



# **Student Handbook**

**May 2019 (Sept 2020)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>This policy applies to :</b>         | Senior Tutors, other pastoral staff, students, parents  |
| <b>Author/Department:</b>               | Assistant Principal: Student Services                   |
| <b>Area/Person responsible:</b>         | Assistant Principal: Student Services                   |
| <b>Date approved:</b>                   | May 2019  |
| <b>Related Documents/<br/>Policies:</b> | Admissions Policy, Equality Scheme, Safeguarding Policy |
| <b>Date of Next Review:</b>             | Sept 2021   |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Date of most recent review:</b> | Sept 2020                                  |
| <b>Changes made:</b>               | Addition of covid-19 pandemic regulations. |

### The Equality Act 2010: The Equality Duty

The College has a duty to consider the needs of all individuals in our day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to our employees. The Equality Duty has three aims, which require the College to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

|  |            |   |           |  |            |  |
|--|------------|---|-----------|--|------------|--|
| <b>Does the policy support the aims of the Equality Duty?</b>  | <b>Yes</b> | ✓ | <b>No</b> |  | <b>N/A</b> |  |
| <b>If no, please state which groups may be affected and complete a full equalities impact assessment</b><br>(guidance and forms available on the intranet) |            |   |           |  |            |  |
| <b>Impact Assessment Reference:</b>  |            |   |           |  |            |  |

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|--|--|
| <b>Initial Impact Assessment Completed</b> |  |
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| <b>Date</b> |  |
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| <b>Review of Policy</b> |  |
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| <b>Date</b> |  |
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## Revision History

| Version  | Date      | Changes  |
|----------|-----------|--|
| Original | May 2019  | 1. Creation of new document amalgamating previous student related policies.  |
| 1        | Sept 2020 | 1. Addition of Covid-19 Pandemic Regulations under Section 7 – Student Conduct Policy and Procedures, point 7.4.1.11 |

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## 1 Introduction

Everyone who enrolls on a course at Ashton Sixth Form College (ASFC) wants to succeed. All the teachers and other staff also want you to succeed. It is important that we all work together to create an atmosphere where everyone can learn to the best of their ability, and where everyone can achieve their goals.

We know that every student has different needs and will, in their time at the College, have times when they need additional support. Personalising your learning experience whilst at the College is a key part of what we do.

## 2 Support Services

### 2.1 Senior Tutors

The experience of becoming a sixth form student should be exciting and challenging. Sometimes however, you may need a bit more support. Having your own Senior Tutor can provide that. Your Senior Tutor acts in a similar way to your form tutor at school. They will provide you with a point of contact for a whole range of support, information and guidance, from university applications to exam stress; personal finance to housing; academic progress to personal issues.

Each Senior Tutor has a dedicated and specialist role to provide the best, and most up-to-date information and guidance to each student, as well as a wealth of experience in dealing with all sorts of external and community agencies.

Through weekly group sessions and regular one-to-one meetings, you will have regular contact with your tutor to discuss any matters which may arise.

The Senior Tutor will also oversee your academic, social and personal journey throughout your entire time here and will act as a first point of contact for your parents and carers.

### 2.2 Careers

At Ashton Sixth Form College we understand that all of our students have high aspirations for their future and we will work with you to help you to achieve your 'dream' career or university place.

#### 2.2.1 What you can expect

We firmly believe that impartial expert guidance is essential in helping all of our students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. That's why we invest so many resources in providing a comprehensive service.

#### 2.2.2 Researching your career

We have a well stocked careers resource centre which is continually updated with books about a huge range of careers, as well as valuable practical advice on university, applying for jobs, volunteering and gap years.

We subscribe to careers software programmes which can make careers information interactive and fun as well as informative. In a dedicated Careers area on the student intranet you can find information which can help you in your career planning. You can follow us on Twitter for useful snippets of information such as part-time jobs and news from universities and apprenticeship providers. We regularly e-mail all students with up-to-date events, deadlines and interesting features in our Careers Bulletin.

If you need extra support, we work closely with Senior Tutors and Inclusive Learning to ensure that students are able to access help quickly and appropriately. We also maintain strong links with universities and apprenticeship providers so that we can ensure our advice to you is up-to-date and well informed.

### 2.2.3 Individual Advice and Guidance

We have two dedicated and fully trained Careers Advisers within college, as well as a Careers Adviser from Positive Steps so we are able to provide as much individual help as you need. You can arrange a careers interview where we can talk about your plans and how to achieve them. If you have no idea what you want to do that's fine too, we can help you to explore all options before you decide. We can help you to make the right choices for you by being impartial and non-judgemental.

If you need practical help in writing a CV, preparing for an interview, writing a personal statement for your university application or just need some confidence building you can talk to a Careers Adviser. Parents are welcome to attend – just let us know beforehand.

### 2.2.4 Useful Links

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> – the national website which provides helpful practical tools and full information about all careers.

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) – the national website where all apprenticeship vacancies are advertised.

[www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – the admissions website for applying to university which contains excellent information, guides and search tools.

## 2.3 Counselling

Our qualified counsellor is there to listen and provide a confidential service and help students with personal and emotional problems that are preventing them from getting the most out of college. The counsellor can see students on a one-off basis or for a period of time. You can contact the counsellor yourself, through your tutor or any member of staff in the College.

Students sometimes find that problems at college or at home can affect their work or their physical or mental well-being. You may be:

- losing sleep over a problem
- feeling lonely, depressed, anxious or exhausted
- struggling to cope with college, work, relationships or home.

Although tutors are always happy to discuss problems, it may be easier to talk things over with a trained listener who is not directly involved. The counselling service is here to help. The counsellor can offer a confidential service to all students. You can talk about your situation, explore your choices and find a way forward. The College counselling service is here to help you.

### 2.3.1 Counselling Directory

This is a free, confidential service to encourage those in distress to seek help. Visitors can read about different areas of distress, view useful articles written by counsellors and refine their search to find the most appropriate help.

View the Counselling Directory website here [www.counselling-directory.org.uk](http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk).

## 2.4 Peer Mentors

We understand that starting college can be a stressful time for some. For those students that are feeling anxious, the Peer Mentors are here to help you.

The Peer Mentor programme was set up in order to contribute to student wellbeing. Our Peer Mentors are experienced second year students who have volunteered to join the programme in order to help their fellow students and to contribute to college life.

Peer Mentors undertake a training programme and are able to provide support and guidance for those students who may experience issues during their first year at college. Their main role is to provide help by listening to you and your issues and signposting to an appropriate source of help within the College.

## 2.5 Bursary and Free College Meals

Ashton Sixth Form College's 16-19 Bursary fund can help 16-19\* year olds where they may struggle financially.

There are two bursaries available.

### *Category A*

This bursary is for the most vulnerable students who fall into the following groups:

- Students in care or care leavers
- Students who are on Income Support or Universal Credit Payment in their own name
- Students in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment

### *Discretionary Bursary*

This bursary is open for all 16-19\* year olds to apply for and is granted normally on household income; however other exceptional circumstances will be considered.

*\*Students must be aged under 19 years on the 31st August in the academic year that they start the courses.*

### 2.5.1 How much will I get?

#### *Category A Bursary*

Eligible for up to £1200 per year paid normally at £30 per week. The remaining fund will be used to pay for trips or other college expenses.

#### *Discretionary Bursary*

We will normally pay a weekly amount of between £15 and £20 per week, subject to the number of successful applicants. The College may also substitute the cash payment for travel passes or lunch vouchers at the College's discretion.

All bursaries are paid subject to full attendance.



### 2.5.2 How do I apply?

Bursary application and information packs and guidance notes can be downloaded from our website.

You can also apply for free school meals by completing a second form, which is also available on our website.

## 2.6 Inclusive Learning

Ashton Sixth Form College believes that all students who have disabilities or learning differences are entitled to support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in college life and to complete their programme of study successfully.

