



Attendance Policy

February 2021

Contents

- 1.0 Statement of Intent..... 2
- 2.0 Introduction 2
- 3.0 Aims..... 4
- 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities 4
 - 4.1 Local Governing Bodies 4
 - 4.2 Head Teacher..... 4
 - 4.3 The School Attendance Officer 4
 - 4.4 Family Worker 5
 - 4.5 Class Teacher 5
 - 4.6 Office Staff 5
 - 4.7 Education Welfare Officer..... 5
 - 4.8 Parents and Carers 5
- 5.0 Children subject to a Child Protection Plan 6
- 6.0 Cared for Children..... 6
- 7.0 Administration 6
- 8.0 Absence..... 6
 - 8.1 Illness..... 6
 - 8.2 Medical or Dental Appointments..... 7
 - 8.3 Holidays During Term Time 7
 - 8.4 Other Absence 7
- 9.0 Punctuality 7
- 10.0 Reporting to Parents and Carers..... 8
 - 10.1 Rewards 9
- 11.0 Monitoring and Evaluation..... 9
- 12.0 Procedures for irregular/non attendance 9
- 13.0 Non-Attendance Procedures 9
 - 13.1 Stage 1..... 9
 - 13.2 Stage 2..... 10
 - 13.3 Fixed Penalty Notices..... 10
- Appendix 1 – Attendance Agreement..... 11
- Appendix 2 – Term Time Leave 12
- Appendix 3 – Attendance Monitoring 13

1.0 Statement of Intent

At Northern Saints C of E (VA) Primary School, we work as a team, to enable all our children, adults and families to flourish. We offer the Christian message of love, joy and the celebration of all humanity, without exception or exclusion. This is encapsulated by our school motto, "Together We Rise".

The Northern Saints were brave men and women, who brought faith, opportunity and freedom to the people of Northern England in the 7th century. Their work was transformational in raising life chances within the communities in which they served. Today we continue as a school community, to remain outward looking, as we endeavour to make a positive contribution to society in the 21st century.

We are aspirational in outlook and strive to provide academic rigour within a well-rounded education. We achieve this through our curriculum, which is broad and balanced and promotes our pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development. Through this, we prepare our pupils well for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

In line with our vision, it is important that we work well as a team to support our children and their families / carers in order to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Act early to address patterns of absence:
- Enable all our pupils to flourish.

We aim to be recognised by the wider community as a centre of reconciliation and support, in how we act of our attendance policy with compassion for all.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

At Northern Saints CE (VA) Primary School, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping students achieve the best that they can be. Students should be at school on time dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community including students, parents, governors and staff.

2.0 Introduction

Parents of compulsory school age (five to sixteen) children have a legal duty to ensure their children receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at a school (this includes home education). If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly. Should a child fail to attend regularly legal action may be taken against the parents under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act.

Education Law defines a *parent* as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child on a daily basis.

It is important to note that, even though a parent may not live in the same home as the child that parent is still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfill their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. Northern Saints CE Primary ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important, that they are missed when they are absent or late. Appropriate action will be taken when necessary in order to promote the aims of the policy.

3.0 Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support of the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

4.1 Local Governing Bodies (LGB)

- To monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

4.2 Head Teacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns.
- As part of their monitoring of attendance, know how many children are absent each day, including any children who are absent who are Cared for or subject to Child Protection, Child in Need or Team Around the Child procedures.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality is an issue.
- To provide LGB with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.

4.3 The School Attendance Officer

- Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the School Attendance Officer. The Governing Body offer parents access to an independent school attendance service (Att100 07585 123853). Att100 are separate from the Local Authority and will try to resolve the situation by agreement. If there is no improvement to the child's attendance and unauthorized absences persist, the School Attendance Officer will refer the matter to the Local Authority Attendance Team. This team can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court

4.4 Family Worker and Welfare Team

- To offer support to and meet with families
- To work with class teachers and parents to address any issues which are a barrier to attendance
- To monitor and report on children's attendance by liaising with office staff
- To liaise with attendance officers to improve outcomes for children.

