Managing Student Attendance Policy

Inspiring Great Minds

1 Rationale

Queensland Academy for Science, Mathematics and Technology is an Independent Public School for highly capable students in Years 7 to 12. Our focus is on helping students reach their full academic potential. We continually challenge every student to reach their potential by setting high academic goals and expectations. The Academy is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students, which addresses their educational needs.

The Academy expects students to be in fulltime attendance at school every day during the school year and that punctuality and reliability is fostered. Consistent attendance at school is a significant factor in achieving better academic and social outcomes. New concepts and skills are taught and reinforced each day by the teachers. If students miss the introduction or the reinforcement of these concepts and skills, they are likely to have gaps in their learning.

2 School community beliefs about the importance of attending school

It is important that students, staff and parents/guardians have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school. The Academy

- is committed to promoting the key messages of Every Day Counts
- believes all children should be enrolled at school and attend school all day, every school day
- monitors, communicates and implements strategies to improve regular school attendance
- believes truanting can place a student in unsafe situations and impact on their future employability and life choices
- believes attendance at school is the responsibility of everyone in the community.

3 Responsibilities

3.1 Students

- attend school each day unless there is an acceptable reason for an absence
- be aware that roll marking occurs in every lesson and Instep and ensure they arrive to class promptly to facilitate accurate roll marking by teachers
- make every day count in their learning.
- late arrival- report to Attendance Officer before going to class.
- early departure- report to Attendance Officer before leaving school grounds.

3.2 Parents (or guardians)

- ensure their child arrives at school on time every day
- ensure their child attends school every school day
- minimise disruption to their child's school day so their child has the best opportunity to learn
- planned absences - contact the school prior to the absence by applying to the Principal EAtoPrincipal@qasmt.eq.edu.au for approval.
- unplanned absence - provide an explanation (by phoning the absence line or in writing or email StudentAbsence@qasmt.eq.edu.au, each time their child is absent from school, this may take the form of:
  - a medical certificate
  - a written explanation note containing the student's name, dates and reasons for absence
  - a verbal explanation to the school through either a phone call or email (for two or less days of absence)
  - any other form of communication agreed by the Principal
  - ensure their child follows the school's recommended processes and procedures for late arrival and early departure