The aim of the Inclusive Learning (IL) team is to encourage students who have support needs to achieve their full potential, promote independent learning, build self-confidence and offer emotional and practical support throughout their time at college.

### 2.6.1 What is Inclusive Learning (IL)?

“IL includes any activity that provides direct support for learning to individual learners, over and above that which is provided in a standard learning programme and which leads to their primary learning goal. IL is required to help learners gain access to, progress towards and successfully achieve their learning goals. The need may arise from a learning difference, a disability or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements.” (Young People’s Learning Agency Funding Guidance 2010/11, Additional Learning Support)

### 2.6.2 Who are the key staff?

|   |   |
|---|---|
| SLT manager with responsibility for IL                  | Assistant Principal Student Services          |
| Team manager  | Inclusive Learning Manager                    |
| Out of class support                                    | 2 x IL Teachers, 1 x Literacy Facilitator     |
| In class support  | 3 x Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)        |
| Higher Education and Skills Centre out of class support | Inclusive Learning Manager<br>2 x IL Teachers |
| Higher Education and Adult Education                    | 3 x Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)        |

Where appropriate IL also arranges specialist support from other agencies such as Tameside Sensory Support: Visual and Hearing Impairment Units.

### 2.6.3 How do we identify students who need support?

Students receive the following opportunities to disclose a support need:

- At Year 10, Year 11 and Higher Education and Skills Centre Open Evenings

- On application forms
- At interview
- At enrolment
- At any time on their course

IL also visits the local feeder schools where possible. Where this is not feasible we contact them by telephone to elicit information on students who have support needs. The team liaises with Tameside Sensory Support Service to obtain information on students who have visual and hearing impairments. We also liaise with Positive Steps to find out about support needs for students who have EHCPs (Education, Health and Care Plans).

Some students may have coped well at GCSE however, on transition to level 3 courses, learning needs may start to present.

*“The process of initial assessment for learning support should be integrated into the other processes carried out during the entry phase of the learning programme, and evidence should be available of the assessments that were carried out. This initial assessment process generally has three main elements:*

- *initial identification of the learners who will need learning support*
- *detailed assessment of their learning support needs*
- *development of a plan to provide IL”*

(Young People’s Learning Agency Funding Guidance 2010/11, Additional Learning Support)

Staff can refer students for support at any time during their course at college, but, to make full use of IL, early identification is imperative.

#### **2.6.4 How does IL support students?**

IL support includes

- Information on individual students’ support needs: available on the College’s student tracking system.
- Guidance on how to support students with a range of disabilities, learning differences and medical conditions: shared via the College’s student tracking system.
- Literacy, numeracy and study skills support through one-to-one and/or small group out of class support.
- In class support from LSAs.
- Personal care and support for learners with severe physical impairments.
- Testing for SpLDs.
- Provision of assistive technology such as text to speech or speech recognition software, laptops, etc.
- Organising and supporting Examination Access Arrangements.
- Adapting materials (for example for visually impaired learners).
- Advice, training and guidance for staff working with students who have learning differences and disabilities.
- Practicing Mindfulness through daily interventions and enrichment.
- Offering anxiety and study skills masterclasses.
- Essay mentoring.

#### **2.6.5 What support do students get in exams and how do they get it?**

If staff believe a student would benefit from having Exam Access Arrangements (EAA), they should determine which EAA is required, trial this in class tests, then clarify the arrangement via a referral to IL, who will need documentation of the student's 'normal way of working'. The IL team will assess the student to discover whether access arrangements are appropriate, and then ensure the necessary documentation is in place.

The IL team, in close collaboration with the exams office, teachers and personal tutors organises a wide range of examination access arrangements including:

- Extra time
- Readers
- Scribes
- Use of word processor
- Prompter (for students with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder or Autistic Spectrum Disorder)
- Coloured overlay and modified papers
- Enlarged scripts
- Read aloud facility
- Rest breaks
- Separate or smaller room
- Bilingual dictionary (for students who have been in the UK for less than two years).

## 2.7 Chaplaincy

The chaplaincy acknowledges that you are not in college just to study academic subjects, but to enjoy your time here and become a well-rounded citizen. The chaplaincy helps you to develop an understanding of other people's faiths, to gain knowledge about different religions and respect one another's beliefs.

The chaplaincy is for people of all faiths and none; there are purpose built facilities to enable you to practice your faith whilst at college or to simply have some quiet, reflective space. There is a multi-faith chaplaincy room with adjacent wash area and just outside there's our Peace Garden with trees and shrubs offering seated open space for contemplation, to take in the fresh air. There's a water feature too which brings tranquillity and a calm setting in the midst of a busy working environment.

The chaplaincy and the Peace Garden were all designed by our students to ensure they are appropriate for the whole community whether you wish to pray, light a candle, read a leaflet or simply go somewhere to catch your breath.

The chaplaincy sees you as a whole person, much more complex than your need to get good grades! We know you have big questions in life and may sometimes struggle to balance studies with a social life and the need to earn a living. It can help to have someone else independent of your teachers and family to offer a confidential listening ear.

The chaplaincy responds to individual and group needs. We work with subject areas when you are studying faith, culture, religion, society, moral and ethical issues in the syllabus by arranging speakers and organising events. For example the chaplaincy organises Faith Walks to visit various places of worship.

The chaplaincy adds so much more value to your time here at Ashton Sixth Form College. The chaplaincy is here to support your religious practice and journey of faith.

The chaplaincy is indeed the heart of the College community, demonstrating that everyone at Ashton Sixth Form is valued and respected.

## 2.8 Equality and Diversity

The College aims to offer equality of opportunity to all students in terms of both access to, and the teaching of, the curriculum. All students are encouraged to achieve their potential, and to recognise and respect the worth of all individuals irrespective of gender, race, religion/belief, age, disability and sexual orientation.

There is an excellent record of achievement year after year amongst students regardless of their background. All groups achieve equally well. We have very few incidents of discrimination and have had no serious incidents since recording began in 2000. Students are all educated to practise tolerance and develop their understanding of all groups in society during their time with us.

To ensure that students from all backgrounds have the best experience at Ashton Sixth Form College, here are some of the opportunities we offer:

- All policies are in place that comply with Equality and Diversity legislation and are regularly reviewed.
- Students who have difficulties with literacy or speak English as a second language receive one-to-one support.
- Students with any disability receive tailored support within the classroom and additional one-to-one time to ensure that their needs are met.
- There is the chaplaincy room in which all faiths are accommodated for and provides a quiet place for contemplation and worship.
- The college has an Equality and Diversity Co-ordinator who can support individual students to ensure that any problems they may have can be overcome.

## 3 Attendance and punctuality

The College recognises that regular, punctual attendance is directly related to achievement, success and establishes regular habits of dependability vital for the future prospects of all students. Ashton Sixth Form College expects all students to aim for 100% attendance. Failure to adhere to this can have a detrimental effect on individuals' achievement and disrupts the learning of others.

The College aims to assist all students to take responsibility for their full and prompt attendance at college, which will enhance their learning experience, develop their personal skills and promote high achievement, retention and successful progression into continued study or employment.

Specifically, the College aims to:

- Promote excellent student attendance and punctuality.
- Support students who are experiencing genuine difficulties in attending college.
- Publish and implement strategies to raise overall attendance and punctuality which are understood by all students, staff and parents/carers.

### 3.1 Responsibilities

The College will do this by:

- Monitoring student attendance and punctuality for all scheduled sessions.

- Discouraging students from taking unauthorised absence at any time, making clear to students and parents/carers the implications of doing so.
- Ensuring that there are effective procedures in place to deal with unauthorised or prolonged absence and poor punctuality.
- Identifying 'at risk' students quickly and taking appropriate action.

