

COLMERS SCHOOL
& SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Attendance and Truancy Policy
November 2019

Agreed by Governing Body
Date of Next Review:

25th November 2019
November 2020

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Statement of intent

Colmers School & Sixth Form College believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Students cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling good attendance.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our students.
- Rewarding regular attendance.
- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

“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”.

Signed by:

Emma Leaman



Headteacher – 25th November 2019

Chair of Governors 25th November 2019

1. Legal framework

- 1.1. This policy has due regard to the following legislation and guidance, including, but not limited to:
 - The Education Act 1996
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended)
 - DfE (2016) School Attendance Advice
- 1.2. All staff must ensure they adhere to and implement the requirements of any equality legislation.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** defines “absence” as either:
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Not attending school for any reason.
- 2.2. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** defines an “authorised absence” as:
 - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
 - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
 - Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave.
 - An absence due to a family emergency/bereavement or funeral
 - Holiday in exceptional circumstances agreed by The Headteacher
 - Educational visit or sporting activity
- 2.3. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** defines an “unauthorised absence” as:
 - Parents and carers keeping children away from school unnecessarily or without reason.
 - Truancy before or during the school day.
 - Absences which have not been properly explained.
 - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
 - Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
 - Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- 2.4. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:
 - Missing 10%, or potentially/ likely to miss 10% or more of schooling across the year for any reason.

3. Key roles and responsibilities

- 3.1. The **Governing Body** has overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of **Colmers School & Sixth Form College**.
- 3.2. The **Governing Body** has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 3.3. The **Governing Body** has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's **Complaints Procedures Policy**.
- 3.4. The **Headteacher** is responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of **Colmers School & Sixth Form College**.
- 3.5. Staff, including teachers, associate staff and volunteers will be responsible for following the attendance policy, and for ensuring Students do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- 3.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 3.7. Designated members of staff will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of each afternoon session.
- 3.8. The school will ensure that every pupil has access to education appropriate to their age, ability and aptitude and as full time as possible.
- 3.9. The school will inform the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers if they:
 - Are being educated from home.
 - No longer live within a reasonable distance of the registered school.
 - Have an authorised medical note.
 - Are in custody for a period of more than four months and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning.
 - Have been permanently excluded.
- 3.10. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** will inform the LA of all pupils who

* Fall below 90% attendance via census

*Have Statements or EHCP's and school attendance is cause for concern

*Are missing from Education and cannot be contacted by telephone or located by address.

*Are withdrawn from school in-order to be Home-Educated.

- 3.11. Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time. **See Appendix D, Attendance Matters Leaflet**
- 3.12. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance and ensure that Students attend school every day.
- 3.13. Students are responsible for their own attendance at school and any agreed activities throughout the school year.
- 3.14. All Students are responsible for their punctuality to lessons.

4. Training of staff

- 4.1. At **Colmers School & Sixth Form College**, we recognise that early intervention can prevent bad behaviour. As such, members of staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk Students.
- 4.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the Attendance Policy as part of their new starter induction. **See Appendix E, Attendance Processes 2017/18**
- 4.3. Teachers and support staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

5. Pupil expectations

- 5.1. Students will be expected to attend school every day and will sign an agreement at the beginning of each school year. **Appendix C Attendance Matters Leaflet**
- 5.2. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** expects all Students to attend lessons punctually.
- 5.3. Students will be expected to report any absence immediately to the relevant member of staff.

6. Absence procedures

- 6.1. Parents and carers are required to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.
- 6.2. Parents and carers are required to send a note on the first day their child returns with a signed explanation as to why they were absent. This must be done even if we have already received a phone call.

- 6.3. Alternatively, parents and carers may call into school and report to Pupil Services where arrangements will be made to speak to a relevant member of staff.
- 6.4. A phone call or text message will be made to the parent/carer of any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school.
- 6.5. The school will always follow up any absences in order to:
 - Ascertain the reason for the absence.
 - Ensure that proper safeguarding action is being taken.
 - Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
 - Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the School Census System.
- 6.6. In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents and carers to speak to the **attendance officer/pastoral leader/head of year/safeguarding team or pastoral support worker**.
- 6.7. If pupil attendance continues to be a cause for concern along with non-co-operation and communication from parents or carers, The EWS, Court Office will be informed and legal action will be processed.

7. Contact information

- 7.1. Parents and carers must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 7.2. Parents and carers are responsible for updating the school if the details change.

