



# NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

## Attendance Policy

April 2024

# | Attendance Policy

## **RATIONALE**

Newtown High School of the Performing Arts aims to develop skilled and creative learners who value the performing and creative arts and academic excellence. The school creates an environment where all students are encouraged to set high expectations and are supported to achieve their full potential.

As members of the school community, we are committed to our core values of Excellence, Creativity and Equity. We have an expectation that all members of our community will consistently act in a manner that promotes these values both as individuals and as representatives of the school.

Regular attendance at school is essential to support students to maximise their potential. Section 22 of the Education Act (1990) states that it is the duty of the parent of a child to ensure their child attends school. Schools, in partnership with parents/caregivers, are responsible for encouraging and maintaining regular attendance of students. Regular attendance and punctuality are important characteristics of successful students. Being on time and prepared to learn gives everyone the best chance of success in the classroom. It is important that students, staff and parents/caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

## **BACKGROUND**

This document contains information about the systems and procedures to support student attendance. Newtown High School of the Performing Arts is a partially selective (in Dance, Drama and Music), co-educational, comprehensive secondary school located on Gadigal Land approximately 5 kms southwest of Sydney. The student population is approximately 1150.

## **UNDERPINNING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The NSPA Attendance Policy has been devised in alignment with the below policies:

School Attendance Policy

[School Attendance \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/school-attendance-policy)

Student Attendance in Government Schools – Procedures

[Student Attendance in Government Schools Procedures \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/student-attendance-in-government-schools-procedures)

Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools

[Enrolment of Students in NSW Government Schools](https://www.nsw.gov.au/enrolment-of-students-in-nsw-government-schools)

General enrolment Procedures

[General Enrolment Procedures \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/general-enrolment-procedures)

Student Welfare Policy

[Student Welfare \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/student-welfare-policy)

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Every day counts, as regular attendance helps students to:

- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Develop and maintain friendships.
- Be more engaged at school.
- Progress with their learning.
- Be more aware of career and life options.

Supporting positive school attendance is a shared responsibility – everyone has a role.

### **Students**

- Attend every class, on time, every day, ready to learn.
- Provide a note or medical certificate if absent from school (submitted by parent/carer by email to the school office, or submitted by student to the Attendance Officer in the Swipe Room).

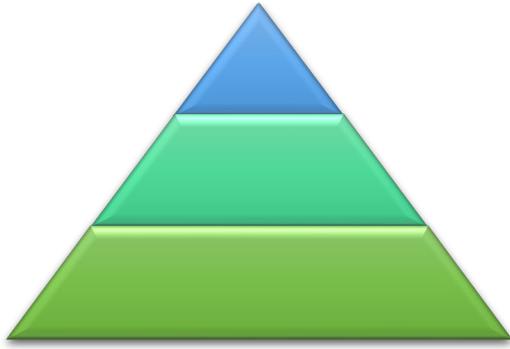
### **Parents/Carers**

- Ensure your child attends school on every school day.
- Inform the school if your child is home sick and will therefore be absent.
- Provide a satisfactory and timely explanation for all absences.
- Contact the school if an absence will be for an extended period of time.

### **School**

- Classroom teachers monitor students' attendance daily by recording attendance every lesson.
- Notify parent/carers of any unexplained absence for the day via text message.
- Notify parent/carers of instances of truancy or persistent lateness to class.
- Discuss individual attendance with students and parent/carers and offer support to parents and students when school attendance has become a problem.
- Will notify parents and carers if there are more than THREE consecutive days absence with no explanation.
- Attendance concerns addressed in line with NHSPA Student Behaviour Management & Support Policy

## ATTENDANCE STRATEGIES



Individual Interventions

Targeted Interventions

Universal Prevention

This tiered approach supports attendance by:

- Fostering regular attendance by establishing a positive and welcoming school culture for all students.
- Addressing attendance concerns by identifying and providing targeted strategies for students or cohorts needing more support.
- Re-engaging students with learning by providing tailored interventions for students with significant support needs.

