

Rothwell Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2017-18

Ratified by the Governing Body	September 2017
Renewal Date	September 2018

Working together to



our potential.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy and Procedures.

Our school aims to provide an excellent, safe environment for the teaching, learning and development of ALL children.

We offer a broad, creative and inclusive curriculum, which nurtures children to grow into responsible, honest, healthy, independent *pupils* who achieve well to be the best they can be. Our PSHE programme, values and ethos promote our aims:

- To raise attainment and achievement levels by having high expectations of attendance and punctuality from all stakeholders.
- To further create a culture in which good attendance is celebrated and accepted as the norm.
- To provide a safe and inspiring environment for the teaching, learning and development of pupils, by encouraging outstanding attendance.
- To work closely with other schools and agencies to support pupils and families and in turn raise attendance.
- To raise the profile of punctuality and reduce the lost learning time.

High expectations in terms of punctuality and attendance are embedded as part of our school culture. The performance indicator by which we judge the success of our efforts is our overall average attendance figure, the percentage of children who achieve or exceed the school target (97%) and the number of children who are classed as persistent absentees. (Attendance of 90% and below).

Registers

As a legal document, registers are kept on the premises at all times. Teachers are required to complete the register daily at the beginning of each day and after lunch. The register must be returned to the office immediately after being taken.

Punctuality

Class doors are open from 8:50am and children are expected to be in class ready to start their learning at 9:00am. At 9:00am the cloakroom doors will be locked, therefore any child arriving after 9:00am will need to enter school through the main office. Any child arriving after 9:30am (unless there is evidence of a medical appointment.) will be classed as an unauthorised absence for that session (U code). It is the responsibility of the office to ensure any child who is late has their mark changed accordingly in the register. If a child is late, their parents will receive a text message. If a child is late on 3 occasions during a half term, they will receive a letter acknowledging our concerns and offering possible mentor support if appropriate. Continued lateness may result in a meeting taking place with the School Attendance Team; this may also involve Louise Ellis (Cluster Attendance Improvement Officer) or Angela Walker – Link governor for attendance. Mrs Brooks, Mr Durkan and Mrs Rothenburg will also regularly speak to any families who are repeatedly late.

If a child is continuously late for school, they may be expected to make up the learning time lost. It is the responsibility of Parents/Carers to ensure that their child is in school on time, to ensure their child is able to start their learning and choose their lunch for the day along with the other children. Mrs Brooks, our pastoral leader, is happy to support any families with any difficulties they face with this aspect or any other.

Absence procedures

We ask all parents/carers to notify school of any absence before 9am. If the office receives a message regarding the reason for absence, or through first day contact, they will enter the relevant code. If the teacher is informed by the parent verbally or by a letter, they will complete an orange slip to inform the office.

(See Appendix 1 for absence codes.)

By 9:05am, the registers must be completed in order for AB to double check with the classes that the child is not in and make first day contact through telephoning. If unable to reach the parent/carer, a text will be sent to the parent/carer asking them to make contact with the school regarding the reason for absence. Failure to make contact over several days may result in a home visit being made by the learning mentor, depending on any risk factors if we have safeguarding or attendance concerns and are unable to make contact, additional steps, such as, home visits by Pastoral leader/SLT and contacting other agencies, may be necessary.

We ask parents/carers to make immediate contact if they know that their child will be absent for any reason.

Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence is most frequently defined as absence where no explanation has been given by parents/carers, however, there are some further instances where planned absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Examples of these instances are listed below:

- All holidays will be unauthorised including long weekends and preparation before or recovery from a holiday. (Unless exceptional circumstance apply).
- Visits to relatives
- Visits to events
- Modelling auditions
- Birthdays and shopping trips
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Family day out
- Attendance is below the school target or children are on the 'Fast Track' process.

Children and young people who return to school following an unauthorised absence will require a written note or must inform the office directly, otherwise the absence will remain unauthorised. If attendance is or has been poor, this may still not be authorised.