8. Attendance register

- 8.1. The designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. This register will record whether the pupil is:
 - Present.
 - Absent.
 - Attending an approved educational visit.
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 8.2. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** will use the national attendance codes to enable the school to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:
 - / = Present in the morning

- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Authorised absence
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- H = Authorised holiday
- I = Illness
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site educational activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- S = Study leave
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- W = Work experience
- V = Educational visit or trip
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- J = At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- D – Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- Y = Exceptional circumstances
- Z – Pupil not on admission register

8.3. When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code ‘#’ will be used for the relevant students who are absent. This code will also be used to record Year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different Year groups, for example: induction days.

- 8.4. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment, and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.
- 8.5. Every entry into the attendance register will be preserved for three years via electronic record of Official Registers.

9. Attendance Officer

- 9.1. If they are persistently absent, Students will be referred to the school's attendance officer who will attempt to resolve the situation with parents or carers by telephone, letter, home visit, referral to relevant key staff in school or external agency.
- 9.2. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the attendance officer can initiate Fast Track procedures via EWS Court office.

10. Lateness

- 10.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.
- 10.2. The school day starts at **8:42am**; Students should be in their form line up on the playground at this time.
- 10.3. The register closes at **10:30am**; Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- 10.4. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

11. Truancy

- 11.1. Truancy means any absence of part, or of all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.
- 11.2. All staff will be concerned about the regular attendance of Students, and the importance of continuity in each child's learning.
- 11.3. All Students are expected to be in their form line up at **8:42am** and P4 **12:20pm and 3pm**, where the teacher will record the attendance.
- 11.4. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at Pupil Services and sign back in again upon their return.
- 11.5. Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a child might be truanting.

11.6. If truancy is suspected, the **Head of Year/Pastoral Team** is notified, who will contact the child's Parents and carers, in order to assess the reasons behind the child not attending school.

11.7. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the Parents and carers of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term time and persistent late arrival at school.

12. Missing children

12.1. Students are not permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the **Headteacher or member of senior staff**.

12.2. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing during the school day:

- The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the **Pupil Services** immediately and they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
- Pupil Services will send out all staff email to first try and locate the pupil in school followed by a CCTV search and if necessary a physical search around school.

12.3. The following areas will be systematically searched:

- All classrooms
- All toilets
- Changing rooms
- Any outbuildings
- The school grounds

12.4. In the event a student is not located via CCTV, available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.

12.5. If the pupil has not been found after a reasonable amount of time, then the Parents and carers of the pupil will be notified.

- 12.6. If the Parents and carers have had no contact from the pupil, then the police will be contacted.
- 12.7. The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident form, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
- 12.8. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, family support worker, is a LAC, or has any special educational needs and/or disabilities, then the appropriate professional will be informed.
- 12.9. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
- 12.10. The Head of Year will take the appropriate action to ensure the pupil understands they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary.
- 12.11. Parents and carers and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.
- 12.12. The Head of Year will carry out a full investigation, and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred.
- 12.13. A written report will be produced and policies and procedures will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome.

13. Term-time leave

- 13.1. At **Colmers School & Sixth Form College**, our aim is to prepare Students for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require Parents and carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 13.2. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example bereavement or serious illness.
- 13.3. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 13.4. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:
 - Immediately before and during assessment periods
 - When a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
 - Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above **10** percent for any reason
- 13.5. If term time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice.

14. Religious observances

- 14.1. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** will take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for religious festivals.
- 14.2. Parents and carers must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.
- 14.3. The day(s) of absence must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents and carers belong.

15. Appointments

- 15.1. As far as possible, parents and carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 15.2. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school.
- 15.3. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, the pupil must be signed out by a parent/carer.
- 15.4. Students must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

16. Young carers

- 16.1. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** understands the difficulties young carers face, and will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school, as well as throughout their time at the school.
- 16.2. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each situation will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies if appropriate.
- 16.3. **Colmers School and Sixth Form College** will refer to young carers support service such as "Spurgeons".

17. Exceptional circumstances

- 17.1. When absence is due to exceptional circumstances, the 'Y' code will be used on the attendance register.
- 17.2. Exceptional circumstances include when a pupil is unable to attend because:
 - The school is fully or partially closed.
 - Transport provided by the school or LA is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
 - There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the pupil from attending.