4.5 Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

4.6 Office Staff

- To accurately prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of SIMs Management Information System for recording pupil attendance.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them using the appropriate code.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
- To contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason if they have not been contacted by a parent to provide a reason for absence.
- Liaise with Family Worker daily to monitor absent children
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To flag up to Headteacher any child who is absent who is subject to a child protection or team around the child procedures or any other child who the Headteacher has concerns about. The Headteacher will identify the children who they wish the office to identify.
- To complete weekly attendance monitoring information for the Headteacher and CEO.

4.7 Education Welfare Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

4.8 Parents and Carers

- Ensure regular and punctual school attendance.
- To inform the school by 9.00am if their child is sick or away from school for any reason. This is especially important as the school is legally required to report reasons for absence. The school will ring home if no notification has been received and may contact the School's attendance officer or social care if there are concerns around a child's whereabouts.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- To inform the school in advance and show the school the appointment card/letter and if necessary, speak to the Head Teacher, if there is an unavoidable medical appointment that a child has to attend.
- Where a child has to be collected during the school day, they must be collected from the

school office by arrangement with the office staff. Children **cannot** be allowed to meet parents / carers off school property and they must be picked up by an adult.

- Only request leave of absence if it is for exceptional circumstances.
- Actively work with the school staff, attendance officer and relevant multi-agency staff to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.

5.0 Children subject to a Child Protection Plan

Where school has concerns about a child's attendance, they will notify Children's Services and report the concern to the identified person for the child immediately. If the family cannot be contacted that day a home visit will be made by the attendance officer at the earliest opportunity.

6.0 Cared for children

Where school has concerns about a child's attendance, they will notify the relevant team and report the concern to the identified person for the child immediately.

7.0 Administration

- Under the 2006 Education Regulations **it is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day**
- The School uses the Sims Management Information System to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are returned to the School Office after the closure of the registration period.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

8.0 Absence

8.1 Illness

Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not itself authorise an absence. It is for the school to determine if an absence is to be authorised (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

- Where Office Staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Headteacher should be informed.
- If parents / carers do not inform the School of their child's reason for absence, this matter should be dealt with by informing the parent of the school policy via letter. If the parent / carer still does not follow the policy a meeting should be arranged with the Headteacher.

8.2 Medical or Dental Appointments

- Parents/carers should make all medical appointments out of school hours.
- Where absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment cannot be avoided, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments and also bring their child into school either before or after the appointment so that full sessions are not missed.

8.3 Holidays During Term Time

- Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 only allow Head Teacher to authorise leave of absence (for any purpose) in exceptional circumstances. Please note only the Head Teacher or his/her Deputy can authorise Leave of Absence
- If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head Teacher will determine the length of the absence authorised
- Requests for Leave of Absence should be made in **advance and before any arrangements confirmed or money committed**
- This form **MUST** be completed by the resident parent(s)/carer(s) before requests will be considered
- Please complete a Leave of Absence form for each child
- Failure to make a request for a Leave of absence in advance will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised

Time off school for family holidays cannot be authorised. The Headteacher has the discretion, in exceptional circumstances, to authorise short periods of time off school.

If a parent/carer considers that they have circumstances that may be deemed exceptional, they should make a request in writing to the Headteacher. (See Appendix 1). The Headteacher will then reply in writing to inform whether the request has been granted.

Northern Saints CE Primary will monitor all absences during term time and challenge those parents that do not adhere to the legislation. Any unauthorised absence will be dealt with through non-attendance procedures.

8.4 Other Absence

Other absence from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made to authorise or un-authorise the absence.

9.0 Punctuality

Children arriving any later than school start time will be marked as L

Pupils arriving late must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded.

Regular reviews of punctuality take place. Any irregular pattern will result in intervention to address the matter via a letter informing parent of the problem, a meeting in school, a home visit by our attendance officer and regular reviews thereafter.

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost a year
10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost a year
15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost a year
20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost a year
30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost a year

10.0 Reporting to Parents and Carers

The school will raise the awareness of the implications of poor school attendance through:

- Newsletters
- Parents Evenings
- Induction Meetings
- Home-school agreements
- Rewarding good attendance and punctuality
- Periodically reminding parents of the School's procedures for notification of absences

Northern Saints CE will actively pursue “truancy” whether it is intentional on the part of the child or is condoned by parents [ie unauthorised absence]. If the school has evidence of truancy, the Headteacher will confirm the absence as “unauthorised” to the parents in writing.

All absences both authorised, unauthorised absence and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of each term and the end of the academic year within their child’s report.

In order to give parents/carers a benchmark to their child’s attendance against national indicators, the following grades will be used :

The information below shows how non-attendance can affect your child’s future progression.

<p>Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Pupils in this cohort have the best chance of achieving the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.</p>
<p>95%: 10 days absence a year Pupils in this group are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 10 days holiday during term time every year can only ever achieve 95% attendance.</p>
<p>92%: 15 days absence a year Pupils in this group are missing three weeks of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best. The school may consider referring pupils with this level of attendance to the Local Authority</p>
<p>90%: 19 days absence a year Any child with an attendance below 90% is deemed Persistently Absent. Children within this cohort are less likely to achieve their ‘levels’ expected for their academic ability.</p>

10.1 Rewards

- Children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the year will be acknowledged and rewarded.
- Good attendance is rewarded in a tangible way for classes and House Groups and individuals for example through positive comments, certificates and stickers.

11.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

- Attendance data will be collected on a weekly basis for each class and vulnerable groups to establish patterns of irregular attendance. Northern Saints CE Primary will monitor attendance of each pupil on a weekly basis. School level monitoring will include: children with incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised; and all children who are deemed to be 'persistent absentees' whose attendance is below 90%. This data will be discussed with the Attendance Officer on a weekly basis.
- The Headteacher and Attendance Officer will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Headteacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governor

12.0 Procedures for irregular/non attendance

Northern Saints CE Primary rigorously monitor attendance. Any child who is below 95%, or has unauthorised absences, has their attendance monitored each week until the end of the school year. Any child whose attendance is 95% or below at the end of a school year, will be monitored from the outset of a new school year.

Any child highlighted with attendance of below 95% will automatically be discussed by the Head Teacher and Attendance Officer on a weekly basis. Following this discussion the following procedures will be followed. The Headteacher will know of any mitigating circumstances, such as serious medical conditions, that have lead to low attendance and will be mindful of this situation when flagging children to commence non-attendance procedures.

At any time in the school year, where there are concerns around a child's attendance, a Parenting Contract may be drawn up to address attendance issues (See Appendix 2).

Any pupil with patterns of irregular attendance i.e. incomplete weeks, Monday and Friday absences, periods of extended absence, periods of unauthorised absence, etc., will begin formal Non-Attendance proceedings as detailed below. At any point during this procedure a parent / carer may be notified that the school will no longer authorise a child's absence without legitimate medical proof which validates the reason for absence provided.

13.0 Non-Attendance Procedures

13.1 Stage 1

Any pupil whose attendance falls below 95% may be sent a concern letter from the school, which may come from the attendance officer acting on behalf of the school. A copy of this letter should be held by the school. The child will be set a target for improvement over a four week period. If the child's attendance does not improve and the child does not meet the target, the Attendance lead, supported by the attendance officer, should decide whether to continue to monitor the child under stage 1 procedures or whether it is necessary to progress the child to Stage 2 procedures. Following a letter being issued, further contact can be made should no improvement occur.

13.2 Stage 2

Parents and/or carers will be invited to a meeting with the School attendance officer, and any member of School staff deemed appropriate, to discuss reasons for absence and any support required to facilitate an improvement, such as a referral to outside agencies for support.

Further meetings will be scheduled following the meeting if required to review and monitor any improvement and any intervention which may be required which was not discussed in initial meeting.

A maximum of 3 meetings will be held in any academic year. Should attendance fail to improve, or parents or carers not engage, a letter will be issued requesting medical evidence to support reasons for future absences, such as a Doctor's note, an appointment card or a copy of medication prescribed to treat an ailment. Failure to provide this will result in absences being deemed unauthorised and the matter will be considered for a referral to the Local Authority Attendance Team for consideration of formal proceedings taking place.

Please note all referrals are done on an individual case basis and could be done without all of the above if it is felt by Attendance Officer and Head Teacher that this is required to prevent a child missing further time from school.

Following a referral to the Local Authority Attendance Team they will investigate absences and deem whether or not formal proceedings should be brought against a parent under the legislation set out in the Education Act (1996) in which it states that it is a parents responsibility to ensure a child of statutory school age receives an education suited to their age and ability.

Formal enforcement includes

- A fixed penalty notice
- A fine of up to £2500 and or 3 month imprisonment

13.3 Fixed Penalty Notices

Local Authorities are granted the power to issue fixed penalty notices under the Education Act 1996, section 444. Following agreement with key staff, Northern Saints CE Primary have endorsed this decision and will be following this guidance.

When a fixed penalty notice will be used:

- a warning letter may be issued if a child has 20 or more unauthorised absences in a 10 week period.
- a fixed penalty notice may be issued to a parent of their child has further unauthorised absences during the 15 days following the receipt of a FPN warning letter.
- a fixed penalty notice may be issued if a pupil has unauthorised absence resulting from an unauthorised holiday in term time.
- a fixed penalty notice requires payment of £60 in 21 days or £120 within 28 days, and will result in a prosecution for unauthorised absence if unpaid.

See Appendices for further information.

This policy will be reviewed from time-to-time following guidance or regulations set from DfE or whenever Northern Saints CE Primary, determines that changes need to be made.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Agreement

Personal Details

Pupil's Name:
Carer's Name:
Contact details

Head Teacher's name:
Contact details:

Aim of Parenting Contract

It has been acknowledged by all parties above that 's school attendance is of concern. It was only.....% betweenand It is hoped that the contract will ensure that 's attendance at School will improve and that this improvement will also be sustained.

A meeting was held on
All agreed to work together to help to attend school more regularly.

The following was discussed:

The following was agreed

School's Agreement

- Contact parent on first day of the child's absence, where notification has not been provided by parent.
- will be available as named persons to be contacted if parent would like to discuss anything.
- Respond to any problems reported that impact on 's attendance and education.
- Make any referrals that are appropriate to support an improved level of attendance.
- If attendance and punctuality do not continue to improve to look at legal monitoring.

Parent's Agreement

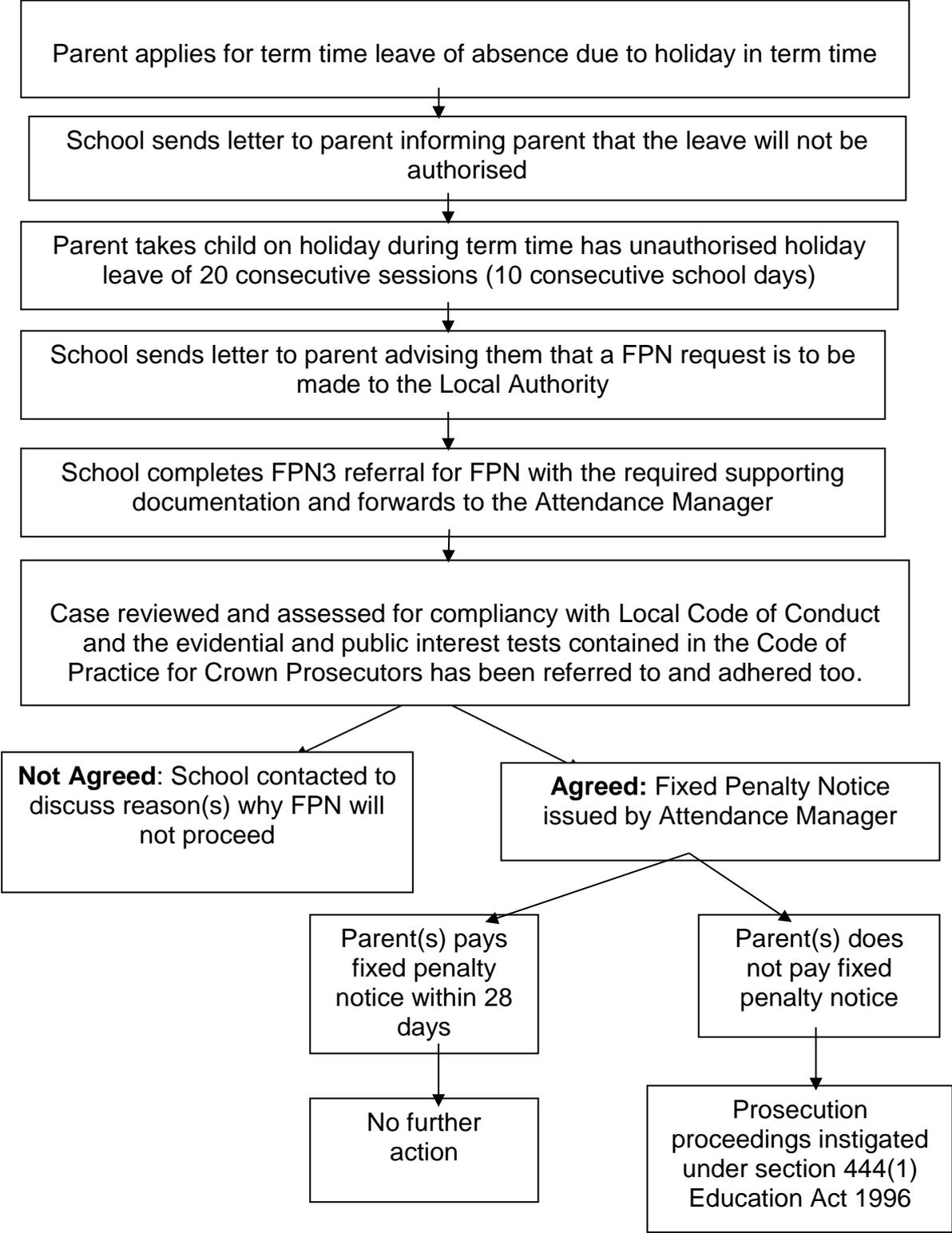
- To continue to notify school immediately upon any changes to any contact details.
- To continue to contact school on the first day of absence, providing a full reason for the absence and giving an estimated date of return.
- To inform school of any issue(s) that impacts on their child's attendance and education.
- To be available for appointments with school and/or EWO/PSA when necessary, or if not available, to contact the relevant person to re-arrange to a more suitable time.
- To work with agencies to improve attendance.

Important Dates

We will next meet on:
We will review this agreement on:
We will end this agreement on:

Appendix 2 – Term Time Leave

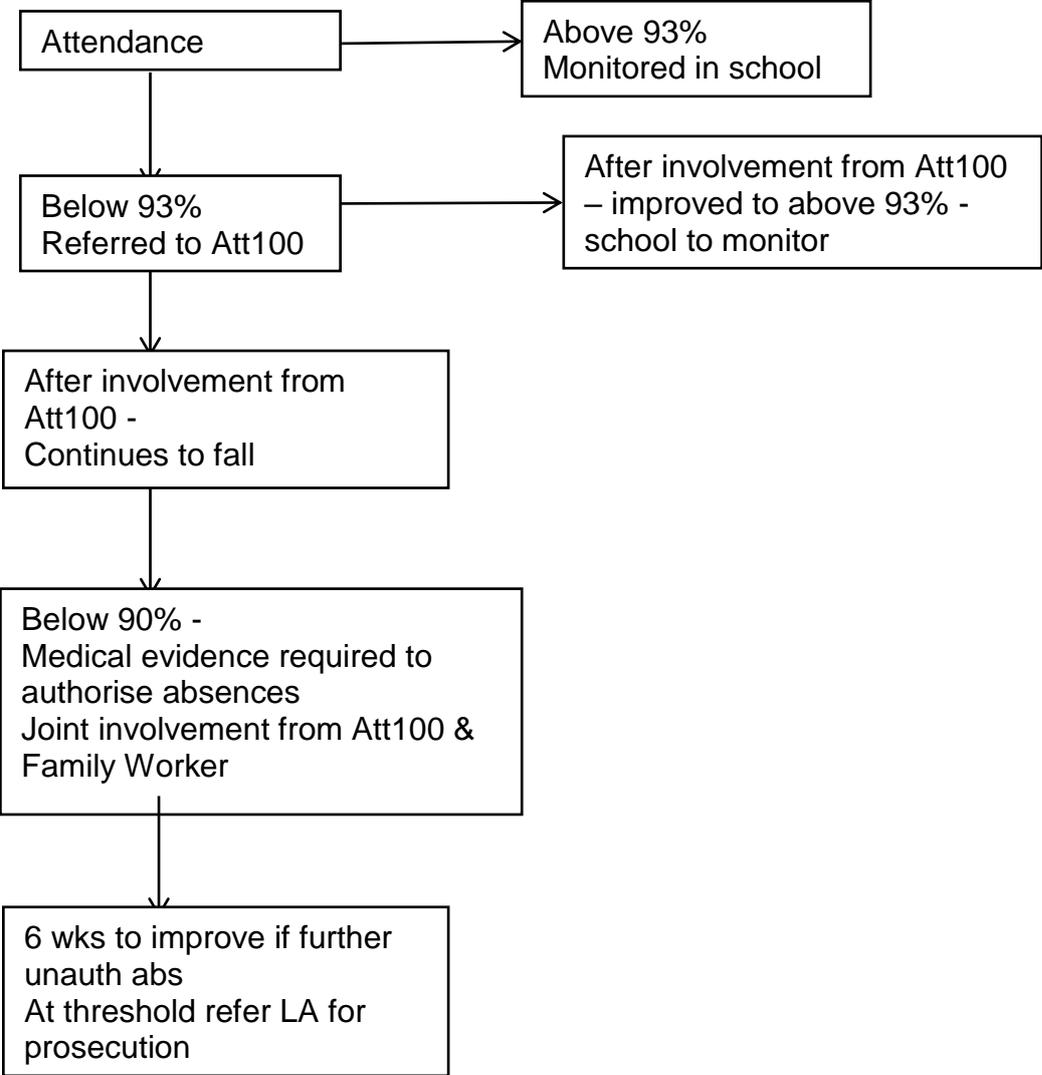
Fixed Penalty Notice Process for Unauthorised Leave During Term Time



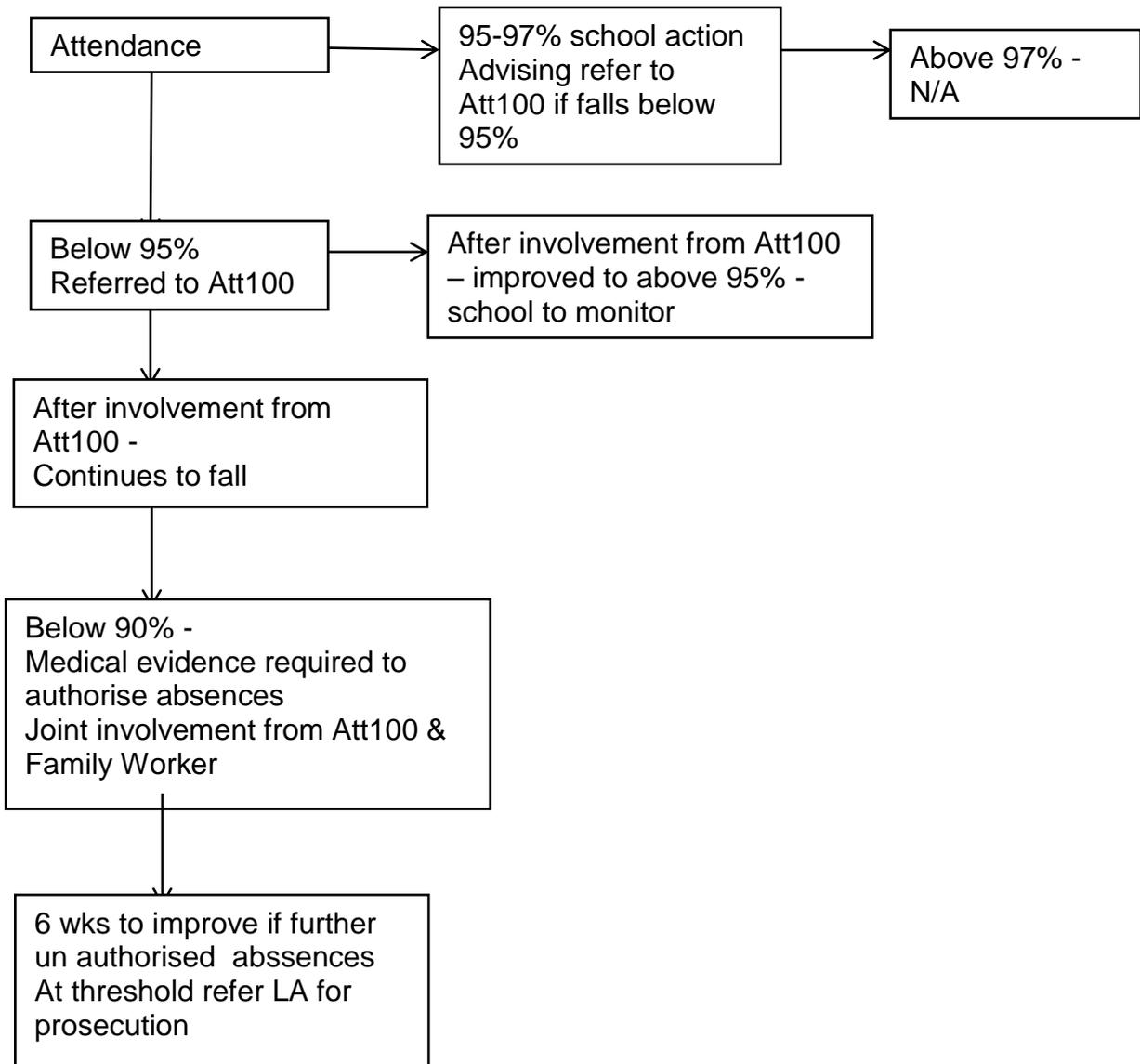
Appendix 3 – A

Attendance Monitoring

Procedures Attendance Monitoring Autumn Term



Procedures Attendance Monitoring Spring and Summer Term



Appendix 4 – Changes to Policy During COVID_19 National Lockdown.

During the period of national lockdown Northern Saints CE (VA) Primary School will allow only vulnerable children and young people and the children of critical workers to attend. All other pupils and students will not attend and will learn remotely until the DFE (in correspondence with Public Health England) deem it safe for all other pupils to return.

Pupils who are self-isolating should not attend school. Clinically extremely vulnerable pupils are also advised not to attend school. Our school will continue to record attendance in the register. We will follow up on absences of the pupils who are expected to be in school but where a parent wishes for their child to be absent, we will authorise the absence during this national lockdown period. Absence will not be penalised.

Critical Workers

Critical workers, parents whose work is critical to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and EU transition response include those who work in health and social care and in other key sectors. Children with at least one parent or carer who is a critical worker can attend school if required. This includes parents who may be working from home.

School will speak to parents and carers to identify who needs to attend school. If it proves necessary, we will ask for simple evidence that the parent in question is a critical worker, such as their work ID badge or pay slip. Parents and carers who are critical workers should keep their children at home if they can.

Vulnerable Pupils

As a school, and strongly encourage vulnerable children to attend. Parents/carers of vulnerable children are strongly encouraged to take up a place that is offered. If vulnerable children do not attend, as a school we will:

- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) to follow up with the parent or carer to explore the reason for absence, discussing our concerns using supporting guidance considering the child's circumstances and their best interests.
- work together with the local authority and social worker (where applicable) and other relevant partners to encourage the child or young person to attend school, particularly where the social worker agrees that the child or young person's attendance would be appropriate.

Where parents seek a leave of absence for a vulnerable child, we will only grant this, after speaking to parents and carers, and social workers (where applicable) to explore the reasons for this and raise our concerns, should we have any. The discussions will focus on the welfare of the child and will ensure that they are able to access appropriate education and support while they are at home.

Recording attendance

All pupils who are not eligible to be in school will be marked as Code X. This means they are not attending because they are following public health advice. Code X is not classed as an absence. As vulnerable children are still expected to attend school full time, they will **not** be marked as Code X if they are not in school (except if they are shielding, self-isolating or quarantining). If the parent of a vulnerable child wishes their child to be absent, the parent must let the school know.

The DFE expects schools to grant applications for leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances. This must be recorded as code C (leave of absence authorised by the school) unless another authorised absence code is more applicable.

Due to several periods of National Lockdown, the school will not be reporting on the attendance of individual pupils. Attendance awards, for this academic year will also be suspended to ensure parity and fairness for all children.

Please consult the following documentation to support this appendix:

- Remote Education Policy
- COVID-19 Whole School Risk Assessment
- DFE Restricting attendance during the national lockdown: schools. Guidance for all schools in England (January 2021)
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Addendum Policy