctually. The following Attendance Phases are a guide for students and parents on the steps that the school will take to support the regular attendance of students at school. At every stage of our Attendance Phases we welcome the opportunity to engage with parents and carers. Early intervention and student support sits at the heart of our approach to raising levels of student attendance.

### **Monitoring phase**

- The student will have an initial discussion with their tutor to discuss their overall attendance rate. Any underlying issues will be able to be fully discussed and parents and carers will be notified when required.
- Attendance will be monitored each week by the tutor to ensure that it moves towards the school target of 95%.

Where attendance does not improve, students will be moved to Phase 1.

### **Phase 1**

- Parents and carers will be invited to attend a school attendance meeting in school with the LSP and Senior Teaching Link.

### **Intervention**

- The concerns will be discussed and any support required will be put in place. This may be parent support, academic support or pastoral support. The school will consider any obstacles presented in the meeting that impact on positive levels of school attendance and will seek to support students and families in finding a positive way forward.
- Where there are frequent absences due to illness, the school may request that medical evidence is provided from the GP before any further absences are authorised. Medical evidence may take the form of a dated prescription, a prescribed medicine package with the child's name and the date of issue or, an appointment card, dated with the child's name on. Please note that only the Headteacher, or delegated staff member, can authorise absence from school.
- Attendance will be monitored for a period of 4-6 weeks. A school attendance meeting review will be held with parents and carers. Where concerns persist, the

student will be moved to Phase 2.

## **Phase 2**

- A formal referral will be made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer by the school and a home visit by this officer will be made.
- Parents/carers will be invited to attend a formal Attendance Panel meeting where further agreements will be made and expectations clearly shared.

## **Intervention**

- The school will explore all possible areas of support during this meeting. We will consider any wider family circumstances which may be impacting on attendance, ensure that we liaise with any external agencies where an integrated support plan (CAF) is required, consider any other underlying causes such as obstacles to learning, social and emotional aspects of learning and health concerns.
- Attendance will be monitored for a period of 4-6 weeks.
- An Attendance Panel Review will be held on the 6<sup>th</sup> week.
- Where concerns remain, the meeting will be chaired by the Local Authority and the student will be automatically moved to Phase 3.

## **Phase 3**

- Parents and carers will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel Review by the Local Authority. This meeting will be held in the school, however, the meeting will be chaired by the Local Education Authority.
- The school will present their concerns regarding the attendance record for the student and parents/carers will have the opportunity to respond to these concerns. A review of the support offered will take place.
- Where the Local Education Authority feel that there is sufficient evidence that an offence has been committed under the Education Act, section 444, the case will be recommended to be placed before the court.

## **Phase 4**

- Parents/carers will be advised of legal action, court process and possible outcomes.
- Education Welfare Officer will prepare the case file.
- A Court Summons will be issued.
- Court appearance.

The possible sentences available to the court include: fines of up to £2,500, a criminal record and imprisonment for up to three months.