### Whole School Prevention

NHSPA is committed to creating a welcoming environment for all students to attend school and participate in learning. Student attendance is promoted and supported by all staff through:

- Differentiated teaching strategies to create an engaging, positive learning environment.
- Consistent and accurate roll marking via Sentral and follow up absences.
- Promoting the importance and benefits of regular attendance with the school community.
- Early intervention is identified and actioned.
- Developing positive teacher-student relationships: “know your students”.
- Encouraging students to develop high expectations by promoting personal goal setting.
- Parent Portal on Sentral: clearly communicating students’ pattern of attendance including lateness, partial absences, explained and unexplained absences.
- Restorative approaches that focus on building, maintaining and restoring positive relationships.
- Child Protection requirements are adhered to by all, for any matter relating to school attendance where safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns arise for a student.

## **Targeted Interventions**

NHSPA engages with the community to address barriers to attendance and improve student engagement through:

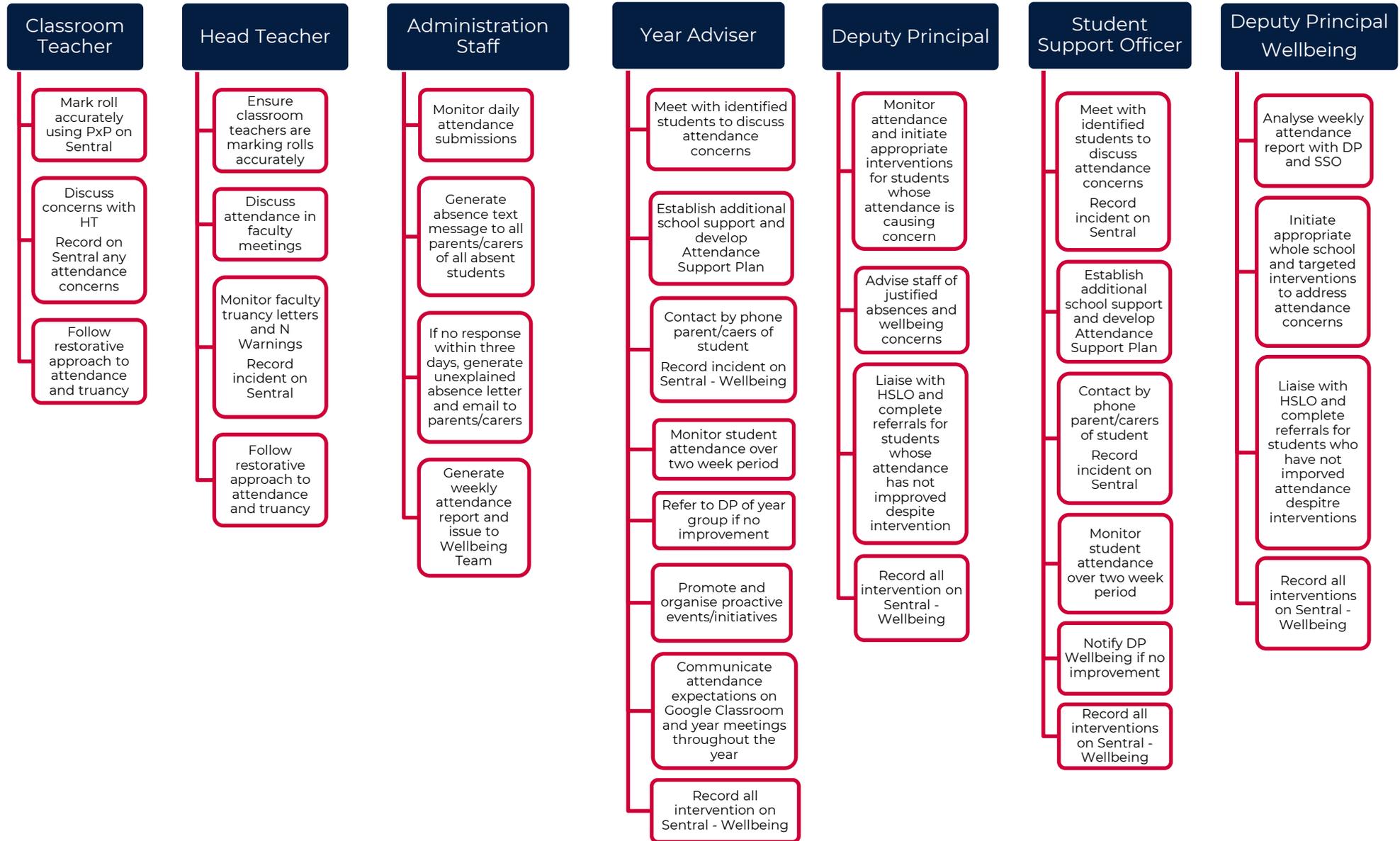
- Promptly following up unexplained absences.
- Working collaboratively with students and parent/carers to understand the underlying factors contributing to non-attendance and planning supportive strategies.
- Year and stage-based interventions to promote the importance and benefits of regular attendance.
- Executive, wellbeing, and learning and support teams regularly review and monitor attendance reports for patterns or students at risk of chronic absence.

