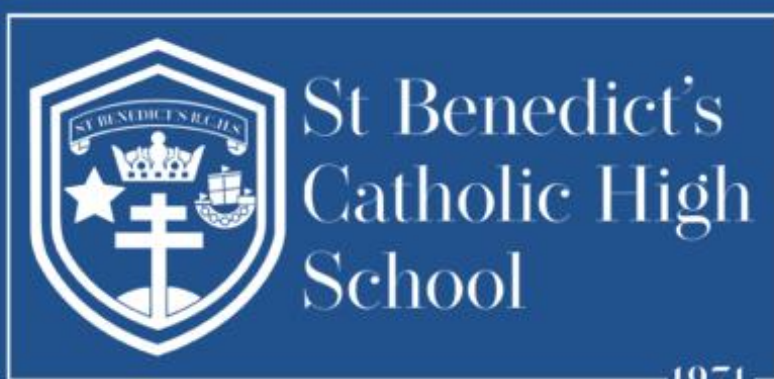


Time is precious at school,
so let's make the most of it.



A Parents'/Carers' Guide to Attendance at St Benedict's Catholic High School





Introduction

Welcome to this summary guide on the attendance procedures in place at our school. At St Benedict's we want to work with our families to support all our students to be successful in their school lives. To do this, students need to attend school on a regular basis. Attendance at school is so important. Good attendance enables the opportunity for so many wonderful experiences to occur. Educational research has shown that children who attend school regularly are more likely to:

- Keep up with their work
- Gain better qualifications
- Develop good habits
- Maintain friendships
- Have access to a wide range of opportunities when they leave school
- Stay away from harm

The document is designed to provide you as a parent/carer with the key information you need to help ensure that attendance at school is as smooth as possible. The school attendance policy is available on the school website (www.st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk) which provides further information.

If you have any questions around attendance, please don't hesitate to contact us at school.

Times of the school day

The school day **starts at 8:35am**

Morning registration is at 8:35am

Afternoon registration is at 1:35pm

The end of the school day:

Monday – Wednesday 3:30pm

Thursday – Friday 2:30pm

Morning registration

Students will be registered in tutor time, which starts at **8:35am**. If a student is late to tutor after 8:45am, they will be marked late on the register.

The morning registration session window closes at 9:15am. Any student arriving after this time, without prior agreement will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

Afternoon registration

Afternoon registration takes place at the start of period 5, 1:35pm. Students are expected to be on time to their period 5 lesson. If they are 5 minutes late, they will be marked as late on the register.

Key contacts in school

Attendance Lead: Mr S Burgess, Assistant Headteacher

Attendance Officer: Mrs B Byers

Attendance Admin: Mrs L Sermon

Who to contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis

The first person to contact is the attendance officer, Mrs Byers. You can contact the attendance officer by using any of the methods in the 'contacting the attendance team' section.

You can also speak to your child's tutor, head of year or learning mentor about complex issues.



The names of the heads of year and learning mentors are:

Year	Head of Year	Learning Mentor
7	Mrs Young	Mrs McCarten
8	Mr Spires	Mrs Ennis
9	Mrs Warneford	Mr Williamson
10	Mrs McAteer	Mrs Brinicombe
11	Mrs Muncaster	Mrs Wells / Miss Percival-Boynton
Sixth Form	Mr Hamilton	Ms Sewell (Student Support Officer)

Contacting the attendance team

You can contact the attendance team by email: attendance@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk

Telephone: 01946 692275 (option 1)

Unexpected absence from school: Reporting an absence

There are four ways to inform school if your child is not able to attend:

- 1: Telephone: 01946 692275 (Option 1)
- 2: Email: attendance@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk
- 3: EduLink – attendance report
- 4: Text: 07860055717

Please provide the following information – **name of child, your name (person reporting the absence), tutor group/year group, reason for absence.**

Please inform school of any absence **before 9:30am. You need to inform school on each day of absence.**

Lateness to school

If a student is late to school without good reason, we will contact home to make sure you are aware of the lateness.

Regular lateness to school without good reason can lead to you being asked to attend a meeting in school and an attendance action plan may be developed. Sanctions such as after school detentions may be issued for the student. These methods are to discourage lateness and help the student learn about being on time.

