

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Date: July 2018#

Document Control

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Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision
July 2015	Lead Attendance Officer	2014	Update
Sept 2016	Lead Attendance Officer	2015	Update
June 2017	Lead Attendance Officer	2016	amendment
July 2017	Lead Attendance Officer/SLT link	2016	Revised
July 2018	Lead Attendance Officer/AHT	2017	Revised

Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Approval Sought From	Name	Date
Governing Body	Pupil & Curriculum	July 2015
Governing Body	Pupil & Curriculum	July 2016

Document Distribution

This document will be distributed to:

Individual/Group	Job Title/Group Type	Distribution Date
All staff	Governors/Teachers/ Associate staff/	July 2016
All staff	Governors/Teachers/ Associate staff/	September 2016
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All staff	Governors/Teachers/ Associate staff/	September 2018

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY MATTERS

Our school has a supportive, family ethos where everyone is encouraged to achieve their potential. We build positive relationships, celebrate diversity and promote tolerance. We believe good manners and respect for each other are of the utmost importance and expect the highest standards of behaviour. We work together in collaboration and are committed to furthering our learning. We believe that to unlock potential in all our children and all our staff our core objective is simply:

TO CREATE A COMPELLING LEARNING EXPERIENCE.

We do this by believing in people.

Improving attendance and punctuality at Falinge Park High School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, Governors, Parents/Carers, Pupils and all Staff. Within this policy we aim;

- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and to reduce the number of pupils arriving late.
- To reduce the number of persistently absent pupils (attendance lower than 90%) within the school.
- To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, school staff and governors.
- To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers, staff and pupils.
- To develop a creative and systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance/punctuality data.
- To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- To develop and implement a whole school approach to rewards and sanctions in line with the school behaviour policy.
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
- To recognise and develop a reintegration framework for pupils following periods of absence.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

The school adheres to the following statutory legislation; under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act all children of compulsory school age (between 5 & 16) must receive a proper full time education at the school where they are registered. It is a parent's legal responsibility to make sure this happens and legal action ranging from parenting orders, penalty notice fines, fines and convictions imposed by the courts and imprisonment may be taken against parents who are not fulfilling this legal obligation.

Fulfil Safeguarding obligations regarding school attendance/punctuality

To develop and promote the effective and consistent use of managing and controlling truancy or children missing from school by use of effective communication and a shared responsibility. By logging any safeguarding issues on My Concern, or reporting children who we suspect have moved home, or they exceed 4 weeks of an extended term time holiday to the Children Missing Education team within the Local Authority.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

WE AIM TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY AND SUPPORT PUPILS WHO HAVE LOWER THAN EXPECTED ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY LEVELS BY:

- The use of a colour coded attendance pyramid displayed in every form classroom, individual attendance levels discussed with pupils on a weekly basis during tutor time:
 - Tutors adhere to their roles regarding pupils with specific colours and make pupils aware of their attendance colour and percentage attendance, and their punctuality
 - Where necessary set targets with pupils for raising their attendance and improving their punctuality
- One to one meetings with targeted pupils
- Learning Mentor referral where acute need is identified
- Peer Mediation programme
- Homework and Breakfast clubs
- Punctuality sanctions for late arrival to school and lateness to lessons
- School Attendance Panels held half termly
- Conduct home visits to enquire about pupil absences
- Send letters of concern to parents/carers
- Make referrals to the Education Welfare Service for legal sanctions to be instigated (may lead to a fine or prosecution)

See Appendix 1: Whole school approach – joining the dots

RIGHTS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICE:

Our school works in conjunction with the Education Welfare Service. The Education Welfare Service is part of the Local Authority. They have a statutory duty to enforce regular school attendance and they have the means to impose legal sanctions such as penalty notice fines, parenting orders, or prosecution for parents who fail to ensure their child/children's regular school attendance. The Education Welfare Service also offers advice and support to schools and parents covering all aspects of education and

the welfare of children, including child employment laws, home-schooling, children missing education, parenting classes and much more.

GOVERNORS:

In conjunction with the Headteacher, Governors will:

- Comply with relevant DFE statutory requirements in connection with attendance.
- Ensure that the annual school's return information is submitted to the DFE.
- Consider statistical information and trends to inform improvements.
- Request information on the progress of pupils with poor attendance, and or punctuality.
- Support positive measures taken to improve attendance/punctuality.
- Ensure that a relevant curriculum supports pupil inclusion.
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment for all pupils.

PUPILS:

The school recognises that while parents have a legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly from 5-16 years, the role of the secondary pupil in ensuring a regular pattern of attendance and punctuality is paramount. Pupils will:

- Will strive to have attendance greater than 95%
- Be punctual to school and arrive at the school gates before 8.25am ready to start school at 8.30am, and arrive to all lessons on time
- Ensure their parents make advance contact with the school to explain any absences from school, including details of essential appointments that happen during school time
- Recognise that good attendance and excellent punctuality is part of compelling behaviour at FPHS and work towards exemplifying this
- Take ownership of their personal attendance

SCHOOL TEAM:

We are committed to a whole school approach when it comes to raising attendance and improving punctuality but as a team the Attendance Lead and Heads of Year will;

- Actively promote good attendance and punctuality with pupils and parents.
- Contact parents on the first morning of pupil absence by text message or phone call if no notification of absence is received
- Contact parents promptly over any concerns that may arise over a pupil's attendance/punctuality

