



THE KING ALFRED SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Created by:	
Date:	
Approved by Governing Body: September 2016	
Review date: September 2017	
Signature of Chair of Governors	Signature of Headteacher

CONTENTS

1	Introduction
2	The Tutor's Role
3	Lesson Registration
4	Lateness
6	Procedures to Ensure Good Attendance
6	Monitoring of Attendance and Intervention
7	Liaison with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer)
8	EWO referral system
9	Roles and Responsibilities
10	Term Time Leave
11	Relationship to Other Policies
12	Arrangements for Monitoring And Evaluation
13	Further Information
Appendix A	Term Time Leave Request Form
Appendix B	Flowchart of Attendance Process
Appendix C	Flowchart of Lates Process
Appendix D	Completing Attendance Registers
Appendix E	Taking the Register in the Classroom using SIMS .net
Appendix F	Absence codes, descriptions & meanings for SIMS attendance

Introduction

All staff share a legal responsibility, alongside the students, parents/carers and the Local Authority in respect of ensuring as full an attendance at school as is possible of our students.

The first clear responsibility for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive an efficient and suitable full time education either at school, or otherwise rests with the parents/carers. Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring that their child attends and stays at school. They risk prosecution if they fail in this duty.

Regular school attendance is vital if our students are to benefit fully from the opportunities we have to offer. Continuity and progression are not possible with irregular or poor attendance. As a school we need to continue to give a high priority to attendance and ensure that this commitment is underpinned by an effective management system. We need to convey a clear message to our parents/carers and our students that regular attendance is vital. Accountability for a high level of attendance is dependent on us building a good relationship between our parents/carers, the wider community and ourselves. All teachers, whether in their role as tutor or classroom teacher, must be aware of the importance The King Alfred School attaches to attendance.

A school's effectiveness in other areas can be an important element in promoting positive attendance. Stimulating teaching and an ethos in which all members of the school community are valued, will help to stimulate high levels of attendance.

The King Alfred School recognises that poor or irregular attendance interrupts and disrupts learning and progress for all students, and is linked to behavioural issues.

At the King Alfred School good attendance is classed as attendance of 95% or more.

Abbreviations used in this policy:

HOY – Head of Year, AO – Attendance Officer, EWO – Education Welfare Officer

THE TUTOR'S ROLE

All tutors need to have regard to the importance of the quality by which they keep their Sims.net registers, not only for the effective management of students attendance but also as a source of evidence in the event of court action against the parents/carers of non-attenders. Attendance registers are the responsibility of the tutor.

Registers should be marked by tutors, or a substituting member of staff at the beginning of morning school and by the class teacher at the beginning of period 4 - on no account should the register be marked by a student. They must be kept accurately. Staff are to keep strictly to the symbols described. Any absence marks without good reason will be deemed as unauthorised.

We are required to distinguish in the attendance registers between authorised and unauthorised absence. Truancy may be defined as absence from school without leave from a duly authorised person.

The Education Act 1944 protects parents/carers from prosecution:

- a) When a child is prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause
- b) A day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parents/carers belong
- c) On the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance.

The 1981 Education Regulations authorises absence on the grounds of:

- a) Work Experience
- b) Participation in approved public performance
- c) Grant leave for annual holidays during term time – which will not normally be given except in exceptional circumstances
- d) Study leave in the period immediately before public examinations
- e) Absence following the death of a close member of the child's family.

It may not always be possible immediately to identify an absence as authorised or unauthorised.

Tutors have a vital role to play in securing high levels of attendance within their tutor group. The most effective way of doing this is to establish close, effective links with the parents/carers of their tutees. Tutors should reinforce to parents/carers the need to give, in writing, the reason for their child's absence as promptly as possible and that any unexplained or condoned absence will be challenged. Condoned absence by parents/carers is not acceptable and must be pursued e.g: minding the house, looking after siblings, shopping during school hours.

The school is proactive in ensuring high levels of school attendance and operates a 'first day' calling system. If a student is absent and there is no known reason for this absence i.e. not coded by the tutor then the attendance administrator will attempt to contact the parent/carer by phone. It will be reinforced at all times, however, it is still the school's expectation that the parent/carer make the school aware if their child is absent from school.

