

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy 2023

Our aim at Northfield Manor Primary Academy is to provide the greatest opportunity for children's learning and endeavor to provide all pupils with an equal chance to make the most of the education that our school offers, by providing a welcoming, caring and positive environment. For this to be achieved, we expect the highest attendance and punctuality from all pupils, at all times.

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their children attend regularly. However, the school recognises that problems may occasionally occur which affect this. Through working in partnership with parents/carers, we can find solutions to problems together and ensure pupils right to a full education.

At Northfield Manor we strive to achieve our target of 96.1% and above for all pupils.

### Aims

At Northfield Manor we aim to:

- Ensure that every pupil is safeguarded and has access to a full-time education to which they are entitled;
- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality is a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, staff and governors;
- Keep accurate up-to-date records/data to identify and address any trends of individuals or groups;
- Reduce persistent, unauthorised and leave of absence within a legal framework (Fasttrack and Penalty Notices);
- Act early to identify support needed with individuals, classes and groups of pupils, staff, families and external agencies where appropriate.

### Unauthorised absence thresholds for 2023-24

	Days missed at 98%	Days missed at 95%	Days missed at 93%	Days missed at 90%
Half term 1	0.5 days	2 days	3 days	3 days
Half term 2	1.5 days	4 days	6 days	8 days
Half term 3	2 days	5 days	8 days	10 days
Half term 4	2.5 days	6 days	10 days	14 days
Half term 5	3 days	8 days	12 days	17 days
Half term 6	4 days	10 days	15 days	



### **Procedures for dealing with absences**

- On the first day of absence, parent/carers are expected to call the office and provide a reason for absence. A text is sent to all parent/carers of pupils absent each day when the registers close at 9.25am. If no contact is made by 10.00am a telephone call will be made to parent/carer by office staff and the reason recorded.
- If member of office staff/other staff is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of absence, this will be referred to Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher.
- If any absence is continued with no reason, all emergency contact numbers will be telephoned to try and ascertain whereabouts of a pupil.
- DSL will make telephone calls to any pupil's families at any time if there are any concerns around absences and further actions may be taken for example a safe and well home visit.
- Pupils with a record of persistent absence (below 93%) will be sent a text and may be contacted by the DSL. If pupils are persistently absent for medical reasons, then medical evidence will be requested for any further absences. Failure to provide this will result in an unauthorised absence.
- Poor attendance with persistent authorised illness and unauthorised absences concerns will be addressed by DSL and HT. This can be seen as 'educational neglect' and Early Help is offered to families, school meetings, referrals made to school nurse and external agencies.
- Absences are monitored on a regular basis by office staff, DSL and HT.

### **Personalised Pupil Progress Tracking Sheets**

Poor attendance or persistent absence is likely to be a significant barrier to learning and attainment. During pupil progress meetings between teachers and Senior Leadership team, attendance issues that are impacting on a pupil's progress are discussed and recorded. These concerns are communicated with the DSL. Teachers continue to share concerns through fortnightly meetings.

### **What do we define as being late?**

If a pupil arrives at school after 8.55am (when the gates close) the pupil is considered to be late and will be given a late mark 'L'. The time registers are closed officially is 9.25am. If a pupil arrives after this time they will be given a 'U' mark (late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole session.

