Student Attendance Procedure 2024-25

Responsible Officers: Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality &
                                 Assistant Principal Student Engagement and Support
Date: August 2024
Review date: July 2025
Procedure available: Intranet / Website
Policy/procedure authorised by: Executive

Introduction

Buckinghamshire College Group (BCG) is committed to providing high quality, vocational, technical, and professional skills training, and education. As part of the Strategic Plan, Beyond Ambition 2023-2028, we aim to provide exceptional learning experiences and a careers-focussed curriculum, improving life chances for individuals and supporting communities throughout Buckinghamshire and beyond to realise their career and life ambitions. We regard attendance as integral to preparing students for life and work.

Intent

This procedure's purpose is to support students and apprentices to attend well and sets out the two key reasons attendance is important:

a. Safeguarding

Attendance is the baseline measure to safeguard our learners. Our priority is the wellbeing of our students and apprentices. Therefore, we must know where they are, how they are, and how best to support them. When students and apprentices do not attend, we intervene swiftly with strategies to support and re-engage.

b. Achievement and progression

There is a proven correlation between students and apprentices attending and their achievement and progression. Statistically, those who attend well, achieve well and those who achieve well, progress well. Students and apprentices who require reasonable adjustments to access their learning opportunities are provided individualised approaches, ensuring the very best outcomes for all.

Procedures

This document is to be followed for all BCG students and apprentices.

This procedural guidance covers:

1. Expectations of students and Apprentices
2. Expectations of parents/carers, where relevant
3. Expectations of employers, where relevant
4. Expectations of staff
5. Roles & responsibilities
6. Reporting absences
7. Attendance registers
8. Probationary period attendance flow charts
9. Interventions where attendance does not meet expectations
10. Reasonable adjustments
11. GDPR and record keeping
12. Safeguarding and welfare
13. Monitoring compliance with procedures
14. Consequences when failing to comply with procedures

1. Expectations of Students and Apprentices

- It is expected that *all* **students and apprentices will aspire to achieve beyond 90%** attendance. Students and Apprentices' attendance will be automatically risk-rated blue, green, amber or red which will be visible on their online portal. Blue = 95%+, green 90%+, amber = 80%+, red = 70%+.
- Students with below 70% attendance will be at significant risk of non-continuation of their learning programme.
- If attendance falls below expectations this will be managed through the *Student Performance Management Procedures.*
- Where attendance has been consistently high or significantly improved, this will be recognised.
- Students (and their parents/carers) can view their attendance records via their online portal.
- When students are going to be absent, they must call the **Attendance Phoneline** between 8.00-9.30 am each day, and no later than 30 minutes before their first timetabled lesson begins (see Appendix 1).
- When apprentices are going to be absent:
    - Their employer must contact the Apprenticeship team email apprenticeships@buckscollegegroup.ac.uk in advance of a planned absence, such as holiday or work commitment so that adjustments can be made with the apprentice's Training Plan.
    - If the apprentice is ill on their college day, they must phone the attendance line **01296 588649** between 8.00-9.30 am each day, and no later than 30 minutes before their first timetabled lesson begins (see Appendix 1).

2. Expectations of parents/carers (under 18s), where relevant

- Support your young person to attend well and on time.
- Take an active interest in your young person's attendance and routinely review their attendance records with them on the online portal.
- Refrain from booking holidays or other activities in term time which will interfere with students' ability to attend.
- Ensure the College has the young person's up-to-date contact details and that you have parental responsibility for the student/apprentice, for further information please see [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk)
- Support your young person to communicate with the college where there are barriers to attendance so that we can help, for example, the cost of travel or mental ill-health.
- Respond to communications (text, emails, phone calls) regarding your young person's attendance in a timely manner.
- Be aware that if the College has had **no contact** with a student or apprentice (not solely parent/carer/employer) in any one timetabled week, staff will raise a safeguarding concern which could trigger a multi-agency referral.
- Be aware that attendance affects bursary payments.
- Be aware that poor attendance puts the young person at significant risk of non-continuation of their learning programme.
- Be aware that all under 18-year-olds must be in education, employment or training [School leaving age - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk) and the college has a duty to notify the local authority if a young person is at risk of not being in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) which can also affect household incomes [Child Benefit when your child turns 16 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).](www.gov.uk)

