The Market Weighton School

Attendance Policy

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Aims

The purpose of this document is to set out the procedures and routines, which TMWS (The Market Weighton School) employs to monitor and improve attendance. This includes the identification of and the responsibilities of key staff in the recording and monitoring of attendance. The Leadership and Student Support Team will continue to play a major role in developing strategies to promote good attendance, but the success will depend upon the involvement and co-operation of all members of the community in following procedures and identifying any concerns.

Students have to value and see the purpose of coming to our school. All members of the school community have a responsibility to develop and embed these values through a variety of whole school strategies such as developing the learning environment and how we deal with bullying. The support of parents/carers is vital to a student's development and the role of the EWO is crucial in encouraging parents to ensure their children attend school daily.

AT TMWS:

* We will ensure that all students access full-time education which meets their needs and allows them to reach their potential.
* We emphasise that it is the responsibility of everyone in the school to improve attendance and punctuality.
* We strive to provide a safe and caring environment where each student can engage in all opportunities offered.
* We work with students and their families to ensure every student has good attendance and punctuality.

What you can expect from The Market Weighton School

* We will promote good attendance and punctuality and will investigate any unexplained and/or unjustified absence.
* We will work closely with parents/carers where student absence is cause for concern.
* We will support students to achieve good attendance and punctuality.
* We will support students returning to school after prolonged absence.

What The Market Weighton School Expects from Students

* To attend regularly and on time.
* To be punctual to all lessons.
* To ensure that they register for all timetabled lessons and inform the Attendance Officer (School Office) if they are not able to register.
* To ensure all messages and notes from parents/carers are taken to the appropriate place (Form Tutor/School Office).

What The Market Weighton School Expects from Parents/Carers

* To ensure that their child attends the school, punctually, dressed in full uniform and equipped to learn.
* To ensure their child attends every day the school is open unless they are too ill to do so.
* To avoid keeping their child away from the school for any other reason than illness or authorised explanation

* To avoid arranging term time holidays
* To immediately inform the School Attendance Officer if their child is unable to attend (by 8.45 where possible), including the reason for absence and expected date of return.
* If no indication of a return date has been given, parents/carers should contact the school on each day of absence.

The Market Weighton School will improve attendance by:

*ensuring all registers are completed accurately
*fostering good relationship with parents and carers
*fostering good relationships with the Education Welfare Service and relevant external agencies.
*only removing students from the school roll when s/he has legally left
*encouraging students to attend through the provision of work which is appropriate to their needs
*identifying patterns of non-attendance and those students who have an irregular pattern of attendance for intervention and support by the EWO / Youth and Family Service
*liaising with parents/carers to support improved individual attendance targets – any student between 95%-92 % will be monitored, anyone under 90% will trigger EWO intervention
*providing a clear statement of attendance on the student's reports
*providing clear guidance to parents/carers regarding holidays in term time
*holding regular meetings to discuss students causing concern
*ensuring that parents/carers know the necessity of providing suitable and detailed communication, e.g. a note, email or phone call to explain absence.
*informing the Governing Body of the level of attendance as part of each KPI Report.
*providing information for the prosecution of parents whose children do not attend school and who do not a have a substantive reason
*monitoring through Data analysis, students who are looked after children, Pupil Premium and other vulnerable groups including SEND
*monitoring Persistent Absence (PA) figures

TMWS will promote and reward good attendance with the following rewards:

<u>In terms of how we will approach aiming for an improvement in attendance as of Sept 2019 we will:</u>

- Give all 100% attendance pupils for 2018/19 a gold star which allows queue jump privileges for all of 2019/20.

- Attendance Certificates will be issued termly for:

Gold 100%, Silver 98%, Bronze 95% Attendance

Plus prize draws.

- Weekly Prize Draw of £5 – A weekly random prize draw of £5 will be held. A random form group and number will be selected and if that pupil has 100% for the previous week they will get £5. If not, it will roll to the next week.