Students are expected to be in school and in their tutor room by 8:35am.

We do understand that on days when there is particularly heavy traffic coming onto the site it can be difficult to be on time and the school will take this into account. Equally for those students who travel by school bus: - if the bus is late then students will not be marked as late.

Medical appointments

Ideally, all medical (doctors, hospital, dentist) appointments should be made outside of school time. However, we do understand that sometimes, particularly hospital appointments are scheduled during the school day. It is important that you inform school as soon as possible. We can then take the appropriate mark on our registration system. For our records we **require a copy of the appointment letter.**



Did you know?

Schools are open 195 days a year. This leaves 170 other days for leisure time.

Requesting leave of absence

As you may know, the law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. The Department for Education allows a Headteacher the discretion to consider authorising a leave of absence in term time only in "exceptional circumstances".

You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will still miss out on the teaching that their peers will receive whilst your child is away. Children returning from a leave of absence during term time are also unprepared for the lessons which build on the teaching they have missed. This poses a potential risk of under achievement for your child.

If you wish to request a leave of absence, please complete the form on the following page. This form is also available from the school reception and on the attendance page on the school website. If the absence is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance, and you nevertheless take your child out of school for the leave of absence this **will be recorded as unauthorised leave**.

All unauthorised absences, including holidays that have not been sanctioned by the Headteacher, are accumulated and parents who fail to ensure regular attendance of their children at school can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The amount is £80 (per parent per child) if paid within 21 days and £160 (per parent per child) if paid between 21 and 28 days. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances. All leave of absence requests must be completed on the attached form, letters will no longer be accepted. This should be returned to the school at least 7 days before the start of the holiday. All requests must be made prior to the leave being taken. Leave cannot be authorised retrospectively.

In considering the decision whether to authorise, the following will be taken into account:-

- Reasons given for the holiday.
- Any holidays taken in previous or the current academic year.
- Your child's previous attendance record; this includes attendance in the current academic year - which should be over 95% - as well as attendance in previous academic years.
- Whether your child will miss any tests/examinations (or important preparation for their tests).
- Whether your child is making good progress.



Request for absence during term time

PLEASE SEND TO THE ATTENDANCE OFFICER AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO REQUEST

Student NameTutor Group

Date of first day of absenceam or pm Date of return to schoolam or pm

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school

Please detail the exceptional circumstance for which you are requesting leave of absence

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the Local Authority may be notified of the holiday taken and a Penalty Notice may be issued. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days and £160 if paid between 21 and 28 days. I also understand that failure to pay a Penalty Notice will result in prosecution, except in limited circumstances.

Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application.

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname

Dr/Mr/Mrs/ Ms Forename..... Surname

Signed Dated

(Please ensure you are giving at least 7 days' notice of the proposed absence, retrospective applications cannot be authorised)

For school to complete: AUTHORISED UNAUTHORISED a) b) c) d) (refers to categories below)

⌘-----

This slip to be returned to Parent/Carer (s)

St Benedict's Catholic High School - Request for a Leave of Absence During Term Time

Dear.....,

Child's Name..... Tutor Group.....

Your request for absence on the following dates: ___ / ___ / ___ to ___ / ___ / ___ =.....days, has been

considered and is AUTHORISED UNAUTHORISED

- a) Their attendance is currently:.....
- b) The request **does/does not** meet the criteria for 'exceptional circumstances'.
- c) They are **making/not making** good academic progress.
- d) They **are/are not** being prepared for or taking tests during the absence.

Please note: An **unauthorised** absence may be reported to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice may be issued

Signed _____

Date ___ / ___ / ___



The school's day to day process for managing attendance

All students are registered by their tutor at 8:35am. If a student is absent from registration, the attendance officer will check to see if either a text message, phone call, EduLink message or email has been sent to school explaining the absence. If no message has been received by 9:30am, then the attendance officer will aim to contact home to attain the reason for absence. Initially, this will be in the form of a text message to the parents/carer. If no response is received by 10:30am then the attendance officer will attempt to telephone. If no response is received, then a home visit may be undertaken.

