Winnington Park Primary and Nursery School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy including EBSN

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Attendance Leader: Bria Hall

Introduction and Aim

Winnington Park Primary School and Nursery recognises the importance of good attendance and the impact it has on children's progress, attainment, enjoyment of learning and relationships within school. Good attendance helps a child to realise their potential and ensure they are motivated, confident and enjoy a diverse range of curricular opportunities and experiences. Our school policies promote good attendance, which is recognised and rewarded as an achievement. The school monitors attendance and ensures quick and early intervention if a problem is identified. We recognise that whole school preventative and proactive approaches are key to promoting children's wellbeing and attendance. A child must attend school every day that they are required to do so unless an exceptional circumstance applies.

Our policy is accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents, and is published on our school website. It will be sent to Parents with any initial information when pupils join the school and reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated. As the barriers to attendance evolve quickly, the policy should be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, we will seek the views of pupils and parents. The Attendance & Punctuality Policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

1. Legislation

Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement. Regular attendance is essential to enable children to maximise their educational attainment, opportunities and further development.

- Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that "The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise".
- Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996 states that "if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school his parent is guilty of an offence".
- Section 576 Education Act 1996 - Meaning of "parent"

For the purposes of Education Law, the definition of a 'parent' and who is responsible for ensuring regular attendance to school is:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person. This could be one parent, both parents and/or carer/s.

2. Registers

Registers provide the daily record of attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents and the register may be required in a court of law, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance in school.

'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006' (section 6)
Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day, morning (a.m.) and once during the second session, afternoon (p.m.).

On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:
• Present
• Attending an approved educational activity
• Absent
• Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:
• Ascertain the reason
• Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken
• Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
• Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system as a priority and returned to the school office in a timely manner. This is used to download data to the School Census.
- Consider early identification, assessment, intervention and support processes that may need to be implemented.

The register should be marked using the codes as advised by the Department for Education (DfE) 'Working together to improve School Attendance Guidance' (for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities) Working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) (publishing.service.gov.uk) (*See appendix 3.)*

3. Procedure

Children are expected to attend school regularly, unless there is good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:

- Authorised (where the school approves a pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (where school will not approve the absence)

The school has a duty to safeguard all its pupils. If a child is absent, the parents/carers should inform the school on the **first day of absence** and each following day of absence, stating the reason.

Contact the school office on 01606 74371 to speak to Mrs Creamer or Mrs Cookson. Parents/Carers should ring school in the first instance. Email admin@winningtonpark.cheshire.sch.uk or office@winningtonpark.cheshire.sch.uk if you are unable to get through – please keep trying to speak to a member of staff.

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school is the head teacher *Mr Rob Cole.*

The school office will make contact with home when a child is absent, and the parent/carer has not notified the school of the absence. If no contact can be achieved or the reason for absence is not accepted the absence will be unauthorised.

4. What can parents/carers do to help and working in partnership with parents/ carers?

Let the school know straight away why your child is absent. Home-school communication is extremely important in supporting your child to achieve and feel settled in school. Try to make any dental, GP, or hospital appointments outside of school time.

It is important that school and parent/carers work together with a shared plan and outcomes when supporting a child's attendance and wellbeing. If despite persistent attempts to work with parents, there continues to be a lack of engagement, then legal procedures may be followed to secure engagement and school attendance.

As a school we recognise that building respectful relationships with families and working in collaboration is essential to ensuring the best outcomes for children. We require all parents to actively support the work of the school, including promoting attendance and engagement. We are committed to ensuring that systems and processes are in place with regards to promoting attendance and would encourage parents to make contact if they have concerns about their child.

We will provide parents/carers with information about Emotionally Based School Non-attendance to discuss needs and strategies to support their child, as appropriate.

5. Absence Monitoring

School robustly monitor and analyse attendance data to promptly identify and address possible concerns and allow for early interventions to support the child/family's underlying needs. This will include –

- Weekly attendance code analysis
- Specific cohort and group monitoring – particularly for vulnerable groups
- Monitoring of lesson attendance across all subjects
- 'Welcome back' meeting for all pupils that have been absent for more than 5 days. One of our Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) will meet with the child on their first day in school to check their wellbeing and ensure there are no ongoing needs that will impact on attendance.
- The school's strategy for using data to target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including how access to wider support services will be provided to remove the barriers to attendance and when support will be formalised in conjunction with the Local Authority.
- Reporting of more than 15 cumulative absences to the Local Authority.

6. Early Identification and Intervention: assess, plan, do and review

Every pupil has a right to a full-time education and Winnington Park Primary School set high attendance expectations for all pupils. Winnington Park Primary School will consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance and will consider our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For any child who is absent from school it is essential to fully understand the reasons for this so that targeted, evidence-based interventions and support can be put into place. All staff have a part to play in promoting attendance. We recognise the importance of ensuring that key members of staff from across the school work in collaboration to consider and identify the holistic needs of the child and to overcome barriers to attendance. In accordance with the principles of early intervention, a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review will be followed utilising a range of school-based resources, evidence-based interventions and seeking advice and support from external services at an appropriate stage, when needed.