- Form Competitions – TMWS encourage competition in form groups with termly prizes to the best forms eg a bowling trip.

- Weekly Statistics go to Form Tutors to encourage attendance competition and for form tutors to be a first layer of intervention. Statistics are displayed on the big screen in reception.

Heads of Year (HOY's) receive 10 queue jump tickets weekly. HOY's can issue these to pupils who have improved their attendance – this can be relative eg attending a full week or better attendance.

Daily procedures and routine for registering student attendance in the morning.

- Registration is the first event of each school day and it sets the tone for the rest of the day. It is vital that registration is conducted punctually, and in a positive, purposeful and business-like climate.

- Form Tutors need to ensure that they collect their register pocket for morning registration, from the front office and return it promptly at the end of the registration period.

- The pocket is to be used to pass information and notes between the Form Tutor and the admin team, so please ensure that neither the medical note envelope nor the paper register sheet are removed from the pocket.

- All medical notes must to be placed inside the medical envelope.

- Form Tutors need to ensure that they check the pocket for any messages/notes. The Form Tutor must ensure that all messages/letters are read/given out to the pupils.

- Once used Form Tutor must return the pocket to the office promptly.

- The register pocket can contain **sensitive information**, so it is essential that pupils are not allowed access to them and should only be collected and returned by staff or their appointed register monitor.

- Any trip money or forms need to be brought to the front office by the pupil. Register pockets **should not** be used for trips. Nor should the pocket be used as a means of **transporting money** into the school office under any circumstances.

- The tutor takes the register using SIMS Lesson Monitor, on a laptop/PC in the tutor group room or assembly Hall. The students are marked present (/) or absent (N) on the screen. If students arrive after being marked absent, the teacher should change the mark to late (L).

- Form Tutors and subject teachers will **only** use the codes / N L. If a code has already been entered onto the system prior to the registration, for example 'I' for Illness Form Tutors/subject teachers should **not** overwrite these codes. The code will have been entered as a result of parents/carers contact with the school.

- Although there are fifteen attendance codes listed, only a few will be regularly used.

- It is essential that login details for SIMS are kept confidential. Under no circumstances should pupils be given passwords or allowed to take a register or look up information on SIMS. Teaching staff should log out of SIMS when a classroom is unoccupied to ensure data security and ensure that laptops are safe.

- As soon as the register has been taken, the Form Tutor should ensure the register is saved, so that the data is stored.

- Students arriving late (after 8.45am) but before 9.05am need to sign in at the office but must then report to their tutor room.

- Students arriving after tutor time should sign in at the school office and then go straight to Period 1 where they will be registered for the lesson. Once the teacher has registered the student SIMS will automatically enter a 'L' for the AM session.

- The Attendance Assistant will check to ensure the correct code has been entered.

- Students arriving after **9.30 am** <u>without a valid reason</u> are marked as an **unauthorised absence using the late code U.**

Procedure for Registering Students on Assembly Days

- A year group will normally have a regular assembly in the main hall on the same day every week. On this day the tutor will complete the register in the hall on laptops. (If Form Tutors are unable to complete the register electronically, paper registers will be completed and returned to the register pocket, which is subsequently returned to the office immediately after assembly).

Daily Arrangements for Registering Student Attendance in Lessons 1-5.

- Every member of teaching staff, including cover supervisors, should take the register for each lesson they teach within the first **15 minutes** of the lesson using the SIMS Lesson Monitor system. Pupils should be marked as present (/) or absent (N). Pupils arriving late should be marked late (L). Teaching staff should ensure they have saved the data by pressing the 'save' button.

- Teaching staff are not expected to update the register after the first 15 minutes of the lesson; however they must notify the Attendance Assistant via e-mail or phone call so that the registers are correct.

- If a student arrives after the first 15 minutes without a reasonable explanation, they should apply a sanction in-line with the BfL policy and notify the School Office and relevant Head of Year.

- Cover Supervisors will be supplied with login details for SIMS and will use the Lesson Monitor system to take the register in every lesson they teach.