- notify the school if their child will be late using the school's recommended communication processes, this may take the form of:
  - accompanying the child to the school
  - phoning the school
  - providing the child with assigned and dated note.
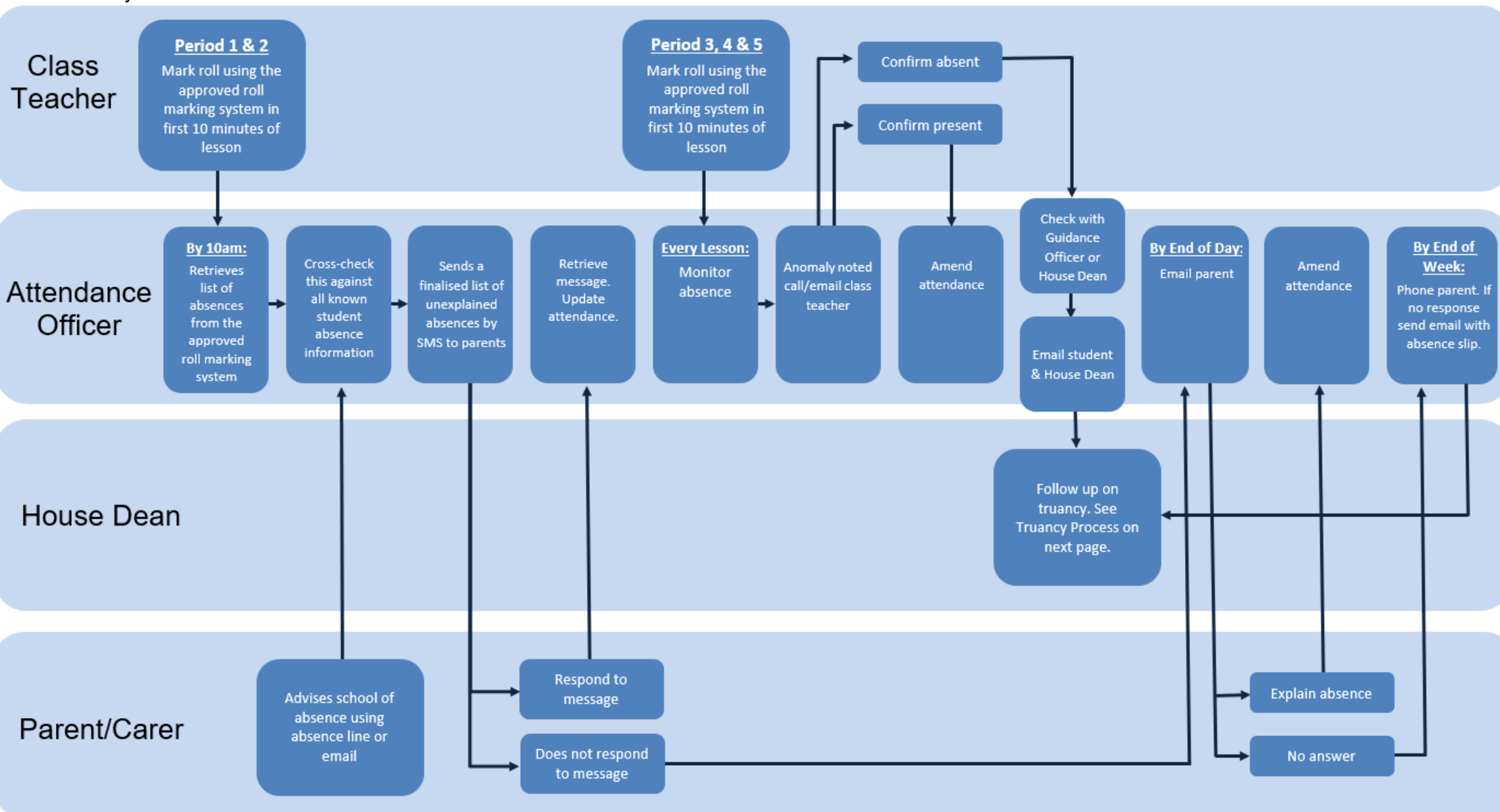
3.3 School

- assign roll marking responsibilities to appropriate staff
- assign data entry of student attendances and absences to appropriate officers
- ensure that roll markers and data entry officers understand and carry out their responsibilities
- ensure casual and relieving teachers are provided with rolls for relevant classes
- ensure that roll data is uploaded to OneSchool weekly from the approved roll marking system
- ensure specific procedures for the Day 8 enrolment collection, as provided to schools at the beginning of each year, are strictly followed
- develop and document a school communication process for parents/guardians to use when notifying the school of their child's absence and make this publicly available through the school's website, newsletters and enrolment package
- communicate processes and procedures for 'late arrival' and 'early departure' to parents/guardians and the school community through the school's website and newsletters
- establish a process for keeping written records of conversations with parents/guardians regarding student absences
- determine whether explanations provided for student absences are reasonable, or not, and ensure that correct codes are used
- implement truancy procedures outlined in Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance in State Schools and local by-laws where appropriate.
- establish & implement processes to monitor student attendance, these processes include lateness to school, full and part day absences and attendance at scheduled classes
- follow up unexplained absences or unauthorised absences for which an unsatisfactory reason is given, satisfactory reasons for absences can be found in Section 5, Table 2 of this document
- notify the parent/guardian if the reason given for the absence is unexplained or unauthorised, unless the student is an adult or living independently, in which case notify the student.

3.4 Teachers

- keep attendance records and monitor attendance and absenteeism of enrolled students
- ensure roll marking is accurate and recognise that rolls are legal documents and can be subpoenaed for court purposes
- use the approved roll marking system to mark rolls every lesson and during Instep within the first 10 minutes, if the approved roll marking system is not working take a 'paper roll," printed from OneSchool, and use the approved roll marking system at a later time to mark the roll. If there is an ongoing issue with the approved roll marking system the administration should be notified as soon as possible and all absences should be emailed to the attendance officer
- never record a student as being present unless they have physically seen them, do not rely on the word of others as this may compromise your duty of care requirements
- notify the rolls attendance officer when a student is going to be absent from a lesson due to an alternative school activity, the timetabled teacher should also be notified as a matter of courtesy
- ensure late students are marked present on the roll, late students should be dealt with as a behaviour management issue if they do not have a late slip. If the student has arrived to school late they must be directed to sign in with the attendance officer and be issued with a late slip.
- alert the House Dean when a student's absence is unauthorised or when concerned that the explanation may be unsatisfactory.

Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology

4   Roll marking and monitoring attendance

Same day student absence notification.

Class Teacher

- **Period 1 & 2** Mark roll using the approved roll marking system in first 10 minutes of lesson
- **Period 3, 4 & 5** Mark roll using the approved roll marking system in first 10 minutes of lesson
- Confirm absent
- Confirm present

Attendance Officer

- **By 10am:** Retrieves list of absences from the approved roll marking system
- Cross-check this against all known student absence information
- Sends a finalised list of unexplained absences by SMS to parents
- Retrieve message. Update attendance.
- **Every Lesson:** Monitor absence
- Anomaly noted call/email class teacher
- Amend attendance
- Check with Guidance Officer or House Dean
- Email student & House Dean
- **By End of Day:** Email parent
- Amend attendance
- **By End of Week:** Phone parent. If no response send email with absence slip.

House Dean

- Follow up on truancy. See Truancy Process on next page.

Parent/Carer

- Advises school of absence using absence line or email
- Respond to message
- Does not respond to message
- Explain absence
- No answer

5 Unexplained Absence Discrepancies

In order to support the implementation of the flowcharts across the Academy, the following step-by-step guide can be used to respond to unexplained discrepancies.

1. Classroom teacher marks the roll in the first 10 minutes of the lesson.
2. AO monitors the marking of rolls in each lesson of the day. If roll is unmarked after 30 minutes (25 minutes if the lesson is 30 minutes or less in duration) the AO will make contact with the teacher in the classroom, to mark roll immediately.
   – this contact is to be made via a phone call. If the AO is unable to make contact via phone, the AO will send an email.
3. Daily report generated of unmarked rolls. AO emails directly to nominated DP or AP and follows up with teacher if required.
4. Daily report generated of Unexplained Absences regarding lesson discrepancies. AO monitors throughout the day.
5. AO emails teacher and student of the unexplained absence at the end of the current day.
   – Teacher investigates and raises unexplained absence with student to determine whether student was absent or present, if student was present correct the absence in the approved roll marking system.
   – If student does have an unexplained absence, the teacher emails the AO as soon as possible.
   – AO emails the HD to investigate and determine whether a truancy has occurred.
   – If truancy confirmed, HD emails AO to mark student as Unauthorised (J) and HD applies Student Code of Conduct.
6. Every Wednesday, AO sends HODs an update of staff who have not completed the process from the previous and current week.
7. Every Friday, AO sends DP line manager an email with information regarding Unexplained (U) absence discrepancies still outstanding for DPs to follow up with HOD.
8. Week 5 and 10 – AO emails nominated DP or AP a list of staff who still have outstanding U or discrepancies.
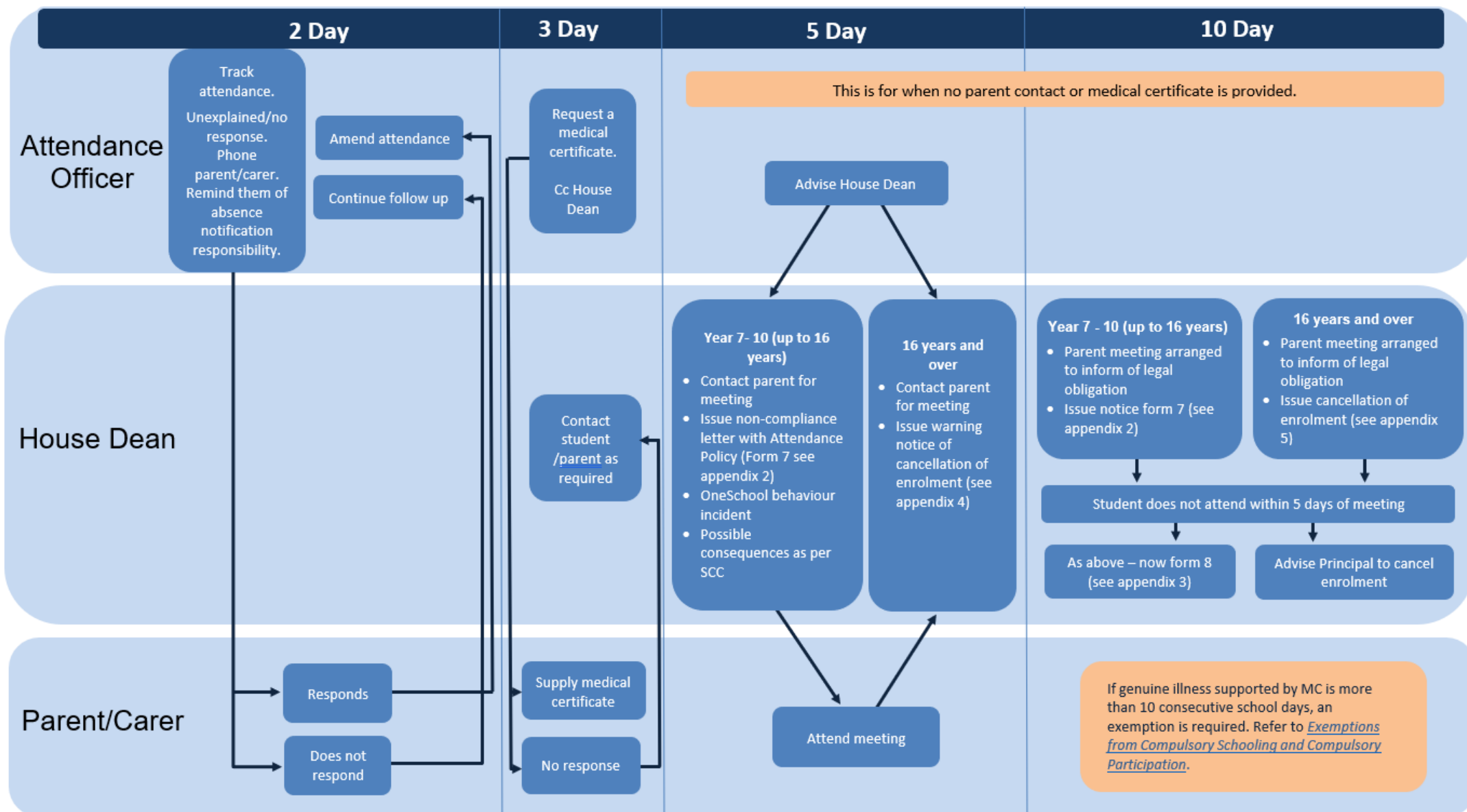
6 Truancy – Unauthorised Absences