Appropriate assessments will be important to help understand the underlying reasons that may be contributing to attendance difficulties. This may be an assessment that focuses on the

individual child's needs such as an SDQ, SEND assessments and wellbeing assessments or may include the holistic needs of the family, such as a TAF assessment. Assessments will include the views of the child as well as parents/carers, and identify strengths (what is working well) and needs (what is working less well).

Assessments undertaken may identify that a child is experiencing underlying emotional based needs that are contributing to non-attendance. Cheshire West and Chester Council has developed guidance for schools - Emotionally Based School Non-attendance: Good practice guidance for schools. This is a whole school framework with a graduated approach to support the early identification and intervention of children who may struggle to cope in school or attend school.

Information from assessments will inform a SMART action plan with focussed targets developed in partnership with families, and other services as appropriate. For example, Early Help and Prevention and Social Care may have a part to play in the delivery of support and intervention to promote engagement and attendance. SMART plans should be personalised to effectively meet a child's needs and improve attendance and wellbeing outcomes.

Regular reviews of support and attendance plans are essential to monitor the impact of interventions and to adjust these accordingly. If, despite targeted support and intervention, attendance and wellbeing concerns persist, we may seek further advice and support from external services including mental health services, specialist teaching and education services.

7. Medical Absence

Absence due to illness should be reported to the school by phone on the first day of absence and any subsequent days. School will contact parents during the first day if no satisfactory reason for absence has been received. The school will ask about the child's symptoms in order to record their absence accurately.

In the majority of cases, a parent's notification that their child is ill can be accepted without question or concern. Schools should not routinely request that parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily as it places additional pressure on health professionals.

Only where the school has a **genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity** of the illness should medical evidence be requested to support the absence. In instances of **long-term or repeated absences for the same reason**, however, seeking medical evidence may be appropriate to assist in assessing whether the child requires additional support to help them to attend more regularly, and whether the illness is likely to prevent the child from attending for extended periods. If a parent proactively seeks out a note from a GP, it does not imply a need for absence unless this is explicit in their letter.

If a medical absence is likely to be ongoing or long term, then we will offer support in accordance with the school's policies and statutory guidance relating to Children with health needs. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3. As a school we need to plan how children can access Education and how and when the child will return to school. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 the school must also demonstrate that reasonable adjustments are made to meet child's Educational Needs.

For children who have a medical condition and cannot attend school, the school will refer to the Cheshire West and Chester Council's Medical Needs Team.

https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/medical-needs-service/medical-needs-policy-latest.pdf

Their policy states that referrals must come directly from the child's school and must be supported by medical evidence from one of the following health professionals:

- consultant paediatrician or adolescent psychiatrist
- consultant child psychiatrist
- hospital consultant

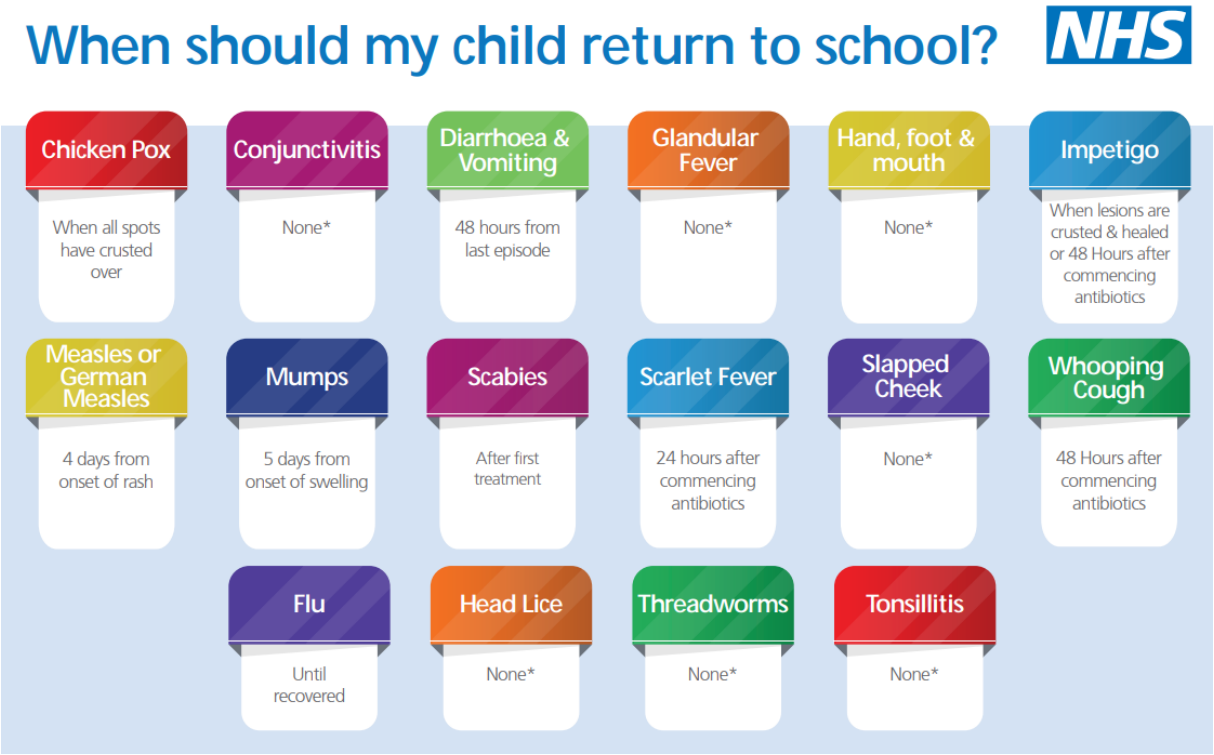
Supporting evidence from a General Practitioner alone cannot be accepted.

As from 19th August 2024 schools must make a sickness return to the Local Authority and provide the full name and address of all pupils who have been recorded with the code I (Illness) and who the school has reasonable grounds to believe they will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness. This is to help the school and Local Authority to agree any provisions needed to ensure continuity of education of pupils who cannot attend because of health needs, in line with the statutory guidance on Education for Children with health needs: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

If a child is ill, parents and carers should notify school by telephone as soon as possible on the first day of absence and on subsequent days if the child is still unwell.

- In cases of infectious diseases, it is essential that school is informed.
- If a child has diarrhoea OR sickness, they should not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of illness. If a child has diarrhoea AND sickness, they should not return to school for 48 hours after the last bout of illness
- If a child becomes ill during the day, their parents or carers will be contacted. Therefore, please let us know immediately if you (or named emergency contacts) change your address or telephone number.

The chart below provides a useful guide regarding returning to school following an illness. **means there is no need to stay off school but school should be informed.*



Medical and Dental Appointments

Please let our school office know, in advance, if your child has an appointment during school time. Please also let us know at what time you will collect your child for the appointment and please sign your child out and then sign in again at our school office upon their return to school. We strongly recommend that all medical appointments are booked outside of school hours and we may ask for confirmation of appointments.

8. Lateness and Punctuality

At Winnington Park Primary School we will apply a robust day to day process to track and follow up on absence and poor punctuality. We will ensure registers are completed accurately and on time, twice per day, in accordance with the timings set out below. This will indicate which pupils are absent from or are late for school.

- Our gates open at 8.30am and classroom doors open at 8.40am.
- We expect all pupils to be in their classroom by 8.45am ready for registration. If your child is in class at this time, they will be marked as present.
- Class registration finishes at 8.50am.
- Office registers close at 9.15am. If your child arrives at school after 8.45am but before 9.15am, they will need to enter the school by the main entrance and the parent will need to sign them in. They will be marked as late and will receive the **L code**.
- If your child arrives at school after the registers have closed at 9.15am, they will be marked as late and will receive the **U code**. This is an unauthorised absence for that session.
- Afternoon registers will be taken at 1.00pm for EYFS and Key Stage 1 and 1.15pm for Key Stage 2.

In accordance with the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006', if your child arrives after the registers close, they will receive a mark, code U, that shows them to be on

site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action if the problem persists.

Children who are consistently late for school are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of other children. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, you will be invited to a meeting to resolve the issues. If there is no improvement following this meeting, further action will be taken which may include referral to external agencies.

You may approach the school at any time for support and advice if you are having difficulty getting your child to school on time or maintaining regular attendance.

Beginning and End of Day Drop off and Collection

Parents/carers/nominated adults should not leave children at school unsupervised before the doors open at 8.40am. The school is not responsible for children before this time. The gates to the school field open at 8.30am.

At the end of the day parents/carers/nominated adults collecting children at 3.15pm are responsible for their safety from these times in the school grounds. Parents/carers may wait on the playground.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the school if they are unable to collect their child at the above times. This will enable the school to care for the child in such an emergency. Parents/carers will need to inform school who is collecting the child in their place.

If it is the first time this person has collected and/or school staff may not know the collecting adult, a password system will be used to confirm their identity. If a longer-term arrangement is made for collection, parents/carers must provide written permission to the school identifying the nominated adult, confirming that they can collect at any time.

To safeguard children, school staff will not send children home with adults that school has not been informed have permission to collect them, even if the nominated adult has been given consent by the parent themselves. Parents/carers will have to be contacted.

The school operates a parent/carer telephone contact register for use in the event of the school requiring contact in an emergency. Parents are required to inform the school of telephone numbers and all changes.

9. Unauthorised Absence and Fixed Penalty Notice

An absence may be coded as 'unauthorised' if:

i. no reason for absence has been given
ii. medical evidence is not received when requested
iii. a request for a leave of absence has been unauthorised
iv. a pupil arrives at school after registration has closed at 9.15am

Parents/carers should be aware that Winnington Park Primary School may contact the Local Authority if a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences in the current term with a view to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action.

The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a

second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3-year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions. *(see appendix 1 for CW&C Code of Conduct).*

10. Promoting and Incentivising Attendance (Rewards and Incentives)

At Winnington Park Primary School, rewards, incentives and competitions play an important part when working to improve attendance. **The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance.** Rewards and incentives should be devised with the childrens' and families' views at the heart. This will mean that our incentives and rewards are purposeful and meaningful. At Winnington Park Primary School, the School Council will play an important part in this to ensure that we improve attendance in the most effective way. **Schools that have good attendance recognise that it is not a discrete piece of work but rather it is an integral part of the school's ethos and culture.**

At Winnington Park Primary School, we understand that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school. Therefore, it is important that attendance is recognised, celebrated and held in high regard, no matter how small the improvements might be. Improved attendance or improved punctuality should be recognised and praised, not just 'perfect' attendance. Every child has the right to feel they can achieve and be successful, so any reward/incentive system must be inclusive of those with children with additional needs. It is important that pupils see the attendance incentives and competitions as a team effort and not to blame individuals. At Winnington Park Primary School, pupils will be taught about the positive link between attendance and high achievement through assemblies and dedicated PSHE sessions.

Attendance information should be readily available for both children and parents. At Winnington Park Primary School we will share attendance information in the form of display boards, website, assemblies and information being sent home. Barriers affecting attendance in our school will be explored, taking both the children's and parent/carer's views into account, so that every staff member is clear about how they can help to improve attendance and/or punctuality. This will be reflected in our rewards and incentives and time will be dedicated to such barriers in order to try to remove them. At Winnington Park Primary School, we will recognise and celebrate attendance on a weekly basis allowing all families the opportunity to achieve and feel successful - a new week, a new start!

Weekly in the Celebration Assembly:

- Whole year group attendance competition

Each half term in the Star of the Half Term Competition

- Gold Awards for individual children achieving 99-100% attendance
- Silver Awards for individual children achieving 96-98% attendance
- Improving Attendance Award for individual children with significant improvement

Yearly celebration:

- Pupils who have had 100% attendance throughout the whole year will receive an additional award

We are proud to be a Trauma Informed school, and as such, all pupils will be welcomed back to school by all staff and reasons for their lateness or absence will be explored sensitively with barriers established and the necessary support provided. At Winnington Park Primary School, we recognise that some pupils will require their own individual reward systems.

11. Application for Exceptional Circumstances

As of 19th August 2024, the law ceases to include a leave of absence for a family holiday. A leave of absence should not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance. Head Teachers are only empowered to approve a leave of absence when it is requested in advance by the parent or carer with whom the child resides and when circumstances of the requested leave are 'exceptional'.

The Head Teacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis. If parents/carers need to request Exceptional Leave of Absence, they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form available from the school office. It should be noted that if any application is declined and absence occurs of a consecutive 5 or more unauthorised days, then school may apply to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to each parent/carer.

The fundamental principles defining 'exceptional' are: rare, significant, unavoidable (an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time) and short. The following guidance gives more information:

- If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise absence - absence during term time for holidays/vacations is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.
- Absences to visit family members are also not normally granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Absence for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Absences for important religious observances can be taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.
- Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities. Families may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis.

The following will not be deemed to be exceptional circumstances:

- Family holiday
- Availability of less expensive holiday
- Availability of holiday accommodation
- Parent/carer's working commitments
- Holiday pre-booked by another family member

A child's absence during term time seriously disrupts their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching on the days they are away but are less prepared for the lessons building

on that teaching when they return to school. There is a consequent risk of under achievement, which we must seek to avoid.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring any attendance issues are dealt with in line with school policy.

Holidays should be organised outside of term time and holidays during term will not be authorised. **We will request that families booking holidays during term time provide confirmation of their booking (accommodation, flights etc.).** This information will be passed on to the Local Authority during register inspections.

Religious Observance
We recognise that some pupils may need to participate in days of religious observance.
Where a day of religious observance.

- falls during school time and
- has been exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil belongs
-

We ask that parents/carers notify Winnington Park Primary School in writing in advance where absence is required due to a religious observance.

12. Enforced School Closure

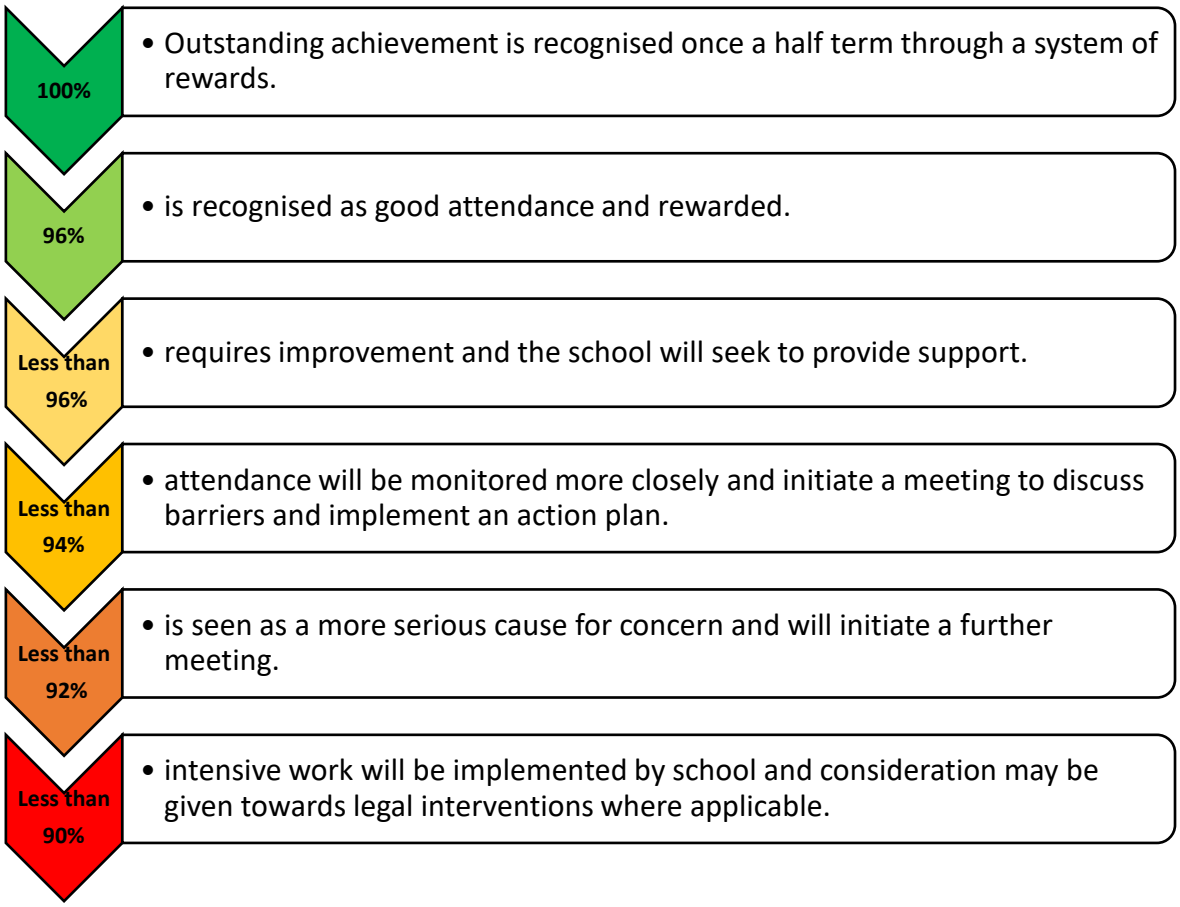
If Winnington Park Primary School and Nursery was forced to close for a period of time, we have the facility to operate an online virtual school. The expectation is children will still engage with ALL activities when work is set. Procedures for online learning will be sent to parents as and when required.

13. Impact

All pupils will achieve well by developing knowledge and skills on their journey through school. Due to robust monitoring of attendance, all pupils, including vulnerable children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), will have fair and equitable access to school in order to achieve the best possible outcomes. Pupils will leave Winnington Park Primary School ready for a successful transition to secondary school.

The table below sets out the attendance targets and at what stage parents/carers will be contacted about their child's attendance

See appendix 2 for further breakdown of missed sessions.


100%
• Outstanding achievement is recognised once a half term through a system of rewards.
96%
• is recognised as good attendance and rewarded.
Less than 96%
• requires improvement and the school will seek to provide support.
Less than 94%
• attendance will be monitored more closely and initiate a meeting to discuss barriers and implement an action plan.
Less than 92%
• is seen as a more serious cause for concern and will initiate a further meeting.
Less than 90%
• intensive work will be implemented by school and consideration may be given towards legal interventions where applicable.

Appendix 1

Cheshire West & Chester

Code of Conduct for Education Fixed Penalty Notice (Unauthorised Leave of Absence & Irregular Attendance)

1. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence.
2. The first penalty notice issued to the parent for that pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days.
3. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
4. A third penalty notice must not be issued within a 3 year period. Therefore, in cases where the threshold is met for a third (or subsequent) times within those 3 years, a penalty notice cannot be issued and alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.
5. A FPN may be issued per parent per child.
6. Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate if:
    - Unauthorised absences of at least 10 consecutive school sessions (five school days).
    - Sessions either side of a weekend or school holiday will be counted as consecutive school days.
    - For poorly attending learners, at least 10 sessions (five school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during a school term. These do not need to be consecutive.
    - For poorly attending learners, persistent late arrive at school in a term. Persistent means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.
    - The presence of an excluded child in a public place in the child's first five days of exclusion *(N.B. points 2 to 4 do not apply where a FPN is issued for an excluded pupil in a public place.)*

7. The school must notify parents of the Attendance Policy and clearly state that parents may receive an FPN for an unauthorised leave of absence relating to holiday in term time.

8. Schools and the Education Welfare Services will take into account any exceptional circumstances when determining whether to issue a FPN.

Appendix 2

What does 'percentage attendance' mean?

Parents/carers should be advised that from September 2015 the Government have categorised those pupils who have attendance of 90% and below as 'Persistent Absence' pupils (P.A.). RSA will be specifically targeting this cohort of pupils, in an effort to improve their attendance in the future. The table below shows the learning time lost against percentage attendance figures.

Attendance during one school year	**Equivalent Days**	**Equivalent Sessions**	**Equivalent Weeks**	**Equivalent Lessons Missed**
95%	9 Days	18 Sessions	1.4 Weeks	45 Lessons
90%	19 Days	38 Sessions	3.4 Weeks	95 Lessons
85%	29 Days	58 Sessions	5.4 Weeks	145 Lessons
80%	36 Days	72 Sessions	7.1 Weeks	180 Lessons
75%	48 Days	96 Sessions	9.3 Weeks	240 Lessons

Appendix 3 - Absence Codes: According to the DfE guidance the following codes are used on the register**. New Attendance Codes from 19th August 2024**

Attending a place other than the school.

These codes are classified for statistical purposes as attending an approved educational activity.

Code K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
Code V	Attending an educational visit or trip
Code P	Participating in a sporting activity
Code W	Attending work experience
Code B	Attending any other approved educational activity
Code D	Dual registered at another school

Absent leave of absence - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
Code M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
Code J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
Code S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
Code X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
Code C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
Code C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance

Absent - other authorised reasons - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as authorised absence.

Code T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
Code R	Religious observance
Code I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
Code E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made

Absent - unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause. - These codes are classified for statistical purposes as not a possible attendance

Code Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements

Code Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Code Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Code Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Code Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Code Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Code Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Code Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause

Absent - unauthorised absence - Theses codes are classified for statistical purposes as unauthorised absence.

Code G	Leave of absence not granted by the school
Code N	Reason for absence not yet established
Code O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances
Code U	Arrived in school after registration closed

Guidance for schools – Attendance case working. (School only) – ***if using this Policy as your own please ensure you pdf pages 1 – 11 as a parent version for your website***

These stages should be followed once a pupil has reached 10 sessions of unauthorised absence and the school is considering the Education Welfare Service's involvement as current strategies are not improving attendance.

Stage 1 (within 30 days)

- Ensure usual attendance policy procedures are being followed
- Continue normal first day contact etc.
- Conduct investigative safeguarding home visits.
- Gather information from teaching and support staff regarding the pupil's strengths and needs – this may include a round robin
- Meet with pupil to elicit their views about school (eg. what is working well / working less well)
- Develop a shared action plan in collaboration with parents / carers, pupils and key staff (informed by assessments and to address specific factors underlying non-attendance)
- Continue to follow assess, plan, do and review cycles focussed on targeted intervention and support – eg. Support and Attendance Plan
- Make an initial single assessment (simplified TAF assessment)
- Refer to other agencies as appropriate (e.g iART)

If parent/carer does not engage with support offered

- Arrange an Attendance Panel Meeting to discuss barriers to attendance, record the voice of the child and complete and ESO checklist
- Consider a Notice to Improve monitoring period (10-20 sessions unauthorised)
- Consider a first warning letter for prosecution for more entrenched cases (20+ sessions)

Stage 2 (within 60 days)

- Continue with usual contact in line with attendance policy
- Conduct further home visits
- Discuss case with attendance lead in school
- Consider Attendance Planning Meeting if there is no improvement following the prosecution first warning letter