- Have the overall picture of the day to day running of attendance/punctuality strategies
- Advise parents when absences are unauthorised such as term time holidays/ excessive absences due to illness/medical appointments
- Implement strategies to ensure a pupil is reintegrated after a period of absence from school
- Provide opportunities for children and their parents to confidentially and sensitively discuss any relevant issues with an appropriate member of staff
- Support parents by offering guidance about, and/or involving the services of external agencies
- Support and work appropriately with all pupils to ensure they feel positive about coming to school
- Advise pupils of strategies to improve their attendance and punctuality
- Monitor pupil attendance and punctuality, recognise and reward good and improved patterns
- Raise awareness of individual pupil attendance levels and targets using a whole school strategy
- Send letters of concern to parents where there are attendance concerns
- Invite parents to meetings in school to enquire about the reasons for their child's low attendance

PARENTS:

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children's regular attendance at school. We ask that they;

- Ensure that their child/children attend school regularly and punctually
- Do not keep their child/children off excessively for minor ailments
- Seek guidance from the school if they are unsure whether their child should be sent to school
- Inform the school before 8.25am of the reason for any absence
- Inform the school by telephone call in advance, or provide a note in their child's planner/diary in the case of any essential appointments requiring them to sign out of school, or arrive late for school
- Provide every day and emergency contact numbers to the school
- Review with their child patterns of punctuality and attendance
- Make appropriate contact with the school to bring about improvements in attendance/punctuality, if necessary
- Make appointments for their children out of school hours where possible
- Do not take children out of school for family holidays

HEADS OF YEARS:

Heads of Years have an important role to play in maintaining a strategic overview of pupil attendance/punctuality. They will;

- Provide data to individual form tutors showing their pupils' attendance and punctuality records
- Support and guide their tutor teams to ensure attendance and punctuality improves
- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality wherever and whenever possible
- Be innovative in supporting school attendance strategies
- Where appropriate visit feeder primary schools to ensure the fullest support for all pupils during secondary transition
- Encourage form tutors to maintain contact with parents
- Be aware of target attendance percentages and devise strategies to ensure these are met
- Enforce sanction systems for students with lateness/truancy.

See Appendix 2: Internal punctuality controls

TEACHERS/FORM TUTORS:

Whilst all school staff play a part in pupil's attendance/punctuality. Subject teachers and form tutors are at the forefront of any issues and are integral to our whole school approach. They will;

- Engage their pupils with the attendance pyramid during tutor time and ensure pupils are aware of their attendance percentage, and they are committed to making improvements
- Adhere to the staff handbook procedures for prompt and accurate taking of registers
- Be positive and offer a compelling learning experience within their classrooms
- Be aware of the pressures and provide assistance/resources for pupils to catch up after a period of absence working with the Attendance Lead where appropriate
- Offer support and guidance for pupils who fall behind in their classes
- Advise their Head of Year / Attendance Lead where there are concerns about a pupil's pattern of attendance and punctuality
- Actively promote the message that regular attendance and good punctuality matters
- Challenge and implement sanctions for students who are late to or truant their lessons
- Inform the Head of Year / Attendance Lead of any suspected truancy following agreed procedures

See Appendix 3: Truancy Control flow chart

Effective use of data:

To develop a systematic approach in gathering, analysing and using attendance/punctuality data in order to;

- develop the usage of attendance/punctuality recording systems
- standardise recording processes
- share data with relevant stakeholders
- react to data analysis trends and specific patterns
- target and intervene with pupils to improve their attendance and/or punctuality
- evaluate and demonstrate impact of strategies

School Registration

- Formal registration is a legal requirement and takes place at Falinge Park High School at 8.30 am and 12.00 noon. Pupils must be at the school gate by 8.25am when the bell rings. The school gates officially close at 8.25am and pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as late for am registration
- The morning register closes at 9.15am. If a pupil arrives in school after the register has closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil will be recorded as “unauthorised absence” for the whole of the morning session
- All class teachers will take registers in each of their classes and will notify the Head of Year/ Attendance Lead if they believe a child is truanting

Definition of authorised/unauthorised absence from school

Examples of circumstances where school MAY authorise absences:

- Genuine illness/medical issues such as injuries
 - Unavoidable medical/dental appointments (usually 1 session/ half a day)
 - One day for Religious Observance (if it falls during term time), proof may be requested
 - Exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement/funeral
 - Home Office interviews as they cannot usually be changed
 - If permission for absence has been granted by the Headteacher (only available in exceptional circumstances)

Examples of absences where school will NOT authorise the absence:

- Shopping
- Excessive time off for illness (without medical evidence)
- Haircuts
- Missed bus/taxi
- Slept late

- No uniform
- Looking after brothers or sisters
- Unwell parents/family members
- Minding the house
- Birthdays
- Going to the Airport
- Translating for parents
- More than one day for Religious Observance (unless Eid falls twice in one academic year in that case a day will be allowed for each.) In instances of pupils being reported as ill the day following a Religious Observance, absences are not authorised without medical evidence being provided
- Term time holidays (the Local Authority will issue instant Penalty Notices fines to parents of children who take unauthorised term time holidays of 5 days (10 unauthorised sessions or more). The fines are £60 for each parent of each child. The fine increases to £120 per parent per child if not paid within 3 weeks

Term time absence request form

See Appendix 4.

The decision to authorise/unauthorise absence lies with the Headteacher.

Penalty Notices Fines: In addition to the fines for term time holidays, the Local Authority will issue fines of £60 for each parent of each child who continues to be absent from school for more than 10 days = 20 unauthorised sessions in a term, or a 12 week period. The fine increases to £120 per parent if not paid within 3 weeks.