Where a student is absent for more than three days, without explanation or valid reason, a written enquiry will be made by the tutor. **Unexplained absences must not be allowed to continue without action.** Early intervention is an essential feature of The King Alfred School's attendance policy. School will inform the Education Welfare Officer when 10 unauthorised sessions have been reached in the last 12 weeks. Under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 parents/carers may be prosecuted if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance and these absences are unauthorised. Penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers who are considered capable of, but unwilling to work towards improving their child's attendance.

The tutor making contact with home should check on long periods of explained absence or regular short absences. This shows interest and concern and may also highlight possible problems – e.g. condoned absence, bullying, home difficulties, and students not coping with work at school. Such instances should be referred to the Pastoral Team.

Absence of a known truant or any absence that is suspicious to the tutor in its nature should be investigated immediately. Where truancy is suspected/confirmed, parents/carers will be informed immediately. If a tutor is unable to do this through teaching commitments the support of the Pastoral Team or relevant Deputy should be sought.

Where a student's attendance continues to give cause for concern in spite of instigating our internal policy, then the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will need to become involved. Biweekly meetings are held between Pastoral Staff and EAO. Tutors should make sure Pastoral Teams are kept informed with the up-to-date situation and similarly Pastoral Teams should keep tutors aware of developments. As always effective communication is essential if our policy is to be successful.

However effectively registration is managed at the beginning of each session there remains a need to ensure that attendance is sustained during the day and that students do not absent themselves from individual lessons. Parents/carers who conscientiously secure their children's attendance at school have a right to expect that the school will, in turn, ensure that their children attend all their time-tabled lessons. At The King

Alfred School we believe we have an effective system for preventing post-registration truancy. All classroom teachers have a corporate responsibility to complete a lesson register on lesson monitor or provide a paper copy to the attendance administrator.

LESSON REGISTRATION

- Absence lists will be displayed in the Staff Room, for information and in the event of a fire alarm.
- All staff should take a register during their lesson and record it via lesson monitor in Sims.net.
- Comments re behaviour - negative and positive, should be recorded and passed to the relevant Pastoral Leader via lesson monitor comment module.
- These comments are printed at 3.20pm and passed to the relevant Pastoral Leader.
- Pastoral staff and tutors should make the attendance administrator aware of students likely to truant or have unauthorised absences. Where these students are absent from class and are not in the absence list, the attendance administrator should inform the student's Pastoral Leader as soon as possible and try to contact parent/carer.
- Any student who misses work for a classroom teacher through truancy should be expected to make up the time and work missed for that teacher.
- Classroom teachers concerned over the absence of individual student's either authorised or unauthorised should make their HoD aware of their concerns, as well as the child's tutor and Pastoral Team.
- Where there is absence of either the tutor or classroom teacher it is important that our system is maintained. Pastoral staff and HoDs must accept responsibility for ensuring that cover teachers are comfortable with our procedures for ensuring effective attendance.

LATENESS

Students are required to sign in at the Attendance Office if they are late. Assemblies regularly stress the importance of signing in and this is monitored through spot checks by Heads of Year.

The Attendance Officer enters students who are late on SIMs. Form tutors mark registers on the computer directly into the SIMS attendance module. Students are expected to attend a break detention if arriving late before 9.30am and attend a break and lunch detention if arriving late after 9.30am on the same day. Appendix C details the lates system.

The register will remain open until 9.30 am and 12.30 pm. If a student has not registered by then they are marked as an unauthorised absence unless the parents/carers subsequently provide a written explanation. Persistent lateness is dealt with by Heads of Year and parents/carers will be advised by letter that any further absences will be unauthorised if the student is not in the King Alfred School by 8.55am.

If students are persistently late to school their case would be referred to the EWO and could will result in a Penalty Notice being issued or court action.

Route delays on buses happen occasionally. These are marked as \ in the register and are not counted against the student's attendance.

Lateness to school or lessons is something the school must not accept. Tutors and class teachers must reinforce that lateness is unacceptable and where it persists inform and involve parents/carers.