- The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

17.3. The use of the 'Y' code is collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

18. Rewarding good attendance

18.1. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** acknowledges 100 percent attendance in the following ways:

- **Contact home**
- **Early Lunch Pass**
- **Bowling**
- **Cinema trip**
- **Certificate**

18.2. Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:

- **Positive phone call home**
- **Rewards raffle**
- **House points**
- **Year league tables**
- **Free lunches**

18.3. School trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance is a cause for concern, these privileges may be taken away.

18.4. Attendance at the Year 11 prom requires good attendance across all five years.

19. Monitoring and review

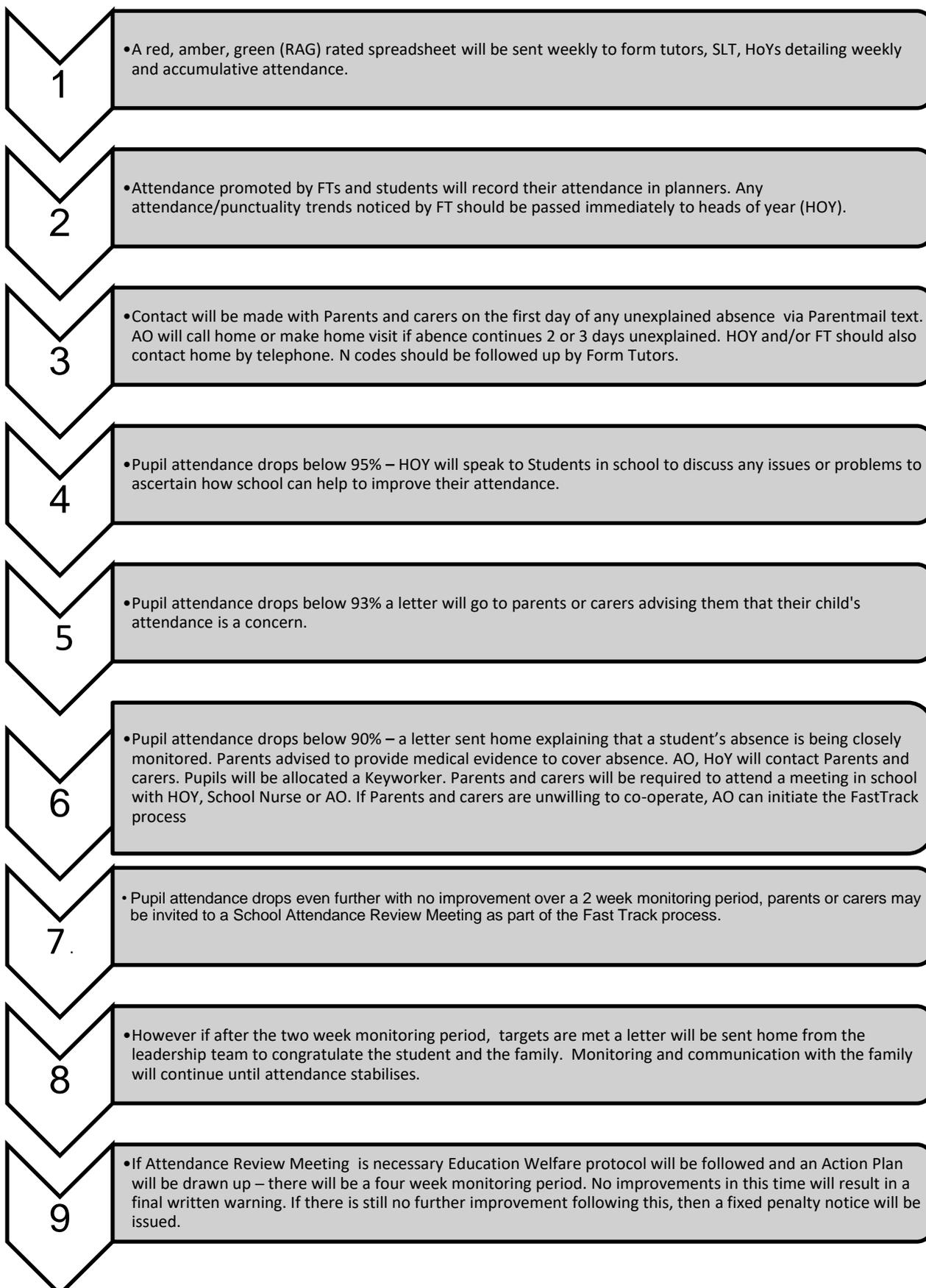
19.1. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College** monitors attendance and punctuality, weekly and Termly, throughout the year.