#### Student responsibilities

- To attend all scheduled sessions (including lessons, tutorials, progress hour, one-to-one tutorials, subject one-to-ones, additional subject specific sessions, meetings, trips, sports fixtures, rehearsals, performances, intervention/mentoring sessions etc.)
- To be in class on time, prepared for academic work.
- To request any missed work/assignments due to an absence and to complete all missed class work and homework.
- To ensure that your parent/carer informs the College of your absence on the same day.

#### Parent/Carer:

- To ensure the student attends college and all of their scheduled sessions.
- To recognise that any absence, regardless of cause, has a detrimental effect on student achievement.
- To inform the College on the day of the absence (Tel. 0161 330 2330) in the event of a student being unable to attend, stating the reason and the likely duration.
- To work cooperatively with the College and the student to solve any attendance problems that may arise.

Regular college absences/lateness will have a detrimental effect on the student's learning and will result in one or all of the following:

- The College will contact the parents/carers of all students whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern.
- The College aims to contact the parents/carers of all students who are absent without prior notification, to inform them of the absence (this may be via a text message where available).
- Students whose attendance or punctuality is causing concern will be set clear and appropriate targets for improvement and will be supported to achieve these targets. This is likely to be via their Senior Tutor and Senior Tutor Assistant.
- The College will continue to be sympathetic in the case of unavoidable absence and in these cases, is committed to offering support to these students.

### 3.2 Holidays in term time

Taking a holiday during college term time will have a serious impact on learning and **is likely to reduce the grades that a student achieves, hence affecting their entire career.** The College discourages taking time away from study for holidays during term time. In the event you choose to do this, a holiday form must be completed and signed by all academic teaching staff affected, parents/carers as well as the student's Senior Tutor.

### 3.3 Medical appointments

Any medical appointment must be backed up with an official appointment card/letter/E-mail if it is to be authorised e.g. hospital appointments, orthodontist, emergency GP appointments.

### 3.4 Authorised absences

The College reserves the right to ask for confirmation of the reason for any absence. Clarification with regards to the authorisation of absence may be sought by the Bursary Officer/Student Services Team/Senior Tutors, where necessary in consultation with the Assistant Principal Student Services.

The following reasons may be counted as authorised absence:

- Care of a family member for whom the student has caring responsibilities.
- Religious holiday.
- University visit.
- Occasional extra-curricular activity if notified in advance.
- Driving Test (official letter to be presented)
- Attendance at funerals.

### **3.5 Unauthorised absences**

There are circumstances when the College will not be in a position to authorise absences. These unauthorised absences will have an impact on the students overall actual attendance and on bursary payments.

The following reasons may be counted as an unauthorised absence:

- Driving lessons
- Babysitting / looking after younger siblings
- Part time jobs and training
- Routine GP and dental appointments

## **4 Progression**

### **4.1 Progression from one academic year into the next**

The college prides itself on the support given to students and will always make every effort to ensure that internal progression arrangements are clear and fair. The vast majority of students who wish to progress into the next academic year will have the opportunity to do this, but progression will be dependent upon a student's attendance in college, work-rate, behaviour/attitude, course/examination success and the fulfilling of college expectations as laid out in the Student Learning Agreement. Final decisions in regards to progression lies with the College's senior leadership team.

### **4.2 Repeating an A1 or A2 year**

Level 3 study at sixth form is a two-year experience. It is not customary to allow students to repeat or re-start an A1 or A2 year at ASFC, either on the same course or on an alternative level 3 course. It is unlikely that students will be permitted to re-start an A1 course, or repeat their A2 year, unless there are exceptional circumstances. In such cases students are required to make a new application with covering letter and their application will be considered by a group of college managers (including the Deputy Principal).

## **5 Student engagement**

The purpose of student engagement at Ashton Sixth Form College is to provide students with a range of meaningful opportunities that can be recognised as impacting upon, influencing and enriching their overall sixth form college experience.

These involvement opportunities should complement and reflect the professional approach taken at the College to the teaching and learning process.

Ashton Sixth Form College recognises the benefits for providers and for students in having an embedded Student Engagement Strategy, these include:

Benefits for providers:

- Increased participation, retention, enjoyment, progression and achievement.
- Students who are more expert and independent, and who can help to shape learning experiences tailored to meet their needs and objectives in a way that achieves success.
- Better quality of information about the students' perspective, which can be used to triangulate other sources of data and drive professional and organisational development and quality improvement.
- Better decisions about resource allocation and investment.
- Students who feel more involved and are motivated to put something back into the organisation, for instance by contributing to the development of policy or by returning to college after their progression to share their experience of industry with future generations of students.

Benefits for students:

For students, the benefits of such involvement are clear: a more responsive, more engaging, higher quality offer that empowers students in shaping their own experience and delivers improved outcomes for more students, especially those who might otherwise not succeed.

## **5.1 What we are aiming to achieve**

Through a range of meaningful engagement opportunities:

- Students will be able to impact positively upon their own learning and teaching experience and those of their peers.
- Students will be able to impact positively upon support services underpinning their learning and teaching experience.
- Students will be able to engage with the wider work and life of the College.
- Students will be able to recognise where their engagement directly impacts upon and brings about quality improvement.
- Students will engage with their study programmes, to become successful students, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals.

## **5.2 The principles that will guide us in achieving our aims:**

- The College is committed to providing students with a high quality, rewarding educational experience.
- The College recognises the importance of engaging with students in a variety of ways, listening to their views and acting promptly to address any issues which they raise.
- The College recognises that student engagement is about more than just student representative structures. It spans a complex range of learning, teaching and related support activities ensuring individual aspirations are realised within a culture of continuous quality improvement.
- The College recognises that engagement may be limited by an individual student's desire or indeed ability to become engaged. The College offers opportunities for students to engage, communicates these opportunities effectively and allows individuals to come to a judgement on their own personal or collective level of engagement.
- Approaches to student engagement must be not seen in isolation but rather collectively, demonstrating the College's approach and commitment to student engagement.

- Student engagement is owned by all college staff and through the day-to-day application of active listening and negotiating skills.
- The College's Student Engagement Strategy must be flexible, readily adapting to the needs of students as required.

### 5.3 This strategy

Student engagement is embedded in the culture, practices, processes and procedures of the College. As such it should be clear to students that student engagement is at the heart of what Ashton Sixth Form College is about and that it adds value to their overall experience. This strategy will therefore:

- recognise existing opportunities for students to engage.
- recognise the role of the College's Student Council in student engagement.
- identify potential future opportunities for student engagement.
- demonstrate how the collective impact of the range of opportunities for student engagement can be measured.

### 5.4 Opportunities for students to engage with learning, teaching and assessment processes and quality improvement activities

The College recognises the importance of engaging students in the learning and teaching process and related quality processes. The College also believes however there is a crucial balance to be struck between levels of student engagement in these processes and the levels of professionalism and expertise college staff are expected to bring to these processes. The following engagement opportunities impact on the College's approach to the learning and teaching experience and related quality assurance processes:

- **Pre-enrolment** – in order for students to have the opportunity to shape their own study programmes the College fully engages in and supports individualised advice, guidance and support, transition meetings for all students with high needs and those who require additional needs as well as transition meetings with local high schools.
- **Initial assessment** – all students complete an initial assessment in each of their subjects/programmes in order to identify any learning differences a student may have. This enables the College to put into place quickly the necessary support for individual students, enables teachers to adjust their teaching accordingly, and encourages students to become more aware of how to support their own learning.
- **Course/assessment guidance** – all students receive a thorough course handbook at the start of their course, which outlines course content, structure and modes of assessment. Some course teams involve students in the writing, putting together and/or evaluating the course handbook.
- **Tracking/progress reviews** – all students are provided with their Minimum Target grades (MTG) at the start of their course, with clear guidance from both personal tutors and course teachers as to how these have been calculated and what they mean. In addition students will attend Target Setting assemblies, where members of the senior leadership team (SLT) will discuss further MTGs in relation to target setting and achievement. At appropriate stages in the year, fixed assessment points record students' performance at subject level. This provides students with an opportunity to discuss their progress, set aspiration grades and discuss any problems/issues with their teachers. SMART targets are set for students to maintain or improve upon their current performance.
- **Tutorial reviews** – all students meet with their senior tutor on a one-to-one basis for an initial meeting (September/early October) in order to ensure they are settled, on the right course etc.



This is followed by at least two further tutorial reviews (often more) during the academic year. These tutorial reviews are intended to monitor/discuss overall progress and identify barriers to learning. The college has a specialist tutor system which we believe best meets the needs of students as tutors are dedicated specialists in pastoral care.

- **Specialist pastoral support**

- **College Counsellor** – the College employs a highly skilled and experienced counsellor to provide personalised support to students in need of specialist support.
- **Careers** – college careers staff and Positive Steps are available to provide personalised careers/life planning advice and guidance.
- **Inclusive Learning** – the College's Inclusive Learning department is swift to act upon teacher/Senior Tutor referrals. The department has responded effectively to the needs of students with particular needs by offering a personalised service.

- **Quality improvement** – students have been involved, for several years, with the quality improvement process at ASFC. The views of individual students are ascertained via college surveys and focus groups. In addition, constructive student feedback is an integral part of the Review of Learning (ROL) process and is also sought via surveys and focus groups. Students have been involved in the validation of the College's Self-Assessment Report. All college managers (curriculum and support) are expected to incorporate student feedback into their self-assessment and planning. Representatives also sit on the College's Teaching & Learning Steering Group.
- **Attendance at SLT** – representatives from the College's Student Council attend the weekly SLT meetings to provide feedback to all members of SLT on a range of aspects of college life and learning.
- **Complaints procedures** – individual students have the facility to make formal or informal complaints to the College. This is often done via their Senior Tutor. The complaints procedure is effective. Complaints are immediately acknowledged, dealt with swiftly and the outcome clearly communicated to the complainant.
- **Involvement in Tutor Group Reps meetings** – all tutorial groups have the opportunity of voting for a tutor rep who will obtain feedback from their group to take to the College-wide tutor rep meetings.
- **Individual student involvement in organising college events** – students are involved in planning and running college events such as raising money for local and national charities, music, drama and dance performances.
- **Multi-faith chaplaincy work** – students have the opportunity to get involved in chaplaincy-led projects, such as the design of the peace garden. A number of Muslim students were involved in the planning of the Muslim prayer space.

## 5.5 Opportunities for students to engage with the wider college environment

Ashton Sixth Form College actively promotes engagement with the wider college environment through a range of engagement opportunities. By necessity these opportunities will span other processes such as teaching and learning and quality assurance. The following engagement opportunities allow students to participate fully with the wider college environment:

- **Formal student feedback** – course surveys, course focus groups, tutorial focus groups, general college surveys and focus groups. These are analysed by SLT, disseminated as appropriate and acted upon.

- **Informal student feedback** – the College has a number of informal methods of collating student feedback e.g. tutorial discussions, feedback to SLT from student services staff via the Assistant Principal (Student Services).
- **Student Council** – the College has a student council, consisting of a minimum of 8 students who have been elected by the student body. The Student Council takes responsibility for charity events, social events and liaise closely with SLT. The Council have their own office in an accessible part of the main college building. Council members sit on various college groups such as Equality & Diversity, Health & Safety, Sustainability, Safeguarding etc. The college Chaplain acts as a link between the student council and SLT, whilst one of the College's Senior Tutors also has responsibility for liaising with the Student Council and Tutor Reps.
- **Student governors** – the College's Student Council President sits on the Governing Body and attends full Governors meetings, whilst also attending various subcommittee meetings.
- **Involvement in college strategic and operational planning** – student consultation takes place with relation to the SAR, the strategic mission, objectives and values of the College.
- **Student ambassadors** – the College has a well-established and successful 'Student Ambassador' programme. Ambassadors are 'recruited' from the student body and fully trained in their role. Ambassadors assist with high school liaison events and represent the College at specific events and open evenings.
- **Student involvement in staff recruitment** – currently, all teaching staff recruited to the College deliver a 'microteach' session to a class or small group of students. Student views as to the most effective teaching/favoured candidate, are encouraged and taken into consideration when appointing. Student panels also feature as part of the selection process for recruitment of senior leaders (including Principal interviews).
- **Participation in wider College events e.g. enrichment days/Imagine Your Future events** – students contribute to and participate in a wide range of enrichment activities as well as cross-college events concerned with progression opportunities. They are subsequently consulted as to the effectiveness of these events and how they can be improved further.
- **Employability activities** – Students have the opportunity to actively participate, as part of the college's approach to employability and enterprise, in events concerned with employment including the participation in work experience and the option to take part in mock interviews as well as attending the Imagine Your Future event.

## 5.6 Opportunities for students to engage through electronic media.

Ashton Sixth Form College recognises the value in engagement opportunities through the use of recognised technologies and other emerging social media outlets. The following engagement opportunities allow technology to be used in both a teaching and learning setting and in the wider college environment:

- Through the use of the College's virtual learning environment.
- Participating in online / electronic forms of assessment.
- Sending and receiving text messages.
- Sending and receiving email.
- Accessing key college information through the College's learning platform, student information tracking system and main website.
- Taking part in online blogs related to courses.
- Making use of mobile technology e.g. laptops, netbooks, smart phones.

- Through the use of specialist software, apps or equipment relevant to specific courses/departments.

### **5.7 Future opportunities for students to engage**

The College recognises that it must strive to identify new and innovative forms of engagement to complement what it currently does in this respect. The following is a range of such future engagement opportunities the College will continue to explore:

- Ensuring the range of opportunities for meaningful engagement is regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary.
- The further development of student led reflection.
- Greater use of electronic means of engagement.
- Further strengthening the part students' play in the range of self-evaluation activities within the College.

### **5.8 How we will measure the impact of the range of student engagement opportunities at Ashton Sixth Form College?**

The College takes account of the normal set of key performance indicators for retention, achievement, success and high grades. It will also reflect annually through the normal self - assessment process on a wider range of measures of success of engagement such as:

- Evidence that students' views have been listened to and where appropriate, corrective action is taken.
- Evidence that students' views are considered across a range of self-assessment activities.
- Evidence that students' views lead to more informed decision making.
- Evidence that student engagement feeds into good practice forums/teaching and learning CPD/Curriculum Forum.
- Student surveys continue to demonstrate high levels of student satisfaction.
- Student feedback on review of learning continues to drive improvement.
- The class representative system is effective in engaging with the College in matters directly affecting the learning and teaching process.

### **5.9 Responsibilities**

Essentially all college staff have a responsibility to engage meaningfully with students. The majority of the existing opportunities for student engagement within the College feed into many existing policies, procedures and processes. Within the Senior Leadership Team the Assistant Principal (Student Services) will assume a co-ordinating responsibility.

## **6 Parental engagement**

We want all of our students to enjoy their time at Ashton Sixth Form College and to be successful in their chosen study programmes. We believe that a partnership between students, staff, and where appropriate parents/carers is key to student success. This strategy aims to balance our intention to involve parents/carers of students aged under 19 in our support partnership, with an appreciation of the students' rights to confidentiality and our encouragement of an adult learning environment.

### **6.1 Objectives**

- To clarify the College's commitment to the principle of a partnership of support involving parents and carers where appropriate.
- To maximise the supportive involvement of students' parents or carers.
- To identify the methods and typical frequency of structured parent/carers involvement.
- To identify the limitations to parent/carers involvement.

## **6.2 The partnership of support for students aged under 19 (or up to 25 for students with learning difficulties or disabilities)**

Students are more likely to be successful in their study programmes if there is a positive and active partnership between the student, their parent(s) or carer(s) and college staff.

This is particularly valid where a student lives with and is supported by their parents or carers.

## **6.3 Supportive parent/carers involvement**

We recognise that parents and carers are very interested in student progress, and all the contributory factors such as course choices, attendance, behaviour and commitment to work.

We ask parents and carers to provide appropriate guidance and encouragement at home as well as maintaining contact with the student's Senior Tutor as their first port of call.

Parents and carers are encouraged to access the online parent portal which provides them with key information about enrolments, attendance, progress grades and progress reviews (please visit the College's main website for more information and in order to register for this service).

Parents and carers are asked to provide their mobile phone number to opt in to the provision of regular absence updates in support of our target for a minimum of 94% attendance. Alternative arrangements can be made for parents/carers with no mobile phone.

## **6.4 Mechanisms for structured parent/carers involvement**

Parents and carers are encouraged but not required to attend the initial liaison/admissions interview and college open days. We also provide the following experiences:

- Pre-enrolment events, some aimed at prospective students and their parents/carers, others aimed specifically at parents/carers.
- A welcome evening for parents of new students.

All 16-19 students will have progress grades and progress reviews, about their main qualification based courses, which are made available to parents and carers via the online parent portal and mailed to those with no internet access.

There are parent/carers consultation evenings held in the autumn term each year which follow the publication of progress grades. Students can attend these meetings if they wish to do so.

There is a further "invitation only" consultation evening for parents and carers held in the spring term after progress reports have been issued. This evening will prioritise those students the College has the most concerns about in terms of study programme achievement.

Parents and carers are invited to other relevant events such as the annual Higher Education Advice Evening.

Parents should contact the Senior Tutor if they have any concerns or issues to raise. They do not have to wait for consultation events. Senior Tutors can be contacted easily via the online parent portal.

Early help interviews, in the first half term, will be arranged by Senior Tutors/teaching staff for parents/carers of students who are having early problems with their courses. Students will be expected to attend these interviews.

Case conferences and telephone calls home will be conducted as and when required.

In addition the College consults further with parents and carers via the following means:

- Parents' and carers' surveys.
- Focus groups.
- Parent Governors.
- Talks to parents as the need arises, i.e. college trips, college schemes/programmes (e.g. our Ashton Sixth Form College Realising Aspirations Programme).

## **6.5 Limitations to parent/carer involvement**

The College recognises that while a young person is designated in law as a child until their 18th birthday, they also have rights to confidentiality.

The College's philosophy is to encourage the sharing of information about students with their parents/carers but if the student asks for this not to happen and are under 18, they will be interviewed by a senior member of staff to check their reasoning. If their reasoning is seen as acceptable or they are 18 or over, their wishes will be recorded on the College's student tracking system and respected.

Students who do not live with their parents or carers can elect to keep them informed and involved in the mechanisms in section 6.4 above.

Members of staff are given training and information on protocols regarding enquiries from parents/carers to minimise the risk of breaking confidentiality.

Students with separated parents can elect who to involve as their next of kin and can request sharing of information with more than one parent.

## **6.6 Improvements to parental/carer engagement**

To improve parental/carer engagement, we seek to do the following:

- Incorporate further pre-enrolment/IAG activities for young people and their parents.
- Conduct research to ask parents what they want from Ashton Sixth Form College/how we can further enhance our partnership with parents.
- Consider a more interactive event for parents; showing/showcasing the work of the student to show how he/she is progressing.

- Conduct research into parents who do not attend parents consultation evenings to find out why this is the case.

## **7 Student conduct policy and procedures**

### **7.1 Context and aims of this policy**

Ashton Sixth Form College is an institution which prides itself on putting the success and well-being of its students first. In order to create the ideal learning environment in which all students have the opportunity to achieve and enjoy, the College needs to establish a set of rules/guidelines/standards for student conduct and performance.

We recognise that some students take longer than others to adjust to the demands and expectations of sixth form life/study and our approach is to be supportive and provide the necessary levels of structure and guidance to these students. However, it is essential for any educational institution to have a clear behaviour policy to provide clear rules and guidelines for behaviour to students. In order to support and backup this behaviour policy, it is necessary to have a clear discipline policy/procedure to ensure that students who depart from the required standards of behaviour or academic performance are returned to acceptable modes of conduct and work as quickly as possible. While consistency is important when implementing the disciplinary procedure, it is both inevitable and necessary to build in an element of flexibility. Context and circumstances need to be taken into consideration when deciding upon an appropriate course of action.

The rules and guidelines laid out in this policy are devised to achieve the following objectives:

- to promote order and fairness;
- to promote a purposeful ethos within college;
- to create a safe learning environment for all members of the College community, free of physical risks, bullying or harassment;
- to promote relationships based upon respect and tolerance.
- to provide students with the opportunity to modify their behaviour so that they may remain in college and successfully complete their course of study;
- to provide clear and effective systems of referral;
- to ensure that all students who may be subject to disciplinary procedures are dealt with in a fair, consistent and equitable manner.

### **7.2 Raising awareness of the policy**

All members of the College community – students and staff – should be made aware of this policy and the College's expectations in relation to student conduct. Expectations of behaviour will be made clear to students and their parents/carers in the following ways:

- college induction – both the general college induction and reinforced within early tutorials and subject lessons;
- open evenings for prospective students;
- Principal's address to new students during induction;
- Principal's talks to returning students in early Autumn Term;
- Learning Agreement.

These expectations and guidelines should be reinforced throughout the academic year through:

- group tutorial activities;
- lessons;

- one-to-one reviews (subject and Senior Tutorial) with students;
- parents' evenings;
- Senior Management/Principal's talks to students by cohort.

College staff (teaching and support) will be made aware of the policy through:

- full staff meetings;
- the College induction programme for new staff;
- staff training days.

New staff will be informed about the discipline policy during their induction. Training on how to use the student tracking system is delivered to new staff as part of the staff induction programme.

### **7.3 Responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy**

All college staff have a role to play in promoting good standards of behaviour and conduct in students and monitoring/reporting breaches of the policy. All members of staff should be prepared to challenge poor standards of behaviour and deal with minor breaches of the policy. However, there is a system of referral, outlined later in this policy, which should be followed for more serious or persistent breaches of the conduct policy. Where a matter is deemed to be of an extremely serious nature, the member of staff reporting the issue should refer the matter to the Senior Tutor Managers or the Assistant Principal (Student Services).

All members of college staff are expected to follow the discipline procedure outlined in this policy document. It is expected that, for minor breaches of college policy, the member of staff who witnesses or is informed of the incident will deal with the matter. For more serious breaches of the student conduct policy or where concerns are persistent/ongoing, the formal referral procedure should be followed, and the matter will be dealt with by the student's Senior Tutor or, the Senior Tutor Managers.

The Assistant Principal (Student Services) is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy.

### **7.4 General policy statement**

#### **7.4.1 Expectations/standards of behaviour**

##### ***7.4.1.1 Attendance and punctuality***

Students must attend all timetabled lessons and group tutorials.

Where students are asked to attend student support sessions or Progress Hour they must attend these sessions.

Any absence from college must be confirmed by telephone call on the day of the absence. This phone call must be made before their first lesson of the day, and by 11 a.m. at the latest. If the telephone call was made by the student themselves, they should support this by producing a parental note OR an appointment card/doctor's note on the day of their return, or their first group tutorial.

Where a student will miss lessons for reasons other than illness and this absence is known about in advance, he/she should gain advance authorisation from his/her Senior Tutor and should inform his/her subject teachers/ascertain what work will be missed. Examples of such planned absence may include driving tests, orthodontist appointments, HE visits or competing in high level sporting events.

Where a student is required to leave college part way through the college day, they must sign out at the Student Services reception desk in the Senior Tutor base. This will require the signature of their Senior Tutor or, if he/she is available, another Senior Tutor. Permission will only be given for suitable

cases, i.e. appointment cards/letters must be produced for things like hospital or orthodontist appointments, driving tests, etc. Students should ensure that routine appointments (e.g. non-emergency doctor's appointments, dental appointments) are arranged to take place outside of college hours. Where appointment cards are not produced, signing out will only be authorized by Senior Tutors for illness and emergencies. Where a teacher or Senior Tutor doubts the genuine nature of a student's request to sign out, the student is still permitted to leave college but must produce a letter from their parents/carers on their return to college to authorise the absence. Signing out data will be monitored by Senior Tutors and the Senior Tutor Managers.

Every absence, incident of lateness and signing out will be checked/challenged within weekly group tutorials.

Where a pattern of absences emerges (authorised or unauthorised) and becomes a cause for concern, a more serious discussion will take place. At this point, parents/carers may/will be informed and the student may be placed on an attendance agreement.

Persistent lateness or patterns of lateness (e.g. every Friday morning) will not be tolerated. If a student continues to present a punctuality problem, despite their Senior Tutor raising the matter with them, they may be placed on the College's review system.

Weekly Bursary payments will be stopped where absences are unauthorised.

Bursary payments can also be stopped for above average levels of authorised absence or signing out, where firm evidence is not produced.

#### **7.4.1.2 College property and facilities**

All college property, including furniture, fixtures and fittings must be respected at all times.

Students involved in vandalism, graffiti and other similar offences against college property will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Damage and breakages, through wilful or neglectful behaviour, may be charged to student or their parents/carers.

Students should adhere to the rules stated in the ICT contract which is discussed and signed during induction by all students. Abuse of ICT or Internet facilities will lead to a student being placed on review. For further details, the 'Acceptable Use' policy can be referred to.

Students should respect the College environment by disposing of all litter in the bins provided around the site for that purpose. Students should also show respect to the College's neighbours, both residents and local businesses, by not littering or causing damage in the surrounding area.

Any interference with, or misuse of, fire safety equipment is a life-endangering offence and will result in immediate suspension from college.

#### **7.4.1.3 ID cards/lanyards**

Students must be in possession of their ID cards at all times.

Any student found lending their ID card to someone else or using another student's ID card will be subject to disciplinary measures.

#### **7.4.1.4 Food and drink**



Food brought on to the premises must be consumed in student recreation areas.

Food and drink are not permitted in classrooms, lessons or group tutorials or the Learning Resource Centres. It is permitted to drink water from a sports bottle within all rooms in college.

#### **7.4.1.5 Visitors**

Students should not invite visitors on to college premises or encourage them in any way to enter college grounds.

Students seen associating with unauthorised visitors will be deemed to be responsible for them being on college premises and hence to have broken the rule and be subject to disciplinary measures.

Where a student has received a prior warning about inviting or associating with unauthorised visitors, and they are found to have broken this rule again, this will be regarded as a very serious disciplinary matter.

Students should report immediately the presence of unauthorised visitors or strangers to reception or to any member of staff available so that further action can be taken.

Where students are picked up from college by relatives or friends, they should arrange to meet the driver giving them a lift outside the College premises.

#### **7.4.1.6 Alcohol**

It is forbidden for students to bring alcohol on to college premises.

Students are not permitted to visit public houses during their college day (i.e. during free/study periods or lunchtime).

It is unacceptable for students to come into college after drinking alcohol.

Eighteenth birthday parties are not a satisfactory excuse for breaking the above rules.

Any breach of the above rules on alcohol will result in the student being immediately suspended from college and their parents/carers will be invited into college to discuss the matter.

#### **7.4.1.7 Drugs or illicit substances**

Any student found using illegal drugs or illicit substances on or off college premises or on college trips/visits will be immediately suspended from college, pending an enquiry into the circumstances of the incident. The student's parents/carers will be contacted along with the police.

A similar approach will also be taken in the following circumstances:

- If a student is found in possession of illegal drugs or illicit substances.
- If a student is found to be distributing or selling drugs or illicit substances
- If a student comes into college whilst under the influence of (or suspected of being under the influence of) drugs or illicit substances.

Permanent exclusion is a likely outcome of the situations outlined above and the College will support any action taken by the police.

Any student who has information about drug possession, usage or sale by other students should report this to their Senior Tutor or other senior member of staff. Confidentiality will be protected.

The College will signpost students to confidential drug counselling and other appropriate support for students who request help with a drug-related problem from outside college.

#### **7.4.1.8 Smoking**

The college has a no smoking and no vaping policy operating in all of its buildings.

The college has designated one area where smoking and vaping is permitted. This is the covered area at the rear of the College site, adjacent to the boundary. Students should not smoke anywhere else on the College site.

Any breach of these rules will be treated very seriously.

#### **7.4.1.9 Offensive weapons**

Following well-publicised national cases involving the carrying and/or use of offensive weapons on educational premises, legislation has extended to help tackle the problem (2006 Violent Crime Reduction Act). It is an arrestable offence to carry a knife or other offensive weapon on educational premises.

All schools and colleges have been recommended to introduce and maintain a procedure relating to these circumstances; it is sensible that we have such a procedure.

The aim of the procedure is to promote precautions which seek to avoid possible injury to any member of the College community.

If any student or intruder is suspected of carrying a knife or other offensive weapon:

1. the Police must be called to deal with the suspected person;
2. if possible, the suspected person should be kept under observation until police arrive;
3. it is recommended that, if it is possible, the suspected person should be isolated from students, e.g. by being invited to sit in a supervised waiting area until police arrive;
4. where possible, staff should seek immediate assistance from colleagues so that they are aided in calling for outside assistance or in observing the suspected person;
5. A search may be carried out with immediate effect, should the situation require this. This may be done by the Principal or someone they have authorised to undertake this duty. This is most likely to involve members of the Senior Leadership Team and/or site staff. Where this is deemed an appropriate course of action, the following guidelines must be adhered to:
  - a student's possessions should only be searched in his/her presence and in the presence of an additional person over the age of 18
  - both adults must be the same sex as the student; strip searches are not permitted
  - consent to search a student should be gained wherever possible.
6. Teaching staff should not hesitate to dismiss a class if it aids their dealing with the incident.

In all circumstances, the safety of individuals must be the paramount consideration in any judgement made on necessary action to be taken.

This procedure has been compiled in the light of government information and guidelines.

#### **7.4.1.10 Respect for others**

Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in college.

The following behaviours are regarded as bullying and/or harassment: verbal abuse, physical abuse, unwanted physical contact, hurtful jokes, blackmail, stalking, offensive e-mails or letters, displaying offensive material about a person, insulting graffiti, spreading rumours, isolating individuals. Where any of these behaviours occur, the matter will be taken very seriously and dealt with accordingly.

On line bullying/harassment (including e-mail, text, Facebook, social media sites etc.) is taken seriously by the College and will be dealt with seriously, regardless of whether it takes place inside or outside college.

Bullying and harassment which is directed at or contains language in relation to the following will be regarded as an equality and diversity issue and will be treated as an extremely serious matter:

- Gender
- Race
- Religion
- Disability
- Sexuality
- Homophobic
- Biphobic
- Transphobic

We expect all students to familiarise themselves with the College's Equality Scheme, and to recognise and respect the worth of all individuals irrespective of gender, race, religion/belief, age, disability and sexual orientation.

Students will be informed as to how to report bullying/harassment. They, or their parents, should inform their Senior Tutor, a teacher or any other member of staff, who should report the matter to the Senior Tutor Managers.

#### **7.4.1.11 Covid-19 Pandemic Regulations**

The college has implemented strict regulations to protect the college community from the transmission of coronavirus. These regulations are shared with students regularly during tutorials and are published around the college campus.

Any student found breaching these regulations will be subject to the college's usual disciplinary measures.

Examples of breaches would include persistent non wearing of face masks, attending the college campus outside of agreed 'bubbles', bringing non-students on site and failing to social distance where instructed.

#### **7.4.1.12 We also expect students to:**

- Avoid wearing clothing containing swear words or other offensive language.
- Dress in an appropriate manner in order not to offend anyone.
- Respect the local community with regard to using local transport, noise levels, parking cars and littering.
- Show respect to others by not using foul language.

## 7.5 Procedures

### 7.5.1 For minor breaches of the student conduct policy

Where a student is involved in a minor breach of the student conduct policy or is falling short of expected standards of attendance, work-rate or behaviour, an informal arrangement is suggested. Subject teachers are responsible for dealing with emerging concerns or minor incidents at course level. They may wish to seek the advice or help of their Head of Department/Head of Subject, arrange to see the student, set targets and record on the College student tracking system. A concern should not be sent to the Senior Tutor at this point, although an information item (see the systems of referral below) may be sent to the Senior Tutor to inform them of the informal discussion/actions you have taken.

Where there are minor concerns/breaches of the behaviour policy, measures may include:

- A discussion with the member of staff who has raised concerns/or witnessed an incident to try and resolve the issue.
- One-to-one interviews/discussions with subject teachers to discuss specific concerns.
- Discussion with/informal warning from Senior Tutor about the issue (i.e. highlighting an emerging punctuality, attendance or behavioural problem).
- Support mechanisms being put into place, where appropriate.
- Parents being contacted, where appropriate.

### 7.5.2 For more serious or generalised concerns, or where informal arrangements have been unsuccessful

At this point, the student's Senior Tutor should be contacted using the online referral system. There are three systems of contact/referral:

1. **Student information** – This is designed so that subject teachers or support staff can pass on a piece of information to the Senior Tutor about a student. It does not require a reply. Teaching staff may use it to inform the Senior Tutor of a very early stage of concern, and to share information with all relevant staff.
2. **Concern** – Should be sent when an issue becomes more serious and the strategies employed at course level have been unsuccessful. A concern should not be sent to the Senior Tutor until genuine efforts have been made to solve the problem. Where the problem is work related, the subject teacher may wish to seek the advice of their course leader to develop strategies to overcome the problem.

**Concerns should not be sent about absence, unless it is persistent or patterned.**

Where a teacher has been unable to solve the problem, even with the advice of their Head of Department, an online concern should be sent to the Senior Tutor. The teacher should outline what strategies have been put into place by the teacher/what action has already been taken. The Senior Tutor will see the student as soon as possible and reply to the concern, outlining what action he/she has taken within 2 working days.

3. **Referral** – Referrals are sent to the Senior Tutor Managers by Heads of Department. It is suggested that, after four significant concerns have been sent and the concerns remain (or sooner if the concerns are of a very serious nature), a referral is sent. Teachers should not send a referral, however, if the student is already subject to disciplinary action (i.e. on review), even if concerns arise. Where this situation occurs, concerns should be sent in the normal way. Where a referral is sent and deemed to be a serious enough concern, the Senior Tutor Manager will arrange to see the student as soon as possible and will respond using the online system, outlining the action taken. This may also require the referring staff member to attend a meeting.

### 7.5.3 Non course-related concerns

Any member of staff may use the above systems of contacting Senior Tutors about student conduct. For example, where a student is found by site staff to be socialising with unauthorised visitors on site, or where a student is misusing ICT facilities in one of the Learning Resource Centres, etc.

The information, concern or referral should be sent under the category of 'non course-related concern'. The Senior Tutor Manager will deal with the matter appropriately and inform the sender of the outcome of the concern.

### 7.5.4 Categories of disciplinary/monitoring measures

#### 7.5.4.1 Attendance and punctuality review

Where attendance concerns about a student appear to be a cross college issue and where the overall college attendance has fallen below 94%, the student should be placed on attendance and punctuality review. The referral to this review is initiated by the Senior Tutor and monitored by the Senior Tutor Assistant over a period of four weeks. If concerns persist then the next stage of the College review is initiated. Parents/carers will be contacted by letter (by the Senior Tutor Assistant) to inform them that their son/daughter has been placed on review.

#### 7.5.4.2 Subject review

Where the concerns about a student appear to be specific to one subject (or on vocational courses, one teacher/module) the student should be placed on subject review for a period of four weeks. Senior Tutors may suggest that subject teachers take this course of action. This stage of monitoring will therefore be initiated by the subject teacher, who will draw up a list of expectations and action points that the student should work towards within the four week period. This action should be recorded formally on the College's student tracking system.

Parents/carers will be contacted by letter (from the subject teacher) to inform them that their son/daughter has been placed on subject review.

**It is the responsibility of the subject teacher to monitor and discuss the student's progress and inform the Senior Tutor of the outcome at the end of the monitoring period.**

If the student completes this monitoring period successfully, he/she will come off the monitoring measures and will return to being tracked in the usual way by their Senior Tutor and subject teacher. If the student fails to meet their targets, this will result in subject review being extended, or a move to college review if there are further concerns.

**Subject monitoring may be halted to progress to the College review stage if concerns about the student become more general during the subject review period (i.e. concerns from other subjects).**

#### 7.5.4.3 College review

Students may be put on college review where:

- They have failed to meet the targets set for them at subject monitoring review.
- They have previously completed a period of subject review, but concerns in this subject have re-surfaced to a point that they are considered reasonably serious
- There is a build-up of significant concerns from more than one source.
- There are persistent and/or patterned breaches of the student conduct policy.

- The student would benefit from being closely monitored to support and progress.

College review will be for a period of four weeks. Senior Tutors will complete the relevant review student comment form on the College's student tracking system which will provide details as to the reason(s) for the student being placed on review, start and end dates and targets for improvement.

Senior Tutors will inform subject teachers that the student has been placed on college review.

The Senior Tutor will send an online message requesting subject teacher comments. These comments will be stored online and used as a basis for one-to-one meetings with the Senior Tutor. This should happen at least twice during the four week period. Any significant concerns a teacher has about a student during their period on review should be sent via the weekly message from the tutor, or as a "concern" message to tutors rather than referrals.

In situations where a serious concern/breach of the conduct policy occurs during the period on review, the period on review can be deemed to have been unsuccessful and the student may be progressed to a more serious level of the disciplinary procedure, disciplinary review.

At the end of the period on review, the student's Senior Tutor will judge whether the conditions have been met and whether the period on review has been successful or not. This judgement involves the Senior Tutor taking an overview as to whether the student has shown a significant improvement during the period on review, using a range of information, including attendance data and subject teacher feedback. College review can be extended only once for another period of 4 weeks.

Parents/carers will be informed by letter that their son/daughter has been placed on college review and both students and parents/carers will be informed that this is part of a formal review procedure. Parents/ Carers can be invited into college to attend a case conference.

Subject review may continue alongside college review to ensure a more co-ordinated approach.

### **7.5.5 Disciplinary review**

Students may be placed on disciplinary review for a period of four weeks where:

- There has been a serious concern/breach of the conduct policy which may have resulted in a suspension.
- They have been unsuccessful on college review (or reached a point where the targets set on college review could not be achieved);
- They have completed college review successfully, but significant or generalized concerns arise again at a later point in the course.

Senior Tutors will meet with the student on a weekly basis and record details on the online system. The Senior Tutor will contact subject teachers on a weekly basis through the student tracking system to be updated on the student's progress. Subject teachers are expected to inform Senior Tutors of any concerns/issues which arise during the student's period on disciplinary review. The outcomes of the case conference will be recorded on the student tracking system. There will be a mid-point (2 week) review of the student's progress.

Again, in situations where:

- (a) insufficient progress is being made by the student during the period on disciplinary review (after 4 weeks) and it becomes apparent that the targets cannot be met; or
  - (b) a serious concern/breach of the conduct policy occurs during the period on disciplinary review
- the period on disciplinary review can be deemed to have been unsuccessful and the student may be referred to a more serious level of the disciplinary procedure; or

- failure to meet the conditions on disciplinary review may lead to the student being placed on final review.