3. Expectations of employers, where relevant
- Support your apprentice to attend well and on time by planning their off-the-job training, advising the College when attendance is not possible due to holiday or work commitments so that their Training Plan is adjusted to ensure their contracted off-the-job training hours are met and they continue to make the necessary progress to be ready for Gateway at their Apprenticeship Agreement date.
- Monitor their attendance to ensure Apprenticeship Agreement contractual obligations are being met.
- Take an active interest in apprentice's attendance and routinely talk to them about what they have learned during their off-the-job training, reviewing their off-the-job training records on OneFile so that you are ready to discuss this as part of the tri-partite Progress Review process.
- Ensure the College has the up-to-date contact details for the person responsible for monitoring, overseeing and reporting apprentice attendance and absence.
- Support your apprentice to communicate with the college where there are barriers to attendance so that we can help, for example, the travel arrangements or mental ill-health.
- Respond to communications (text, emails, phone calls) regarding your apprentice's attendance in a timely manner.
- Be aware that if the College has had **no contact** with a young or vulnerable apprentice (not solely parent/carer/employer) in any two consecutive timetabled weeks, staff will raise a safeguarding concern which could trigger a multi-agency referral.
- Be aware that poor attendance puts the apprentice at significant risk of non-continuation of their learning programme.

- Be aware that all under 18-year-olds must be in education, employment or training School leaving age - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and the college has a duty to notify the local authority if a young person is at risk of not being in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) which can also affect household incomes Child Benefit when your child turns 16 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

4. Expectations of Staff

- Curriculum managers are expected to strive to create student-friendly timetables that maximise the learning time in college and do not have large gaps in the day.
- Teachers are expected to deliver high-quality learning experiences that start on time with an effective engagement activity, have clear learning objectives, a variety of purposeful and inclusive learning activities and end with recap and bridge to the next session, as per the *Exceptional Learning Framework.*
- Teachers are expected to accurately mark the register by the end of the lesson at the latest, use correct register marks, and where a mark needs changing, e.g. a student was late, update the register by the end of the lesson (see Appendix 2 – Marking your registers).
- Teachers and Progress Coaches are expected to implement appropriate and timely interventions which are recorded, shared and reviewed as per the *Student Performance Management Procedures.*
- Trainers, Apprentice Training Supervisors, Assessors are expected to oversee apprentice attendance as part of their off-the-job training hours, checking that the apprentice is recording their hours in line with their Training Plan. They are expected to discuss deviations with the employer and apprentice, adjusting the apprentice's training plan accordingly to work towards readiness for Gateway by the end of the Practical Learning Period.
- Faculty Directors are expected to provide reasonable adjustments to ensure access to learning, where appropriate, through a panel-approved individualised learning programme.
- All staff are expected to follow the Ready Respectful Safe approach to behaviour management, ensuring that students and apprentices feel College is a safe and welcoming place to be.
- Managers are expected to routinely monitor attendance and ensure compliance with the appropriate procedures.
- Progress Coaches in liaison with Course Leaders are expected to follow up non-attendance daily for Study Programme students (see Appendix 3).
- Assessors are expected to follow up on non-attendance for apprentices in liaison with the employers.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality and Vice Principal Commercial & Partnerships	College-wide strategic leadership and management of attendance of students and apprentices.
Assistant Principal Student Engagement & Support	Oversight of the attendance, engagement, safeguarding and welfare of students and apprentices.
Faculty Directors	Faculty-wide strategic leadership and management of attendance of students, accountable for compliance with procedures and managing the attendance and performance of students and staff in their faculty.

Curriculum Managers / Heads	Operational leadership and management of attendance of students, accountable for compliance with procedures and managing the attendance and performance of students and staff in their Curriculum Area/s.
Course Leaders, Lecturers, Trainers, Assessors	Overall responsibility for the students'/apprentices' attendance. Ensuring all attendance is reported and monitored effectively.
Trainers, Apprentice Training Supervisors, Assessors	Reporting attendance to employers, negotiating revised Training Plans to address off-the-job shortfall, evaluating and recording attendance in Progress Reviews.
Industry Placement Officers / WorkZone Team	Operational reporting of attendance of students on work placements.
Progress Coaches	Daily phone calls to students, parents and carers. Recording these calls on ProMonitor. Liaison with the Course Leaders regarding interventions in line with Student *Performance Management Procedures*.
Curriculum Administrators	Recording of any informed absences on the systems, keeping all staff updated via ProMonitor of any other attendance issues they receive.
Attendance Phoneline team	To ensure the Attendance Phoneline is manned between the hours of 8:00-9:30am daily and follow the process in Appendices 3 and 4.
All staff and employers involved	Health and safety, safeguarding, and welfare of students and Apprentices in relation to their attendance.