Please see process flowchart below
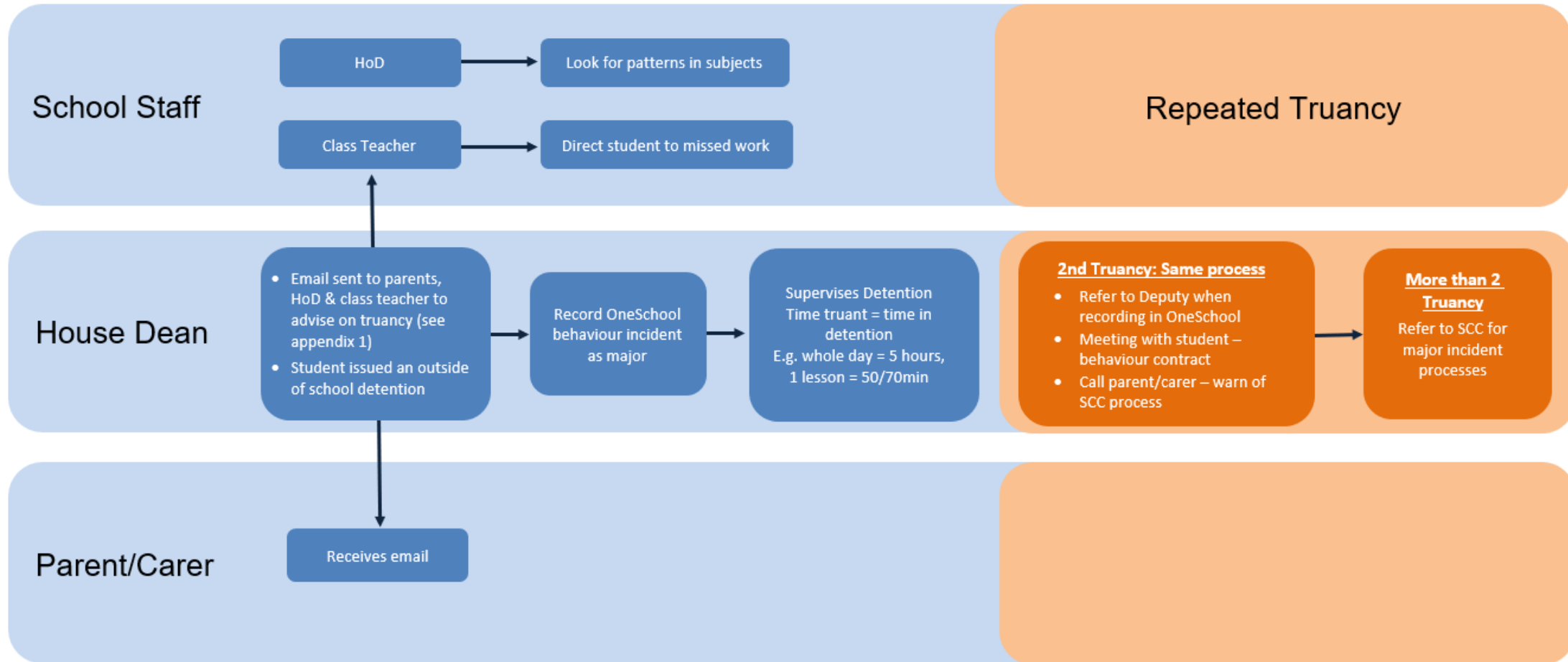
Truancy: <u>Truancy that is deliberate</u> and becomes a pattern will result in consequences as per the flow chart. Truancy that is stand-alone behaviour requires a behaviour response which includes catch up on work during detention time. Failure to attend is deliberate and requires consequences aligned with non-compliance.

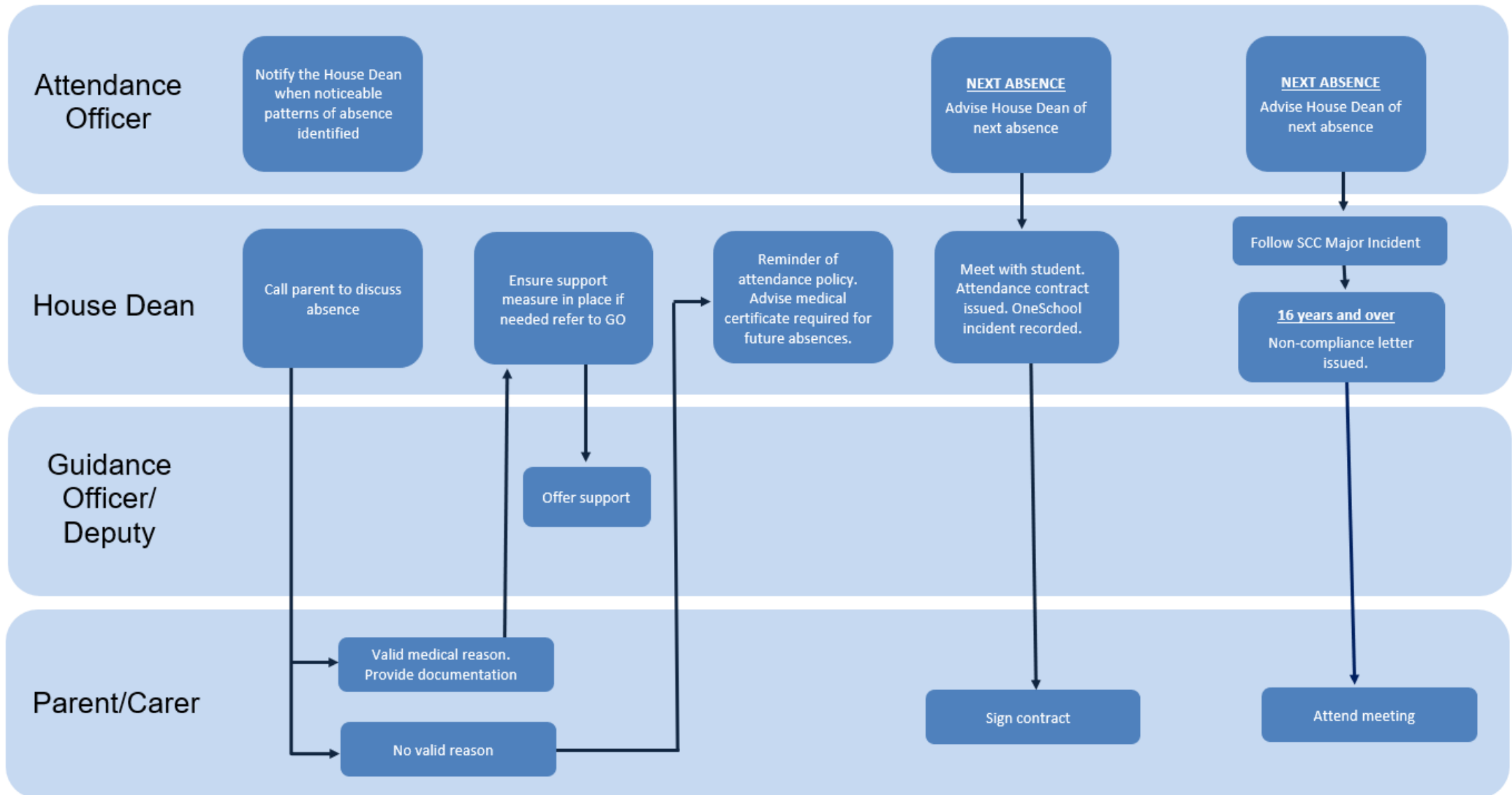**Non-Compliance includes not limited to: a)** Non participation in program **b)** Deliberate absence on special calendar days/events **c)** Early holidays or holidays throughout the term with non-approval **d)** Non completion of work – detentions

7 Prolonged Absence

	2 Day	3 Day	5 Day	10 Day

This is for when no parent contact or medical certificate is provided.

Attendance Officer

- Track attendance. Unexplained/no response. Phone parent/carer. Remind them of absence notification responsibility.
- Amend attendance
- Continue follow up
- Request a medical certificate. Cc House Dean
- Advise House Dean

House Dean

- Contact student /parent as required

Year 7- 10 (up to 16 years)
- Contact parent for meeting
- Issue non-compliance letter with Attendance Policy (Form 7 see appendix 2)
- OneSchool behaviour incident
- Possible consequences as per SCC

16 years and over
- Contact parent for meeting
- Issue warning notice of cancellation of enrolment (see appendix 4)

Year 7 - 10 (up to 16 years)
- Parent meeting arranged to inform of legal obligation
- Issue notice form 7 (see appendix 2)

16 years and over
- Parent meeting arranged to inform of legal obligation
- Issue cancellation of enrolment (see appendix 5)

Student does not attend within 5 days of meeting

As above – now form 8 (see appendix 3)

Advise Principal to cancel enrolment

Parent/Carer

- Responds
- Does not respond
- Supply medical certificate
- No response
- Attend meeting

If genuine illness supported by MC is more than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption is required. Refer to *Exemptions from Compulsory Schooling and Compulsory Participation*.

8   Patterns of Absence

Such as attendance below 90%, same day absence each week/fortnight

Attendance Officer
- Notify the House Dean when noticeable patterns of absence identified
- **NEXT ABSENCE** Advise House Dean of next absence
- **NEXT ABSENCE** Advise House Dean of next absence

House Dean
- Call parent to discuss absence
- Ensure support measure in place if needed refer to GO
- Reminder of attendance policy. Advise medical certificate required for future absences.
- Meet with student. Attendance contract issued. OneSchool incident recorded.
- Follow SCC Major Incident
- **16 years and over** Non-compliance letter issued.