- Supply teachers will be given paper registers, which include a photograph of all pupils, so that they can accurately complete a register each lesson. These paper registers will be returned to the office within 15 minutes of the lesson starting and will then be entered onto the system by the office staff.

- In the event of teachers covering for absent colleagues; staff are expected to take the register for the lesson. The details of the group being covered will appear on the timetable bar when the teacher signs in to SIMS.

- Students arriving after 1.10 pm will sign in at the office and will then go straight to their lesson to be registered. They will be marked (L) Late. Any student arriving after 1.40 pm without a valid reason is marked as an unauthorised absence using the late code U.

Procedures for a Power or Network Failure

- **In the event that the school network fails, manual sheets are available to Form Tutors for morning registration in the register pockets. These will be completed and will be returned to the office in the register pockets. Manual sheets will be distributed to the teachers of all lesson 4 teachers in the event of a network failure in the afternoon.**

Persistent Lateness Absence Reports

- Students who fail to be punctual for registration or lessons on a regular basis will be placed on punctuality or lateness report to be monitored by Heads of Year/Form Tutors which will be signed daily by parents. In the first instance it is the responsibility of Form Tutors to implement sanctions for lateness. Subject teachers should inform Lead Teachers/Assistant Headteachers of their faculty of persistent absence or lateness.

Unexplained Absences

- The Attendance Assistant needs to complete unexplained absences for AM/PM sessions on a weekly basis.

- Each week if a student fails to provide notes for absence, the Attendance Assistant will then contact home via an attendance/unexplained Absence letter.
- If after a further week no response has been received from the student's parents/carers, a follow up letter will be sent

- If no contact can be made, or reason given is unacceptable, then students will be given an unauthorised absence.

- All absence notes should be sent to the office using the absence envelope in the register pocket and these notes are filed and kept in the office.

Communicating with Parents

Parents/carers are reminded regularly through newsletters, the importance of informing the Form Tutor or Attendance Assistant of any reason for absence and are encouraged to telephone the school so that messages can be passed onto the Form Tutors, or to write a note.

Form Tutors will then record these advance absences electronically onto the system or inform the Attendance Assistant via e-mail.

Where concerns have been raised in terms of attendance, Heads of Year will liaise with the Education Welfare Officer, who will subsequently contact parents/carers.

All parents/carers will be regularly informed of authorised/unauthorised sessions through the students' individual **Student Report Card**.

Holidays

The Headteacher has responsibility for authorising term time holidays in exceptional circumstances only.

Detention(s) for Persistent Lateness

The school does run a detention system for students who are late to school. These detentions will be undertaken on a lunchtime the following day in accordance with sanctions detailed in the schools behaviour policy.

Educational Visits and Sports Fixtures – Paper registers must be taken prior to departure and a copy sent to Attendance Officer. Students will be given their marks for lessons in that session.

College Courses – Paper registers should be taken by link member of staff and returned to the Attendance Officer.

Signing Out – Any KS3/4 student who leaves the school premises during the day should go to the Reception where s/he will be given an 'Authorised Absence Pass' which gives permission for student to be off the site. Parental/official verification for the reason for leaving the site will be sought/looked at before pass is given. The Authorised Absence Pass must be shown if a student is challenged outside the school by the police or Education Welfare Service.

Roles and Responsibilities

Form Tutors

- Complete register each morning and check messages to share with the tutor group;
- Provide information to Heads of Year about those students who have been late twice in the week or more;
- Report to Heads of Year when there are concerns about absence/lateness/truancy.

Subject Teachers

- Take registers within 15 minutes of the beginning of the lesson;
- Follow up all lateness to lessons and inform Lead Teacher/AHT;
- Report any suspicious absences with Lead teachers, Head of Year and AHT.

Lead Teachers/Assistant Headteacher (Faculty)

- Follow up reasons for non-attendance at lessons with teachers.
- See students who miss lessons on a regular basis.
- Inform HOY.

Heads of Year – will check attendance on a weekly basis ensuring that:

a) absence/e-mails/notes are being provided and phone calls are logged (in conjunction with Tutors and Attendance Officer)
b) codes/explanations for absence are being inputted by the attendance officer
c) any patterns of absence are identified and investigated
d) poor attenders/students with problems in school likely to affect their attendance are identified for intervention
e) reasons for non- attendance are investigated with students, parents/carers/EWO where there are concerns and the appropriate action taken – monitoring will begin initially by form tutor and further 'investigation' will be done by Attendance Officer, then Head of Year and finally EWO
f) if a student is likely to be absent for a known period of time to arrange for work to be sent home
g) if a student's absence is supported by a hospital consultant or a specialist medical team a referral to Home Tuition Service will be completed
h) if a student is returning after a long absence from school, the possibility of a phased return should be considered.

Attendance Officer – has responsibility for:

a) ensuring registers are being completed and informing AHT at appropriate stages (where there are persistent concerns)
b) clearing and entering absence notes, (ensuring correct codes are used) absence emails and phone calls re absence
c) collating leave of absence /holidays forms for SLT
d) updating and maintaining students' personal data/contact details
e) making necessary amendments to SIMS data
f) providing daily absence reports to HOY
g) actioning first day calling
h) providing attendance data to Heads of Year (weekly)
i) providing data for governing Body (termly KPI)
j) providing data for the LEA and DFE returns
k) providing data to Senior Leadership Team (weekly)
l) reporting any hardware difficulties to ICT Systems Managers
m) providing punctuality data for Head of Year (weekly)
n) providing 100% (Gold), 98% (Silver) and 95% (Bronze) attendance certificates (half-termly/termly)

Education Welfare Officer – is responsible for:

a) monitoring attendance levels of all students

b) meeting on a weekly basis with Head of Year and AHT Link to discuss students with under 90% attendance, including reporting to Inclusion Panel on persistent absence patterns and Pupil Premium attendance to PP Champion
c) feeding back to staff information as appropriate
d) liaising with parents/carers to identify any problems which may be affecting attendance and offer support if appropriate to parents/carers/students
e) supporting students with difficulties in school
f) making home visits if appropriate to meet with parents/carers
g) informing parents/carers of legal responsibility for regular attendance and possible sanctions – via standardised letters where attendance has become a concern, penalty fines and prosecution
h) following up with the EWO's line manager where a decision is made to take action against parents/carers for the non-attendance of a student

i) monitoring attendance and implement Fast Track Procedure if appropriate
j) adopting a multi-agency working practice to ensure support for parents/carers/students
k) attending child protection conferences/core group meetings
l) taking part in truancy sweeps under direction of the police or SLT

Education Welfare Officer will use a wide range of strategies to monitor and improve attendance of all students, for example:

1. Parenting Contracts
2. Penalties
3. Fast Track Procedures
4. Prosecution
5. Education Supervision Orders

Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion, Behaviour and Welfare) – are responsible for:

- Overseeing whole-school attendance;
- Setting whole school attendance targets;
- Attending panel meetings on behalf of the school;
- Attending Behaviour and Attendance Partnership meetings;
- Term-time holiday authorisation.

Parents/carers – have a legal responsibility

"All parents/carers who have children of compulsory school age, are responsible in law for ensuring that their children receive an efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs which they have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise." Section 7 Education Act 1996.

This responsibility includes:

a) ensuring that their children attend punctually, regularly and stay in school
b) ensuring a good attitude to learning and support the Home-school Agreement
c) working in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of the child

d) in exceptional circumstances as stated below, requesting leave of absence for holidays during term time via a Holiday Form, well in advance of the requested dates

Authorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the School has given approval for absence in advance or where the explanation given afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for the absence. Parents/carers may not authorise absence; only the school can do this.

Parents/carers should contact the School Attendance Office (by telephone or email) on the morning of absence (preferably before 8.45 am), giving a reason and an expected date of return. Wherever possible, students should attempt to arrange non-school activities outside of their course timetable.

The following is a list of reasons for absence which would be authorised:

*A medical appointment
*A family bereavement and/ or attendance at a funeral
*A religious observance
*A visit to a University / College, either to attend an open day or for an interview
*A careers interview
*An appointment with a Youth & Family Support Service personal advisor/CAMHS/MIND counsellor
*A work experience placement (although preferably arranged for during weekends or holidays)
*Moving house (1 day only)

For each of the above, evidence will be required e.g. an appointment card or letter.

Term Time Holidays (School Unauthorised Absence)

New legislation came into effect on 1 September 2013 which means there is no longer a provision in law for the Headteachers to authorise an absence for the purpose of a term time holiday other than in a very limited set of exceptional circumstances outlined here:

1) Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with the school holidays
2) Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue
3) The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family
4) To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

1) The first term of any academic year (applies to all students)
2) Year 9 options time (for students in Year 9)
3) At any time during Years 10 and 11 (for all students in these year groups)
4) At any further times as specified by the school
5) Students whose attendance is classified as persistent absence

Persistent Absence (Below 90%)

A student will be defined as a Persistent Absentee when they have been absent from school for 10% or more. The Department of Education reduced this threshold from September 2015 from 15% previously. Persistent Absence is a serious problem for students, leaving students at a considerable disadvantage. Students who fall below 92% threshold will be monitored and supported to improve their attendance. Students whose attendance falls below 90% PA threshold will be supported by Education Welfare Officer and their attendance will be reviewed by Assistant Head for Inclusion. Where appropriate Attendance Action Plans will be drawn up by the Education Welfare Officer in consultation with parents/carers and relevant external agencies, such as CAMHS.

Penalty Notices

Under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent.

Penalty Notices may be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing. They will be issued by post directly to the home of a parent after a warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given. This may include students caught on truancy sweeps, excessive or unauthorised family holidays and persistent late arrival after the close of registration.

If a parent's/carer's request is declined and they still take their child out of school each parent within the household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 28 days it will increase to £120. If after 42 days it remains unpaid the parent will be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why their child has unauthorised school absences and they may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

