KING EDWARD VI COLLEGE

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King Edward VI College – Fitness to Study Procedure
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At King Edward VI College, we want all students to complete their studies successfully and achieve their potential. There are occasions, however, when physical or mental health issues are so complex or so significant that this is not possible. In these instances, each student needs to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the College needs to ensure it is fully aware of all the medical evidence and the wishes of the student and the parents or carers. Ideally, a clear consensus would always emerge about the best way forward, but this will not always be the case.

There will be occasions where the College believes that it has exhausted the support options available, it has made reasonable adjustments in all aspects of college life, but the student is unable to maintain their fitness to study. For a student with an EHCP, any discussions regarding fiteness to study will be held in conjunction with the local authority, taking advice and guidance around reasonable adjustments in line with the student's plan. These situations impact negatively both on the student, since their welfare is at risk, and on the College, since there is an excessive demand on resources. For a student who has demonstrated difficulty in maintaining full attendance, despite targeted interventions (see Wellbeing Plans) from their Progress Support Tutor and struggled to make positive academic progress against the odds, keeping the structure of college life going can be a positive factor in their rehabilitation. However, there comes a point where long-missed deadlines and significant periods of absence have more of a negative impact on their health than withdrawing from their studies.

It is crucial to recognise that, on occasions, the College is advised, by medical specialists, that it is unsafe for students to attend. This advice will always supersede College policy, and the student will not be able to attend until we are notified of their fitness to do so by the relevant authority.

If the College reaches a decision, after consultation with the student, parents / guardians, that a student should pause their education and withdraw under Fitness to Study, then this will be actioned. In these situations, we would always assure students and their parents or carers that the best interests of the individual student and their welfare are at the centre of decisions.

Where there is no consensus that withdrawal is the most appropriate outcome, then the stages below will be followed.

Wellbeing Plans

Wellbeing plans provide tailored support for students experiencing emotional wellbeing, mental health or personal barriers which
may impact engagement, attendance or progress. Students can be placed on a Level 1, 2 or 3 Wellbeing plan depending upon the severity of the support needed.

Plans may include:

- Personalised intervention plans.
- Ongoing review and monitoring.
- Internal or external wellbeing referrals.
- One-to-one support.
- Workshops or specialist interventions.
- Collaboration with safeguarding, wellbeing and specialist support teams.

A temporary interruption of studies under the Fitness to Study process will involve the young person being withdrawn from their current courses, with the intention of re-enrolling them onto appropriate courses in the following academic year.

Any re-enrolment will consider the young person's age, noting that they must not be over 18 years old on 31 August of that academic year. Re-enrolment will also be subject to the young person providing appropriate medical evidence confirming that the issues which led to the interruption of their studies have been sufficiently addressed.

Following withdrawal, the young person must reapply to the college by 30 April of the relevant academic year to be considered for a place to continue their studies. Where withdrawal occurs after 30 April, further discussions will be required to determine whether Fitness to Study remains the most appropriate course of action, or whether the young person should be supported to remain in college or consider an alternative provider for the following academic year.

Students who have withdrawn due to Fitness to Study must attend a pre-enrolment meeting with their Progress Leader along with parents/carer. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the Mental Health, Physical Health and Wellbeing Support the young person is engaging with, with the aim of strengthening their coping strategies and supporting a successful return to college. The student will always be encouraged to express their views on the way to address the concerns. We understand that accessing support can be difficult due to the demand on services, the young person, along with parents/carer will therefore be required to attend a further pre-enrolment meeting for further evidence from external agencies to be

provided. A revised Wellbeing Plan will be drawn up providing evidence of engagement with external support is provided. Failure to engage with external support during a period of interrupted study will result in the student not being permitted to re-enrol at the college.

Once the young person has re-enrolled, their attendance, engagement and work submission will be closely monitored, if there is no significant improvement seen during the 1st 42 days of their return, a further meeting will be held to establish whether they will remain on college roll.

The student has the right of appeal against any decision to require the student's studies to be temporarily interrupted or to exclude the learner. Appeals must be made in writing to the principal within 10 days of the notification to withdraw. The principal's decision will be final. The expectation is that both student and college staff can come to a mutual decision that fully supports the student.

Normally sensitive personal data and confidential information will only be disclosed to third parties with the express, informed consent of the learner for the purposes of implementing this procedure. However, there may be rare occasions where the College is obliged to disclose, notwithstanding that the learner has refused consent. These include:

- To facilitate the student's access to the agreed support in lessons and around College.
- Where the learner's behaviour threatens his/her safety or the safety of others.
- Where the member of staff, or the College in general, would be breaching the College or County Safeguarding Procedures by failing to disclose.

The College's commitment to equal opportunities is demonstrated through its determination that every learner receives the high-quality learning experience which will bring them success. The Fitness to Study Procedure will be implemented in a manner which maintains everyone's attendance at College, if possible.

The College will ensure that its Fitness to Study Procedure operates within the spirit and letter of the College's approach to equality and diversity, actively promoting equality and aiming to minimise differences in success across groups.