Please note that communication from home is needed for each day of absence from school.

If there is no response following telephone calls, home visits, text messages, contact with other family members, then a safeguarding or Police referral may be made.

How the school promotes and incentivise good attendance

Throughout the year, the school promotes good attendance through assemblies, reminders during tutor and PSHE time. Certificates and prizes are provided each term and achievements points are given to students for excellent attendance.

Tracking attendance data

Parent/Carer:

Using our parental school app on your mobile phone or on the web, gives you access to your child's attendance data. The system is updated every 24 hours and will provide you with your child's up-to-date attendance data.

The system used is called EduLink and the app can be downloaded from the app store.

The system can also be logged in via a web browser at: <https://www.edulinkone.com/>

If you do not have a username or password, you can request this by emailing ithelpdesk@st-benedicts.cumbria.sch.uk On the log on page, you will be asked for the school postcode: CA28 8UG

The school will also send attendance text messages to you informing you of your child's attendance.

School:

The school monitors all student's attendance daily and analyses attendance trends each week. Based on the data, the school will identify any student who has declining attendance. At this point the attendance officer will contact home and try to attain a reason for the declining attendance. If attendance continues to decline for no specific reason, you may be invited to a meeting in school. This may be with the attendance officer, head of year/learning mentor or with the assistant headteacher.

To improve attendance, during the meeting an attendance action plan will be drawn up and a set of agreed targets will be agreed. Those targets will be in effect for three weeks, after which time the targets will be reviewed. If there is no improvement after three review meetings, the school may decide that a referral to the Local Authority is required.

When we review students' attendance, we look at their progress in three initial stages, green, amber and red.

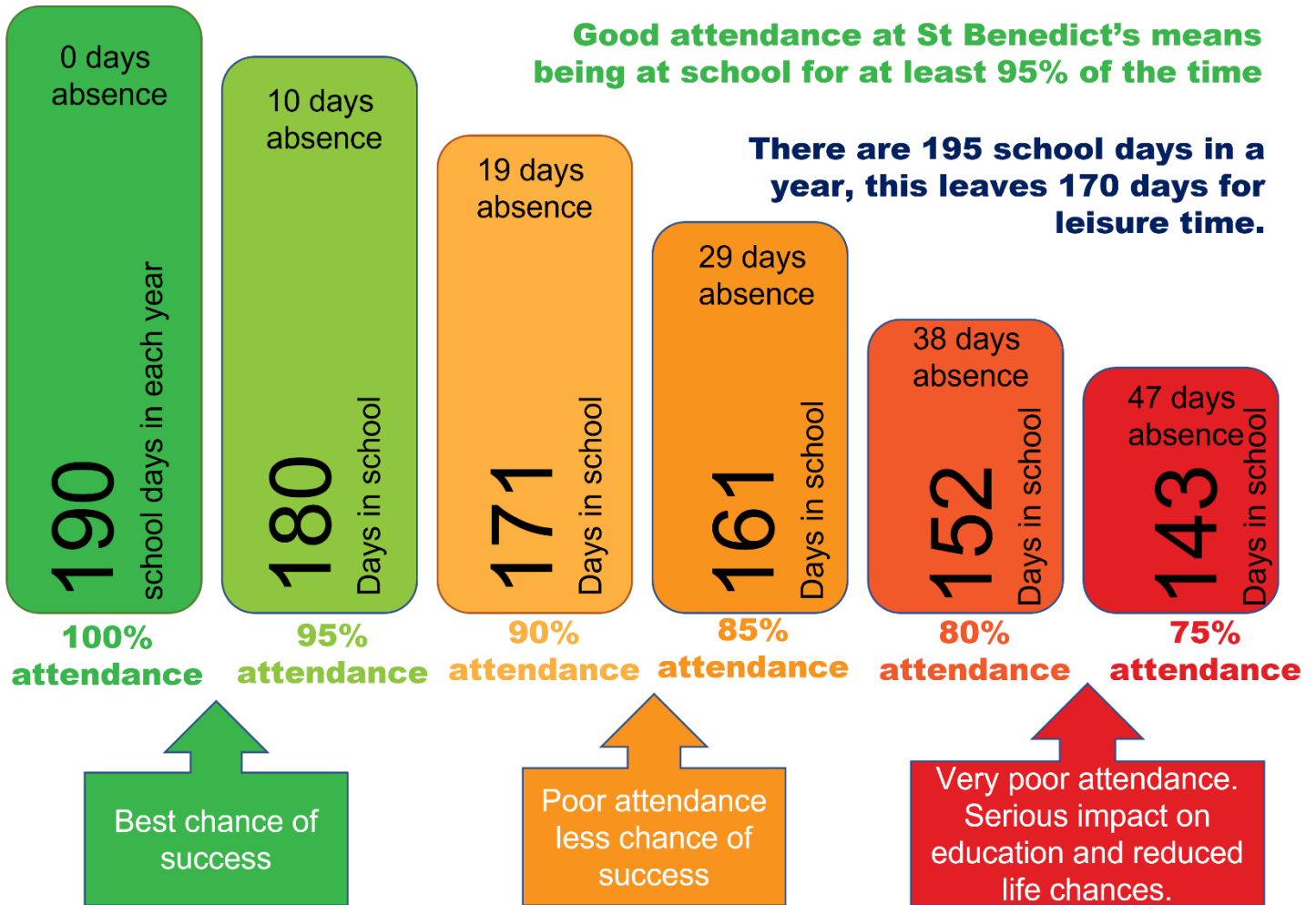
Attendance Band	Current Attendance Percentage
Stage 1: Green	95% - 100%
Stage 2: Amber	90% - 94.9%
Stage 3: Red	Below 90%