In the event of a parent taking a pupil out of school for an unauthorised holiday or reason listed above, following the change in Government Regulations in September 2013 a fixed penalty notice may be issued. (see Appendix 4).

Appendix 5 shows this procedure for holidays.

The attendance team will use their professional judgement and discretion in deciding whether to authorise an absence. Full day absences for medical appointments may not be authorised unless there is a specific reason, such as an appointment out of area.

If a child has a record of poor attendance at a previous school or from the current or previous year, the attendance team will decide if any absences will be authorised or if a medical proof of appointment or medicine is required. In addition to this, at the end of the academic year, parents/carers of any child with attendance below target, may receive a letter stating we will not

authorise any absences from the following September unless medical proof, appointment card or medicine, are seen. All children below 94% will receive a letter, unless there is a specific reason for their absence.

Safeguarding

If school does not receive contact from parents/carers regarding a child's absence this raises safeguarding concerns. As a result, phone calls / texts home will be made by school on the first day of absence. In the event of an extended absence, subsequent contact will be made by school.

Children and young people who return to school following an unauthorised absence will require a written note otherwise the absence will remain unauthorised.

If a child continues to be absent with no reason, or a prolonged period, further enquiries will be made promptly (AB to make home visits, ringing emergency contacts or checking with a new named school if they've said they've moved to another part of the country). Should a child go missing and having exhausted their leads, we will refer immediately, as a CME (Child Missing in Education), directly to the *LCC Attendance Advisor*.

If a child has applied for extended leave, we advise parents that if they do not return by the agreed return date then they may be taken off roll (although the actual action would be to have 2 weeks unauthorised absence while following the CME procedures above).

This policy runs alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Holidays

All Cluster Schools expect that parents will take their holidays during the approved school break. It should be noted that there are 175 days each year when pupils are on holiday from school. The cost, convenience or availability of a particular holiday will not be taken into consideration.

If a parent decides to take their child out of school on holiday, during term time, they must complete a leave of absence request form (Appendix 3). Parents must accept that additional absence will be unauthorised and will be coded so upon their pupil's attendance record. Any absence will also impact on the child's colour code.

The Government changed the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations in relation to term time holidays and this came into force on 1 September 2013.

As a result, Head Teachers can no longer allow any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. This means that holidays in term time **will not** be authorised and will be marked as an unauthorised absence in the school register.

Any request for Exceptional Circumstances Absence must be put in writing to the Head Teacher. Please see Appendix 2. A response will be shared via Appendix 6 or 7, depending on the decision.

Authorised Planned Leave in Exceptional Circumstances

The following list of exceptional circumstances has been agreed by all the Primary Schools in the Rothwell Cluster.

In all cases, the child/children must have an attendance record of at least 97% for the current and previous academic year, in order for any authorised absence leave to be considered. Each case will be considered individually but usually must meet the criteria below

- Up to 2 days per year for religious festivals

- Funeral of a close family member
- Participation in a sporting event at city, regional or national level
- Theatre performances (only authorised if a recognised licence is required)
- Recognised examinations for music or dance
- Other exceptional circumstances agreed on an individual basis by the Headteacher

Monitoring

The School Attendance Team meetings are held twice a half term. During these meetings all children with attendance below 94% will be reviewed, along with any children who have had a more recent drop in their attendance or have reached the criteria of 10 unauthorised absences in the last 12 weeks, poor punctuality, Fast track cases... For each of these children, the attendance team will decide if any action is to be taken; this may involve sending awareness letters, warning letters, support being offered, letters informing parents that we will not be authorising any further absences without medical proof, fast track referral etc. We track and analyse our data regularly and share this with Angela Walker, our link governor for attendance, and with the Pupil Support Committee.