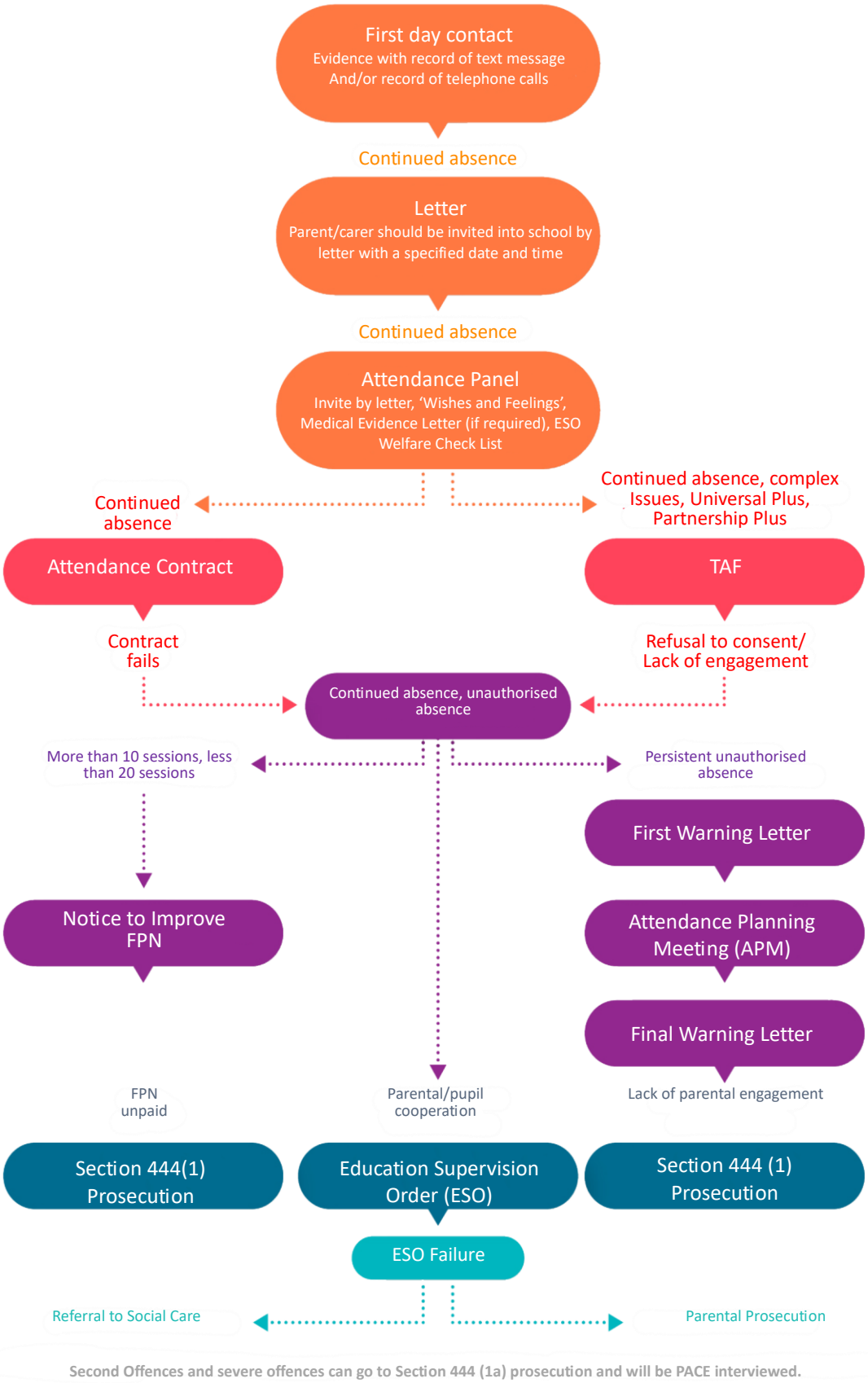
- Issue a final warning letter if no improvement following the Attendance Planning Meeting
- Consult with Education Welfare Officer to support in preparing witness statement and exhibits of evidence

Stage 3 (within 90 days)

- EWO will support in setting up Court File as follows:
- Statement of evidence S9
- Exhibits (labelled and numbered)
- Head teacher certificate
- Recent registration certificate

Please note, each section says WITHIN the time scale, so you don't have to wait until 30 days have passed to take action.

Attendance Pathway



Second Offences and severe offences can go to Section 444 (1a) prosecution and will be PACE interviewed.

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN)

Emotionally Based School Non-attendance (EBSN) is a term used to describe the needs of CYP who struggle to attend school due to underlying emotional based needs, such as anxiety, unhappiness and despair. These CYP may be reluctant to leave home and can present high levels of distress in response to parents' attempts to get them to school. This can result in prolonged absences from school.

EBSN is complex and multifaceted, requiring a holistic approach to assessment and intervention. Good practice guidance emphasises the importance of early identification and intervention to support the needs of CYP who may struggle to attend school, developing a SMART support plan, with timely review processes (CW&C, 2018).

The EBSN framework is embedded within the school's Attendance Policy and we use many of the tools and resources to underpin our early identification of need and targeted support and intervention approach.

Schools can access EBSN training and Guidance (EBSN: Good Practice Guidance for Schools) via: eCWIP for Education - Cheshire West Industry Professionals

Letter templates below:

Letter 1 - Attendance Concern
Letter 2 - Medical evidence letter
Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Panel meeting
Letter 4 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting after no response
Letter 5 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting having attended the last meeting
Letter 6 - Attendance Action Plan
Letter 7 - After failure to attend meeting
Letter 8 - First Warning Letter
Letter 9 - Final Warning Letter

Please note that whilst these letters are numbered this is for information purposes only and should be removed from letters that are being sent out to parent/carers.

Letter 1 - Attendance concern

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

RE: Attendance concern letter
<insert pupil name>
Re: Attendance – XX%

At <insert school> we have a strong focus on attendance to ensure that all pupils make excellent progress and achieve their very best potential.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). As this is just falling below the national expected minimum of 96% we are therefore writing to offer additional support and to open communication in the hope that we can improve their attendance and ensure that it improves.

Good attendance is key to ensuring that pupils progress well at school. In addition, your child's attendance record has to be conveyed in any future reference provided by the school.
We are hopeful that your child's attendance will improve and we wish to offer our support and ask that you communicate to us any provision or assistance which you feel may be beneficial or communicate any reasons why you feel that improved attendance may be difficult so that we can work together in supporting your child.