If a student's attendance is below 90%, this means that it is below the government's threshold for 'good' attendance but in reality over the course of a year it means that...



Good attendance at St Benedict's means being at school for at least 95% of the time

There are 195 school days in a year, this leaves 170 days for leisure time.



The school's strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence

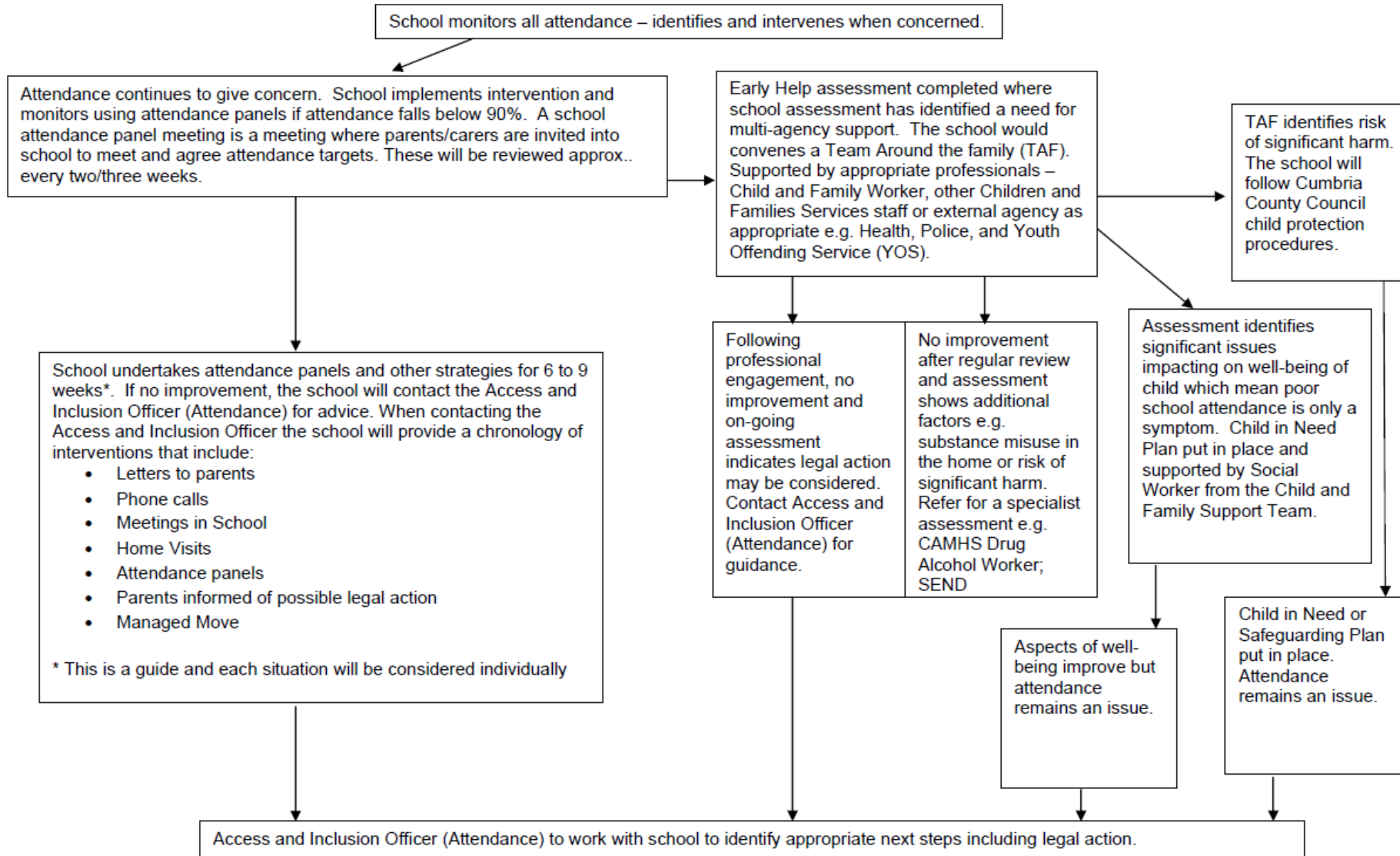
Although the support on offer will differ for each student and their family, the school aims to promote an inclusive and supportive approach to all.

