

**Ascent Autism Specialist
College**
The Autism Specialists

Attendance Policy
January 2024

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Reviewer:	Student Admissions & Safeguarding Officer
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Updated:	January 2024
Next Review:	January 2025
Committee:	
Approved by the Ascent Governing Body/Board of Trustees:	

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:	
1	Ascent Admissions policy 2023
2	Ascent Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy 2023
3	Prevent Duty 2023
4	Visitors' policy 2023
5	Bursary Fund policy 2023

Change History Record			
Current Version	Previous Version	Summary of changes made	Section Heading & Page Number
January 2024	November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word 'school' has been deleted on all pages and replaced with 'college' 'Bursary Fund' policy referenced 'Introduction' added 'Policy' added Updates to 'Partnership Between Parents and College' with points 4, 5 and 6 added 'Head of Education' replaced with 'Head of Adult Services' 	All pages Page 2 Page 4 Page 4 Pages 4 & 5 Pages 6 & 7

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Introduction

Attendance to Ascent College is integral and fundamental to providing consistency and effective learning for our students. Ascent College supports students aged from 16-25 with a diagnosis of Autism/ social communication needs and associated difficulties.

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectations and responsibilities relating to attendance at Ascent College.

Partnership Between Parents and College

- (i) According to Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:
 - a) to age, ability, and aptitude and
 - b) to any special educational needs, he/she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

- (ii) This policy document has been developed to ensure that Ascent College provides a clear statement of intent, expectation, and consistent guidance in relation to the management of attendance and any requests for leave of absence.
- (iii) Parents must ensure that their young person arrives at college on time. Transport, which has been provided by the student's Local Authority must endeavour to arrive at college for the allotted starting time, although there may be exceptional circumstances when this may not be possible e.g., distance/travelling time are lengthy and thus necessitating a very early home start more than would be reasonable to expect.
- (iv) It is the responsibility of the parent/ carer to collect their young person if they are required to go home for any reason during the college day. It is their responsibility to have arrangements in place to collect them from college and care for them. College will contact parents/ carers to inform them that their young person requires to be collected from college. If college is required to close due to

inclement weather or other unforeseen emergency, it is also parent/carers responsibility to collect their young person.

- (v) Attendance to Ascent college is expected to be 95% or above
- (vi) Students who are in receipt of a Vulnerable (16-19) or Discretionary (16-25) bursary should have an attendance record of 90+% and no unauthorised absences in order to continue to receive the funding. *Please see Ascent College Bursary Fund policy for further information*

Registration

The taking of registers is an integral and key part of the college day.

Under Section 6 of the Education (Student Registration England. Regulations 2006), all schools must keep an attendance register at the start of each morning session and during each afternoon session. They must record whether every student was:

- a) Present;
- b) Absent;
- c) Present at approved educational activity; or
- d) Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Consistency of registration practice will be maintained throughout college.

National Attendance codes will be used to help ensure consistency in treatment and recording of attendance and absence.

Monitoring attendance is a key part of the college objectives; see 'Absent Student Protocol' (see Appendix 1)

Reporting Absence

- (i) Attendance is monitored daily through registers completed for both morning and afternoon sessions each day.
- (ii) It is the parent/carers' responsibility to inform the college of their young person's absence by 8.30am by telephone, or email if telephone is not possible. When a young person is ill, the nature of the illness should be described and if it can be predicted, the date the young person is likely to return to college.