## **Individual Interventions**

Additional support is provided to re-engage individual students with significant barriers or complex needs that impact on their attendance. This is fostered through:

- Referral to external support services for additional interventions including counselling, tailored strategies and programs.
- Referral to Home School Liaison Officer for case management.
- Negotiated learning goals with clear and consistent expectations.
- One on one support including Learning and Support (LST), Student Support Officer (SSO) Counselling and mentoring.

# NHSPA Attendance Policy Flow Chart



## A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT ATTENDANCE

A restorative approach is used to rebuild and strengthen relationships. At Newtown High School of the Performing Arts the following approach is used to promote positive behaviour, wellbeing and connectedness across the entire school community.

### Structure

#### Classroom Teacher

##### Restorative Discussion

*For attendance concerns a classroom teacher:*

- Has a Restorative Discussion with student
- Negotiates support to catch up on missed work and assessments
- Notifies the Head Teacher of any attendance concerns
- Record incident on Sentral



#### Head Teacher

##### Restorative Discussion

*For attendance concerns a Head Teacher:*

- Has a restorative conversation with student and discusses available support to catch up on missed work or assessment
- Monitors pattern of attendance with classroom teacher
- Raises concern at executive or wellbeing meeting
- Parents contacted and action recorded on Sentral

*N.B.*

*For Years 10, 11 & 12 students – N Determination Course Warning letter can be issued for not meeting some or all of the course outcomes/ or not shown diligence and sustained effort in the course and course warning process then followed*



#### Deputy Principal

##### Restorative Discussion and DP Contract

*For ongoing attendance concerns, a Deputy Principal may:*

- Interview the student to discuss their pattern of attendance
- Conduct a formal interview with parent/carer
- Refer student to SSO, YA or school counsellor for monitoring and support
- Develop an attendance plan
- Place student on a Deputy Principal contract
- Issue a Letter of Concern and Negotiated Behaviour Management Plan to be undertaken for five school weeks
- Enable a follow up progress report and parent/carer meeting
- Student may be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO). A parent meeting to be arranged to discuss strategies to improve attendance, the legal ramifications of non-attendance and a formal attendance plan developed by HSLO.



#### Breaking the DP contract/Letter of Concern

If there is no improvement in attendance after a letter of concern and the current behaviour management plan is not effective, the Deputy Principal will follow the NHSPA Student Behaviour Management Plan in consultation with the Principal.

### Additional Wellbeing Support

#### Student Support Officer

- Receives attendance report from Sentral and has targeted restorative discussions with student
- SSO will call parent/carer for further discussion regarding poor attendance
- Records incident on Sentral

##### Support could include:

- Developing an attendance support plan
- Fortnightly monitoring for two weeks
- Informing the Deputy Principal, during regular meetings, to discuss support strategies to improve attendance.

***If attendance does not improve, additional intervention strategies will be discussed with Year Adviser and Deputy Principal***

#### Year Advisor

- Receives weekly Sentral attendance report
- Has targeted restorative discussions with students of concern if the SSO Intervention is unsuccessful
- Year advisor to call parent/carer for further discussion regarding poor attendance.
- Records incident on Sentral

##### Support could include:

- Initiating a progress report for students with low attendance to confirm pattern and impact on student learning outcomes
- Informing Deputy Principal, during regular meetings, to discuss support strategies to improve attendance.

***If attendance does not improve additional intervention strategies will be discussed with Deputy Principal***

# A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT TRUANCY

A restorative approach is used to rebuild and strengthen relationships. At Newtown High School of the Performing Arts the following approach is used to promote positive behaviour, wellbeing and connectedness across the entire school community.

## Structure

## Additional Wellbeing Support

### Classroom Teacher

#### Restorative Discussion and Classroom Contract

For partial truancy a classroom teacher:

- Sends a partial absence email to parents
- Has a Restorative Discussion with student
- Notifies the Head Teacher of any truancy
- Issues a Classroom contract for second truancy
- Monitors student attendance over six lessons
- Record incident on Sentral

N.B.