The aim is for your child's attendance to improve within the next 4 weeks in order to avoid having to issue a continued attendance concern letter. If you would like to discuss anything in relation to this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 2 - Medical evidence letter

Our ref: XXXX Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Medical Evidence
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

<insert school> places great emphasis upon every student achieving their full potential. It is important therefore that every student attends the school regularly and participates in the schooling that is offered if they are to make good progress and benefit from the opportunities that school offers.

It is expected that parents/carers support their child by complying with the law which imposes a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their son/daughters are properly educated.

I am aware that there have been reasons provided for these absences **however to enable us to authorise any future absences due to illness medical evidence will be required.**

This can be in the form of:

- Copy of prescription relating to the illness
- A dated note from the GP's receptionist confirming your visit to the GP
- A medical appointment card
- Evidence of medical prescribed by the GP

May I remind you that after 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence you may receive a Notice to Improve warning.

If there is anything that you feel the school should be aware of, or that I can help you with, I would be grateful if you could telephone me at school to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 3 - Invite to Attendance Panel meeting

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance Action Plan meeting
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you concerning ……..…….'s attendance at school, which stands at…..%.

As parents/carers we would like to invite you to meet with the Attendance Panel at school/other on…….....at…… where we hope to be able to discuss any concerns or issues affecting your son/daughter's attendance. The meeting will last approximately 15 minutes.

We look forward to your co-operation in this matter and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the school on……..…

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 4 - Invite to Attendance Planning meeting after no response

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance planning meeting after no response
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the previous letter I sent out requesting a meeting regarding <insert pupil name> attendance record. Unfortunately, I have had no response.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). This is below the national expected minimum of 96% and is therefore a cause for concern.

You are invited to attend a meeting to be held at <insert place> on <day, date and time>.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving <insert pupil name> attendance. A robust action plan will be implemented to support improved attendance.

You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in a Notice to Improve being issued against you.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 5 - Invite to Attendance Planning Meeting – having attended the last meeting

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>

Re: Invitation to Attendance planning meeting after no improvement
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the previous meeting regarding <insert pupil name> attendance record. Unfortunately, their attendance has not improved and there is now a more serious concern about their welfare and educational needs being met.

Our records show that <insert pupil name> attendance is XX%. (Please see enclosed attendance record). This is now well below the 96% expected minimum and is therefore a major cause for concern.

You are invited to attend a meeting to be held at <place> on <day, date and time>.
The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving your <insert pupil name> attendance.

You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in consideration being given to legal proceedings.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 6 – Attendance Action Plan

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to you regarding the recent meeting which we had concerning <insert pupil name> attendance at the <insert school>.

I have enclosed a copy of the Action Plan for your information and attention.

May I take this opportunity to inform you that: under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, you have a legal responsibility to ensure that <insert pupil name> attends the <insert school> regularly. Failure to do so may lead in legal action being taken against you by the Local Authority resulting in prosecution.

Thank you for attending the recent meeting; it is only by all working together that we can achieve the best possible educational and social outcomes for our pupils.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 7 - After failure to attend meeting
Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

As you failed to attend a meeting on <day, date and time>, you are now invited to attend a meeting to be held at the <insert school> on <day, date and time>.
The purpose of the meeting is to discuss a way forward in improving your child's attendance. A member of the Senior Management Team will be present at this meeting.
You are urged to attend this meeting as failure to do so may result in the Local Authority initiating legal proceedings against you. I enclose a copy of your child's registration certificate.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 8 - First Warning Letter

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

I am writing to express my concern regarding <insert pupil name> continued irregular attendance. According to the class register, between **<date> and <date>** <insert pupil name> has been marked absent for **XX sessions, of which XX were authorised and XX were unauthorised.** <insert pupil name> has completed **XX full weeks in school out of a possible XX weeks.** A copy of the percentage attendance register is enclosed.
The <insert school> has made efforts to engage with you in attempting to improve this situation but despite this there has been no improvement in <insert pupil name> attendance.

Such attendance is not acceptable and I must remind you that S.444, Education Act 1996 requires you to make sure that your child comes to school, on time, every time the school is open. I am writing this letter to give you an opportunity to make sure that from now on and in future, your child attends school regularly.
Failure to do so may result in the Local Authority taking one of the following actions:
a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1,000.
b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.
I now look forward to your co-operation in ensuring an immediate and sustained improvement in your child's school attendance.
If you wish to discuss this matter, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position

Letter 9 - Final Warning letter

Our ref: XXXX
Date
Name
Address
United Kingdom

Dear <insert parent/carer name>
<insert pupil name> Re: Attendance – XX%

On <insert date>, we wrote to you concerning <insert pupil name> irregular attendance at <insert school>.

Unfortunately, I now have to contact you again as <insert pupil name> has continued to be absent from school during the last **XX** weeks.

Obviously, such a record is not acceptable, and I now have to warn you that unless there is an immediate improvement in <insert pupil name> school attendance, the Local Authority will have no option but to instigate one of the following options:

a) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1000.

b) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

Please contact me to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

Name
Position