Parents/carers will be informed by letter and telephone call from the Senior Tutor that their son/daughter has been placed on disciplinary review and will be required to attend a case conference in college with a Senior Tutor Manager. Teachers may also be invited.

#### **7.5.5.1 Final review**

If the student fails to complete the disciplinary review they may be put on final review by their Senior Tutor. The Senior Tutor will interview the student and issue him/her with the review documentation which must be signed by:

- the student;
- the Senior Tutor;
- a parent or carer;
- Senior Tutor Manager

Details of the final review will be put on to the online pastoral record on the College's tracking system and subject teachers will be informed. The review will last for a period of eight weeks.

Where a student is placed upon final review, parents/carers will be informed by letter and are required to sign the review documentation. Parents/carers will be required to attend a case conference whereby the conditions of the Review are laid out and the implications of failing the Review are made clear.

If the conditions of the review are not met, the Senior Tutor will ask the student's parents/carers to withdraw him/her from college. If the parent/carer does not agree to do this, the Assistant Principal (Student Services) may permanently exclude the student from college.

#### **7.5.6 Progression agreement**

Where a student has given serious cause for concern during an academic year, and has been subject to disciplinary measures, yet has completed the academic year with some success, they may be put on to a 'progression agreement' on their return to college in the next academic year.

The progression agreement will last for the first half term and will set out clear expectations and targets for the student to achieve. The progression agreement will be signed by the student, their Senior Tutor (or, in some cases, the Senior Tutor Manager or the Assistant Principal (Student Services)) and the student's parent/carer. Parents/carers will be informed by telephone that their son/daughter is on a progression agreement, and are welcome to come into college to discuss the conditions of the agreement and the implications of failing the agreement. Subject teachers will be informed of which students are on a progression agreement and are expected to inform the Senior Tutor of any concerns/issues which arise during the period of the agreement.

At the end of the period of the agreement, a decision will be made by the Senior Tutor as to whether the student has successfully achieved the targets or not. At this point, a decision will be made as to whether:

- the student should remain in college and be taken off disciplinary measures;
- the student should remain in college but be placed on Contract;
- the student's parents/carers should be asked to withdraw him/her from college.

If the latter is decided, and the student's parent/carer refuses to withdraw the student from college,

the Assistant Principal (Student Services) may decide to permanently exclude the student from college.

If the student successfully completes their progression agreement but, at a later point, gives significant cause for concern, they will be placed on final review.

#### **7.5.7 Extending the period on review, final review or progression agreement**

The period of time a student spends on review, final review or progression agreement may be extended if the student has taken authorised absence during the original period. For example, where there is a week's genuine illness backed up by a doctor's note, an extra week may be added to the end of the review period.

#### **7.5.8 Suspension and Exclusion**

The college is deeply committed to retaining students and providing the opportunity for students who breach the rules outlined in the student conduct policy, to modify their behaviour. Occasionally, however, there are situations where it is in the best interest of the student and/or the College, for the student to be removed from college either temporarily (**suspension**) or permanently (**exclusion**). The College would not make the decision to suspend or exclude a student lightly or without thorough consideration of the circumstances of the situation.

##### **7.5.8.1 Suspension**

The College may suspend students without notice in the following cases:

- Where there is a serious breach of the College's Student Conduct Policy.
- Where an incident occurs in which the safety of individuals is threatened.
- Where an incident occurs which compromises the reputation/public image of the College.
- Where a serious, but as yet unproved, allegation has taken place and further investigation is needed.

Suspension can only be issued by a member of the College's Senior Leadership Team or the Senior Tutor Manager. Suspended students will normally be asked to leave college premises immediately. He/she will be informed that they are excluded from college premises during the period of the suspension and failure to adhere to this instruction will be regarded as a further serious breach of discipline rules. The College will ensure that the student is in a position to make their way home from college.

Parents/carers will be telephoned immediately and a letter will be sent home inviting parents/carers into college to discuss the matter.

The college will endeavour to resolve the matter as quickly as possible as this is in the best interests of both the student and the College.

The Principal will be informed of any suspensions.

##### **7.5.8.2 Permanent Exclusion**

The need to permanently exclude a student may arise due to any of the following situations:

- Where a student fails to meet the conditions of their final review or progression agreement and their parents/carers refuse to voluntarily withdraw them from college.
- Where a serious incident has occurred for which the student has already been suspended.



The decision to permanently exclude will normally follow a discussion with the student and their parents/carers by a college representative. Where the College is minded to exclude permanently, the student and their parents/carers will be informed, as soon as is possible and certainly within five working days), in writing, of this decision.

The decision to permanently exclude can only be made by a member of the College's Senior Leadership Team.

#### **7.5.8.3 Appeals against a permanent exclusion where the decision is taken by a member of the senior leadership team**

If a student wishes to appeal against a decision to permanently exclude him/her, they must do so, by letter, within five working days of the notification of the decision to exclude. The letter of appeal must:

- be addressed to the Principal
- outline the reasons, arguments and evidence for opposing the decision to exclude.

The appeal will normally be heard by the Principal, but in their absence (or at the discretion of the Principal) this can be delegated to the Deputy Principal.

The appeal hearing will normally be held within ten days of receipt of the appeal letter. If this is not possible, or there is any delay, reasons for this must be given to the student and their parents/carers. The student/their parents/carers will be informed in writing of the date, time and place of the appeal hearing. The letter will also reiterate the original reasons for the exclusion.

At the hearing, the student (and/or parents/carers) will have the opportunity to present their case and provide any evidence which supports their objection to the exclusion.

The student will normally be informed of the outcome of the appeal, in writing, within five working days of the appeal hearing.

If the student's appeal is upheld, he/she will be supported in resuming their studies, although other sanctions may be put in place as appropriate.

Where the appeal is unsuccessful or the student is unhappy with the outcome, he/she may appeal to the governing body. The student/their parents/carers will be informed of this right in the letter following the original appeal hearing.

#### **7.5.8.4 Appeals against a permanent exclusion where the decision has been taken by the Principal**

Appeals to the governing body must be made within five working days of the notification of the original appeal decision. Appeals to the governing body will only be considered where a student feels that the original decision is inappropriate or unfair on the following grounds:

- That the decision did not take account of all the evidence.
- That the punishment (exclusion) is out of proportion in relation to the 'offence'.
- That new evidence has emerged/arisen which could not have been available or known about at the time of the original appeal.
- That proper procedures have not been followed.

If students/their parents/carers feel that any of the above grounds apply, they should appeal to the Chair of Governors, in writing, outlining the grounds for appealing, alongside any supporting evidence.

#### **7.5.8.5 The governors' appeal hearing**

The hearing will be held within ten days of receipt of the letter of appeal.

All documents to be considered at the hearing and a list of any persons who will be present at the hearing should be made available to all parties at least three days before the hearing.

A college representative(s) will be in attendance to outline the College's position and present the reasons for the exclusion.

At least three governors will hear the appeal and a chair will be elected.

The format for the hearing will be:

- The student/their parent/carer will present their case, referring to any supporting evidence/documents and clearly stating on which grounds they are appealing. They may call witnesses as appropriate.
- The College's representative will be given the opportunity to ask any questions of the student.
- Members of the appeal panel may then ask questions of the student.
- The College representative will then present the College's case and outline the original reasons for the decision to exclude. The representative may also respond to any points made by the student and may introduce any witnesses or supporting documents to support their case.
- The student will be given the opportunity to question the College representative on their case.
- Members of the appeal panel may then have the opportunity to ask questions.
- Both parties will then be given the opportunity to summarise their respective cases, beginning with the student, followed by the College representative. New information is not permitted within the summary and will be disregarded by the panel.
- The panel will then retire to consider their decision, which all parties will be informed of within five working days.
- The governors' decision is final.

All references within this handbook to the "governing body", refer to the Local Governing Body of Ashton Sixth Form College.