Guidance Officer/ Deputy
- Offer support

Parent/Carer
- Valid medical reason. Provide documentation
- No valid reason
- Sign contract
- Attend meeting

9   Patterns of Absence

Who	Patterns within the Semester	Notes
Attendance Officer	**1st Late** – AO sends generated email to parent/carer, and student and logs the contact in OneSchool and refers the contact to HD.	*The Attendance Officer will use professional discretion based on communication from the student and or parents/carers to determine best course of action.*
	2nd Late – AO sends generated warning email to parent/carer and student and logs the contact in OneSchool and refers the contact to HD.	
	3rd Late – AO emails House Dean	
	4th Late – AO emails House Dean	
	5th Late – AO emails House Dean	
	6th Late – AO emails House Dean	
House Dean	**3rd Late** – House Dean follows up with student and parent/carer, logs contact and behaviour incident in OneSchool and follows up as per Student Code of Conduct for a minor incident.	*The House Dean will use professional discretion based on communication from the student and or parents/carers to determine best course of action.*
	4th Late – House Dean follows up with student and parent/carer, logs contact and behaviour incident in OneSchool and follows up as per Student Code of Conduct for a major incident.	
	5th Late - House Dean follows up with student and parent/carer, logs contact and behaviour incident in OneSchool and follows up as per Student Code of Conduct for a major incident and initiates an Attendance Contract.	*House Dean may involve Guidance Officers or other support staff to differentiate for students and to ensure learning days are maximised.*
	6th Late – House Dean in consultation with senior leadership, enters incident in OneSchool as Major and enacts the Student Code of Conduct for major breach for compulsory schooling/post-compulsory schooling.	

10 Roll marking in State Schools

Table 1 – Absence codes for full or part day absence

Type of Absence	Code	Explanatory notes
Entire day	A	Student was absent entire day.
Early (No Penalty)	E	Student left early, but within the final 2 hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as an afternoon/half day absence. If the student left earlier than 2 hours prior to the end of the scheduled school day, this will count as an afternoon/half day absence (see "P" code).
Late (No Penalty)	L	Student arrived late, but within 2 hours of scheduled schooling. This will not count as a morning/half day absence. If the student arrived after the first 2 hours of the scheduled school day, this will count as a morning/half day absence (see "M" code).
Morning	M	Student was absent for the morning. This will count as a half-day absence.
Afternoon	P	Student was absent during the afternoon. This will count as a half-day absence.

Table 2 – Absence reason codes for reasonable and unreasonable excuses

Pursuant to s.176(1) of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld) (EGPA), each parent of a child who is of compulsory school age must ensure that the child is enrolled and attends school on every school day for the educational program in which the child is enrolled unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. Pursuant to s.239(1) of the EGPA, a parent of a young person in the compulsory participation phase must ensure the young person is participating full-time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse.

Reason	Code	Description	Examples	Considered reasonable	Counted as an absence*
School activity	A	Student is participating in an authorised school activity for school purposes. NOTE: If used for attendance at hospital school, upon discharge from hospital, the hospital school should advise the usual school of any variations in the student's attendance. Replace Code A with Code I (Illness and medical appointments) for days when the student has not participated in the education program at the hospital school due to illness.	• Performing in school choir, band or dance group • Participating in youth parliament or council, or in community service • Attending a hospital school	Yes	No
Attendance not required	B	Student is not required to attend school on this day as it is not included in their educational program.	• Year 12 students with a four-day timetable • Exam blocks where students are not required to attend on days with no exams • Students who are on a charge-related suspension and who have enrolled at a school of distance education or are accessing an educational program from home • Students in a youth detention centre • Absence is subject to a direction or order given about an infectious or contagious disease or condition Students on a part-time educational program (for DoE employees only)	Yes	No
Excursion	C	Student is participating in a school excursion.	• Includes part-day, full-day or multi-day class visits to venues outside the school	Yes	No

