Attendance and Progression Policy

For Sixth Form

Heathcote School and Science College

Approved by the Governing Body:	**Summer 2026**
To be reviewed:	**Annually**
Next review date:	**Summer 2027**

Other Documentation

This Policy should be used in reference with the following documents;

- School Attendance Policy (whole school)
- Sixth Form Admissions and Progression Policy
- Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- 16–19 Bursary Fund Policy and Bursary Agreement
- SEND Policy and Equality Duty
- DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (August 2024)
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- ESFA 16–19 Funding Regulations 2024–25
- JCQ Regulations and awarding body requirements
- London Borough of Waltham Forest NEET Prevention and Participation Framework

Heathcote Sixth Form is committed to supporting every student to succeed. Where barriers to attendance exist, the school will work collaboratively with students, families and external partners to remove them. However, attendance and engagement are fundamental conditions of enrolment and continued participation. Where a student is unable or unwilling to engage sufficiently despite appropriate support, the school reserves the right to determine that continuation is no longer in the best interests of the student and to assist them in identifying a suitable alternative pathway

Document details	
Applies to	Years 12 and 13 (Heathcote Sixth Form)
Policy owner	Head of Sixth Form
Approved by	Governing Body
Review cycle	Annual – next review September 2027
Statutory basis	DfE 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' (August 2024, statutory); School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; ESFA 16–19 Funding Regulations 2024–25; Education Act 1996

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Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out Heathcote Sixth Form's expectations, monitoring procedures and intervention framework for attendance, engagement and progression. It applies to all students in Years 12 and 13.

Whilst students in the Sixth Form are above compulsory school age, enrolment is conditional upon regular attendance, behaviour, active engagement and compliance with the expectations of their programme of study. Acceptance of a place constitutes agreement to these conditions.

As a publicly funded institution, Heathcote Sixth Form is required to maintain accurate attendance records, submit data to the DfE and local authority (London Borough of Waltham Forest), and demonstrate that funded students are actively participating in their programme. Attendance records underpin ESFA 16–19 funding claims and must be preserved for a minimum of six years in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Attendance Expectations

All Sixth Form students are expected to attend all scheduled elements of their programme, including:

- Timetabled lessons
- Form time, tutorials and assemblies
- Directed study, intervention and enrichment sessions forming part of the study programme
- Examinations, assessments and revision sessions
- Any additional sessions required to support academic progress

Attendance thresholds

Attendance Level	Classification	Response
97% or above	Target	No intervention required
95%–96%	Pre-liminary Monitoring threshold	
90%–94%	Monitoring threshold	Attendance tutor report
90% or below	Monitoring threshold	clinic; letter to parents/carers
85%–89%	Persistent Absence	Stage 1: formal monitoring; parental meeting- YL report
Below 85%	Serious concern	Stage 2: attendance contract; SLT report, review.
Below 65%	Critical – programme at risk	Stage 3: formal review; possible withdrawal.

These thresholds apply to overall attendance, including authorised absences supported by appropriate medical or other evidence. Persistent Absence (below 90%) and Severe

Absence (below 50%) are defined in line with DfE guidance and will be reported to the local authority as required.

Reporting Absences

Students must report all absences before 8:30 am on each day of absence by telephoning the Sixth Form office. Parents and carers should be informed by the student or may contact the school directly.

Medical absences of three or more consecutive days must be supported by appropriate evidence (e.g. GP letter, hospital appointment card). Evidence must be submitted promptly to the Sixth Form attendance team so that absence can be authorised.

The school reserves the right to classify absence as unauthorised where no valid reason or evidence is provided.

Requests for planned absence (e.g. university open days, external examinations, job interviews, planned medical appointments) must be submitted in advance to the attendance team using the Leave of Absence Request Form with accommodating evidence. This must be submitted two weeks in advance of the leave. Only the Head of Sixth Form may authorise leave of absence for post-16 students.

Monitoring and Data Sharing

Attendance is monitored continuously throughout the academic year using Arbor. Students are responsible for checking their own attendance record on Arbor and raising any discrepancies promptly with the Sixth Form Attendance Team.

Attendance data is shared with:

- The London Borough of Waltham Forest local authority, as required by law under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The DfE, via the school census and data-sharing arrangements
- Ofsted, during inspection
- The ESFA/DfE, as part of 16–19 funding compliance and audit

Attendance forms part of bursary reviews, internal progress reviews and external references. Parents and carers will be informed where attendance concerns arise unless safeguarding considerations prevent this.