Persistent Absence Definition

Pupils with less than 90% overall attendance, ie missing more than 10% of school, whether authorised or unauthorised fall into this category. Persistent absentees are heavily monitored by the school, pupils are subject to intervention and support strategies. Specific information data for persistent absentees is reported to the Local Authority. Data is collected and produced regarding individual pupils, and every effort is made to prevent pupils falling into this category. Results show clear links between underachievement and persistent absenteeism in secondary age pupils. It is a priority for all stakeholders to ensure that pupils do not fall into or remain in this category.

Register Codes

Registers are legal documents. They are available for inspection by staff in school and by outside agencies. The correct codes for explaining absences MUST be used. They are as follows:

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
A	Isolation room	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
K	In Exam	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity

X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted attendances	in possible
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted attendances	in possible
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted attendances	in possible
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted attendances	in possible

SCHOOL REGISTERS

TO: ALL TUTORS

PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU KEEP A COPY OF THESE CODES AND REFER TO THEM WHEN NECESSARY.

Please be aware registers are legal documents and can be requested as evidence in cases of prosecution of parents in attendance court cases.

1. All teachers must take the am register by 8.30am. Please ensure that this is taken as the registers are printed off at during am registration in the case of fire/fire drill.
2. If pupils arrive late to lesson they should be marked as L "LATE"
3. The Inentry system will update pupil marks when they sign in/out.
4. If there is already a code for a pupil shown on the register this is because the Attendance Lead/ Head of Year have been informed of the reason for absence and this has been recorded on SIMS. There will usually be a note of explanation next to the mark.
5. All registers need to be taken immediately as the lesson has started as parents often ring up to check if their child is in school. If a pupil is missing from your lesson but was present in the previous lesson and you are concerned about them, contact the attendance lead who will check all possibilities regarding their absence. Please refer to appendix truancy control
6. Remember that Period 4 is pm registration and is a statutory requirement and should always be taken immediately.
7. Please check the Attendance Codes for information relating to reasons for absence. Teacher should only use codes: L, N, / on the register as the Attendance Lead will populate registers with all other codes.
8. All register codes are now used nationally and are issued by DfE.

9. A First Day Absence Response list is done every day. If a pupil is absent from your lesson the correct code to use is "N". If this is shown on the register for either am or pm registration, enquires into absence will be made by the HoY/Attendance Lead and notes put onto the register. For lessons in between it is the responsibility of the teacher to inform us - see appendix truancy control

10. WARNING. All staff are responsible and have a legal obligation to register pupils AM (Period 1) and PM (Period 4). If registers are not taken, staff will be required to complete missing registers in retrospect and be responsible for the accuracy of the data.

If for any reason the computer system is not working, it is the responsibility of that teacher to either:

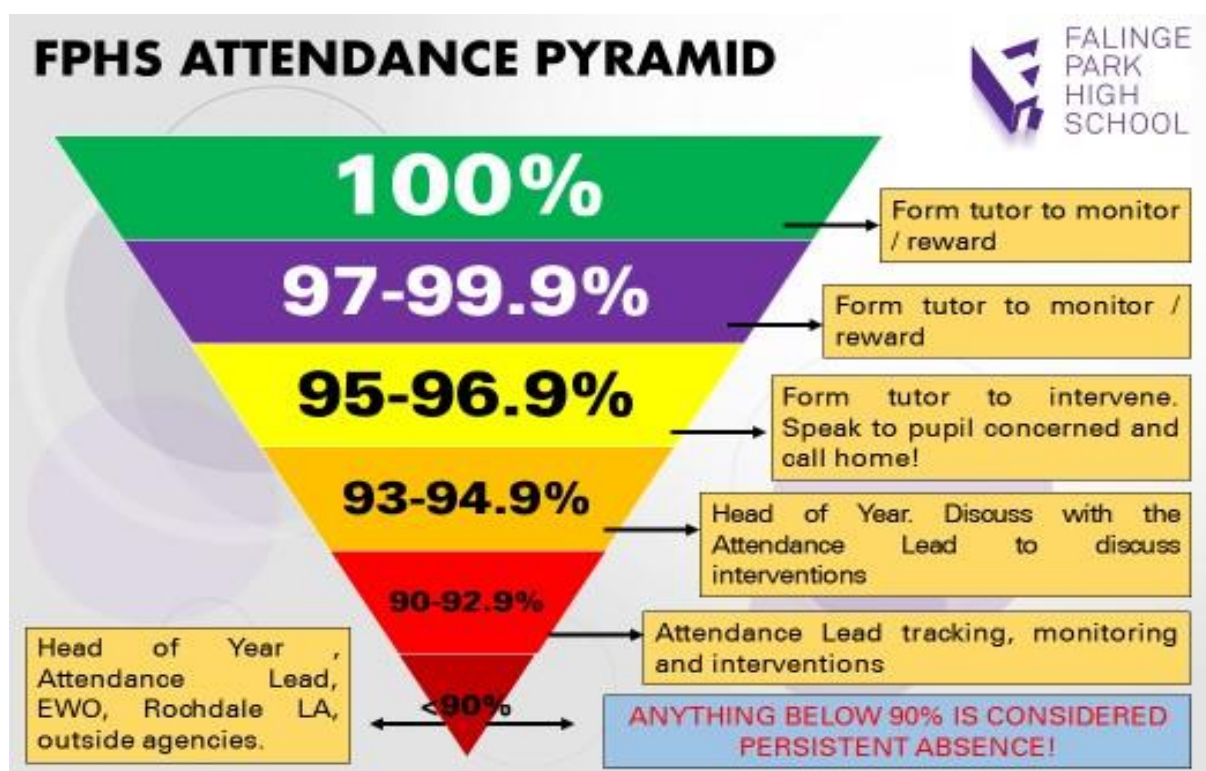
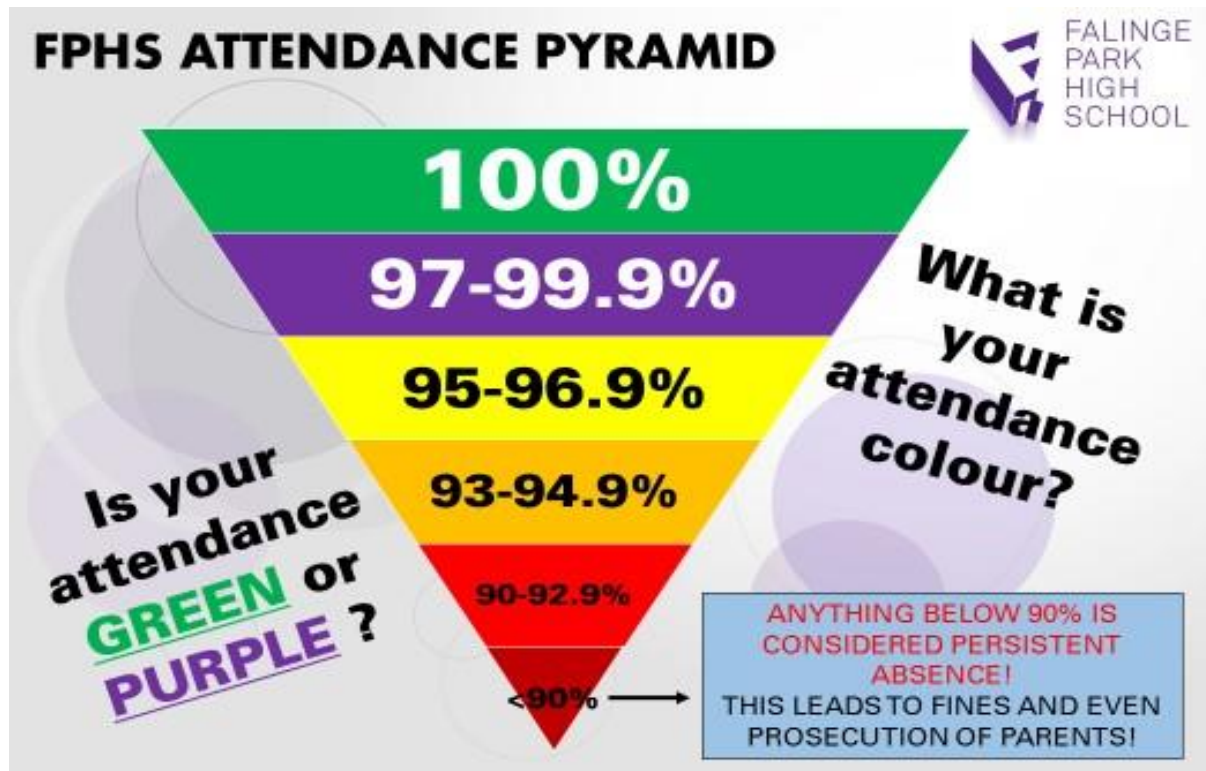
- Send for a paper copy of the register from the Attendance Lead and to complete it and return it immediately or
- To complete their own paper register, clearly marked with the date, period and group name and send it to the Attendance Lead
- Safeguarding is non-negotiable in school. Not taking a register is a breach of safeguarding procedures. In line with school strategy the relevant members of staff will ensure that the registers are taken.

11. Teachers will receive a reminder for any registers not taken and as stated in the staff handbook the procedure below will be followed in cases of the necessity to repeat reminders.