Parents will receive a letter advising of late detentions, example below:-

Date: 22 April 2016, 10:45 - 11:05
Reason: Late to School,
Sanction: Late Breaktime Detention – Friday – Did not attend
Teacher: Miss Matthews

Date: 22 April 2016, 12:45 - 13:25
Reason: Did not attend breaktime detention
Sanction: Late Lunchtime Detention – Did not attend
Teacher: Miss Matthews

Date: 29 April 2016, 15:10 – 16:10
Reason: Did not attend lunchtime detention
Sanction: School Detention
Teacher: Miss Matthews

PROCEDURES TO ENSURE GOOD ATTENDANCE

First Day Calling: Wherever possible parents/carers are contacted on the first day of absence or the Attendance Officer calls Priority students. These are students who are known truants or who are being monitored by Heads of Year.

Absences: Parents are encouraged to phone in on the first day of absence and many parents co-operate with this. The King Alfred School authorises the absence via the AO. If there is any doubt about a reason, the King Alfred School contacts parents to query the reason. If the King Alfred School is not satisfied with the reasons given, it immediately notifies the EWO and makes the necessary two contacts before completing the referral form.

Medical reasons: If the King Alfred School needs more information about a medical condition, or if the King Alfred School is not satisfied with a reason, consent is sought from the parent/carer to contact the GP directly. If permission is not given, the King Alfred School will expect the parent/carer to provide necessary medical information themselves. If this is not forthcoming, the necessary two contacts are made before the EWO is informed.

Truancy: Heads of Year conduct spot checks on students to check for truancy. Teachers

are required to maintain electronic registers and use SIMS data to check absences, particularly of known truants.

Students will be expected to spend at least the equivalent of the time missed in detention and this will be arranged by the Head of Year. Truancy for a whole day should be punished by an equivalent number of hours at break, lunch or after school spent in the A23 Internal Exclusion Room. The isolation area during lesson time is not to be used to punish truancy: it rewards students for truanting a lesson by then keeping them out of the lesson they wished to miss in the first place.

MONITORING OF ATTENDANCE AND INTERVENTION

- Every 3 weeks, the Attendance Officer prints out a list of attendance figures for each tutor and HOY. Lists show attendance across the tutor group/year group.
- Lists to tutors request that tutors annotate and return to Heads of Year showing any relevant information about students with regard to attendance, or general concerns.
- Categories for intervention are generated by HOY who then authorise a letter to be sent/contact made with the EWO. If attendance continues to be poor, action is taken by the EWO.
- Referrals to the EWO are completed before the visit and most will be completed by the Attendance Officer. All documentation has been agreed with the EWO and notification of which letters have been sent will be emailed prior to any visit by the EWO.
- The Attendance Officer/Heads of Year will record the action taken and this will be emailed to the EWO. The EWO will therefore have full electronic records when she visits the King Alfred School. This leads to a more efficient use of the EWO's time.
- The King Alfred School intervenes early with potential poor attenders and rewards good attendance.
- The King Alfred School recognises that many students can achieve good attendance and seeks to promote and celebrate this achievement. This is done in assemblies and certificates and prizes are awarded for good attendance. The Attendance Officer produces monthly attendance bulletins. These show % attendance, most improved attendance and % of lateness for each tutor group in each year.

LIAISON WITH THE EWO (EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER)

The King Alfred School seeks to have good working relations with all external agencies, and the EWO has worked with the King Alfred School in developing these procedures.

The EWO visits the King Alfred School every two weeks to meet with each, the Attendance Officer and the member of SLT responsible for attendance. In these visits students with poor attendance and appropriate intervention strategies are discussed.

The King Alfred School is required to have made contact with parents/carers before a referral is made to the EWO.

Before the first visit, the Attendance Officer will generate a list of attendance below 92% to the EWO as well as distributing to the Heads of Year etc as described above.

The meetings between the AO and the HOY are scheduled and will take place in the relevant Year Office. Heads of Year arrive with details of any other circumstances that may affect the attendance. Heads of Year keep notes of any decisions and actions to be taken and copies of these notes are given to the attendance officer and the member of SLT responsible for attendance.