Persistent absentees

In September 2015 the DFE increased the percentage of attendance for a child to be classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' from 85% and below to 90% and below. Schools have a legal obligation to notify the local authority of pupils whose attendance is below 90%. They are then classed as a 'Persistent Absentee' regardless of the reason they have been absent. If a pupil is missing school without good reason, schools and local authorities have a number of legal powers that they can use.

Fast Tracks

We work closely with *Leeds City Council's* Attendance Improvement Officer, to develop our 'Fast track' process.

As with other cluster schools, the school attendance team identify children who meet the Fast Track criteria of 10 (or more) unauthorised absences in the last 12 weeks.

Schools will complete the initial stages of the Fast Track system. Attendance will be monitored for *a* further 20 school days, any further unauthorised absence will result in *the* parents/carers being invited to attend a School Attendance Panel meeting, to discuss the barriers and importance of attending school regularly; *a penalty warning* letter will be issued at this meeting.

This will be monitored for a further 20 school days; any further unauthorised absence after this meeting may result in *a* referral to the Attendance Advisor and a Fixed Penalty notice being served. Please see Appendix 8 for further details of this process.

Communication and sharing expectations for attendance.

A colour coding system is used to celebrate good attendance, and to raise awareness and the profile of attendance to ensure children, parents/carers, staff and leadership are all aware of a child's attendance.

Colour Codes

Green: 97% and above.

Yellow: 95% to 96.9%

Orange: 93% to 94.9%

Red: below 93%

These colour codes will be used to promote, share, monitor and celebrate excellent attendance. Their colour code will be shared with children at least twice during each half term, although this may be more regular where there are concerns.

Attendance and Punctuality Rewards

We have numerous reward systems: individual rewards for punctuality are tracked on Class Dojo. In order to earn the reward points, children will need to be in school; these individual points will be converted into Team points.

If a child has 100% attendance, and is on time every day during a half term, they will receive a certificate. At the end of each term, pupils with 100% attendance and punctuality for the term, will receive a Rothwell Primary School Attendance badge.

Medals are awarded at the end of the year to any children who achieved an incredible 100% attendance and punctuality.

There will also be a large end of year celebration for children who are 'Green' for attendance at the end of the year.

Weekly Attendance and Targets

- Each week the class % for attendance should be displayed inside the classroom.
- During a weekly assembly, certificates will be awarded for classes who meet or exceed the school target of 97%. Trophies will be awarded to the class with the best attendance and best punctuality.
- Class teachers must share the % for the year so far with the children each Monday morning.

Role and Responsibilities

All staff across the Cluster, in all schools, are responsible for promoting and raising attendance. The key leaders with additional responsibility in the implementation of this policy are the Headteacher, School attendance team, SLT, Pastoral Leader and administration staff, parents/carers, pupils themselves and the class teacher in conjunction with the Local Authority and Governors. Angela Walker is the link governor with a designated responsibility for Attendance and, together with the pupil support sub-committee, have a responsibility to ensure policy and procedures are followed.

Promoting good attendance and punctuality is the responsibility of EVERYONE in school.

Mrs Brooks, the Pastoral Leader, and the attendance team have leadership responsibility for attendance and punctuality. They *are* responsible for driving the high profile, importance and expectations of outstanding punctuality and attendance.

LR/AB/AR have the responsibility to ensure the school attendance team meet every three weeks and that school procedures for attendance and punctuality are adhered to, supporting and challenging all stakeholders where necessary. The school attendance team must ensure Fast Track and Casework procedures are followed.

AR has the responsibility of having an overview of developments, collecting key data and sending out the appropriate letters, particularly for children causing concern. AR from the school attendance team will collate data for meetings, as well as highlighting any concerns between

meetings. She will also attend school panel meetings and complete information for 'Care, Support and Guidance' referrals. AR also leads on the monitoring of the Fast Track process and making CME referrals.

AR is also responsible for collating weekly data for attendance, providing staff with colour coded class lists approximately every 3 weeks and organising/ordering certificates and badges for the half-termly rewards.

AB responsible for attendance. AB will receive a list on non-attenders, double check the children are absent with the classes and telephone to make first day contact. She will attend and input into school attendance and panel meetings and offer both support and challenge for children and families who are causing concern. AB will also make home visits where attendance is a concern. As part of the school attendance team, she will also be involved in deciding upon Fast Track and Case referrals to CSG and gathering information. With regards to punctuality, AB will support LR/PD. AB/LR will also provide data and information to the link governor for attendance and for the pupil support sub-committee.

AR monitors and records information regarding children who are late for school. She records the times children arrive, add these onto SIMS and will text parents to inform and remind them of the importance of good punctuality.

The class teachers and support staff are responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, marking the register correctly and referring any concerns to the attendance team - AB. They must also ensure that high expectations are in place for attendance and that it is high profile within the class. A warm, safe ethos, along with engaging lessons, will also help to promote good attendance.

All procedures, such as completing the daily attendance and punctuality charts, weekly outline on the cloakroom door for parents, tickets and sticker rewards, must also be completed consistently. AR and support staff will oversee that the half termly attendance updates are in KS2 planners and that KS1 receive a letter showing their attendance and colour code.

Appendix 1 –Absence Codes

Code	Meaning/When to use
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/	Present AM- morning session
\	Present PM- afternoon session
B	Based off site – at an approved educational setting
C	Leave of absence authorised by the school Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.
D	Dual Registration – also on roll at another educational setting e.g. PRU
E	Fixed term exclusion
G	Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher. If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.
H	Holiday authorised by the school Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
I	Illness – to be used at schools discretion- not parents
J	Interview
L	Late before register closes – If a child is between by up to 30 minutes. Time of arrival will be recorded.
M	Medical appointment e.g. dentist, doctors or time spent in hospital.
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance e.g. Eid Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.
S	Study leave
T	Traveller absence- can authorise up to 190 sessions a year as long as the parent has had to travel for work purposes. If the primary carer does not go travelling, and stays at home, then the absence would not be authorised.
U	Late – after registers close 30 minutes after school starts.
V	Educational visit e.g. museum
W	Work experience
#	School closed to pupils and staff- snow, also used for training days
Y	Enforced school closure- e.g. snow, flood, gas leak
X	Non-compulsory school age absence
Z	Not on school roll
-	Should attend – no mark recorded



Appendix 3 - LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances

*Unauthorised leave may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice under the provisions of the Education Act 1996 (as amended)**

By law, you must ask permission for your child to miss school. If you don't you risk a penalty notice.

Penalty notices can be issued per parent and per child.

Name of School.....Date of request.....

PARENTS SECTION (to be completed first)

Surname of child		First name	
Date of birth		Class	
Surname of parent/guardian		First name	
Address of child			
Postcode		Telephone number	
About the request for your child's leave of absence	Reason for Absence		
	Total number of school days	From	To
	Would he/she miss any national tests or examinations?		Yes/No
	Has he/she already had leave during term-time this school year? (If so, please give dates and number of school days leave)		Yes/No
	Did he/she have leave of absence during term-time in the previous school year?		Yes/No
Emergency telephone contact in the Leeds district			
Siblings name(s) and school(s) attended – if relevant			
Parent's/Guardian's Signature			

SCHOOL SECTION

Name of child:		Class:	
Absence in Term Time From: _____ To: _____	i. Approved.....school days Not approvedschool days ii. Absence Code	Is the cluster AIO involved? YES/NO	
Number of previous days authorised		Absence during tests or exams? YES/NO	
Current percentage attendance		Office Staff Signature:	
Last year's percentage attendance		Headteacher's Signature:	

A copy of this form will be returned to the parent after consideration

**Payment of a Penalty Notice, if paid within 21 days, is £60.00. If you do not pay within 21 days, the fine is increased to £120.00 and you have a further 7 days to make this payment in full. Non-payment of a Penalty Notice within the total 28 day period could result in the commencement of criminal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.*

Appendix 4

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES - ATTENDANCE
UNAUTHORISED HOLIDAY PENALTY NOTICE APPLICATION**

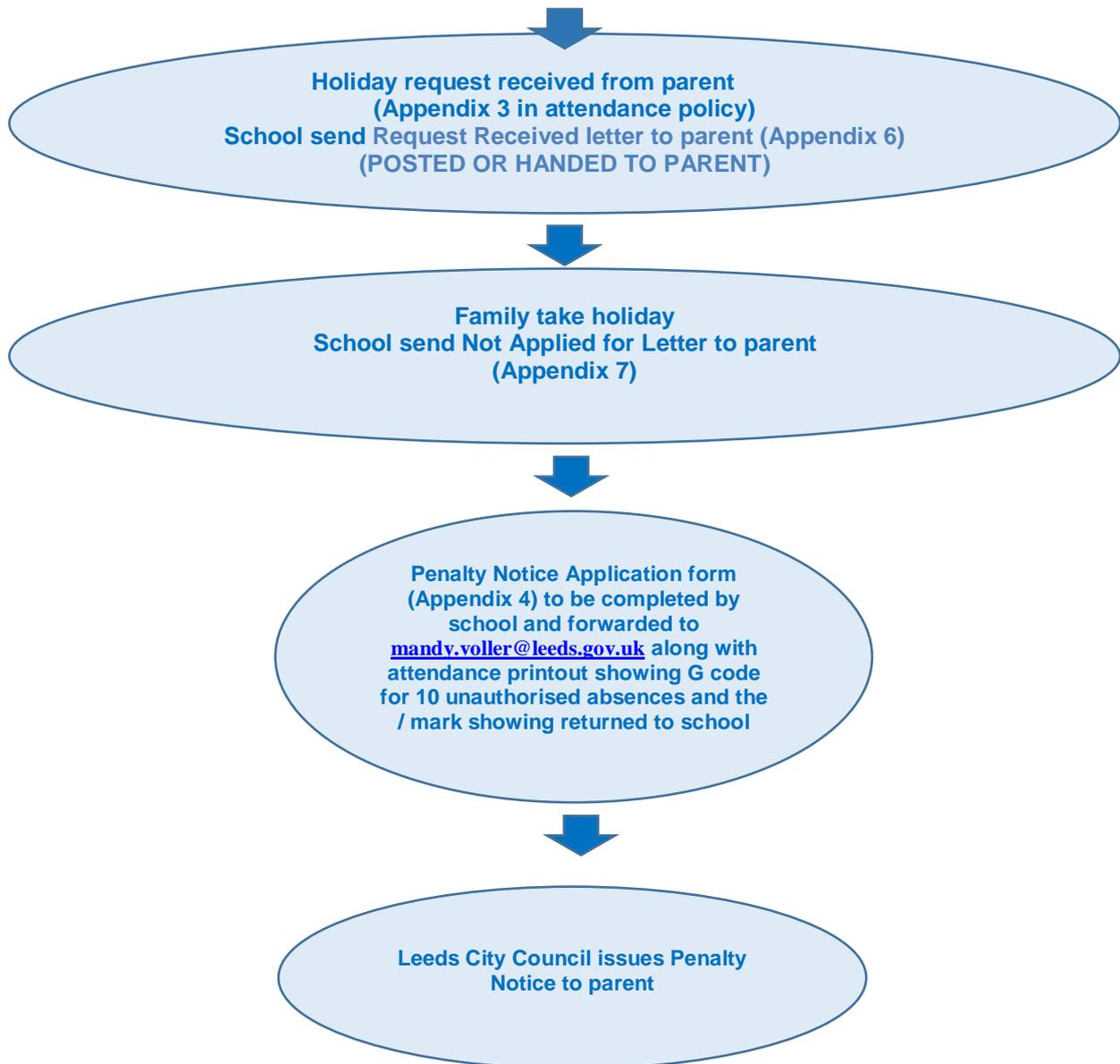
Name of School/Academy		Date holiday requested:		
Pupils Name:		DOB:	Year group:	
Address:		Pupil UPN Number		
		Dates of Holiday	From_____	
			To_____	
		Number of sessions in the holiday period		
		Number of Authorised Absences in that period		
		Number of Unauthorised Holiday (G) in that period (minimum of 10 sessions)		

Parents/Carers FULL Name	
Mother	
Father	
Date that leave was refused (<i>please provide evidence</i>)	
Pupil's Overall Attendance Rate.	