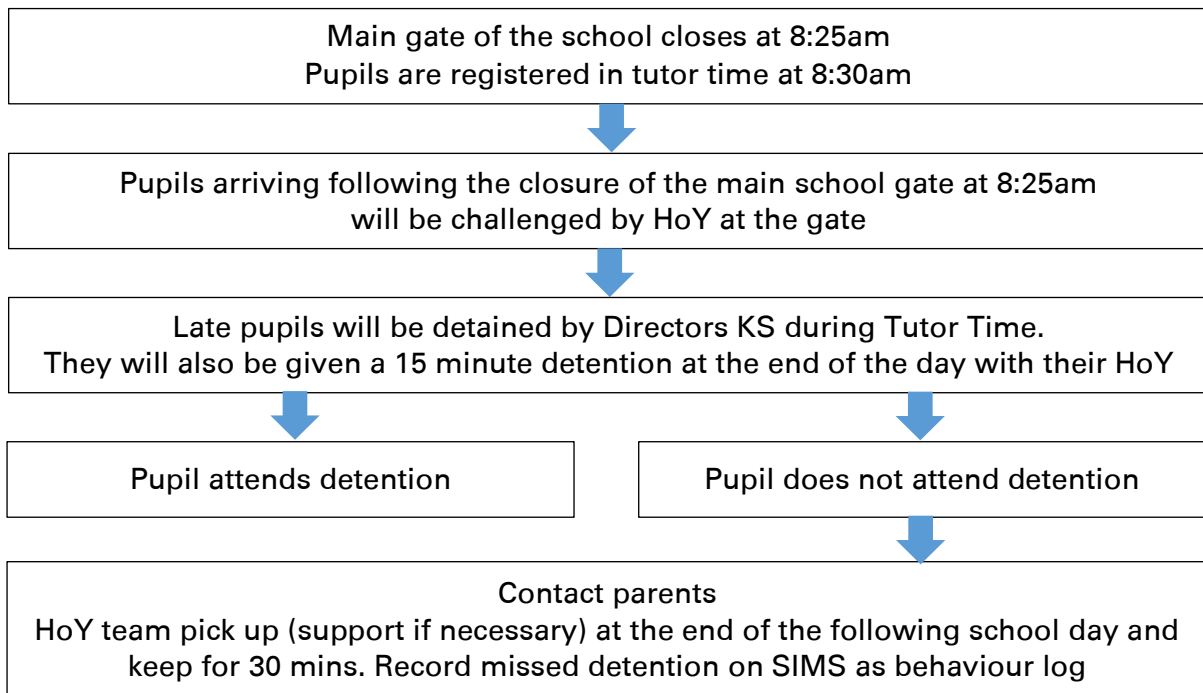
In the case of a register not being taken at the correct time the Attendance Lead will produce a list of staff and pass to the Assistant Head (PDBW). Assistant Head (PDBW) will email staff and remind them it is a non-negotiable. Failure to complete a register twice in a week or regularly in a number of weeks will be requested to attend a meeting with Assistant Head (PDBW) and record. Repeat offenders after meeting with the Assistant Deputy Head (PDBW) to meet with Associate Deputy Head to be given a clear instruction and explanation of the next step being a Management Instruction from the Head teacher. Management instruction given if failure to take registers continues. Recorded on staff record.

Appendix 1: Whole school approach – joining the dots

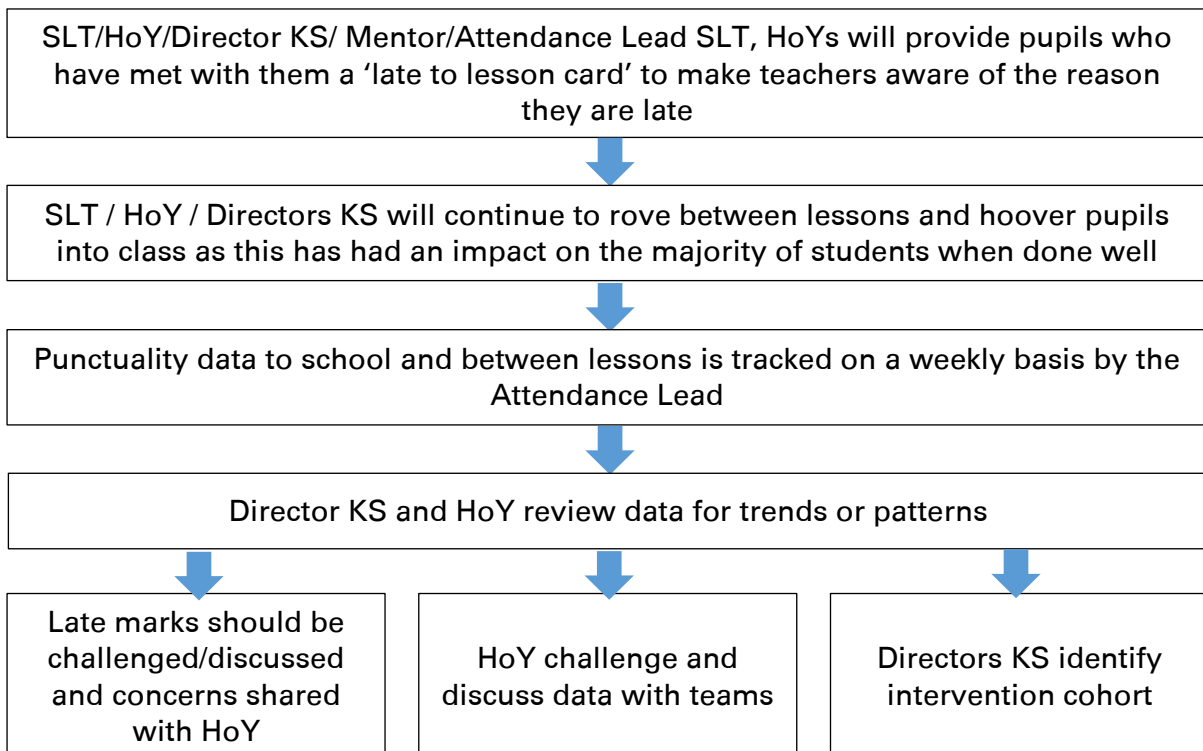
Attendance is the responsibility of all stakeholders. As part of our strategy to ensure a shared responsibility all pupils are expected to know their attendance percentage and the colour they fall into on the pyramid. This takes place through professional conversations with their form tutor who provides weekly updates during form time.