Support and Intervention

Heathcote Sixth Form is committed to identifying and removing barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity. The following staged response applies:

Stage 1 – Attendance below 95%

- Letter or email to student and parents/carers

- Attendance monitoring meeting with tutor
- Attendance recorded on Arbor and reviewed fortnightly

Stage 2 – Attendance below 90% (Persistent Absence)

- Formal meeting with YL; parents/carers invited
- Individual Attendance Support Plan agreed and signed- YL report
- Wellbeing, pastoral or external agency referrals as appropriate
- Review of study programme suitability
- Bursary payments reviewed in line with Bursary Agreement

Stage 3 – Attendance below 85% or no sustained improvement

- Formal Programme Review by Sixth Form team and SLT
- Attendance contract or conditional continuation agreement
- Review of examination entries in line with JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements
- Consideration of alternative pathways (apprenticeships, college, training)
- Possible withdrawal from roll where sustained non-attendance means continuation is no longer appropriate

Medical evidence, safeguarding considerations and other exceptional circumstances will be taken into account at all stages. No decision to withdraw a student from their programme will be taken without parental involvement and the completion of all three stages of this process, except where safeguarding, behaviour or other urgent circumstances require immediate action.

Where a student is identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or a long-term health condition, support will be adapted to meet their individual needs. The attendance ambition remains the same for all students, but provision will be made to facilitate access where barriers exist.

Progression from Year 12 to Year 13

Year 12 is a probationary year. Progression into Year 13 is not automatic and is subject to an annual review against the criteria below.

Criteria for Progression

To be offered a place in Year 13, students will normally be required to demonstrate all of the following by the end of Year 12:

- Attendance of 90% or above across the full academic year
- Positive and consistent engagement with lessons, tutorials and enrichment
- Good punctuality, with no unresolved pattern of lateness

- Completion of all required coursework, assessments and internal examinations
- Academic progress in line with expectations for their programme of study
- Compliance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Sixth Form Code of Conduct

Meeting academic targets alone does not guarantee progression. Attendance, punctuality and engagement are independently assessed as part of the progression decision.

Attendance Below 85% in Year 12

Where a student's attendance falls below 85% during Year 12, progression to Year 13 will not normally be approved. An exception may be made only where:

- The absence is fully explained by documented medical evidence or other verified exceptional circumstances, and
- The student has demonstrated satisfactory engagement, academic progress and coursework completion throughout the year, and
- The Head of Sixth Form and SLT are satisfied that the student is able to complete Year 13 successfully

In all cases, the decision of the Head of Sixth Form, in consultation with SLT, is final. Where progression is refused, the school will provide guidance on alternative pathways and notify the London Borough of Waltham Forest in line with its NEET prevention responsibilities.

Conditional Progression

Where a student does not fully meet the progression criteria but there are mitigating circumstances, the Head of Sixth Form may offer conditional progression. Conditions will be set out in writing and signed by the student and parent/carer before the start of Year 13. Failure to meet conditions may result in withdrawal from the programme.

Progression Review Timeline

Stage	Action
May (Year 12)	Initial progression data shared with students via progress reviews
June (Year 12)	Formal Progression Review letters issued; concerns communicated to parents
July (Year 12)	Final progression decisions confirmed in writing; right to request review explained
August (Year 12)	Enrolment into Year 13 subject to confirmed decision; conditional enrolments reviewed

Examinations and Course Requirements

Examination entry is dependent upon students meeting the minimum teaching and coursework requirements set by awarding bodies and JCQ. Where a student's attendance or

coursework completion falls significantly below these requirements, the school reserves the right to withdraw examination entries.

Under ESFA 16–19 Funding Regulations, institutions may apply reasonable conditions of attendance in order to qualify for **free examination entry**. Where the required attendance or completion of work has not been achieved, and where this is not due to illness or other acceptable reason, the Heathcote Sixth Form may charge for examination resits in line with the regulations.

Any decision to withdraw or amend examination entries will be made following consultation with the student and parents/carers, and will comply with JCQ regulations and the relevant awarding body's requirements.

16–19 Bursary

Receipt of a 16–19 Bursary (both Vulnerable Student and Discretionary Bursary) is conditional upon satisfactory attendance, punctuality and engagement. The minimum attendance requirement for bursary recipients is 95%, including authorised absences evidenced by appropriate documentation.

Attendance is reviewed at regular intervals throughout the year. Where attendance falls below the required level, bursary payments may be suspended, reduced or permanently withdrawn in accordance with the Heathcote Sixth Form Bursary Agreement, a copy of which is provided to all recipients at enrolment.

All bursary recipients are responsible for monitoring their attendance on Arbor and must raise any discrepancies with the Sixth Form Team without delay. Acceptance of a bursary constitutes agreement to these conditions.

References and Destinations

Attendance, punctuality, engagement and conduct form part of a student's Sixth Form record. In preparing references for universities, apprenticeship providers, employers and training organisations, the school is under a duty to provide fair, accurate and evidence-based information.

The school may include factual information about attendance and engagement in references where this is material and accurate, in line with UCAS guidance, apprenticeship provider expectations and the school's duty of candour. Students are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their record with the Head of Sixth Form before references are submitted.

Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

Unexplained or prolonged absence may trigger a safeguarding concern. All unexplained absences will be followed up on the first day of non-attendance. Where a student cannot be contacted and there is cause for concern, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.

Where a student's name is to be removed from the roll and/ or is at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), the school will notify the London Borough of Waltham Forest as required under the Education and Skills Act 2008 and in line with the authority's NEET tracking and support arrangements.