EWO REFERRAL SYSTEM

Prior to the EWO involvement, schools are required to take the following steps:

- Send letter to parents/carers raising concerns about attendance.
- Invite parents into meeting if attendance remains a concern. Parents will be made aware of EWO referral at this meeting
- Make a referral to the EWO

The King Alfred School must supply the following documentation:

- Up to date attendance print out – from Attendance Officer
- Copies of letters
- Minutes of any meetings with the family

The EWO makes initial contact by letter and details the Legal Penalties that can be imposed by the LEA. Second contact is made if there is no improvement. Parents are requested to attend a meeting with the EWO. Further steps can include fixed penalties and in extreme cases, prosecution.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Attendance Officer:

- Ensures that all registers are completed correctly, and draws attention to any inconsistencies in the registers.
- Inputs any outstanding data and maintains the system.
- First day calling.
- Distributes lists of attendance to tutors, Heads of Year every 3 weeks with notes if there has been previous action taken
- Maintains all records regarding attendance.
- Liaises with the EWO and other relevant bodies regarding interventions and concerns.

Tutors

- Complete am and pm registration directly into SIMS.

- Complete the absence record and keep Progress Leader and AO informed of relevant information through the return of lists as well as informal discussions.
- Identify patterns of non-attendance in the tutor group and for individual students, and intervene to ensure good attendance
- Contact parents if there is a specific concern

Heads of Year

- Lead and manage the year teams in ensuring good attendance
- Identify patterns of non-attendance in the year group and intervene to ensure good attendance. Support the tutors and maintain the professional relationship between the King Alfred School and home.
- Monitor the work of the year team in attendance.
- Direct interventions that ensure and promote good attendance.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies about specific concerns.
- Liaise with the EWO and other agencies to devise strategies to ensure and promote good attendance.

Pastoral Deputy Headteacher

- Monitor and support the HOY in their leadership and management of year teams.
- Support Heads of Year in establishing interventions and monitoring the effectiveness of these.
- Line management of the Attendance Officer
- Responsible for ensuring that monitoring takes place
- Ensures the Attendance procedures and policy are in place and implemented.
- Liaison with Education Welfare Service and other agencies as appropriate.

Headteacher

- Responsible for authorising term time leave

TERM TIME LEAVE

The education (pupil registration) (England) (amendment) regulations 2013, which came into force on 1 September 2013, removed references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the notional threshold of ten school days. The amendments made clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless 'exceptional circumstances' exist. The regulations also stated that head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted for 'exceptional circumstances'. This legislation expects that any term time leave must be requested in advance, in writing, direct to the Headteacher, and this should come from the person with whom the child normally resides, must be authorised by the person with whom the child normally resides. The Headteacher will then determine whether the reason is exceptional.

There is no formal definition offered for exceptional leave at present by the Department for Education. The King Alfred School will continue to adopt the clarification as set out by Somerset County Council in 2014.

- Forces staff returning from lengthy active service abroad
- Police, Fire Service staff being told when they can or cannot take leave
- If a close family member has a terminal illness and it may be a last chance to be together, especially if the family member lived overseas
- Parents having to work abroad for a fixed, minimum term period.

In addition in 2015 Somerset County Council further clarified the definitions for leave in term time as:-

- Rare
- Significant
- Unavoidable
- Short

By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

The King Alfred School will only authorise term time holiday for those request which fit the exceptional criteria. Any other requests, such as educational or sporting trips/visits will be looked at on an individual basis on receipt of a written request. The following criteria would, in such circumstances, be taken into account:

- Number of days requested
- Is the request in reasonable time (received at least three weeks prior to first date of proposed absence)
- What will the student be missing during the period of absence? (e.g. exams, controlled assessments, key revision period etc.)
- Is it in the child's best interests?
- Current attendance of the student

Somerset County Council (SCC) supports schools:

- In expecting parents and carers to make sure that children and young people attend school regularly. Any absence from school will impact on educational achievement, success in later life and longer term health and well being
- In ensuring the law is upheld. Parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at the school where they are on roll. Schools must explain their stance on term time leave in their attendance policy so that parents/carers are clear on expectations and potential consequences, such as any unauthorised absence including taking term time leave not agreed with the school, can result in legal action being taken including Penalty Notices and court prosecution.

If a child has been absent from school due to illness/other authorised circumstance, but the school has reason to believe that the absence would not in actual fact fit that criteria (e.g. the student is actually on a holiday etc.) the school will request additional supporting evidence and unauthorise the absence unless this evidence is received.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES

This protocol is encompassed within the Safeguarding the Welfare of Students & Staff suite of policies.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To be reviewed June 2017

Additional amendments to be made as required with reference to statutory guidance and legislation.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfE March 2015

Keeping Children Safe in Education, DfE May 2016

Parental responsibility measures for school attendance and behaviour, DfE 2013

School attendance, DfE 2014

Term Time Leave: Advice for Schools and Parents, Somerset County Council 2015

Children Missing Education, Statutory guidance for local authorities, September 2016 – please also refer to “Children Missing Education Protocol”.

