



# EVERY LESSON MATTERS

A framework to improve learner attendance at Preston College

2024-27

**PRESTON**  

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**COLLEGE**



# Principal Introduction

I have had the pleasure this year of speaking to many learners and staff across the College, and one thing that has stood out in those conversations has been the importance of learner attendance. Staff have always recognised the critical role that attendance plays in helping our learners to achieve and progress, but it is becoming ever clearer to our learners that they will only reach their full potential by committing to attending every lesson.

One of our core values is to be accountable for the things we do. This is just as important for learners as it is for our staff. As a College, we recognise that there are many factors in play that may lead to attendance challenges, and we are committed to understanding what these are and how we can help to address these over time.

This framework sets out in more detail how we will approach these challenges over the next three years. Improvements will require the involvement and cooperation of the whole College community, and we believe that this can be facilitated by being clear on our interventions and expectations at the start of all learner programmes. We realise this has become a sector wide issue, but are determined that our proactive support will make a difference for our learners.

**Simon Nixon**  
Principal and  
Chief Executive







# Preston College Strategic Objectives

The college has very clear strategic objectives, designed to ensure that learner engagement and the learner experience is central to all decision-making.

- Deliver high quality teaching, learning and support to promote high levels of attendance, achievement and positive outcomes for learners
- Provide a high quality technical and vocational curriculum, aligned to regional and local businesses and community needs
- Value our diverse college community, and provide aspirational progression pathways for all learners and staff
- Improve financial surplus and cash generation to provide future investment capacity
- Fully embed a culture in which all staff deliver outstanding performance that contributes effectively to the learner experience
- Nurture effective partnerships that benefit learners, staff, the City of Preston and the wider region

## Our Commitment

Our college mission is **'to inspire, educate and support our diverse community to reach its potential'**, and we recognise that attending college is a critical foundation for unlocking this opportunity.

We know that every day at college contributes to learning, and that every lesson attended leads to better engagement and higher academic achievement. College achievement will improve opportunities for our learners, creating better social and economic outcomes for Lancashire-based families and communities.

Improving attendance requires the addressing of complex factors both inside and outside of the college, recognising that social factors can often play their part in creating barriers to learning. This plan represents a commitment to a new approach to improving attendance, doing things that are learner-focussed, community-led and in their essence, are strengths based.

### We commit to;

- Holding ourselves and each other accountable for outcomes, in recognition that a trauma informed approach, underpinned by an engaging college experience will positively impact attendance.
- Being culturally responsive in our approach, responding to the diverse needs, backgrounds and experiences of our college community.
- Being innovative in delivery, recognising that different learners respond to different methods of delivery. We will develop approaches to learning which engage learners and inspire them to attend college more regularly.
- Working with community stakeholders in developing and implementing approaches that meet individual needs and aspirations.







# The Five As of Ambition

The college has introduced the 'Five As of Ambition' to focus activity towards key areas of performance for all, recognising **attendance** as being critical to our learners achieving success.



### Attitude

Positive behaviour and a strong work ethic are the foundations of a successful future.



### Accountability

Take responsibility for the way your decisions and actions impact yourself and others.



### Attendance

Excellent attendance is vital to your progress and demonstrates your commitment.



### Aspiration

Aim high! We'll support your progression and career goals, so you can reach your full potential.



### Achievement

Be proud of your progress and celebrate your achievements and qualifications.

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**Five As of Ambition**



# Factors Impacting Attendance

The causes of learner absence are multi-dimensional, complex and numerous. They can often be considered in isolation when in reality, learners may face a range of compounding issues.

Research reinforces that learners are most likely to attend college and thrive when the following factors are met;

Learner factors	Family factors	Community factors	College factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Working to a defined goal</li><li>Mental and physical health</li><li>Feeling safe and a sense of belonging</li><li>Positive social connections</li><li>Academic achievement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Education is valued and prioritised</li><li>Engaging parents or guardians</li><li>Connected to culture and community</li><li>Resilience and self determination</li><li>Financial security</li><li>Stable and safe housing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Education, training and employment opportunities</li><li>Safe environments</li><li>Access to learning (transport, distance, safety)</li><li>Positive social media interactions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provision of an engaging college experience for all</li><li>Ability to engage learners with diverse needs</li><li>Positive relationships with learners, their families and support services</li><li>Monitor attendance and provide early intervention support</li><li>Consistent and clear policies</li></ul>



## Things that Work

Attendance patterns and attitudes to college will be strongly influenced by the early years and school experience for our young learners, whilst adult learners will face other barriers to attending college regularly, including employment, family commitments and cost factors. In delivering improvement in attendance, the approaches outlined below are proven to have an impact;