6. Reporting absences

Please see *Appendix 1 – Reporting an absence* for how a student or apprentice must report their absence.

7. Attendance registers

Please see *Appendix 2 – Marking your registers* for how staff must mark their registers.

8. Probationary period attendance flow charts

During a student or apprentice probationary period there is a shorter timeframe for non-attendance follow-up. Please see Appendix 5 - Probationary period flow chart for Study Programme students and Appendix 6 - Probationary period flow chart for apprentices.

9. Interventions where attendance does not meet expectations

Where student/apprentice attendance falls below expectations the *Student Performance Management Procedures* must be invoked to ensure early intervention and support are in place. If non-attendance persists the *Student Performance Management Procedures* should continue to be followed.

10. Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments should be made where a student or apprentices is otherwise disadvantaged to enable the student or apprentice to attend well e.g. a personalised timetable. The Faculty Director is responsible for approving reasonable adjustments and ensuring that they are recorded and the reflected on the college systems. The Faculty Director may seek the guidance of the college's *Fair Access Panel* to support such decision making in complex cases.

11. GDPR and Record Keeping

Students to use their college email for all correspondence with the college. Students give their permission to share personal information with external contacts. Absence reasons will be requested and recorded on ProSolution, ProMonitor and OneFile only.

12. Safeguarding and Welfare

All attendance procedures must comply with the *Safeguarding, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy.* The College does not attend students' and Apprentices' homes and relies on text, email and phone calls to stay in touch with students if they are absent.

13. Monitoring compliance with procedures

Compliance with the Student Attendance Procedures will be monitored through audits, management information reports, and quality assurance/improvement processes outlined in the *Quality Handbook.*

14. Consequences when failing to comply with procedures

The Student Attendance Procedures are underpinned by the effective implementation of:
- Ready Respectful Safe approach to behaviour management
- Student Performance Management Procedures
- Safeguarding, Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults and Prevent Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Student Fitness to Study Policy
- Student Medical Needs Policy
- Fair Access Panel Guidelines
- Staff Disciplinary / Capability Policy and Procedures

Equality Impact Assessment

Section One	
College:	Buckinghamshire College Group
Departments Affected:	Whole College
Who is responsible for the Equality Impact Assessment?	Nicola Ellis
Title (of the policy/practice/decision)	Assistant Principal
Description (Provide a brief description of the policy/practice/decision)	Attendance is the baseline measure to safeguard our learners. Our priority is the wellbeing of our students and apprentices. Therefore, we must know where they are, how they are, and how best to support them. When students and apprentices do not attend, we intervene swiftly with strategies to support and re-engage

Section Two – Stakeholder Consultation		
2	Who are the main stakeholders and what consultation exercise are you planning to undertake, if required (e.g. consultation with Employee Voice, Trades Unions, Staff groups, Student groups?	Students, parents/carers and staff
3	Are there concerns that this could result in differential or adverse impact on any Equality Groups (Protected Characteristics as identified by the Equality Act 2010)	No

Section Three
Please identify how the procedure may impact the following protected characteristics:

- Identify any positive impacts the policy/practice/decision may have on equality groups.
- Identify any negative impacts the policy/practice/decision may have on equality groups.
- Propose measures to mitigate or eliminate identified negative impacts.

Protected Characteristics	Impact High/Medium/ Low/N/A	Action(s) you will take to mitigate or remove the negative or adverse impact if identified? Propose measures to mitigate or eliminate identified negative impacts
1. Age (e.g. are there ways older or younger people may find it difficult to engage?)	Low	Suitable for all
2. Disability (eg do you need to consider large print or easy read?)	Low	Suitable for all
3. Gender identification (eg is your language inclusive of LGBTQ+ groups?)	Low	Suitable for all
4. Gender Re-assignment (eg is your language inclusive of trans and non-binary people?)	Low	Suitable for all
5. Marriage and civil partnership (eg does it treat marriage and civil partnerships equally?)	Low	Suitable for all
6. Pregnancy and Maternity	Low	Suitable for all