				• School camps and overnight excursions		
Sorry Business	D	Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students participating in Sorry Business*. Parents should be encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. Schools should work with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of routine where culturally appropriate. These situations should be handled with respect and sensitivity and should be underpinned by the interests of the child. *'Sorry Business' is an expression used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for a time of **mourning** in the community.	• Cultural activities related to a recent family bereavement • Grief for a close family member or extended family members	Yes	Yes
Off campus activity	F	Student is participating in an authorised activity that is away from the school campus. These activities will be regular and ongoing in nature.	• Flexible arrangements • Attendance at a TAFE or other training provider course • Participation in a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship • Attendance at a Positive Learning Centre	Yes	No
Family reasons	G	Student is absent due to family circumstances beyond the influence of the student. The parent is aware that their child is absent and an explanation has been provided to the school. Parents should be encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. Schools should work with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of routine. These situations should be handled with respect and sensitivity and should be underpinned by the interests of the child. Where these absences are persistent and regular, principals should discuss the situation with the parent and/or student to determine if additional supports and/or strategies are required to strengthen engagement and improve attendance.	• Moving house • Transport issues • Family member is ill or in hospital	Yes	Yes

Holiday	H	The parent, or the student if they are living [independently](#) (DoE employees only), has informed the school that the student/family is taking a holiday. Note that holidays during the school term should be discouraged. If the absence is more than 10 consecutive days, an exemption may be considered. Refer to [Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation](#).		Yes	Yes
Illness and medical appointments	I	The parent, or the student if they are living [independently](#) (DoE employees only), has informed the school that the student is sick. Where these absences are persistent and regular, schools may request that documentary evidence (e.g. medical certificate) is provided. If a medical certificate has been provided, this should be noted in OneSchool and kept on file. If a student is unable to attend school for a period longer than 10 consecutive school days, an exemption may be considered. Refer to [Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation](#).	• All references to ill health or reasons related to the health of the student (including [mental health](#)) • Absences to attend medical/dental/health professional appointments during school hours • School refusal (i.e. student refusing to go to school due to a fear of attending school or anxiety about leaving home)	Yes	Yes
Unauthorised	J	The excuse given for a student absence is deemed as unreasonable by the principal. The reason (with any supporting evidence) as to why an explanation is considered to be unreasonable must be documented in OneSchool.	• Leisure activities • Shopping • Visiting friends and relatives • Celebrating birthdays • Fishing • Truancy • Any other reason for absence that the principal does not consider to be reasonable	No	Yes
Natural disaster	N	Student is unable to attend school due to an extreme weather event or other natural disaster. This code may be used whether or not the student is continuing with school work while absent from school, and may be used for full or part-day absences.		Yes	No

Other	O	Only use this code if the no other absence reason code is suitable and the principal has determined that the excuse provided by the parent or student (where the student is independent, an adult, or where it would be inappropriate to ask the parent) is reasonable. Parents should be encouraged to ensure their child misses as little school as possible. Schools should work with families to encourage them to have the child attend school to maintain a sense of routine. These situations should be handled with respect and sensitivity and should be underpinned by the interests of the child	• Religious observances • Funerals • Legal matters (i.e. attending court) • Non-representative sport events / sports events not endorsed by the school	Yes	Yes
Short suspension	P	Student is suspended for 1 to 10 days under s.283 of the EGPA.		Yes	Yes
Long suspension	Q	Student is suspended for 11 to 20 days under s.283 of the EGPA, or for a student who is on a charge-related suspension and who has not enrolled at a school of distance education.		Yes	Yes
Suspension pending exclusion	R	Student is suspended pending an exclusion decision by the principal.		Yes	Yes
Sport (Representative)	S	Student is representing their school, district, region, state or nation at a sporting event which is recognised by the school (refer to Queensland Representative School Sport for the full list of representative sports). **NOTE:** If non-representative sport, use Code O (Other).	• Australian football • golf • swimming • water polo • multi-class events in aquathon, cross country, track and field	Yes	No
Unexplained	U	No reason has been given for the student's absence.		No	Yes
Work experience	W	Student is participating in a work experience program approved and organised by the school.		Yes	No

Exemptions	Z	Student has been granted an exemption from schooling. Refer to [Exemptions from compulsory schooling and compulsory participation](#). Refer to [Guidelines for recording attendance of students who are enrolled but not attending school and cannot be located, and students who have been granted an exemption from schooling](#)		Yes	No

For absences less than two hours (i.e. E or L code from [Table 1](#)), the absence will not be counted irrespective of the reason given.

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