- Should the classroom contract be breached refer to Head Teacher and continue to monitor whilst on a Head Teacher contract.

### Year Advisor

- Receives truancy list from Sentral and has targeted restorative discussions with students of concern
- Record incident on Sentral

#### Support could include:

- Initiating a progress report for students with multiple truanancies to confirm pattern and impact on student learning outcomes
- Informing Deputy Principal, during regular meetings, to discuss support strategies to improve attendance.

**If pattern of truancy continues additional intervention strategies will be discussed with Deputy Principal**

### Head Teacher

#### Restorative Discussion and HT Contract

For breach of classroom contract a Head Teacher:

- Places student on a HT contract, has a restorative conversation with student and makes a phone call to the parent/carer to discuss concerns and details of the HT contract.
- Checks pattern of attendance with classroom teacher – refer to Student Behaviour Management & Support Policy for action/consequences.
- Makes a follow-up phone call to parents to discuss the outcome/progress of student attendance and application whilst on the HT contract
- Notifies of a concern at executive meeting if student has been placed on a HT contract for repeated truanancies.
- Parent contact and record incident on Sentral

N.B.

Should the Head Teacher contract be breached the Head Teacher informs the Deputy Principal

For Years 10, 11 & 12 students – N Determination Course Warning letter can be issued for not meeting some or all of the course outcomes/ or not shown diligence and sustained effort in the course and course warning process then followed.

### Deputy Principal

#### Restorative Discussion and DP Contract

For breach of HT contract, or more than one Head Teacher contract in one term, a Deputy Principal may:

- Interview the student to discuss their persistent truancy
- Conduct a formal interview with parent/carer
- Develop an attendance support plan
- Place student on a Deputy Principal contract
- Place student on lunchtime detention/s as per NHSPA Student Behaviour Management and Support Policy
- Issue a Letter of Concern and Negotiated Behaviour Management Plan undertaken for 5 school weeks
- Enable a follow up progress report and parent/carer meeting
- Parent contact and record incident on Sentral

N.B.

- If a student is found outside of school grounds without permission, they will be sent to the Deputy Principal responsible for that year group.
- Persistent truancy may be referred to the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO). A parent meeting to be arranged to discuss strategies to improve attendance, the legal ramifications of non-attendance and a formal attendance plan developed by HSLO.