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(eg with this have an impact on pregnant or those on family leave; breastfeeding services?)			
7. Race / Ethnicity *(eg does it take into account the needs of people from different groups)*	Low	Suitable for all	
8. Religion or Belief *(eg do people from faith groups experience any specific disadvantage)*	Low	Suitable for all	
9. Sexual Orientation *(eg is your language inclusive of LGBTQ+ groups?)*	Low	Suitable for all	

Section Four – Monitoring and Review	
Does your criteria and procedure promote fairness and equal opportunities? *Utilize relevant data sources, such as demographic information, student feedback, or staff surveys, to inform the analysis as necessary*	Yes
How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these measures to determine whether it has been effectively and fairly applied?	Monitored by APSES

Section Five – Outcome, Sign-off and Authorisation	
Equality Impact Assessment Outcome Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision	
Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.	x
Option 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.	
Option 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated/or justified	
Option 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	
Name and job title of authorised person	Nicky Ellis, Assistant Principal Student Engagement and Support
Equality Impact Assessment was completed on:	2/9/24
Date of next review, and by whom? This may include regular reviews, data analysis, and stakeholder feedback	1/7/25 Assistant Principal Student Engagement and Support

Appendix 1 – Reporting your absence – Students and Apprentices

- When you are going to be absent, you must call the **Attendance Phoneline** between 8.00-09.30am each day, and no later than 30 minutes before their first timetabled lesson begins.
- You must call the phone line and give your name, student number and reason for absence.
- A parent/carer can only call on your behalf in exceptional circumstances, e.g. you are too unwell to call.
- The staff member will confirm with you what lessons you are missing and remind you that you will need to call in on each day of your absence.

Students and Apprentices who **have not** informed us via the Attendance Phoneline and who have not turned up for lessons, their parent/carer/employer will receive a **phone call** for each day absent from their progress coach or assessor.

Students and Apprentices who **have informed** us via the Attendance Phoneline that they will be absent, their parent/carer/employer will receive a **text message** for each day absent.

Attendance is the baseline measure to safeguard our learners. Our priority is the wellbeing of our students and apprentices. Therefore, we must know where they are if a member of staff or employer **has not spoken to a student or apprentice in any one timetable week** the college as duty of care may contact the appropriate external agencies.

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Appendix 2 – Marking your Registers

- Schools and colleges must keep attendance registers by law.
- Staff, students, apprentices, parent/carers and college partners need to be aware that registers are recognised as a legal document and can be used, if required, in legal proceedings.
- Registers must be marked by the end of the lesson at the latest.
- The correct register marks must be used.
- Where a mark needs changing, e.g. a student was late, the register must be updated by the end of the lesson.
- If a staff member is covering a lesson, it is their responsibility to mark the registers timely and accurately.
- Everyone in the room must be accounted for on the electronic register. There is an option to manually add a student or Apprentice to a register. For example, a visiting student doing a trial lesson or a student who has transferred but their records have not been updated but is wearing a valid ID badge.
- Where registers are inaccurate e.g. they do not have the correct time/dates/teacher/students - the staff member is responsible for following this up with the MIS team as soon as possible.
- Registers must be marked within the agreed timeframe because the register marks inform the absence reporting process e.g. text to parents/safeguarding concerns and bursary payments to students most in need.

Register marks to be used:
- 0 -Absent (is not present in the lesson and has not made contact with the college today)
- I -Informed Absence (is not present in the lesson but has called the attendance phoneline today or has a pre-arranged appointment approved and recorded on ProMonitor/OneFile)
- / -Present
- D -Distance learning (where the learner connects live remotely, as part of a pre-agreed reasonable adjustment)
- L -Late (please enter the number of minutes late)
- Z -Withdrawal or transfer raised (the course leader has submitted a withdrawal request that is yet to be processed)
- P- Placement (the learner is on an approved work/industry placement)