The College will ensure that its *Fitness to Study Procedure* is designed and implemented in a way that actively supports safeguarding responsibilities, including the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This means that all decisions, interventions, and support measures taken under the procedure will prioritise the

safety, wellbeing, and protection of individuals who may be at risk. Staff involved in this process will be trained to recognise safeguarding concerns and will work in line with established safeguarding policies, ensuring appropriate referrals and actions are taken where necessary.

This procedure has taken note of DFE school guidance 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions ' (2014, updated 2015/17)

Medical Evidence

This must be written evidence from a medical professional or social worker and must give full and specific details of the reason for a student remaining or interrupting their studies. This evidence will be shared with MIS and will be stored with the student enrolment form.

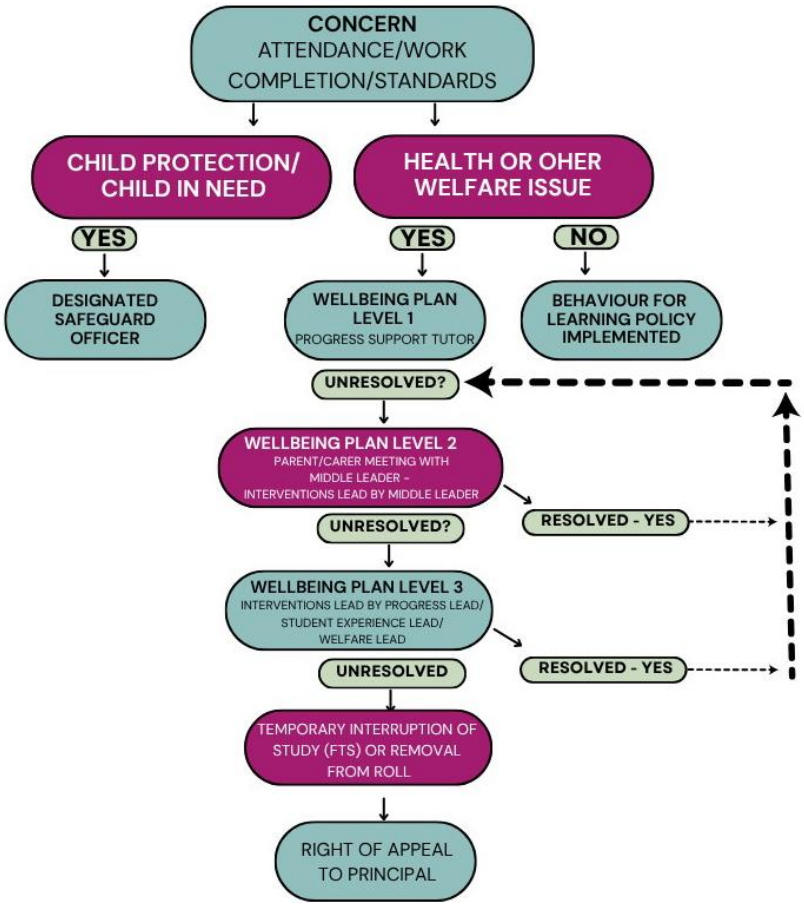
Non-Attendance

The organisation is committed to supporting student engagement and achievement. However, where a student is under the age of 18 has not attended any timetabled lessons for a period of 10 consecutive days a welfare check should be conducted, this will include members of the Safeguarding or Progress Team carrying out a home visit, telephone call or email correspondence with the student.

If absences persist and the young person has not attended for four consecutive weeks (excluding scheduled holiday periods or medically evidenced absence), the student **must be withdrawn** from their programme.

Withdrawal action must be taken promptly to ensure that student records are accurate, complete, and compliant with regulatory and funding requirements, *as per the DfE Advice: funding rules for 16 – 19 provision 2026-2027*

Fitness To Study Flowchart



APPENDIX A

Appeals Against a Fitness to Study Decision

Students have the right to appeal a Fitness to Study decision if they believe that the procedure has not been followed correctly, that relevant information was not properly considered, or that the decision has resulted in a manifest injustice.

For clarity, an appeal against a Fitness to Study decision is not the same as making a complaint. Where concerns relate to the conduct of a member of staff, the matter should be addressed through the College's Staff Disciplinary Procedure. Where concerns relate to a College service, function, or operation, the Trust Complaints Policy should be followed.

The College is responsible for making decisions under the Fitness to Study Procedure and is therefore the final authority in relation to appeals under this process. There is no further right of appeal to the Department for Education (DfE), as the College is responsible for the application of its own Fitness to Study arrangements.

An appeal would normally be submitted by the student, as they are the individual directly affected by the Fitness to Study decision. Parents, carers, or other supporters are encouraged to assist the student in preparing the appeal where appropriate.

The appeal should be submitted in writing to the Principal (for example, by email) within 10 working days of the Fitness to Study decision being made and should clearly set out the grounds for appeal. Appeals may be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- The Fitness to Study Procedure was not followed correctly.
- Relevant evidence or information was not considered as part of the original decision-making process.
- New information has become available that was not reasonably available at the time of the original meeting or panel and may have had a material impact on the outcome.
- The decision reached was unreasonable or disproportionate in the circumstances and has resulted in a manifest injustice.

The following procedure will be used to gather information from all relevant parties, consider the grounds of appeal, reach a decision, and communicate the outcome to the student. The appeal outcome will be confirmed in writing and will conclude the College's Fitness to Study appeal process.