The key to improving attendance is through honest and frank conversations, where the family and school are working together to support the student in their return. The school will activity work to provide a bespoke support package that is tailored to the student's needs.

The flow chart on the following page outlines some of the possible routes to provide support and outlines the process where engagement from a family and student is not working.



ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART

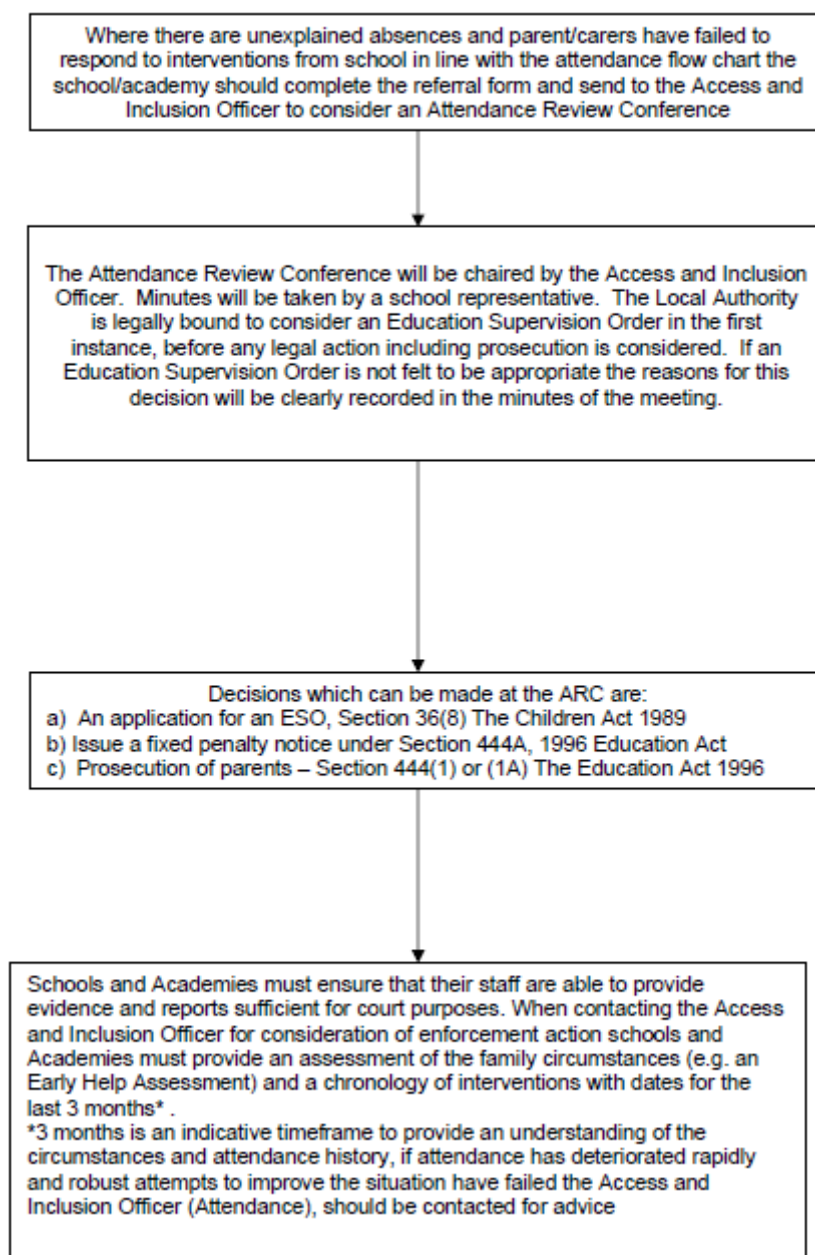




When fixed penalty notices for absence are used

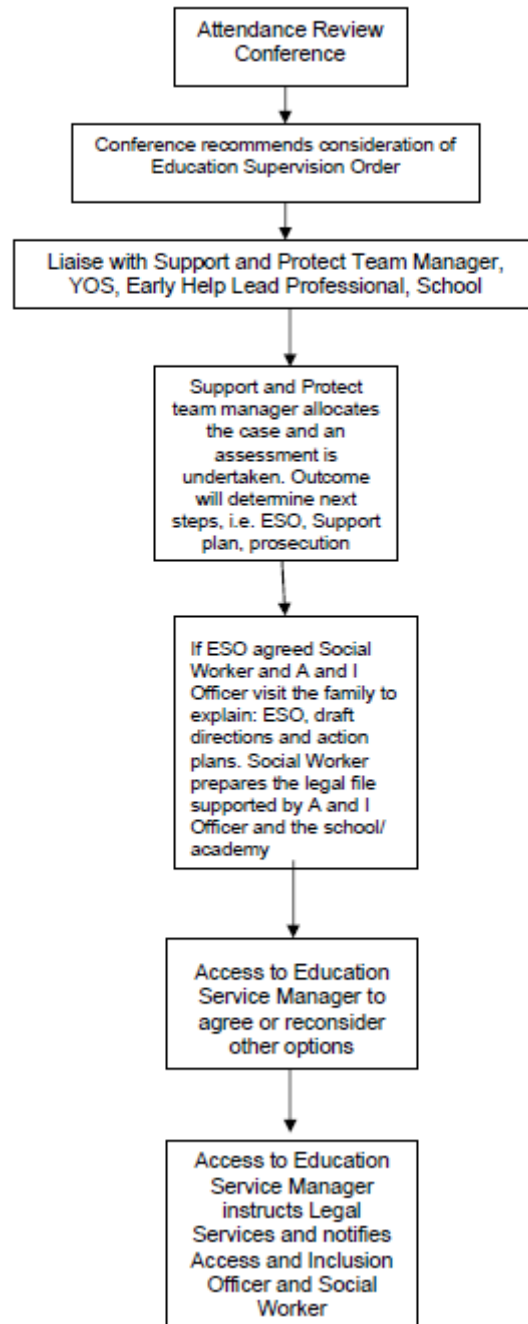
The school follows the local authority school enforcement procedures and as part of the procedures, where a student is absent from school for no specific reason; then the parents/carers are at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice from the local authority. Penalty notices tend to be issued when there is evidence of regular absence from school such as term time holidays or lack of engagement from a family to address other absence from school. In the first instance an attendance review conference will be held by school and if there is no improvement a referral will be made to the local authority. They will undertake their own attendance review conference and follow the points on the flow chart below. If there is still no improvement, then the local authority will make a decision as to the next steps. These are shown on the following pages.