Appendix 3 Process for reporting absences - Study Programme

Student Absence Reporting

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Student phones in between 8.00 – 9.30am to │
│            report absence.               │
│                                          │
│ Absence reporting line to be answered by the │
│     Attendance Reporting  Group          │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Student to be asked the following:     │
│        1. Reason for absence             │
│     2. Length of absence (if known)      │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
         │                        │
         ▼                        ▼
┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ Absence to be recorded │   │ Register mark for student │
│ on ProMonitor. CL, CM, │   │ on ProSolution to be   │
│ FD & Performance Coach │   │ updated (Informed or   │
│ to be tagged.          │   │ Authorised)            │
└──────────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
         │
         ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Progress Coaches, in liaison with the CL, to contact │
│ parents of students under the age of 18 to notify │
│        them of absence on that day.      │
│                                          │
│          PC to update ProMonitor         │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ FDs, in consultation with CMs, to produce action │
│ plan against SPMP and ensure that absences are │
│        being followed up by CLs.         │
│                                          │
│          CLs to update ProMonitor        │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
                    │
                    ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Assistant Principal Student Engagement & Support │
│ to follow up on absences and action plans in a │
│      weekly meeting with FDs             │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
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Students and Apprentices who have not informed us via Attendance Phoneline and who **have not** turned up for lessons, their parent/carer/ employer will receive a **phone call for each day absent.**

Students and Apprentices who **have informed** us via Attendance Phoneline that they will be absent, their parent/carer/employer will receive a **text message for each day absent.**

If a member of staff or employer has not spoken to a student or apprentice in any once timetabled week may be a safeguarding concern and the appropriate external agencies may be contacted.

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Appendix 4 Process for reporting absences - Apprentices

Apprenticeship Absence Reporting

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Student phones in between 8.00 –     │
│ 9.30am to report absence.            │
│                                      │
│ Absence reporting line to be         │
│ answered by the Attendance           │
│ Reporting Group                      │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Apprentice to be asked the following:│
│ 1. Reason for absence                │
│ 2. Length of absence (if known)      │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
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Absence to be recorded on ProMonitor. HoA, ASM, Assessor to be tagged.	◄──────►	Register mark for student on ProSolution to be updated (Informed or Authorised)