Appendix A

REQUEST FOR TERM-TIME LEAVE



To the Headteacher

The King Alfred School

I wish to apply for term time leave for my child

	Name	Tutor Group
1.		
2.		

from to inclusive

The Exceptional Reasons for this request are:

Signature (Parent/Carer) Date

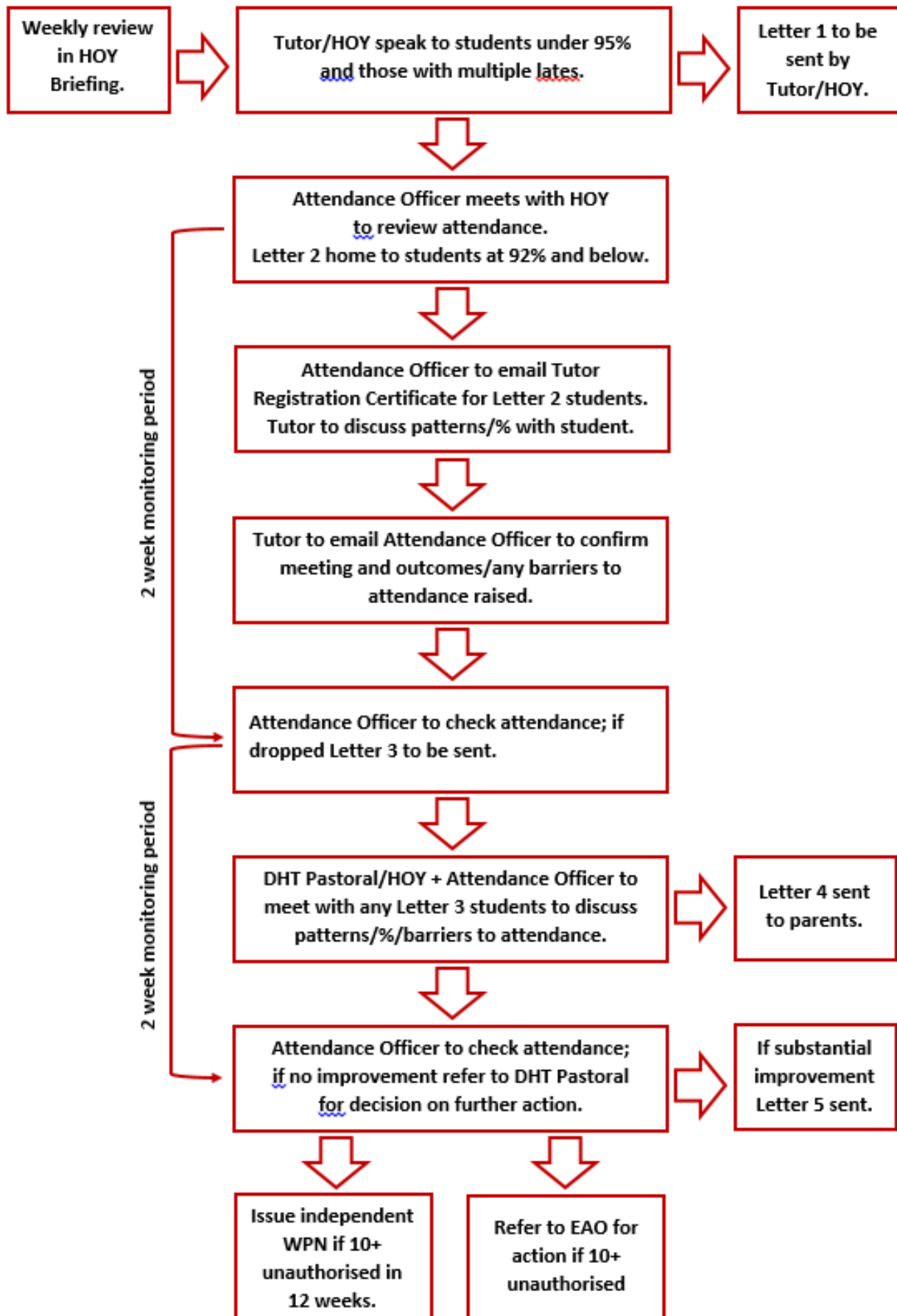
Print Name

Please make your request prior to making any bookings and at least four weeks before the anticipated leave date.

NB. If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in a penalty notice being issued or legal action taken for poor attendance.

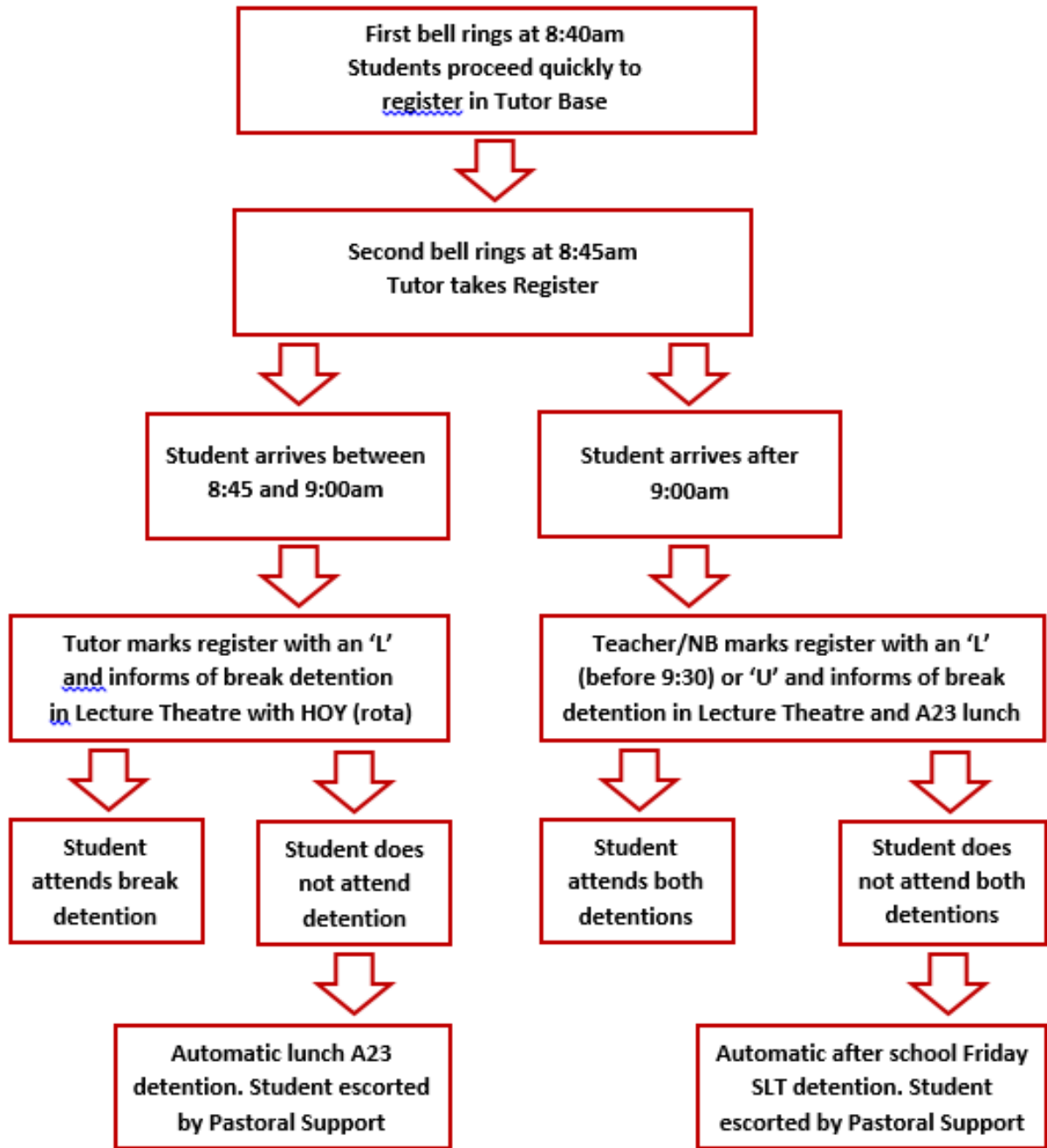
Attendance Process Flow Chart

APPENDIX B – FLOWCHART



**APPENDIX C – FLOWCHART
OF LATES PROCESS**

Lates Process Flow Chart



Letters are sent home re punctuality by HOY/Attendance Officer at 3, 6, 9 and 12 lates
 9 lates would still incur an SLT detention
 12 lates would still incur a day in A23 Internal Exclusion
 xx U lates (after registers closed) would result in the issue of a WPN

