

POLICY

Wirral Grammar School for Boys



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| Policy | Attendance Policy |
| Responsible Manager | Adam Walker |
| Approval Date | 1 st April 2025 |
| Review Date | 1 st April 2026 |
| Approved by | Headteacher |

1. 1. AIMS

Central to raising standards of achievement and ensuring that all pupils can fulfil their potential is the need for pupils to attend school regularly in order to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Poor attendance or poor punctuality are not acceptable behaviours for learning. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their son attends school regularly. This policy aims:

- To promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- To ensure that every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- To act early to address patterns of absence;
- To ensure that all pupils are punctual to their lessons.

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- o Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- o Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- o Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- o [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- o [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- o [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

It also refers to:

- o [School census guidance](#)
 - o [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)



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2. Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- o The implementation of this policy at the school
- o Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- o Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- o Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- o Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the attendance officer to be able to do so
- o Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- o Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- o Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- o Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

Deputy Headteacher and Head of Student Services Faculty

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- o Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- o Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- o Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- o Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- o Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- o Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- o Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- o Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- o Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- o Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families



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The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- o Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- o Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- o Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the headteacher
- o Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- o Advising the headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/Head of Student Services Faculty when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- o All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- o All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- o Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Parents are expected to:

- o Make sure their child attends every day on time
- o Call the school to report their child's absence before on the day of the absence. It is good practice for parents to remain in contact with the school during their son's illness.
- o Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- o Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- o Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- o Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting their son's Head of Year.

3. Registration

3.1 (See Appendix for Attendance Ladder)

A register is marked in every lesson and Tutor Group Tutorial and the official marks for the am and pm sessions are those recorded during tutor period & P4. Any pupils who do not obtain an attendance mark for those lessons will be marked absent for the session.

Pupils who arrive after 9.00am (tutor period) and 1.40pm (lesson 4) should be marked as late but not as absent.

6th Form students who find that their teacher does not arrive at the lesson should obtain their attendance mark by signing in at the Pastoral Hub. 6th Form students who have a free P4 register with their card on the Inventory system.

Pupils who arrive late for any lesson should have this recorded by their teacher.



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Pupils who have an individual music lesson either during tutor period or P4 should sign in the music book located in the Pastoral Hub.

In case of Bromcom failure, teachers will be provided with paper registers.

4. Lateness

Students who miss either morning or afternoon registration must sign in on Inventory or report to the Pastoral Hub. The school actively discourages late arrival and lateness is monitored by the pastoral team in order to recognise patterns which could provide grounds for action by the school and which could lead to referral to the LA Attendance Officer (LAAO) in serious cases. Where a student is persistently late at morning registration the student will be monitored by the pastoral team as appropriate.

Lateness Protocol

- All students (Y7-13) are required to be on site by **8.55**.
- Students who arrive after **8.55** must sign in at the main reception on the InVentry screen.
- Students who arrive after **9.00** will be marked as **late**.
- Students who arrive after **9.00** will receive a **30 minute lunchtime detention on the day of being late**.
- Non-attendance at the 30 minute detention will result in a **full lunchtime detention** on Friday of the same week. (*All students will be allowed reasonable time to eat, drink and use toilet facilities if required*)
- Non-attendance at the Friday full lunchtime detention will escalate to **an after-school detention** organised by the Deputy Headteacher each **Thursday 15.40-16.40**. Parents/carers will be notified of this by Bromcom message/email.
- ***If a student is onsite before 8.55am but is marked late to their tutor period (9.00am), the above sanctions will still apply.***

5. Categories of Absence

Authorised absence

5.1 Illness

Parents should notify the school each day their son is unable to attend due to illness. This can be done by leaving a voice message as prompted by the telephone answering service or via the absence email address. This notification should be given as early as possible and by 9.00 am at the latest. The school may request appropriate medical evidence to support the absence.

5.2 Medical or dental appointments

Missing part of the school day for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Parents are encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the



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appointment. Parents should notify the school in advance of the absence. Pupils will be required to 'sign out' and 'sign in' as appropriate in such cases.