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ASM to assign trainer/assessor to    │
│ contact:                             │
│ 1. Employer – to verify absence,     │
│    update Training File.             │
│ 2. If under 18, parent to be         │
│    contacted                         │
│                                      │
│ Assigned staff to update ProMonitor  │
│ & OneFile                            │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ HoA in consultation with ASM to      │
│ produce action plan against SPMP and │
│ ensure that absences are being       │
│ followed up by Apprenticeship team.  │
│                                      │
│ ASMs to ensure OneFile and Training  │
│ Plans updated                        │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
                  │
                  ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ HoA to meet with ASMs to follow up   │
│ and monitor absences.  Concerns to   │
│ be referred to Assistant Principal   │
│ Student Engagement & Support.        │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘
```
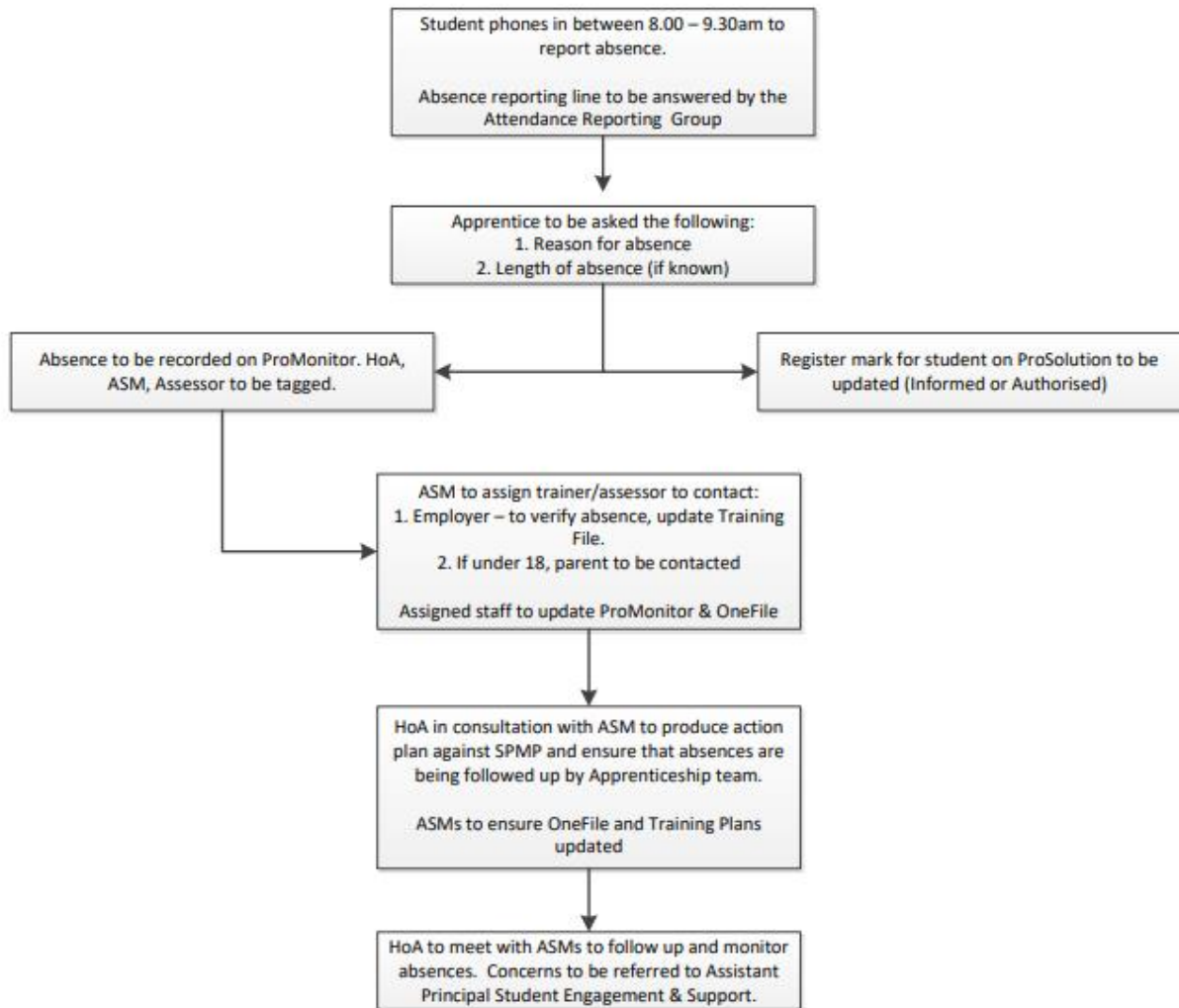
Students and Apprentices who have not informed us via Attendance Phoneline and who **have not** turned up for lessons, their parent/carer/ employer will receive a **phone call for each day absent**.

Students and Apprentices who **have informed** us via Attendance Phoneline that they will be absent, their parent/carer/employer will receive a **text message for each day absent**.

If a member of staff or employer has not spoken to a student or apprentice in any once timetabled week may be a safeguarding concern and the appropriate external agencies may be contacted.

Appendix 5 Probationary Period - Study Programme - Attendance Flowchart

Student has not attended first day

→ The Progress Coach will liaise with Curriculum to see if the student has mentioned a holiday

→ If not, Progress Coach to call student first and then the parent and update ProMonitor

→ If the student has gone to another education setting, after speaking to the student get written confirmation from the parent/carer. Once this has been received by the Course Leader, they will record on Promonitor and submit a withdrawal request via ProSolution.

Student has not attended for 2 days

→ Progress Coach to call parent/carer and then the student

→ Progress Coach to initiate an informal PIP* with the student in conjunction with the Course Leader. Progress Coach to record PIP on Promonitor and set review date.

No contact with the student in any one week

→ Progress Coach or Course Leader to raise a CPOMs concern

*PIP = Performance Improvement Plan

Appendix 6 Probationary Period - Apprentice - Attendance Flowchart

Apprentice has not attended first day
→ Assessor will liaise with ASM and employer to see if the apprentice has mentioned a holiday
→ If not, Assessor to call apprentice and update OneFile. Assessor to call employer to see if apprentice is still employed with them.
→ If the apprentice has gone to another education setting, after speaking to the apprentice get written confirmation from the parent/carer (if under 18) and employer. Once this has been received the Assessor will record on OneFile and submit a withdrawal request via ProSolution.

Apprentice has not attended for 2 days
→ Assessor to call apprentice and parent/carer (if under 18) and employer
→ Assessor to initiate an informal PIP* with the apprentice in conjunction with the employer. Assessor to record PIP on OneFile and set review date.

No contact with the Apprentice in any one week
→ Assessor to raise a CPOMs concern

*PIP = Performance Improvement Plan