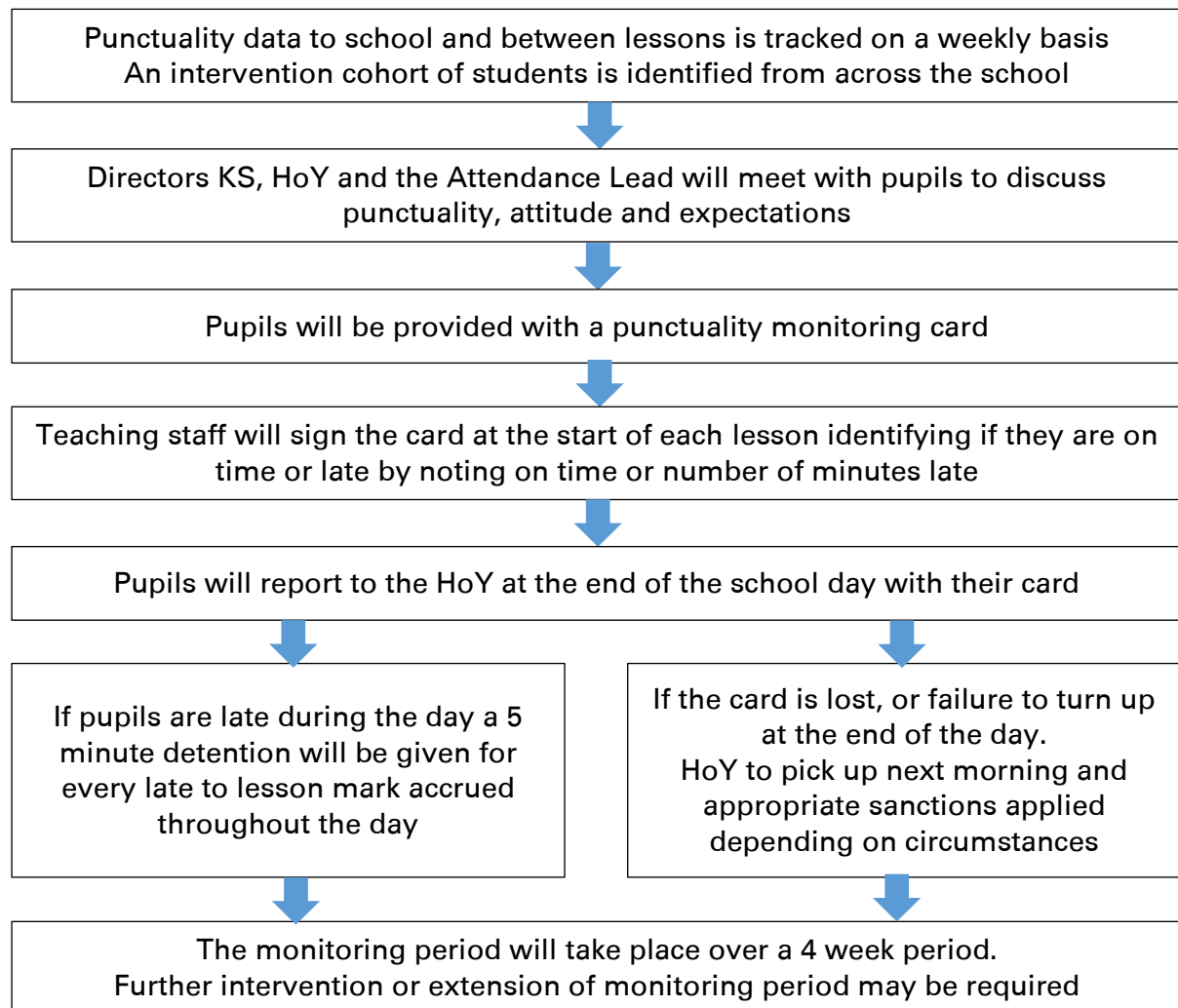
Appendix 2. Internal punctuality controls — Start of the day



Internal punctuality controls — During the day



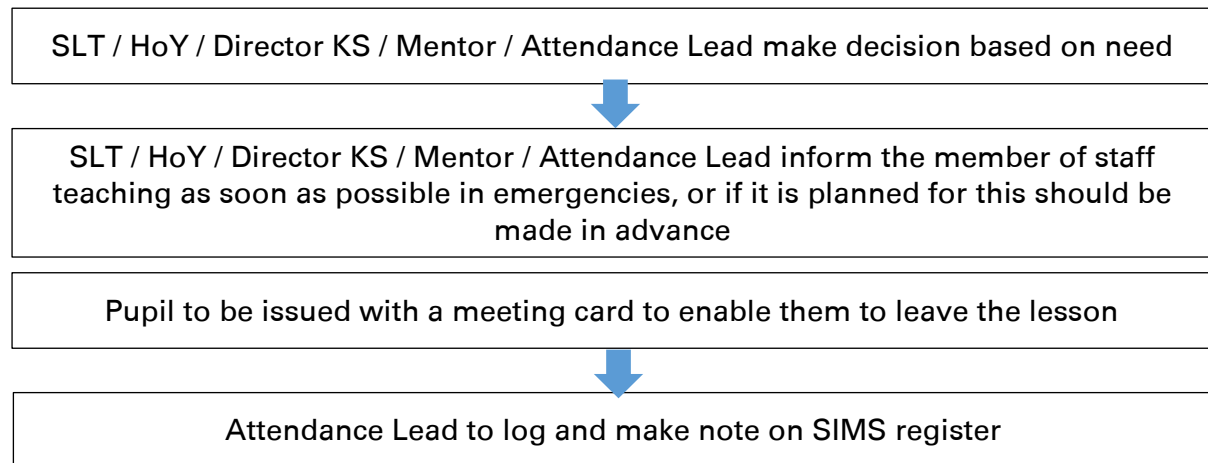
Intervention for continued failure to be punctual