5.3 Religious observance

This may be an authorised absence if the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a boy belongs. Parents should notify the school, in writing, in advance of the absence.

5.4 Other reasons approved by the school

If a parent wishes to seek authorization for their son to be absent from school for a reason other than those listed above, this should be done in writing, in advance.

5.5 Holiday

There is no entitlement for parents to withdraw their son from school for a family holiday nor can the Headteacher authorise such an absence. Only in "exceptional circumstances" can the Headteacher grant a holiday leave request and it is for the school alone to determine whether the exceptional criteria has been met.

Leave of absence requests must be provided in advance.

5.6 Study Leave

There is no entitlement for pupils of compulsory school age to be granted study leave during public examinations. Any study leave which is given will be an authorised absence.

5.7 Other Reasons

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- Attending work experience
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

5.8 Unauthorised absence

If a pupil is absent in circumstances for which the school cannot or is unwilling to give approval, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This includes holiday not authorised by the school and an absence for which a reason has not yet been provided.



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6. Procedures to be followed by Parents in Case of Absence

If it is **known in advance** that a pupil is likely to be absent (e.g. for a medical appointment) or authorization is being sought for an absence, notification should be given in writing, in advance.

Written notice or request for authorization can be in the form of a letter by email to absence@wirralgrammarboys.com.

If absence is **unplanned** (for example in the case of sickness), parents should contact the school by telephone or email as early as possible on the **first** day of absence and at the latest by 9.00am. (0151 644 0908 – option 3 and leave a message).

If, on the first day of absence, the school has not been made aware of the reason for the absence, the school will endeavour to contact parents as soon as possible via email after 9.30am. It is good practice for parents to remain in contact with the school during their son's illness.

On return from unplanned absence a written note (signed by parent or carer) explaining the reason for absence (including the nature of the illness) should be brought into school and handed in to the Pastoral Office or to a pupils form tutor. Alternatively, an email may be sent to absence@wirralgrammarboys.com. If email is used, the office may contact the parent by phone to confirm the authenticity of the email.

If an absence note is not received after 5 days the absence is marked as unauthorised.

7. Authorisation

A telephone call or email from a parent or carer confirming that they have given permission for the pupil to be absent does **not** necessarily mean that the school will authorise the absence. Only the school is able to authorise an absence. In the case of a dispute as to whether an absence should be authorised or not the final decision rests with the Headteacher.

8. Action to be taken when Attendance gives cause for concern

It is the school's policy that any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the pupil. If the school becomes aware that there is a problem, contact will be made with parents and carers at an early stage. Similarly, if they become aware of a problem, parents and carers are expected to make early contact so that they can work with the school's pastoral staff in resolving problems together.

If a Form Tutor, Head of Year or Deputy Headteacher is concerned about the absence of a pupil on a particular day, the school office will telephone parents or carers in order to clarify the situation.

The pastoral team monitors the attendance of each student. If attendance below 90% without a clear reason, parents will be contacted to discuss the situation. If attendance falls below 85%, the school's



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Locality Attendance Officer (LAO) will be contacted for advice. Below 90% attendance is classed as “persistently absent”.

Parents or children may wish to contact the LAO themselves to ask for advice. They are independent of the school. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority. The school’s learning mentor may become involved in counselling pupils whose attendance is giving cause for concern or who are reluctant to attend school regularly.

Any pupils whose unauthorised absence is identified as truancy will be required to make up for the lesson time missed by working under supervision at lunchtime. Normally, five hours of lunchtime work will be undertaken for each school day missed. When an unauthorised absence occurs with the consent of parents or carers, the matter will be referred to a Deputy Headteacher and the Head of Year will make contact with them to discuss the matter.

Parents of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 to make sure that children of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full-time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be reported to the Education Authority if problems cannot be resolved by agreement. The LAO will also try to resolve the difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the pupil’s attendance have failed, these officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

9. Sanctions

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions – including, but not limited to, those listed below – to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

Penalty notices

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil’s offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.