THE ATTENDANCE REVIEW CONFERENCE



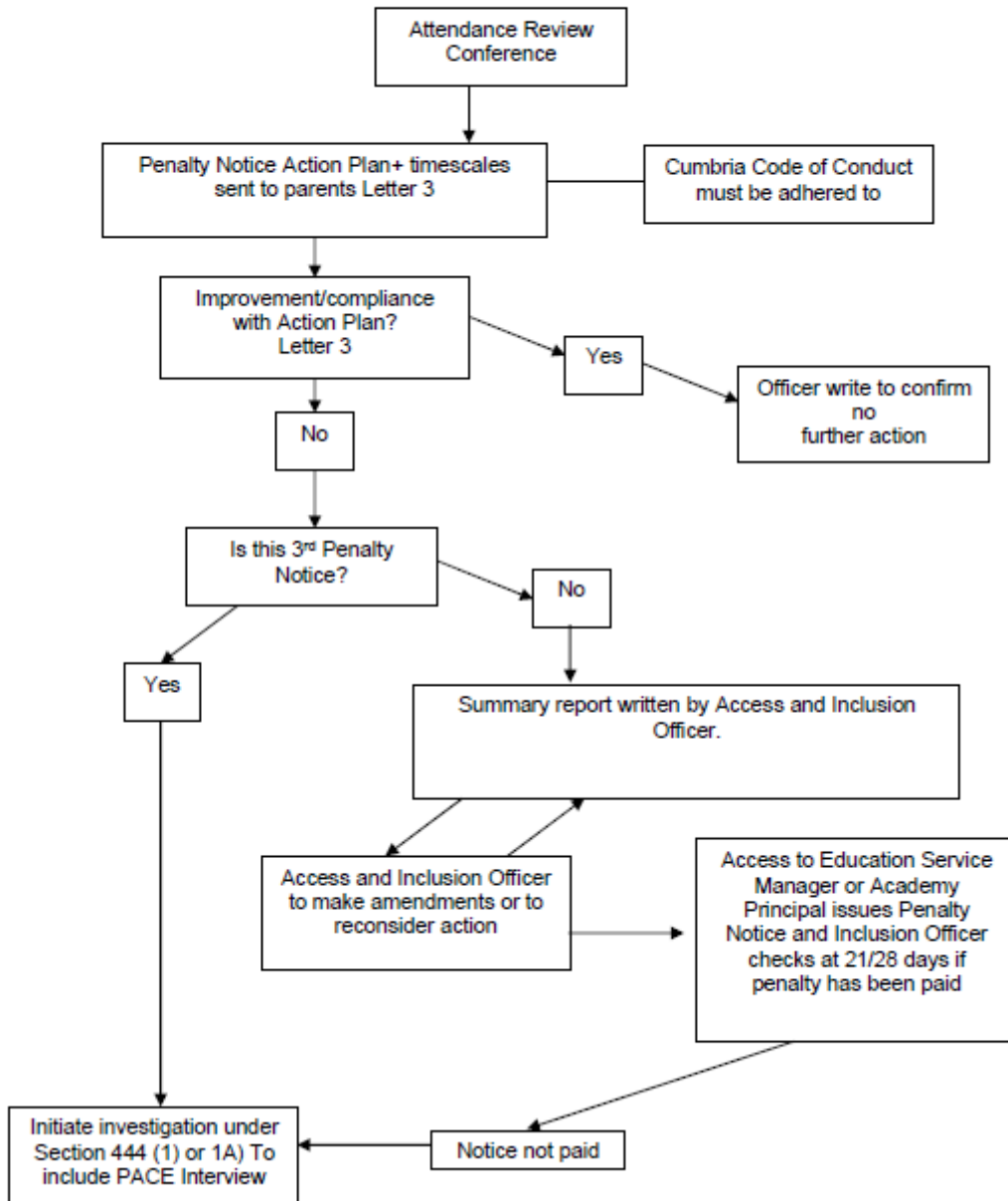


EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDER FLOWCHART





PENALTY NOTICE FLOWCHART





PROSECUTION FLOWCHART

