

NEWPORT GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST



ATTENDANCE POLICY including Leave of Absence

Policy written by:	Miss H Clarke & Mr M J Scott
Policy written/reviewed:	June 2020
Next review due:	June 2022
Statutory Governor Approval:	Pending

Newport Girls' High School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all students. We believe that, if students are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. The attendance pattern of students is monitored weekly by the Attendance Officer with the school seeking to work with parents / carers to ensure a regular pattern is maintained.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents / carers and students the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents / carers have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a student's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive, in partnership with parents / carers and students, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the student to full attendance at all times.

The school will:

- complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,
- stress to parents / carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence,
- regularly monitor attendance,
- promote and reward 100% attendance,
- promote and reward attendance above 97% (school target),
- promote positive staff attitudes to students returning after absence,
- have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the LEA if necessary
- Keeping a signed copy of any correspondence to and / or from parents / carers within the school

Procedures

In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the students the importance of their education.

The School Attendance Officer will monitor attendance and inform Form Tutors and Heads of Year of persistent absences. The threshold for attendance concerns is below 95%. If a student's attendance falls below 95% there are a number of interventions that will be put into place:

STAGE 1

First contact from the Form Tutor. Discussion with the student to see if there are any reasons for the absences or not. A record should be kept of this conversation and shared with the appropriate Head of Year (CPOMS).

STAGE 2

If the attendance does not improve at the next review point, a school attendance letter I (SALI) will be sent out signed by the Attendance Officer. A copy will be added to the student's personal file (CPOMS).

STAGE 3

If the attendance does not improve at the next review point, school attendance letter 2 (SAL2) will be sent out by the Head of Year, which will request an appointment with the Head of Year. The Head of Year will discuss the attendance pattern with the parent / carer and student and will work through reasons for the low attendance and complete an attendance improvement plan. A copy of the agreed improvement plan will be posted out following the meeting and a copy will also be added to the student's personal file (CPOMS).

STAGE 4

If the attendance does not improve at the next review point, school attendance letter 3 (SAL3) will be sent out signed by the Headteacher, which will request an appointment with the Headteacher and in some cases a member of the governing body. The Headteacher will discuss the attendance pattern with parent/carer and student and will explain the next steps for the improvement of attendance.

STAGE 5

Referrals will be made to Attendance Support Team at Telford and Wrekin if no improvement is seen at this stage.

Appointments

Routine dental and medical appointments should take place outside of school hours.

If this is not possible and it needs to happen during school time, the school should be notified in advance via a letter to the school office and students should attempt to come in for lessons around these appointments where possible.

Medical Evidence

For all students who have an attendance percentage below our minimum expectation (95%) it is expected that every absence should be covered with an appropriate medical note which explains this absence.

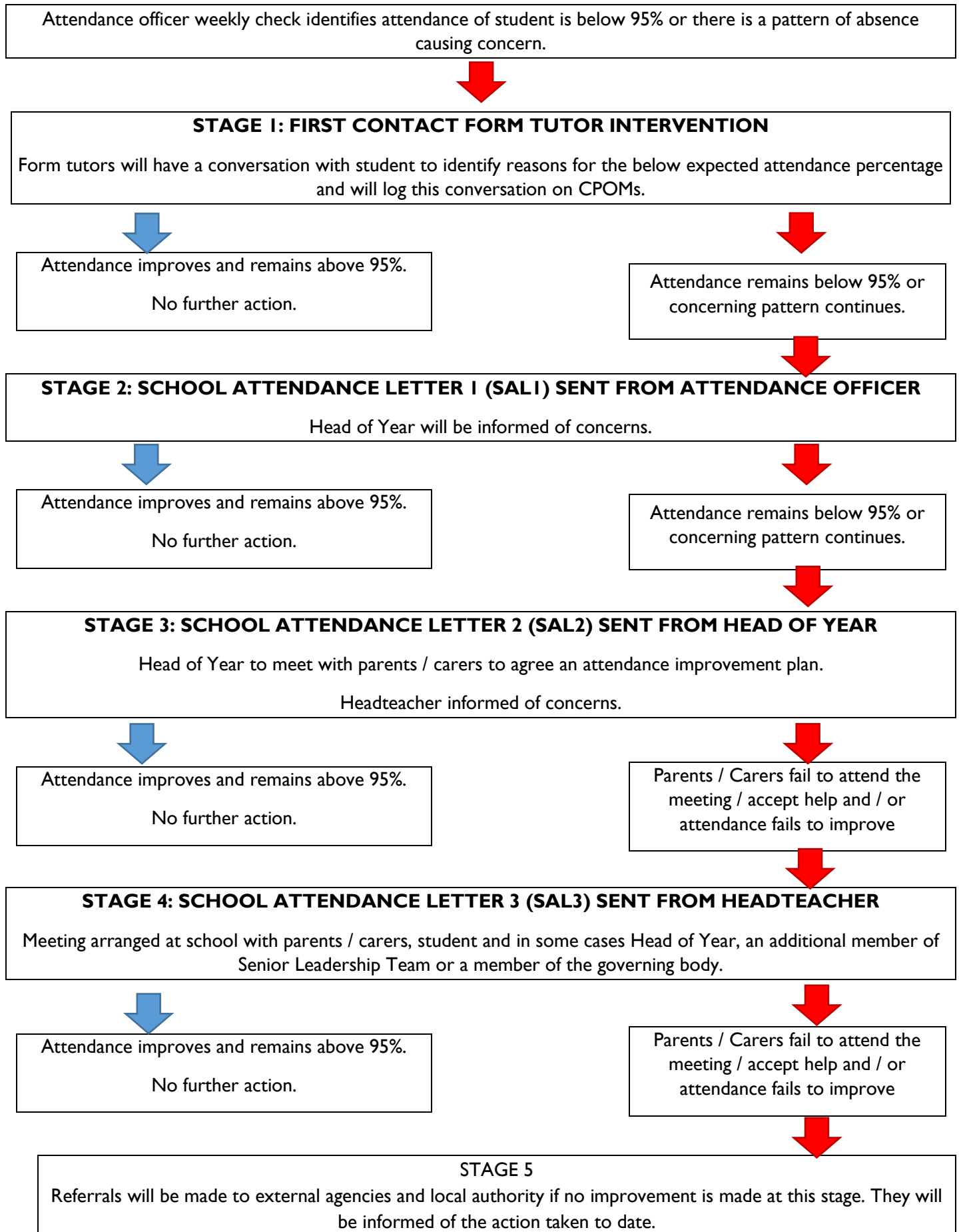
Requesting leave during term time

1. Parents / Carers wishing the school to consider granting leave of absence in school term time should read these notes carefully and then complete and send to the Headteacher the leave of absence request form (Appendix 2). This form should be sent to the school in time for the request to be considered **well before** the desired period of absence. Parents / carers are strongly advised not to finalise any leave in term time booking arrangements before receiving the school's decision on their request. In any event the request form must be received by the school at least four weeks before the departure date to allow sufficient time for appropriate consideration.
2. The granting of leave of absence in school term time is, by law, a matter for consideration and decision by the school. There is no automatic right to any leave in term time. The Department for Education (DfE) and Telford & Wrekin Local Authority (LA) policy is extended leave in term time should not be granted. Where such requests are made, for the leave to be granted, the Headteacher should decide if there are **exceptional circumstances**.
3. Each case will be considered individually and on its own merits. Parents / carers need, therefore, to consider very carefully before making any request for leave of absence the demands of the National and wider School Curriculum especially at the Key Stage assessment stage. In considering a request, the school will take account of: -
 - the **exceptional** circumstances stated that have given rise to the request;
 - the age of the child;
 - the stage of the child's education and progress and the effects of the requested absence on both elements;
 - the overall attendance pattern of the child;
 - the nature of the trip.
 - students on examination courses will **not** normally be granted leave of absence.

4. Where parents / carers have children in more than one school a separate request must be made to each school. The Headteacher of each school will make their own decision based on the factors relating to the child at their school. It is possible that because of these factors different decisions may be made. It is hoped that if this situation arises parents / carers will be persuaded to accept the reasons for refusal given and, thereby, withdraw any other requests.
5. Where requests for a grant of leave of absence are received from only one parent the response letter – agreeing or refusing – will be either addressed to both/all parents where they live at the same address or to each where they do not. This is to ensure, particularly in the case of a refusal, that both or all ‘parents’ are fully aware of the consequences of ignoring a refusal as the refusal letter clearly states that each parent will receive a penalty notice.
6. Should the school decide to grant leave of absence but, the child **does not return to school at the time s/he was expected to** (i.e. following the expiry of the granted leave of absence period) and, no information is available to the school to explain/justify the continuing absence or, make known the whereabouts of the child, **his/her place at the school could be lost.**
7. Should the School decide **not to grant leave of absence** and parents still take their child out of school the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** which may be subject to a Holiday Penalty Notice fine of £60 per parent per child, this fine will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the £120 fine within the period 22 to 28 days may lead to Court proceedings.

APPENDIX I

NEWPORT GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE



Appendix 2
Newport Girls' High School Request for Leave During Term Time

To: The Headteacher, Newport Girls' High School

Date

I request consideration of a grant of leave of absence from school during term time for:

my child (full name) school year

for the period from (date) to (date)

The **exceptional** circumstances and reason for this request are:

.....
.....
.....
.....

I have (an)other child(ren) in (an)other school(s) as follows:

Child(ren) (full name(s)) School(s) attended

.....
.....

(Signature of 1st Parent/Carer(s) Print Name

(Signature of 2nd Parent/Carer(s) Print Name

Please return completed form to the school office. The school will write to you and inform you of the decision on whether the request is authorised or not.

For Office Use Only

Current Attendance%

Last Year's Attendance%

Number of school sessions taken as leave during term time (this Academic Year)

Agreed/Not Agreed

Request for leave is agreed/is not agreed for the above student to take leave during term time between the above dates.

Signed

Date

.....

Notification of decision: Date letter sent to parent