19.2. **Colmers School & Sixth Form College's** attendance target is **97** percent 2019/20.

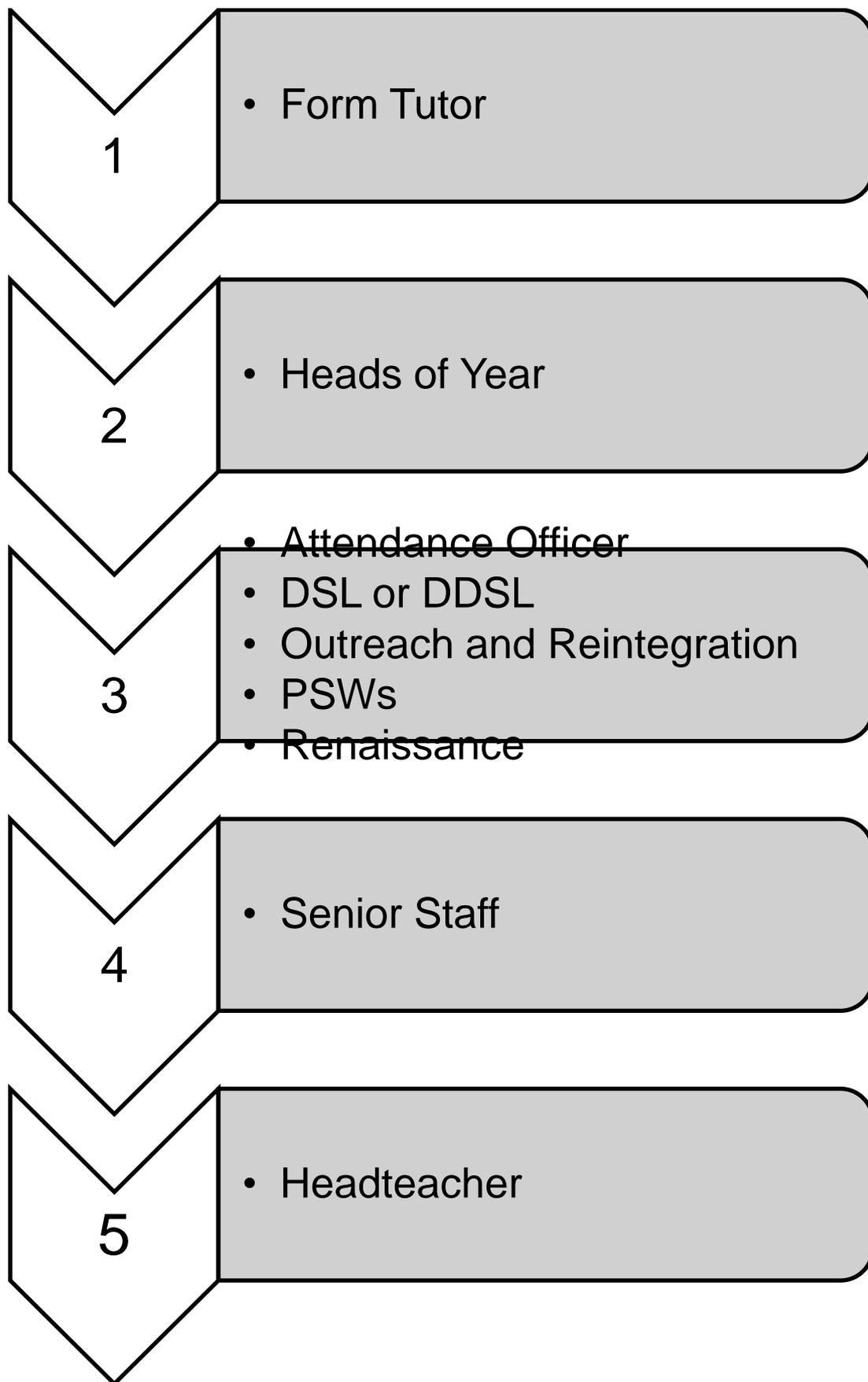
19.3. This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the attendance team.

19.4. Any changes made to the policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

Appendix A – Attendance Monitoring Procedures



Appendix B – Attendance Reporting Structure



Appendix C – Attendance matters leaflet

Appendix D – Attendance Processes