Localised and context specific solutions	Individual intervention based on need, not on generalised approaches.
Strong relationships and shared responsibility between the learner, family, college and other stakeholders.	Clear, open and regular communication, progress and performance monitoring, based on the fundamentals of respect and trust.
Early identification and intervention towards non-attendance, including the use of granular data.	Every lesson, every day from day one...
Unconditional positive regard for the learner.	Consistently taking a trauma-informed approach, understanding and responding to attendance barriers and introducing sanctions only when all other interventions have been exhausted.
Positive reinforcement of progress and development	Providing praise and recognition of improving and positive performance. Always championing our learners and encouraging further growth.
Meeting learners' basic health and wellbeing needs.	Promoting safety and wellbeing at all times, being nurturing and ensuring that the college campus is always positive and welcoming.
Incentive programmes for learners and their families.	Maximising the impact of the college, our facilities and our provision in incentivising our learners and their families (where appropriate).
Learner engagement programmes (including extra-curricular activities)	Promoting fun and engaging activities which add social value to the college experience.
Nutrition programmes (free breakfast, FCMs)	Continuing to provide support for those in need, being cognisant of the impact of a structured and balanced diet.
Incorporating cultural activities into college life	Recognising and celebrating diversity, providing learners with a platform to engage in key cultural activities and celebrations.







# Preston College Attendance Charter

In positively impacting on learner attendance, the college will proactively engage all relevant stakeholders, and together we will;

## Learner

- Attend college every day and take part in learning, recognising that 'every lesson matters'
- To proactively inform the college if there are any barriers to learning
- To provide feedback relating to the college experience.

## Delivery Staff

- Provide inspirational and engaging learning activities
- Ask learners 'what will help' if attendance drops
- Provide a range of interventions to support attendance

## College

- Ensure a safe, positive and welcoming environment
- Talk to parents / carers if attendance becomes a concern
- Recognise individual need and cultural diversity.
- Think holistically about learner's needs
- Championing our learners, celebrating progress and walking 'side by side' with them.

## Parents / Carers

- Support my child to get to college
- Encourage, advocate and engage in your child's college experience
- Ensure my child has what they need to engage positively in college
- Ask them if they have any concerns with college and talk to the college if this is the case
- To effectively communicate with the college, outlining any barriers to attendance and supporting intervention.

## External Partners

- Where attendance is a concern, include it in the child's plan
- Support families to understand expectations of them
- Link with Student Coordinators when there is a concern relating to attendance
- To ensure safe and nurturing living environments
- To ensure effective and timely access to healthcare provision and support needs
- To engage positively in multi-agency planning, monitoring and intervention.

## Employer Partners

- Promote attendance, behaviours and attitudes as being integral to achieving employment beyond the college
- Support the delivery of engaging and inspirational curriculum
- To provide coaching and mentorship, modelling employment skills and behaviours.



This framework is underpinned by the following principles, with the needs of the learner being central to all activity.







# Our Objectives - Six Steps to Success

1. To deliver visible, high impact attendance campaigns.

## Enablers

- Visible and positive attendance campaigns on campus, on the website and in all associated digital and print media.
- To directly engage key stakeholders including parents, employers and support agencies in promoting the Preston College Attendance Charter.
- To implement a recognition programme for learners and groups whose performance is progressive and positive.

2. To intervene on an individual basis, agreeing targets and objectives with learners that are strength-based as opposed deficit-based.

## Enablers

- To equip all staff with learner information that will support positive intervention in relation to attendance
- To intervene in a consistent and timely manner, using a holistic approach involving a multi-agency links where appropriate.
- To regularly reinforce positive performance in relation to attendance.

3. To ensure that all staff are aware and accepting of their accountabilities and responsibilities in delivering to this framework.

## Enablers

- Deliver effective staff training to ensure staff understand their individual accountabilities and responsibilities.
- To monitor performance at individual, programme and School level, effectively intervening and supporting where appropriate.
- To embed a 'college wide' adoption of trauma informed practices, ensuring that all members of staff are supporting a positive campus culture.

4. Work closely with key stakeholders including parents, carers and social workers in promoting improvement.

## Enablers

- Open channels of communication with parents and carers with clearly identified contacts within the college.
- Bespoke strategies and attendance targets agreed with all stakeholders at the point of enrolment.
- The Attendance Charter to be effectively communicated with all key stakeholders.

5. Use a graduated approach to attendance improvement so that resources are targeted to where there is greatest need.

## Enablers

- Review the tutorial / learner caseload model with a view to best responding to learner need.
- Instil a 'first intervention' approach across the college delivery teams, ensuring that every member of staff is taking positive action in impacting attendance.
- Ensure clarity of communication and reporting in minimising duplication for staff and maximising clarity of message for learners.

6. Effectively develop and use college systems in promoting highly impactful monitoring and reporting.

## Enablers

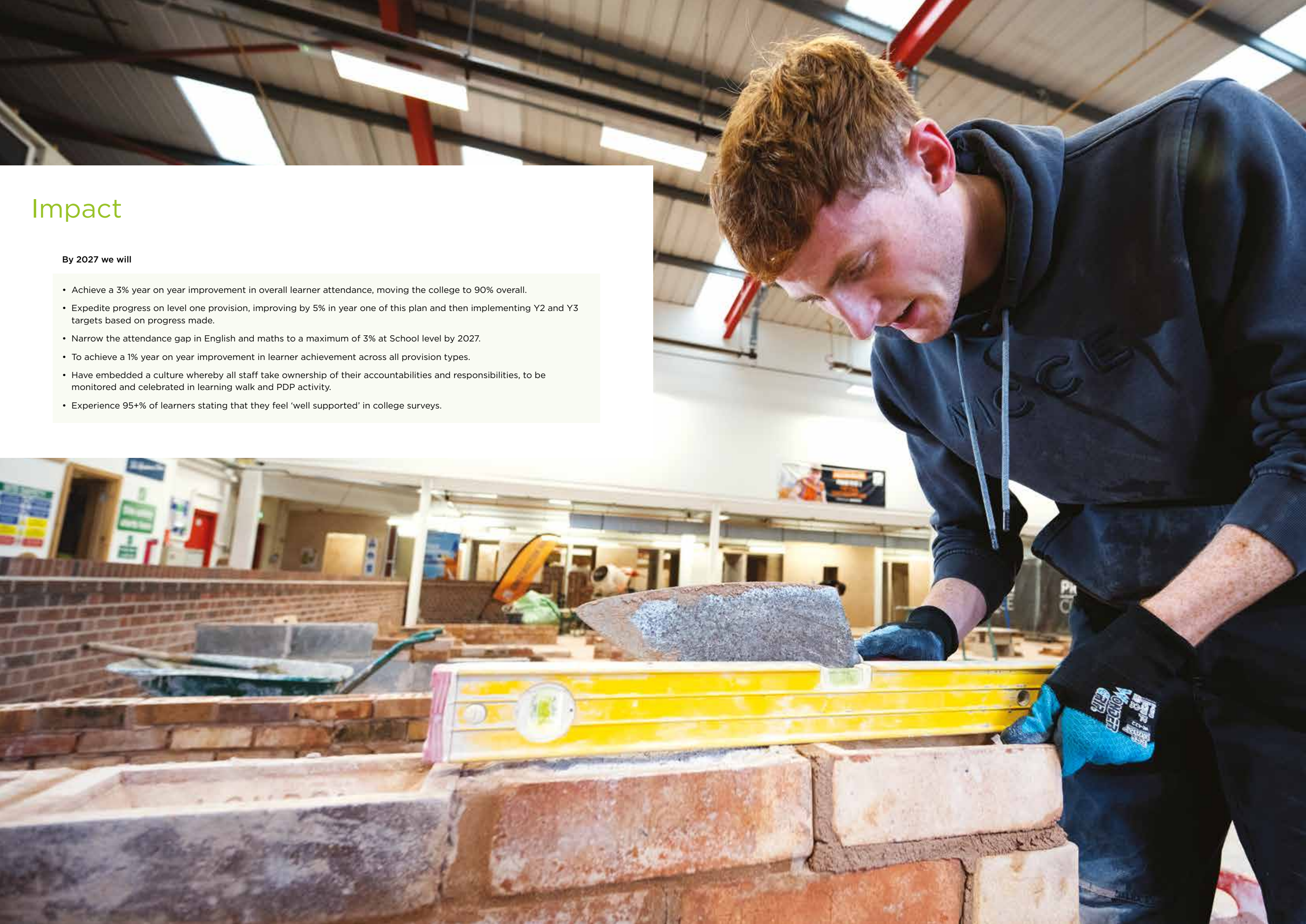
- Provide clear guidance to staff on how to effectively use Dynistics, Teams and Promonitor in promoting timely and positive intervention.
- Ensure that ahead of course delivery, teachers and work-based tutors are provided information that will enable them to best meet individual learner needs.
- Develop our systems to ensure that learners, staff, parents, employers and other agencies have access to attendance-related information at all times.



# Impact

## By 2027 we will

- Achieve a 3% year on year improvement in overall learner attendance, moving the college to 90% overall.
- Expedite progress on level one provision, improving by 5% in year one of this plan and then implementing Y2 and Y3 targets based on progress made.
- Narrow the attendance gap in English and maths to a maximum of 3% at School level by 2027.
- To achieve a 1% year on year improvement in learner achievement across all provision types.
- Have embedded a culture whereby all staff take ownership of their accountabilities and responsibilities, to be monitored and celebrated in learning walk and PDP activity.
- Experience 95+% of learners stating that they feel 'well supported' in college surveys.





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