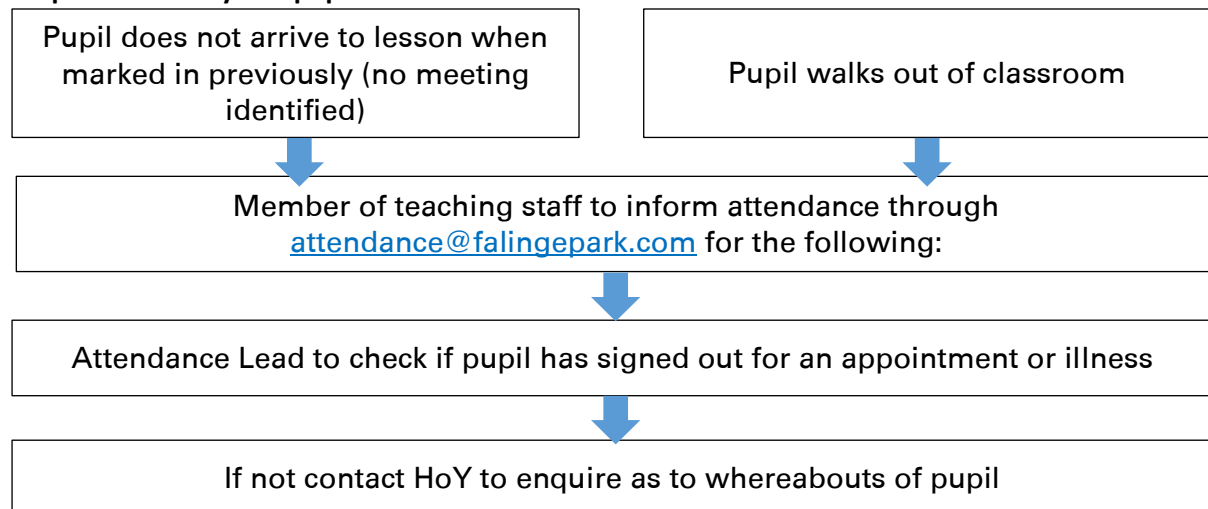
Appendix 3: Truancy Control flow chart

To prevent the truancy of students during lessons the following flow chart have been designed to strength the processes surrounding pupils missing lessons/truancy and associated causes

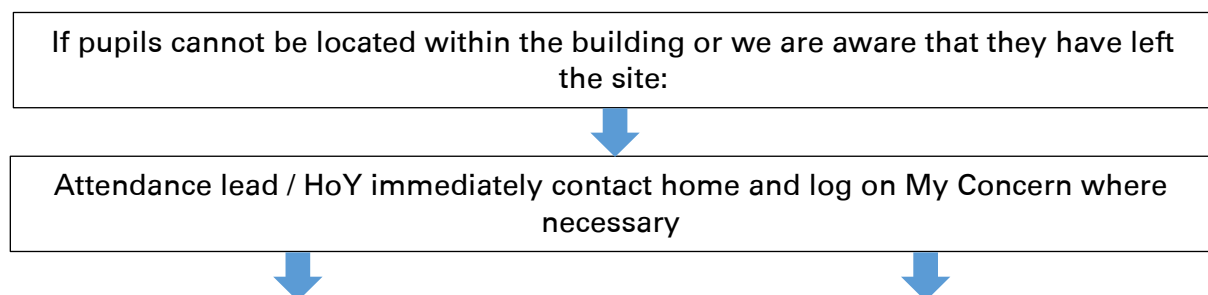
Pupil removal from a lesson for a meeting with SLT/HoY/Director KS/Mentor/Attendance Lead

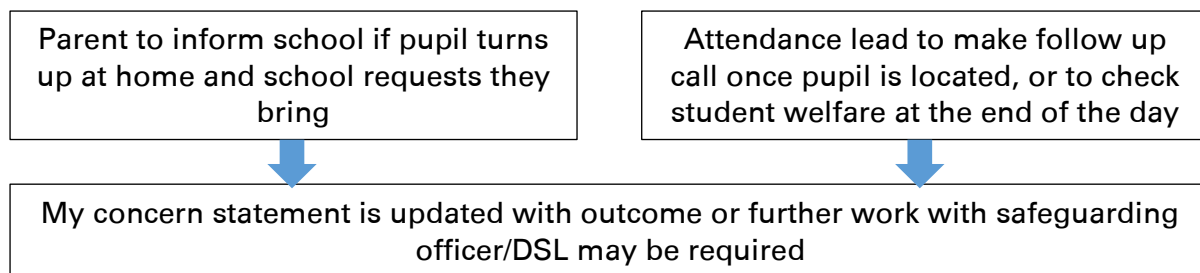


Suspected truancy of a pupil

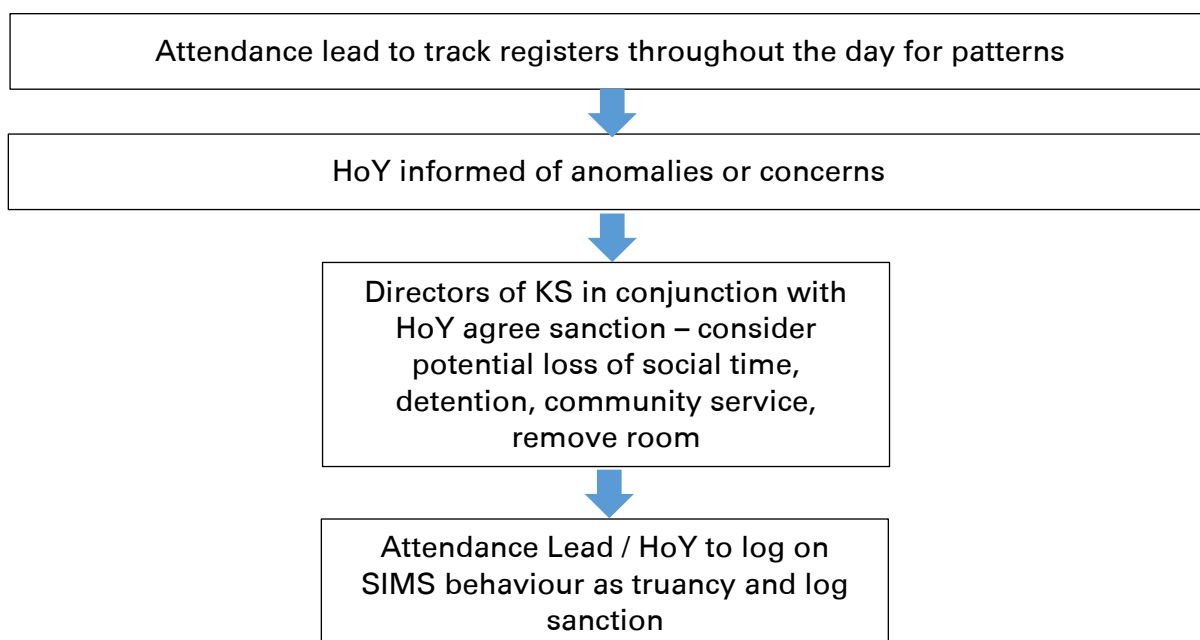


Contacting parent of a pupil who is truanting

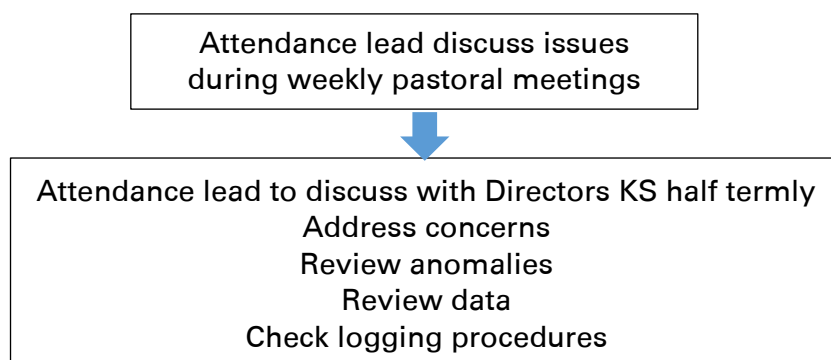




Recording, monitoring and sanctioning internal truancy – Directors of KS / HoY



Quality assurance of internal truancy – Ass Head PDBW with responsibility for attendance



Appendix 4 – Term time absence request form



TERM TIME ABSENCE – THE LAW

From September 2013 the Government replaced the 2006 regulation that allowed schools to grant up to 10 days leave of absence at their discretion.

This means that from September 2013, Headteachers have NOT been able to grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please see overleaf for information regarding exceptional circumstances.

There has been a period recently where the fines for unauthorised holidays in certain cases were suspended, however from 19/6/2017 the fines have been reinstated throughout schools in Rochdale.

The cost of Penalty Notice fines:

A fine of £120 EACH parent, EACH child will be issued for 5 days or more of an unauthorised term time holiday, (the fine reduces to £60 each parent each child if paid within a 3 week period).

Failure to pay the fine within 28 days may result in a criminal conviction and a fine issued by the Magistrate's Court.

Please complete if having read the above you still intend to take your child (children) out of school for a holiday.

Name of child/children: _____
Tutor Group(s): _____
Address: _____

Date(s) of absence: From _____ To _____
Reason for absence:

Parent signature: _____ Tel contact: _____

Please note: We ask that you complete the information so we can update our registers. You will only receive a response if the Headteacher is satisfied that your circumstances are exceptional, otherwise the holiday will be recorded as unauthorised and the details passed to the Local Authority.

We do understand that if your child has an excellent attendance record it is very disappointing for an absence not to be approved. You may consider that a holiday will be educational but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive. Pupils returning from a term time holiday are unprepared for lessons which build on the teaching and learning they have missed. This could potentially make it more challenging for pupils to engage in learning and make progress. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

Exceptional Circumstances does not include:

- × Cheaper holiday cost
- × Visiting relatives
- × Parents unable to take school holiday time off work (unless emergency services/forces
- × Employees with proof of enforced holiday period)

Exceptional Circumstances may include:

- √ A holiday organised by a charity due to a child/parent's illness - proof will be requested
- √ Holidays around a sporting/musical event where the child is taking part – proof will be requested

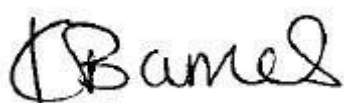
EXTENDED HOLIDAYS

If you take your child out of school on unauthorised leave of absence for 20 school days or more then he/she will be taken off our school roll. On your return you will need to contact the Local Authority to apply for a new school place. The Local Authority will inform you of schools that have vacancies in your child's year group.

If you wish to discuss this further please contact the school's attendance team on 01706 631246, ext. 3011, 3056, or 3118.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mrs K Barnes



Lead Attendance/Extended Curriculum Officer

Miss J Allen



Headteacher