The Penalty is requested by: <i>(this must be a member of Senior Leadership Team)</i>	Name	
	Designation	
	Signature	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Fine paid within the time limits	Date
Fine increased and paid	Date
Fine not paid- referred to Magistrates	Date

Holiday Fine Flow Chart



(Appendix 6)

LETTER 1 Request received

Dear

Please find attached your leave of absence request. As you will be aware, the Government changed the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations in relation to term time holidays on 1st September 2013. As a result, Head Teachers can not authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

This application has been declined because we do not deem the reasons stated as exceptional circumstances and therefore, this leave, if taken, will be coded as unauthorised and could incur a Penalty Notice.

However, If you feel that you have exceptional circumstances that you have not informed us of with regards to your request, I would ask that you submit your reasons to school in writing within the next 7 (school) days from the date of this letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any queries that you would like to discuss about this matter.

Yours sincerely

Leila Rothenburg
Headteacher

Note: Payment of a Penalty Notice (from September 2013), if paid within 21 days, is £60. If you do not pay within 21 days the fine is increased to £120 and you have a further 7 days to make this payment in full.

Appendix 7

LETTER 2 – not applied for

Dear

We understand that you have recently taken your child out of school for a holiday in term time.

As you will be aware, the Government changed the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations in relation to term time holidays on 1st September 2013. As a result, only exceptional circumstance leave can be authorised by the Head Teacher and the taking of a holiday is not deemed as exceptional circumstances.

Your child's leave of absence from school was not requested and we have had no notification of any exceptional circumstances, therefore, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and you could receive a Penalty Notice.

However, If you feel that you have exceptional circumstances that you have not informed us of with regards to this holiday, I would ask that you submit your reasons to the school in writing within the next 7 (school) days from the date of this letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact school if you have any queries that you would like to discuss about this matter.

Yours sincerely

Leila Rothenburg

Headteacher....

Note: Payment of a Penalty Notice (from September 2013), if paid within 21 days, is £60. If you do not pay within 21 days the fine is increased to £120 and you have a further 7 days to make this payment in full.

Appendix 8

Fast Track Process

(Start) Beginning of term. identify cohort for Fast Track = 10 or more unauthorised absences within the previous 12 weeks. (note: FT's are not suitable for pupils with <70% attendance as case work usually needs to be employed in such cases)

Send out letter (1) with an attendance certificate, then monitor cohort for 20 school days. (allow a couple of days for the letter to arrive)

Review the cohort after the 20 days. Anyone with FURTHER unauthorised absence to be invited into school, by letter (2), for a School Attendance Panel (SAP) meeting

SAP Meetings held and minuted whether parent attends or not. A copy of the minutes to be posted to the parent. Penalty Notice Warning (PNW) letters (3) issued to parents who attend. Where parents do not attend the SAP, a PNW letter will need to be posted or hand delivered. A home visit to be undertaken where the family did not attend the SAP meeting (a.s.a.p. the next day if possible)

Cohort monitored for a further 20 school days after the SAP/PNW letter.

Termly Fast Track Cycle

PLEASE NOTE: At any point a pupil should be removed from the process where there are other circumstances that would need to be dealt with by other means. i.e. signposting to another agency

Complete referral form for the Penalty Notice to be issued

Review the cohort again. Anyone with further unauthorised absence to be referred for a penalty notice IF there are 10 unauthorised absences in the previous 12 weeks.