- (iii) Where no report is made, contact by telephone with the parent/carer will be made by midday of the first day of absence.
- (iv) Where there has been no contact for a period 48 hours from parents/ carers to give explanation for student absence, the Admissions Officer will establish direct contact with the family. This may include a home visit. Student home LA (Local Authority) safeguarding team will also be notified.
- (v) Section 18 of 'Children Missing from Education', September 2016; where absence is for a period of 10 days or more (authorized or otherwise) the placing authority will be notified. If a student is absent from college without authorisation for 20 consecutive college days, the student can be removed from the admission register when the college and the local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the young person. This only applies if the college does not have reasonable grounds to believe that the student is unable to attend because of sickness or unavoidable cause.
- (vi) School Attendance Order – sections 437-443, Education Act 1996 provides that no offence is committed where a student of compulsory college age is prevented from attending college by reason of illness. Illness is an AUTHORISED absence.
- (vii) Medical or dental appointments are AUTHORISED absences provided confirmation has been received from parents/carers. If a student is recorded present, then is required to attend a medical or dental inspection, the register must record that fact. It is essential that there is a means of recording which young people are clearly in college in the event of an emergency evacuation (e.g., fire). Similarly, the college must note the presence of a student who was not there when the register was being taken but had subsequently returned later.
- (viii) If a student is absent, without an explanation, they will be marked absent which constitutes an UNAUTHORISED absence and must be denoted.
- (ix) Taking a young person out of college to go shopping during college hours is an UNAUTHORISED absence.
- (x) Staying at home to look after brothers and sisters or minding the house is an UNAUTHORISED absence, however, this is unlikely to happen at this college.

- (xi) The death of a family member will be responded to sensitively and requests to attend funerals or associated events will be granted. Such an absence will be AUTHORISED.
- (xii) An offence is not committed when the absence of a student of compulsory college age is a result of participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong (see section 6 (2ii) Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006) absence would be classified as AUTHORISED.
- (xiii) Regulation 6(3) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 provide that leave of absence from college may be granted to enable a student to undertake work experience or to participate in approved public performances. This would be classified as an AUTHORISED absence.

Requesting Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

- (i) Ascent College recognises the important link between regular attendance at college and the educational attainment of its students. Leave of absence during term time may not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- (ii) Amendments to the 2006 regulations of 'The Education (Pupil registration) regulations' remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The Head of Adult Services has the discretion to grant leave, but they should only do so in exceptional circumstances, and it is up to them to determine the length of time that the young person can be away from college.
- (iii) Requests for exceptional term time leave must be made at least 20 college days in advance of any arrangements being made. This will allow sufficient time for the request to be considered by the college. The request will be made in writing by using 'Request for Exceptional Leave' form, copies of which are available from reception.
- (iv) The college will reach a decision and send a written response to the parent/carer within 10 college days of the leave request being received.
- (v) The college will also inform the placing authority of any leave that has been granted and the reasons for authorisation.
- (vi) Where a request is not made or has not been granted and the parent/carer takes the young person out of college, then this will

constitute an UNAUTHORISED absence. Any unauthorised absences are reported to placing authorities who may wish to act themselves.

- (vii) The decision of the Head of Adult Services is final.

Legal Context

This policy was written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- (i) Children Missing from Education, September 2016
- (ii) The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- (iii) The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010)
- (iv) The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- (v) DfE (2019) 'The Independent Schools Standards'
- (vi) Equality Act 2010
- (vii) DfE School National restrictions Guidance 2021

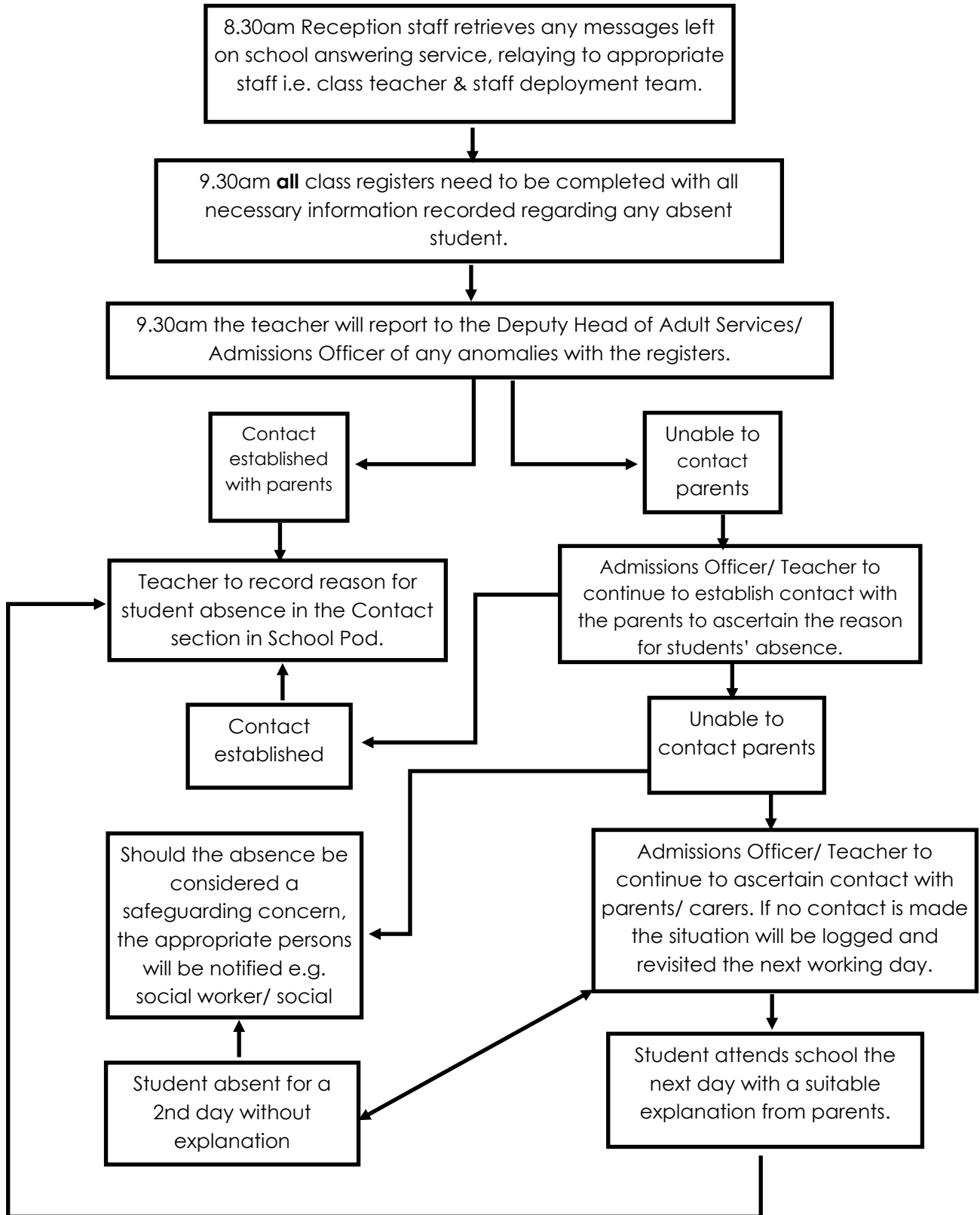
Policy Impact

We have a rolling programme for reviewing our Company policies. We regularly review the impact of our policies on the needs, entitlements and outcomes for students, service users, staff, and parents.

References and Further Resources

- Department for Education (2015) Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0 to 25 years. London: The Department for Education.
- Department for Education (2021) School National Restrictions Guidance. London: The Department for Education.

Appendix 1 – Student Absence Protocol



Appendix 2 – Attendance Codes

Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Educated off site	Present
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised absence
D	Dual Registration	Authorised absence
E	Excluded	Authorised absence
F	Extended Family Holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family Holiday (not agreed)	Unauthorised absence
H	Annual family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registration closed)	Present
M	Medical/dental	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised circumstances	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registration closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required
Z	Student not on roll	Attendance not required
#	Holiday for all	Attendance not required
-	All should attend/no mark recorded	No Mark