### Breaking the DP contract/Letter of Concern

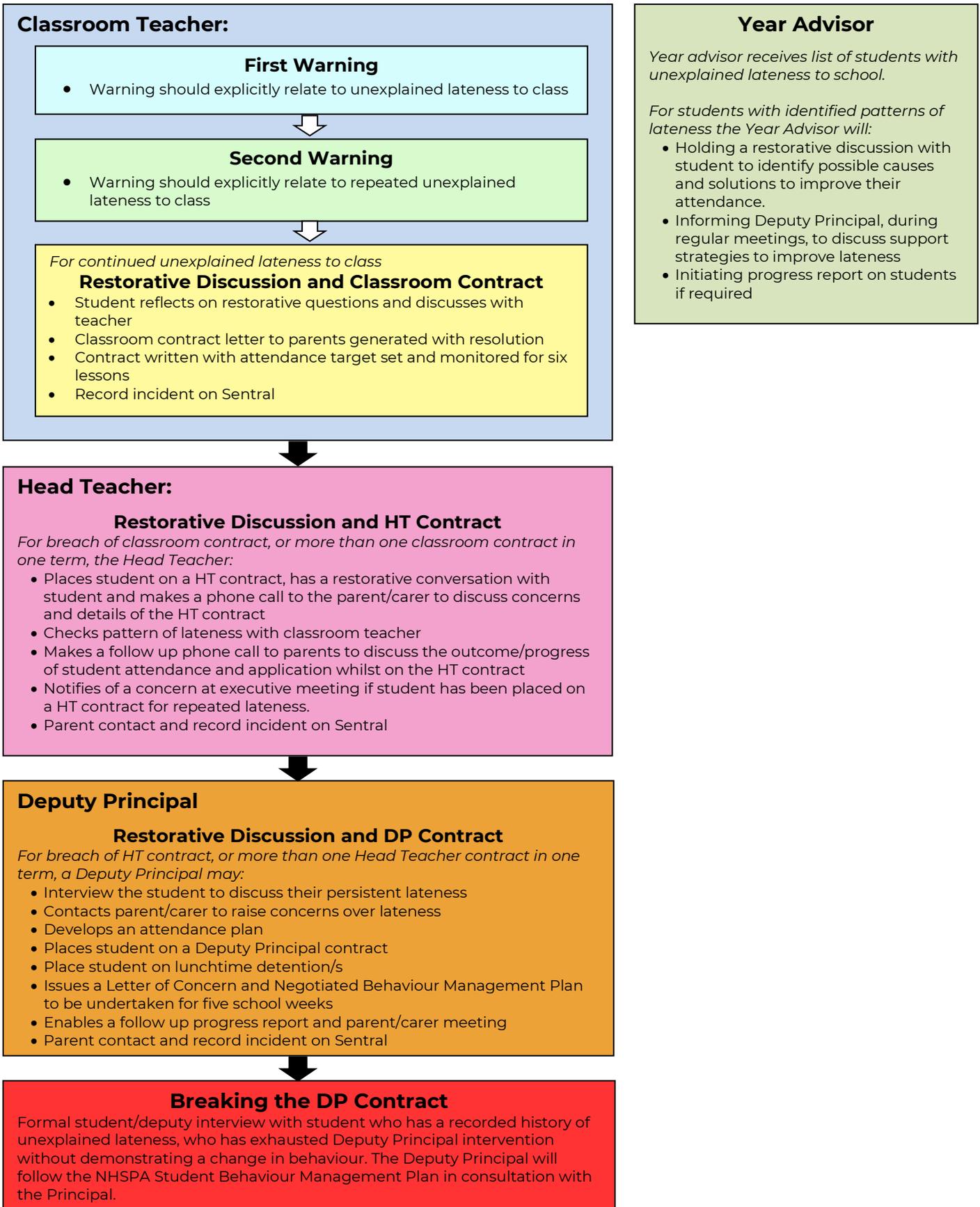
If the pattern of truancy continues after a letter of concern and a current behaviour management plan is not effective, then the Deputy Principal will follow the NHSPA Student Behaviour Management Plan in consultation with the Principal.

## A RESTORATIVE APPROACH TO STUDENT LATENESS

At Newtown High School of the Performing Arts the following approach is used to promote positive behaviour, wellbeing and connectedness across the entire school community.

### Structure

### Additional Wellbeing Support



# Restorative Questions

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**Date:**

**Class:**

**Period:**

**Student's name:**

**Faculty:**

**Teacher name:**

What happened?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> Talking</li><li><input type="radio"/> Distracting others</li><li><input type="radio"/> Swearing/Inappropriate language</li><li><input type="radio"/> Out of Uniform</li><li><input type="radio"/> Inappropriate use of device</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> Unsafe behaviour</li><li><input type="radio"/> Not following instructions</li><li><input type="radio"/> Chewing gum</li><li><input type="radio"/> Lateness</li><li><input type="radio"/> Disruptive behaviour in the playground</li></ul>	Other: _____ _____ _____ _____
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What were you thinking of at the time?

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What have you thought about since?

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Who has been affected by what you have done? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="radio"/> Myself</li><li><input type="radio"/> Other students</li><li><input type="radio"/> Teacher</li><li><input type="radio"/> Community</li></ul>	In what way have they been affected? _____ _____ _____
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What are you going to do to modify your behaviour in order to resolve the issue?

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**I \_\_\_\_\_ understand that if I break this contract I will be required to attend a Head Teacher restorative interview involving parental contact and be placed on a Head Teacher Contract for a period of 6 lessons.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Teacher's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

- As per the student behavior management policy, when a student is placed on a Classroom Contract the student and the teacher discuss the restorative questions above. The parent/carer will receive a letter informing them when the student is placed on the contract. Incident is recorded on Sentral.
- If a student is placed on a Head Teacher or Deputy Principal Contract, parent/carer will receive a letter informing them of that contract.

# School Attendance Support Plan

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**Date:**

**Student's name:**

Regular attendance helps students to: develop a sense of belonging, maintain and develop friendships, progress with learning and be more engaged at school.

<b>Barriers/Blockers</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
Reasons for not attending school.	Strategies to attend school.	Who is responsible?

Plan start date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Plan end date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

This plan was created by:

In consultation with: