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12 December 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

### Attendance Policy update

As mentioned in the last attendance letter (28 November 2022), the government released [new guidance](#) in May 2022 outlining the responsibilities placed upon schools, the local authority and parents/carers regarding attending school.

We have an updated Attendance Policy which can be found in the policy section of our website and you can also follow this [https://www.cardinalheenan.com/?jet\\_download=4026](https://www.cardinalheenan.com/?jet_download=4026)

A notable update to guidance is that schools should only keep registers “open” for 30 minutes. For our school, this means that students that arrive after 9.20am will be marked as absent for the morning session using Code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate. The time students are expected to be in their Tutor Room in the morning remains 8.55am and any students arriving between 8.55am and 9.20am will be marked as Code L.

Our Attendance Policy includes how our day-to-day processes are set up and how we monitor and analyse data. It also states our commitment of engaging with families, including working together to remove any barriers to good attendance. Our intention is to support parents in giving every child the best possible chance of achieving. We know that students who are in school, every day, have a better chance at making progress and reaching the grades they are capable of. When students miss school, they fall behind.

It is important that I inform parents/carers that the new guidance sets out clearly that where initial support is not effective in improving attendance, a more formal process will be followed in line with the DfE guidance document. This includes the introduction of ‘Attendance Monitoring Cards’ and parental meetings that can lead to contracts being put in place. It is important to stress that, ultimately, parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council’s, School Attendance Service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the Local Authority in order to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education. Where necessary statutory action can and will be taken, which may take the form of a Penalty Notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrates Court resulting in a fine, or a statutory order.

In the coming weeks we will begin sending out “nudge” letters to parents/carers when students are about to enter or have entered the next level indicator for attendance (see previously sent Attendance Letter 28 November 2022).

If you would like to speak to a member of staff regarding supporting your child to attend and remove barriers in attending, please contact your child’s Head of Year.

Yours sincerely

**Mr D Mangan**

Senior Assistant Headteacher: Pastoral, Behaviour and Safeguarding

