

# Royal Alexandra & Albert School



## Attendance Policy

---

<b>Policy applies to</b>	School staff and pupils
<b>Committee responsible</b>	Pupil Matters
<b>Governing Body approval required</b>	No
<b>Accountable Executive</b>	Senior Assistant Head
<b>Status &amp; Review Cycle</b>	Non statutory 3 yearly
<b>Last approval</b>	PM 09.11.21
<b>Next approval</b>	PM Autumn 2024

# **Attendance Policy**

## **Commitment to Attendance**

The staff of Royal Alexandra and Albert School are committed, in partnership with the parents, pupils, governors and the Local Authority, to building a school which serves the local community as well as serving the unique nature of the school community itself.

Regular attendance is key to ensuring that every pupil stays healthy and safe and has every opportunity to achieve. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. As a school, we will encourage parents to ensure that their children achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

## **Expectations**

All pupils must:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day
- Discuss promptly with their Tutor / Class Teacher / Head of Year / Head of House / Head of School any problems that may affect their school attendance

All parents will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day
- Ensure that they contact the school on the first day of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact details
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child

The school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent/carer's concerns
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality
- Monitor individual pupil's attendance and punctuality
- Contact parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils via our half termly reports and the Classcharts Parent App.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly
- Meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Inclusion Team. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Inclusion Team may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order

### **Pupils Leaving During the School Day**

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time. This should be received by the school at least 7 days before the absence.
- Pupils must sign out on leaving the school and sign back in on their return
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are requested to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted as soon as the School becomes aware. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupil as a missing person

### **Pupils Leaving Lessons During the School Day**

Pupils are able to leave lessons to attend various other activities for example, Music lessons or Mentoring sessions. If they have permission to attend an activity during lesson time the pupil must;

- Inform the teacher as they enter the lesson they will be required to leave
- Show the teacher the permission from the member of staff running the activity.
- Leave enough time to leave the lesson via the main school reception to sign the out of lesson book.

On returning to lessons the pupil must;

- When leaving the activity go via the main school reception to sign the out of lesson book.
- Inform the teacher as they enter the lesson that they have been at an activity
- Show the teacher their permission

### **Encouraging Attendance**

The Royal Alexandra and Albert School encourages regular attendance in the following ways;

- By providing a caring and welcoming learning environment
- By responding promptly to a child's or parent concerns about the school or other pupils
- By marking registers accurately and punctually during morning and afternoon registration periods. If pupils arrive at school after the close of registration without a written explanation, the lateness will be recorded as an unauthorised absence
- By publishing and displaying attendance statistics
- By requiring pupils to regularly record their own attendance and punctuality
- By celebrating good and improved attendance
- By monitoring pupils, informing parents in writing of irregular attendance, arranging meetings with them if necessary and referring the family to the Surrey County if the irregular attendance continues

### **Responding to Non-Attendance**

When a pupil does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- A designated member of office staff inputs notifications of absence on a daily basis. This information is taken from correspondence from parents and information received from the boarding houses. Also they will update missing marks from lessons pupils where signed out of lessons using the signing out of lessons book.
- When an AM absence has not explained that morning by parents a phone call to the parents will be placed to ascertain the reasons.
- Where a pupil has been absent from school and no information has been received after two days a letter is sent home requesting the reason for absence. These individual letters are filed and, upon receiving a reply, the information is kept with the original letter and SIMS is updated accordingly. If there is no reply then a phone call is made by the Assistant Head
- If there is still no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent. If there has still been no contact made, the school will send a letter of concern to parents or invite them into school to

discuss their concerns. The school will tell parents that if the absence persists that a referral will be made to the Inclusion Officer

- Failure to comply with the expectations set by the Inclusion Officer may result in further action such as;

### Penalty Notices

The Education Welfare Service, acting on behalf of Surrey County Council may issue a Penalty Notice as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's unauthorised absence from school and requires the recipient to pay a fixed amount.

The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

### Circumstances when a Penalty Notices may be issued

Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which becomes law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 state that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head teacher is required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and the 'leave of absence' is without the authority of the head teacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a penalty notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where attendance has fallen below 85% and there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks. The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

### Punctuality /Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial and being on time to Tutor Period at 8.30 a.m. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

- Tutor Period starts at 8.30 a.m. and pupils who arrive after 8.35 a.m. (five minutes later) will be recorded as late to school.
- Registers close at 9.00 a.m. (Monday to Saturday) and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with through school detentions and may be referred to Education Welfare

## **School Organisation**

In order for the school's Attendance Policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey this to the pupils at all times. Parents need to support these views in the home to ensure that children are receiving corresponding messages about the value of education.

In addition to this, the School has the following responsibilities for the Headteacher, Governors and designated member of school staff with overall responsibility for attendance to:

- Adopt the whole policy
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided
- Ensure that key staff have time-tabled periods for liaison and follow-up work with the Inclusion Officer and appropriate access to attendance data
- Consult and liaise closely with the Inclusion Officer on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- To work in close collaboration with the Inclusion Officer during their termly/half termly register analysis
- To set whole school attendance targets
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the Inclusion Officer

### **Class Teachers / Form Tutors are expected:**

- To complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
- To follow up any unexplained non-attendance
- To inform their Head of Year in charge of overall attendance of concerns
- To be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the designated person in charge of overall attendance

### **Heads of School and Heads of Year are expected:**

- To oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and punctually
- To liaise with the Assistant Head to feed information through to the Inclusion Officer regularly
- To reinforce good practice at year group meetings
- To share the form tutors' concerns regarding the early identification of disaffection with the Assistant Head.
- To contact parents when a pupil's attendance becomes an issue.
- To send out absence letters on a weekly basis to parents.

### **Assistant Head is expected;**

- To co-ordinate the attendance issues from the Heads of School and Heads of Year.
- To meet regularly with the Inclusion Officer.
- To Refer pupils when needed to the Inclusion Officer.

## **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school they inform the school as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority.

### **Holidays/Leave of absence**

- The school holiday dates, external exam dates and INSET days are published a year in advance
- Family holidays/leave will not be authorised during external examination periods
- Only in exceptional circumstances will family holidays/leave in term time be authorised
- Where a family holiday/leave in term time is unavoidable, a leave of absence application form must be requested from the Headmaster's PA and submitted for consideration by the Headmaster on behalf of the school governors no less than 7 days prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed 10 school days in any one academic year
- If a holiday is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified

### **Penalty Notices for Holidays**

- In line with the guidance from the DoE, holidays during GCSE exams, Mocks and other external exam periods will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued
- The Headmaster can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents/carers when pupils are taken out of school for 4 or more days' holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £ 120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days, the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance

### **Penalty Notices**

In addition to Penalty Notices issued for unauthorised holidays, Penalty Notices may also be issued when a pupil is stopped by Truancy Patrol or if a parent/carer fails to ensure regular school attendance.

### **Truancy Patrol**

When a pupil comes to the notice of a Truancy Patrol, the pupil's pattern of school attendance is investigated. If there are unauthorised absences in the preceding 4 months, a warning letter may be sent to the parent. If there are further unauthorised absences during the subsequent 15 school days, a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent.

If there is no significant improvement in attendance in the 3 subsequent weeks, a Penalty Notice will be issued. Again, the Penalty Notice fines are as follows:

- £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority must prosecute the parent/carer for failing to ensure regular school attendance under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

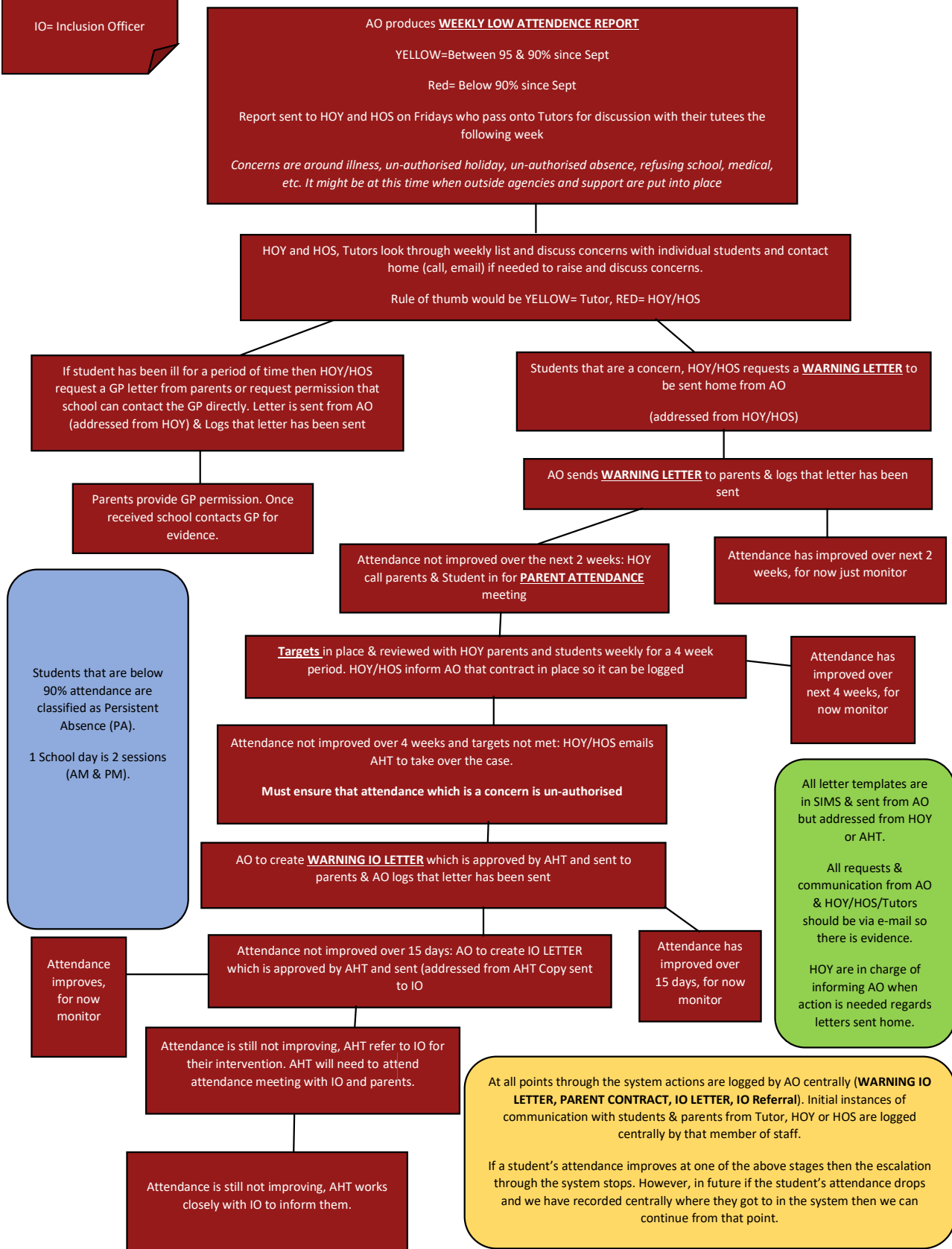
### **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

Education Welfare may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty Notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

**Appendix A**

AO= Attendance officer  
 HOY=Head of Year  
 HOS= Head of School  
 AHT= Assistant Headteacher  
 IO= Inclusion Officer

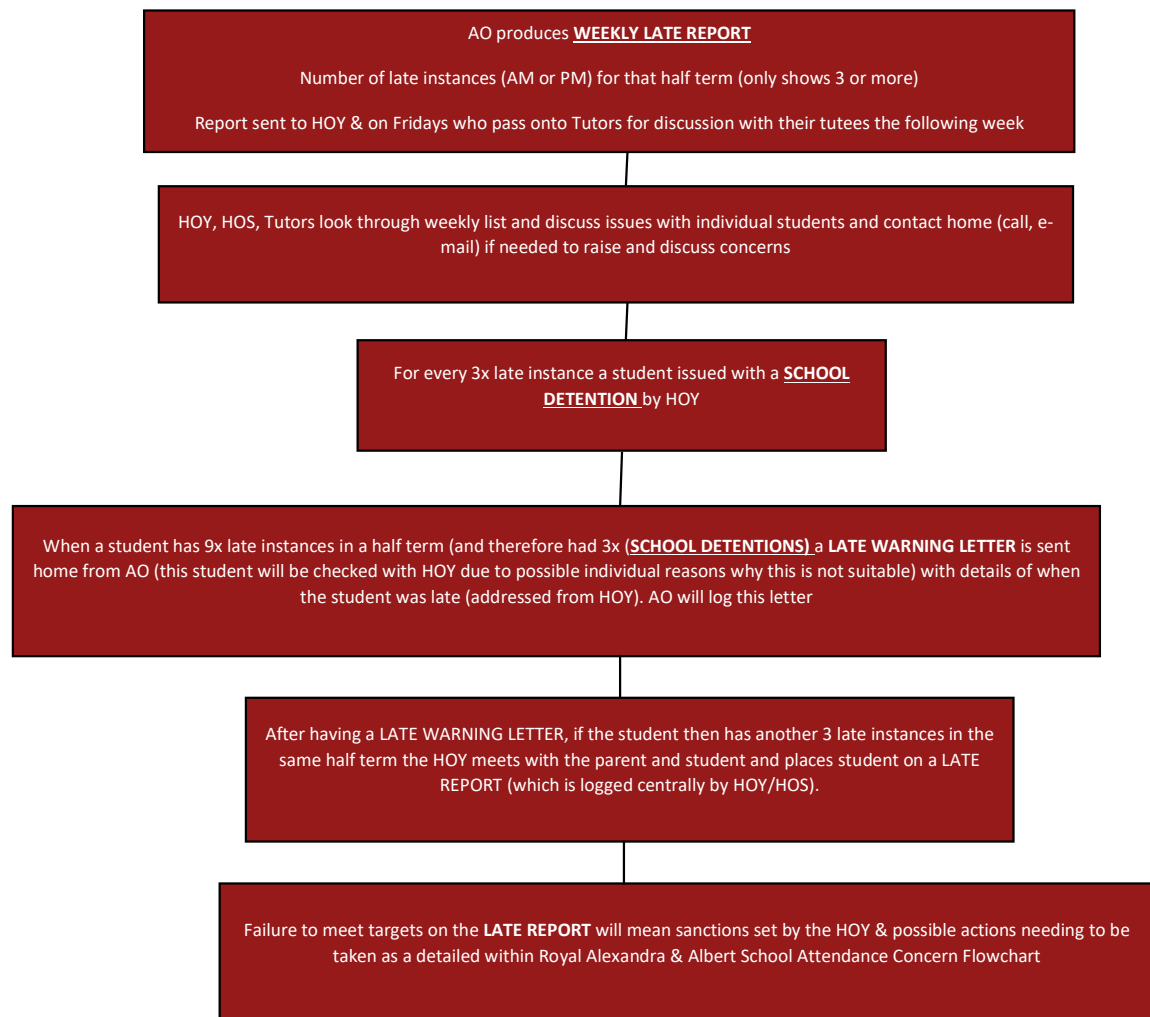
### School Attendance Concern Flowchart





AO= Attendance officer  
HOY=Head of Year  
HOS= Head of School

# School Lateness Concern Flowchart



All letter templates are in SIMS and sent from HOY.

All requests and communication from AO and HOY/HOS/Tutors should be via e-mail so there is evidence.

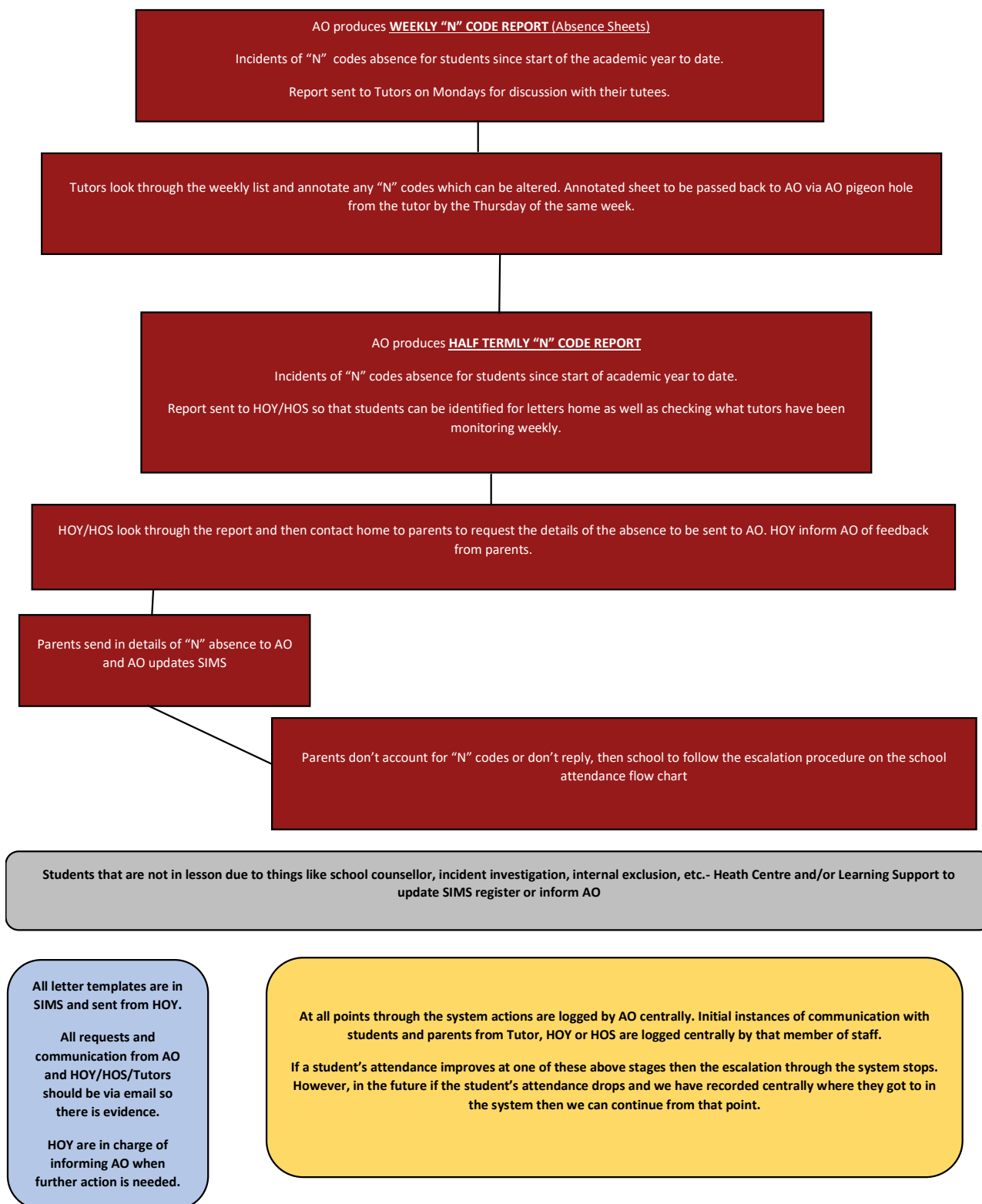
HOY are in charge of informing AO when action is needed regards letters sent home.

At all points through the system actions are logged by AO centrally (LATE WARNING LETTER, LATE REPORT). Initial instances of communication with students and parents from Tutor, HOY or HOS are logged centrally by that member of staff.

If a student's attendance improves at one of these above stages then the escalation through the systems stops. However, in the future if the student's attendance drops and we have recorded centrally where they got in the system then we can continue from that point.

AO= Attendance officer  
HOY=Head of Year  
HOS= Head of School

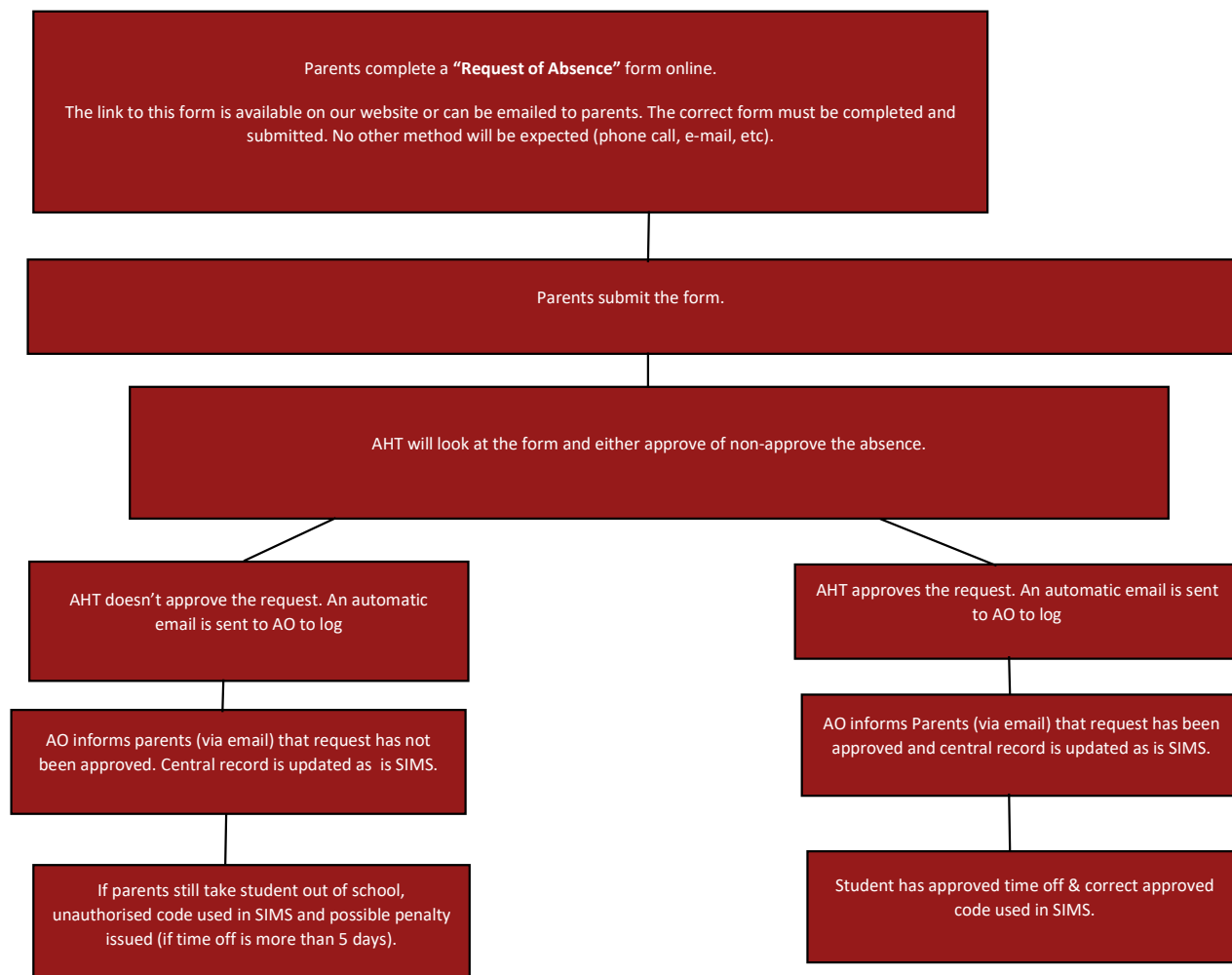
# Royal Alexandra and Albert School "N" Code Flowchart



AO= Attendance officer

AHT= Assistant  
Headteacher

Royal Alexandra and Albert School Request of Absence Flowchart



Any time taken off school which is not authorised or approved and is 5 or more days could result in a penalty being issued.

All request and communication from AO and AHT should be via e-mail so there is evidence.

AHT is in charge of informing AO when action is needed regards letters sent home.

AO is copied in on any letters or e-mails to parents from AHT.

Only the school Request Absence Form is to be used to request leave of absence by parents. Only AHT can approve.

Attendance Promotion of good attendance and Interventions

<p align="center"><u>Universal Practice</u></p> <p align="center"><b>Attendance procedures for all pupils, Monitoring of student 95% or below for stage 1 interventions</b></p>	<p align="center"><u>Intervention Tier 1</u></p> <p align="center"><b>Regular patterns of absence &amp; below 95 absence rate</b></p>	<p align="center"><u>Intervention Tier 2</u></p> <p align="center"><b>Persistent patterns of absence classified as PA or moving towards 80%</b></p>
<p><b>Promotion:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class charts dashboards to contain charts by year groups</li> <li>Newsletter to parents on statistics</li> <li>Regular assemblies &amp; weekly bulletin attendance and punctuality displayed by Year Group.</li> <li>100% Attendance certificates and emails termly.</li> <li>No authorisation of holiday unless exceptional circumstances &amp; work provided</li> <li>Well Done email sent home at Xmas, Feb half term &amp; July for all pupils above 95%, Parents are informed of attendance %</li> <li>All school reports sent home have attendance %</li> <li>First day contact- office text &amp; phone call</li> <li>90% &amp; no more than 4x lates to attend YR11 prom</li> </ol> <p><b>Tracking:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Tutors- all Tutors to complete register accurately (clear guidance in policy)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Track</b> attendance of all tutees- ask questions/chase reasons for absence for those below 95%</li> <li><b>Phone</b> parents if continued concerns. Any concerns ref; safeguarding pass to Safeguarding Team</li> <li><b>If no Improvement</b> absence and reasons for absence are a concern 93% Tutor pass concerns to HOY. <b>Move to stage 2 for HOY to track and activate amber or red letters</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>Class teachers to challenge daily lateness. Reception will enter minutes late/ comments for pupils who sign in via reception. Track pupils with 3 lates DT given, 9 lates inform HOY to contact home- <b>no improvement move to stage 2 for HOY</b></li> <li>Subject leaders received half termly lesson monitor report of all pupils missing 95% of their subject area. Discuss and plan at dept meeting so standing agenda item- lost learning and actions sent to GB.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Criteria for Tier 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tutor has discussed the student with the attendance % falling from 95% to 90% with HOY and there are ongoing concerns</li> <li>The student is already at 89% or below</li> <li>Student late more than 9x in more than 1 half term</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For all students at stage 2 the absence rate will be high enough to cause gaps in learning. All subject teachers must demonstrate planning for learning lost in class for pupils with absence. ELT support put in place if appropriate for significant loss of learning time &amp; student behind.</li> <li>Tier 1 will be activated for regular patterns of absence for pupils 90% absence or below. An amber text is sent at 90% to inform parents that student attendance is below expected levels &amp; is being monitored &amp; student supported by HOY.</li> <li>If moved to tier 1 for punctuality HOY to place student on report.</li> <li>If moved to tier 1 for overall absence HOY to work with student on improving attendance.</li> <li>If improvement after 6 weeks monitoring student moves back to universal practice.</li> <li>HOY to request medical evidence from Hospital &amp; GP if appropriate. All monitoring and intervention need to be logged on student's file on SIMs.</li> <li>HOY may activate PRE CAF</li> <li>The Headteacher will refuse leave of absence requests for all tier 1 students unless there are exceptional circumstances</li> <li>Penalty Notice warning issued. HOY to monitor progress of overall attendance and/or punctuality for 6 WEEKS. If no improvement sends tier 2 letter home to parents to attend a meeting with HOY. Formal action plan agreed student &amp; parents sign. The actions agreed will be recorded on pupils file on sims and will be copied for other staff as relevant. Tutor &amp; HOY to support student and family as needed to achieve actions.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Criteria for Tier 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance 80% and dropping following support from HOY at tier 1</li> <li>Student is already at 79% or below</li> <li>HOY to meet with HOS/GB and communicate on all vulnerable pupils to agree Tier 2 pupils for attendance</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red Text for 80% attendance sent home alongside letter and parent pack. HOS to meet with parents. School to discuss further interventions &amp; consider initiation or either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific IEPs, PSPs - ELT intervention to include 1-to-1 support and/or specific reintegration strategy as required</li> <li>Pre CAF</li> <li>Referral to IO or other agent</li> <li>Multi agency plan for student/ family</li> <li>Penalty Notice through school</li> </ul> </li> <li>The actions agreed will be recorded on Sims and will be copied to Tutor and HOY &amp; Subject teachers</li> <li>Attendance tracked &amp; monitored regularly until student attendance rises to above 90% for a 6-week period. Until such point regular school/home meetings taking place to discuss issues.</li> <li>Home visits will be implemented to support the student and discuss issues at the family home with parents or carers.</li> <li>The school will appoint an "in house" lead for the student with whom staff and external agencies should liaise regarding work, progress and support.</li> </ol>
<p><b>No response from parents or no improvement</b> <b>Move to stage 2 Consider SAFEGUARDING</b></p>	<p><b>6 WEEKS assessment if no improvement moves to tier 2. If increase in attendance move back to Universal Support monitoring by Tutor</b></p>	<p><b>If there is improvement after 6 weeks monitoring the family should move back to Tier 1 monitoring by HOY</b></p>