Attendance Officer to provide register for break and lunch detentions daily to location
 Students are allowed 5 minutes comfort break/refreshment and must arrive no later than 10:45am

APPENDIX D - COMPLETING ATTENDANCE REGISTERS

The school uses a computerised method of storing data of the attendance of students. It involves the completion of an electronic register on Sims.net. It is the responsibility of the tutor to input the reasons for absence at either/or both AM or PM registration. Class teachers should copy the code inputted by the tutor ie 'C' or 'I' etc.

The codes for absence are given on the Attendance Register via Sims. Please be aware that (N) shows that the absence has not yet been explained

- Enter Sims.net as usual.
- Select lesson monitor.
- Click on relevant class list.
- Enter marks in the appropriate column.
- To overwrite, or to put in reasons for absence, you will have to click on the overwrite button (near to the top right hand corner) – it looks like a closed lock.
- To save your data click on the save icon.
- To change weeks, click on the previous History/Future labels, saving your data before each change.
- Close the page.
- Taking a register for another member of staff See Appendix IV
- Log on as usual in Sims.net.
- Select lesson monitor via the icon or Focus – lesson monitor – take register.
- Click on the Binoculars icon
- Input the teachers surname and search.
- Select the relevant lesson/register.
- Input codes.
- Save and exit.

How to Take a Register for another Member of Staff

Log into SIMS.net entering your user ID and password.

Click on the Take Register button at the top of the screen.

Click on the binoculars beside your user name.

In the 'Browse for Lesson dialog' type in the surname of the member of staff who's lesson/registration group is being covered.

Click on Search.

Double click on the registration group/lesson that is being covered.

This will open the relevant register where marks can be input in the normal way.

APPENDIX E - TAKING THE REGISTER IN THE CLASSROOM USING SIMS .NET

- Log into SIMS.net entering your user ID and password
- Either:
Double click on the required lesson displayed in either the My Classes Today panel on the Home Page, or Select Focus | Lesson Monitor | Take Register
Click on the Take Register button on the Focus bar
- Click the first cell in which you wish to enter a mark; the orange highlight indicates the name of the student and the lesson for which the mark is about to be entered
- As the register is taken, enter a / or \ against any student who is present and an N against any student who is not present by clicking in the cell for that student
- If a pupil arrives late, enter an L for that student
- Click on the Save button at the top of the panel to save the marks
- If you wish to view the previous 10 lessons click beside history at the top of the register
- If you wish to add the number of minutes a student is late highlight the relevant cell, ensure that it contains an L and click on the **Minutes Late** button
- Enter the number of minutes the student was late, click OK. The background colour of the cell is now blue
- If you wish to add comments relating to a student highlight the relevant cell and click on the **Comments** button
Enter your comments, click OK. The addition of the comments is indicated by a red triangle in the top right-hand corner of the cell
- If you wish to add a student to the register for the lesson, click on the **Extra Name** button
Click on search, find the required student, highlight the name and click OK
Confirm the addition of the student for the lesson, the extra name is added to the bottom of the list, marked as present.
- If it is necessary to edit the marks, select the relevant students cell and click on the **Preserve** button which will change to **Overwrite**
Edit the mark, click on Preserve to protect other marks.
- Save the changes

APPENDIX F - ABSENCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS & MEANINGS FOR SIMS ATTENDANCE

DfES National Absence codes, DfES agreed application in SIMS Attendance, effective Sept 2006, correct as of June 2006.

Code	Description	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
@	Do Not Use	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual reg.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual registration (attending other estab.)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (NOT med/dental appointments)	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by other code)	Unauthorised absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	DfES #: School closed to pupils	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
Z	Do Not Use	Authorised absence	Out for whole session
!	DfES X: Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
*	DfES Z: Pupil not on roll	Attendance Not Required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session