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Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

10. Collation and Analysis of Attendance Data

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

10.1 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence



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- o Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- o Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

10.2 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- o Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- o Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families
- o Provide regular attendance reports to form tutors and Heads of Year to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads)
- o Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- o Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

10.3 Monitoring by Heads of Year

Heads of Year take the lead in the monitoring of attendance. This includes the following.

1. At the start of the academic year each HoY draws up an "Attendance Monitoring List" for his or her year group based on data for the previous academic year. Any boys whose attendance during the previous year was below 90% will be on this list and their attendance will be monitored throughout the current academic year.
2. On a regular basis, HoYs will look at the attendance record of each boy. Any reasons given for the low level of attendance will be considered. These issues will be discussed with DHT (Pastoral), after an appropriate time scale, attendance letters will be issued once it's clear a poor attendance pattern has emerged.
3. Once this has been done, boys can be placed into one of two categories: (i) level of attendance fully explained (e.g. one incidence of long term illness which is known to be genuine); (ii) level of attendance continuing to give cause for concern.

Action by Heads of Year

Please see appendix 2 and 3 for further details.

Where a boy's level of attendance is continuing to give cause for concern, the Head of Year will employ one or more of the following strategies.



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- One to one interview with the boy.
- Contacting parents by telephone.
- Meeting with parents.
- Referral to learning mentor (who may engage the boy in further discussion about the reasons for his absence and work with him to prevent his absence being a barrier to learning).
- Referral to school nurse (where illness seems to be the problem).
- Referral to the SENDCO (where the boy is on the SEN register or where there may be a need for him to be placed on the register)
- Referral to the DHT (Pastoral) when there is a red alert as a result of the boy's level of attendance and the situation is not improving or is even deteriorating, despite the intervention of HoY and others.

Even after a referral such as those listed above, the HoY will continue to monitor the boy's level of attendance.

Action by DHT (Pastoral)

- Interview with the boy alongside the HoY
- Contacting Parents by telephone
- Meeting with parents
- Contacting the school's LAO for advice and assistance (or asking a HoY, the DHT (Pastoral) or Learning Mentor to do so on their behalf).
- Referral to the Headteacher (in extreme cases).

Action where a boy's level of attendance is poor but is fully and satisfactorily explained

This would include, for example, one incidence of long term illness which is known to be genuine. Whatever the reason for an absence, it is a barrier to learning and, on the boy's return to school, the HOY should refer the boy as appropriate to the learning mentor or SENDCO who will provide appropriate levels of support.

Further to this the Deputy Headteacher and Head of Faculty for Student Services may call an Attendance Panel meeting for cases where we feel parents are not sufficiently engaged and attendance may be considered unauthorised I.e. insufficient evidence to justify non-attendance

RE-INTEGRATION FOLLOWING LENGTHY ABSENCE

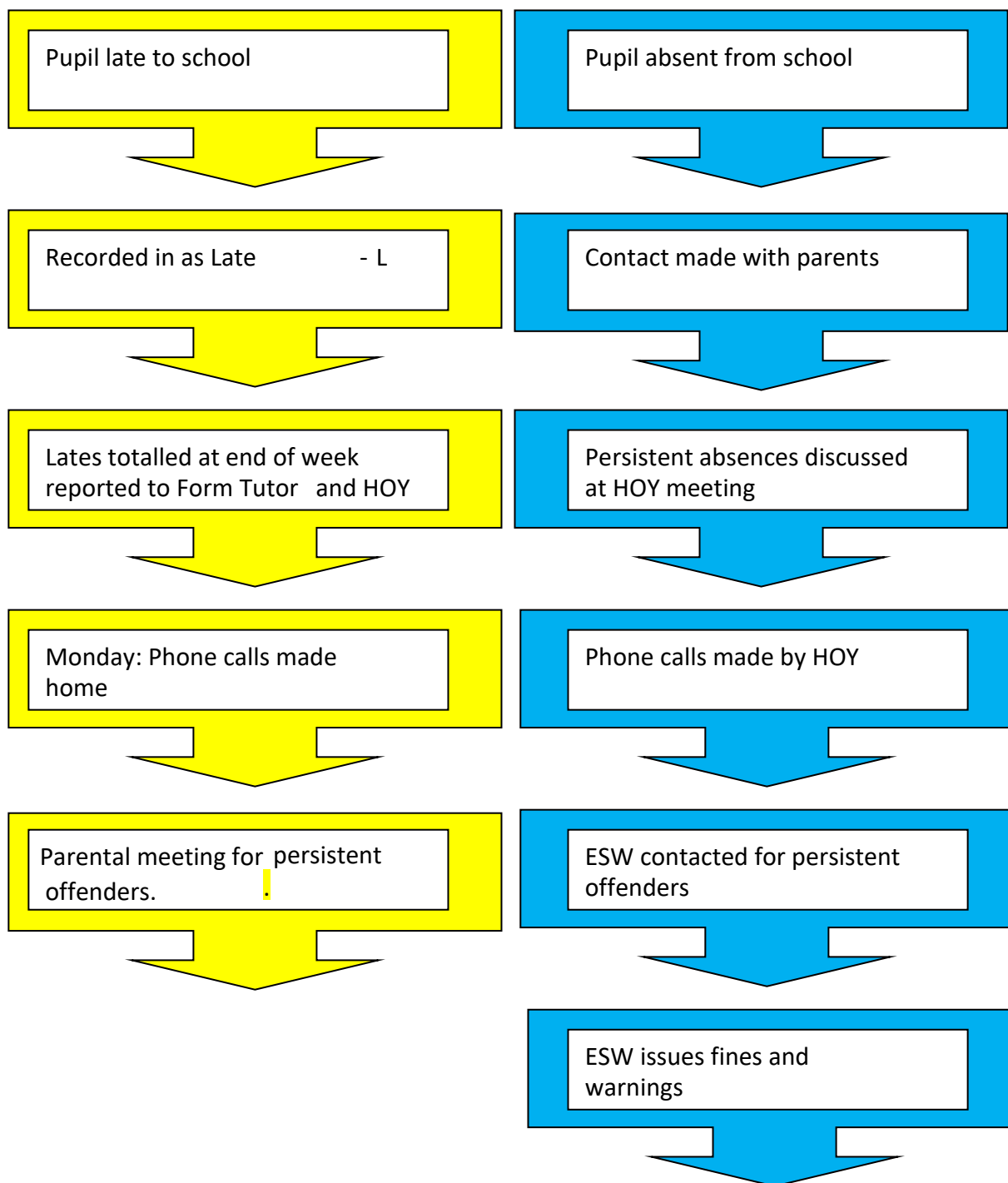
The Learning Mentor will work with the DHT (Pastoral) and Head of Year to re-integrate and re-engage any pupil who returns to school after a long absence. In certain cases, the Headteacher may give permission for this re-integration to include part-time attendance at school for a fixed term.

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APPENDIX 1: Attendance ladder

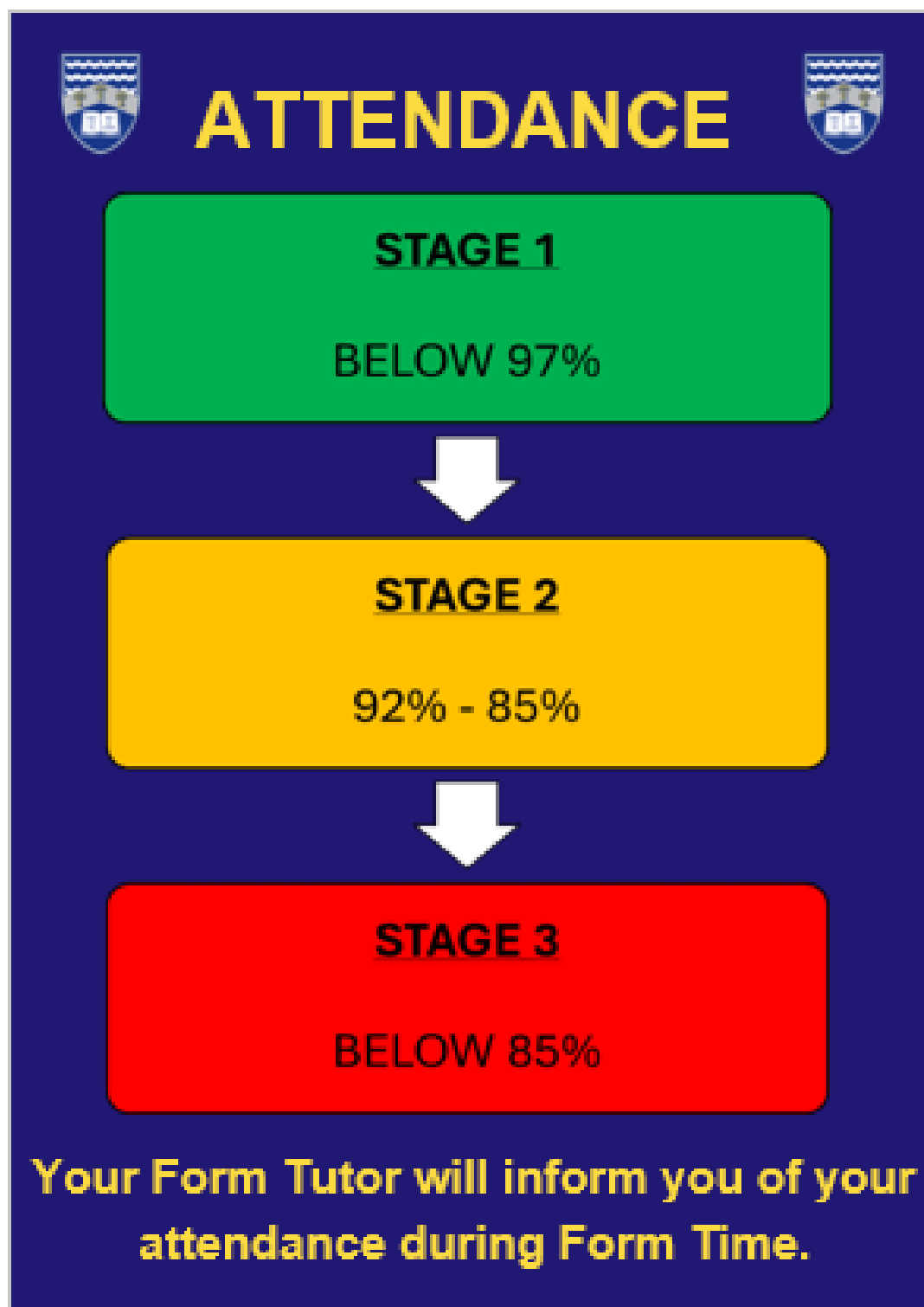


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Appendix 2: Attendance Figures Poster





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Appendix 3: Attendance Details

Stage 1

<97% - Early Awareness Raising – Email letter to parents – attendance fallen below expectation & Tutor conversation with pupil – logged (**EBSA Ticksheet completed**)

Stage

2

85-92% - Panel Meeting (HOY/AO/LM) & Attendance Support Plan – Where a student's absence has continued, parents are invited in for a supportive meeting to look at barriers and agree route forward. (**Parental EBSA form to be completed**)

Stage

3

<85%- Parental Meeting 2 (inc. HOF) – Where a student's absence has continued and is a **cause for concern**. Milestones are set and parents informed of the future **actions**. The LAO is likely to be in attendance at this meeting.

EPN/Prosecution—Where adequate support has been exhausted and timeframes have not been met by families, the school then works closely with the Local Authority. A copy of a penalty notices will be checked with the local authority before being authorised.

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