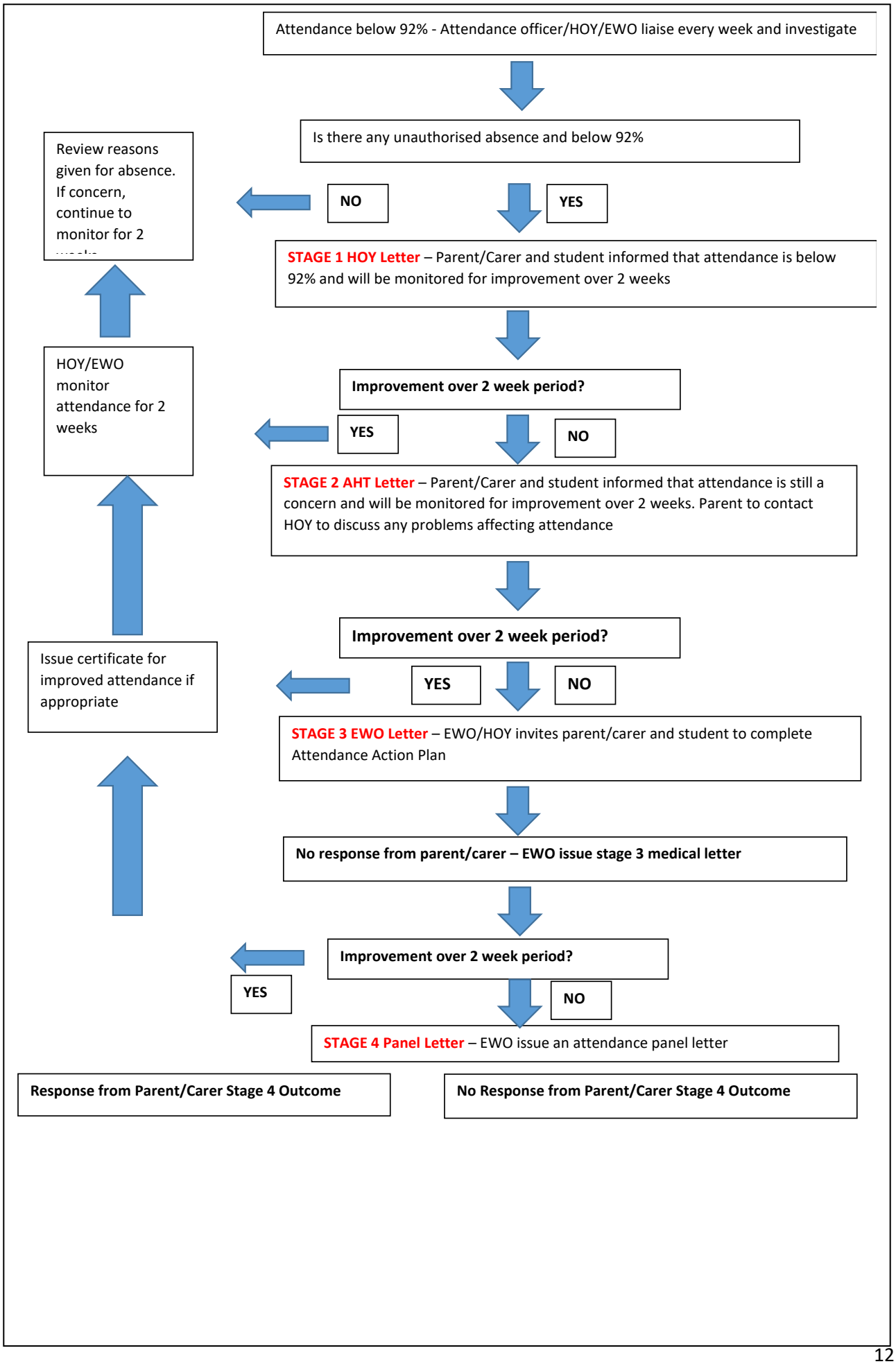
Parental Guidance on new legislation

We advise that parents/carers do not plan for their child to be absent without contacting the school first to obtain prior approval. Head teachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstance. A penalty notice may be issued for any unauthorised absence due to holidays.

If a parent believes at any stage that their child's absence from school may leave them liable for prosecution or a penalty notice, it is important for the parent/carer to take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if parents/carers have any questions about this, or need any help to achieve an improvement, they are encouraged to contact the school to discuss any issues.

School Leaver Year 11

Year 11 Leavers official school leaving date will be the date of their last examination. Year 11 students are expected to register and attend school during the examination period to access subject specialist support. Revision support is provided within school for every student during the examinations. The Secretary of State may by order determine the day in any calendar year which is to be the school leaving date for that year


Attendance below 92% - Attendance officer/HOY/EWO liaise every week and investigate
Is there any unauthorised absence and below 92%
NO
YES
Review reasons given for absence. If concern, continue to monitor for 2 weeks
STAGE 1 HOY Letter – Parent/Carer and student informed that attendance is below 92% and will be monitored for improvement over 2 weeks
HOY/EWO monitor attendance for 2 weeks
Improvement over 2 week period?
YES
NO
STAGE 2 AHT Letter – Parent/Carer and student informed that attendance is still a concern and will be monitored for improvement over 2 weeks. Parent to contact HOY to discuss any problems affecting attendance
Issue certificate for improved attendance if appropriate
Improvement over 2 week period?
YES
NO
STAGE 3 EWO Letter – EWO/HOY invites parent/carer and student to complete Attendance Action Plan
No response from parent/carer – EWO issue stage 3 medical letter
Improvement over 2 week period?
YES
NO
STAGE 4 Panel Letter – EWO issue an attendance panel letter
Response from Parent/Carer Stage 4 Outcome
No Response from Parent/Carer Stage 4 Outcome