### **Procedures for dealing with lateness**

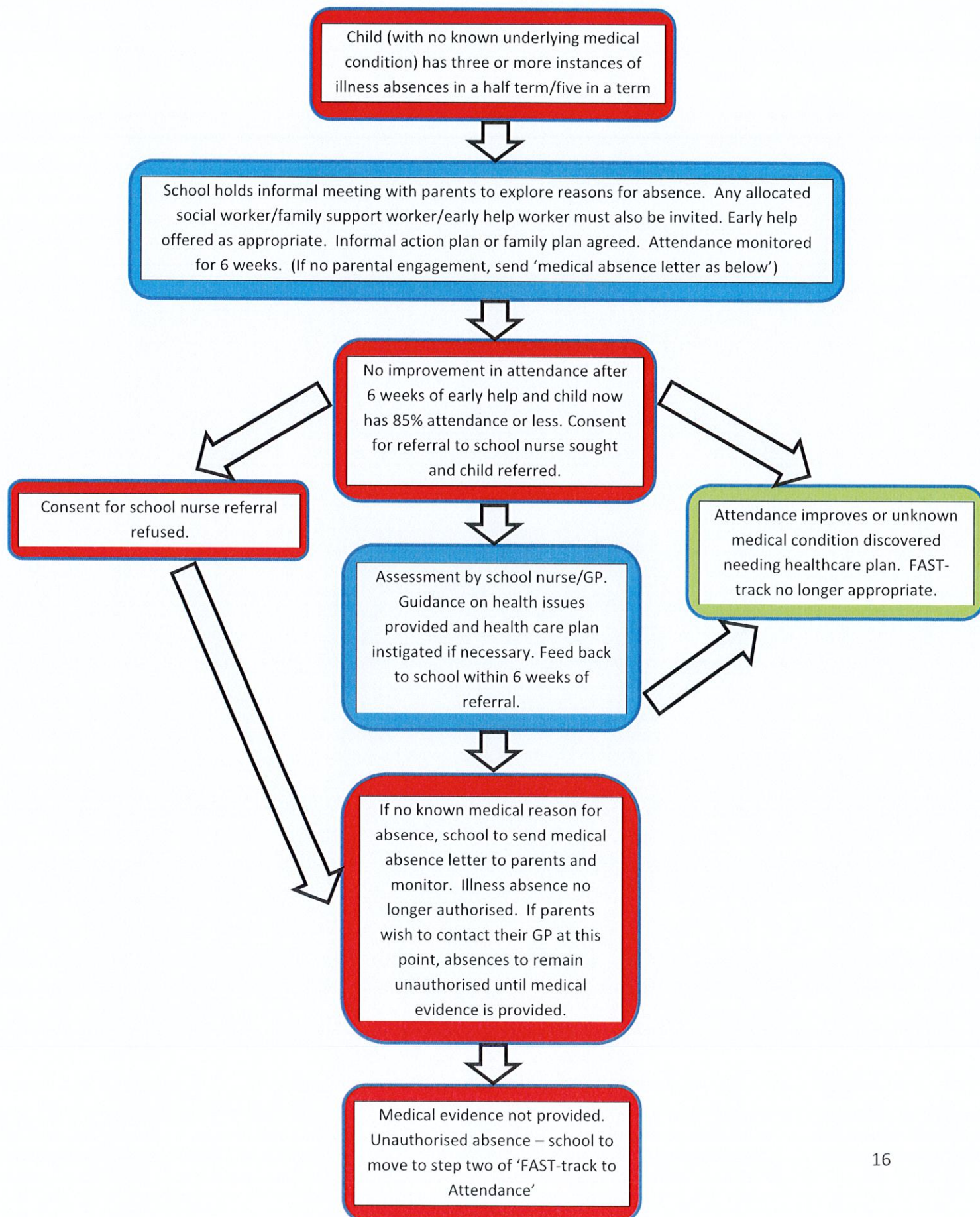
- School gates are closed at 8.55am after this time a pupil is classed as arriving 'late' and must be brought through the main office only.
- The person who is responsible for bringing the pupil to school must come and sign the pupil in on our electronic system situated inside the main school entrance.
- If lateness becomes a concern for any pupil, then this is communicated with DSL who will take appropriate action for example a letter sent to parent/carers and a meeting in school if further sessions of lateness.
- Punctuality is monitored on a regular basis by office staff/DSL and HT.

### **Medical Appointments**

Parents are actively encouraged to make routine medical appointments, outside the school day such as dentist, optician and GPs' surgeries outside of school hours and during the school holidays. Parents need to inform the office in advance of any medical appointments and show the appointment letter/card or text/email. A pupil absence for medical appointments will only be authorised for the session as code 'M' morning or afternoon session. If the pupil does not return after appointment, then the session will be unauthorised.



### Frequent illness absence (no known medical condition)





## Registration

Registration takes place at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is completed using the electronic SIMS system and is the class teacher/staff member's responsibility.

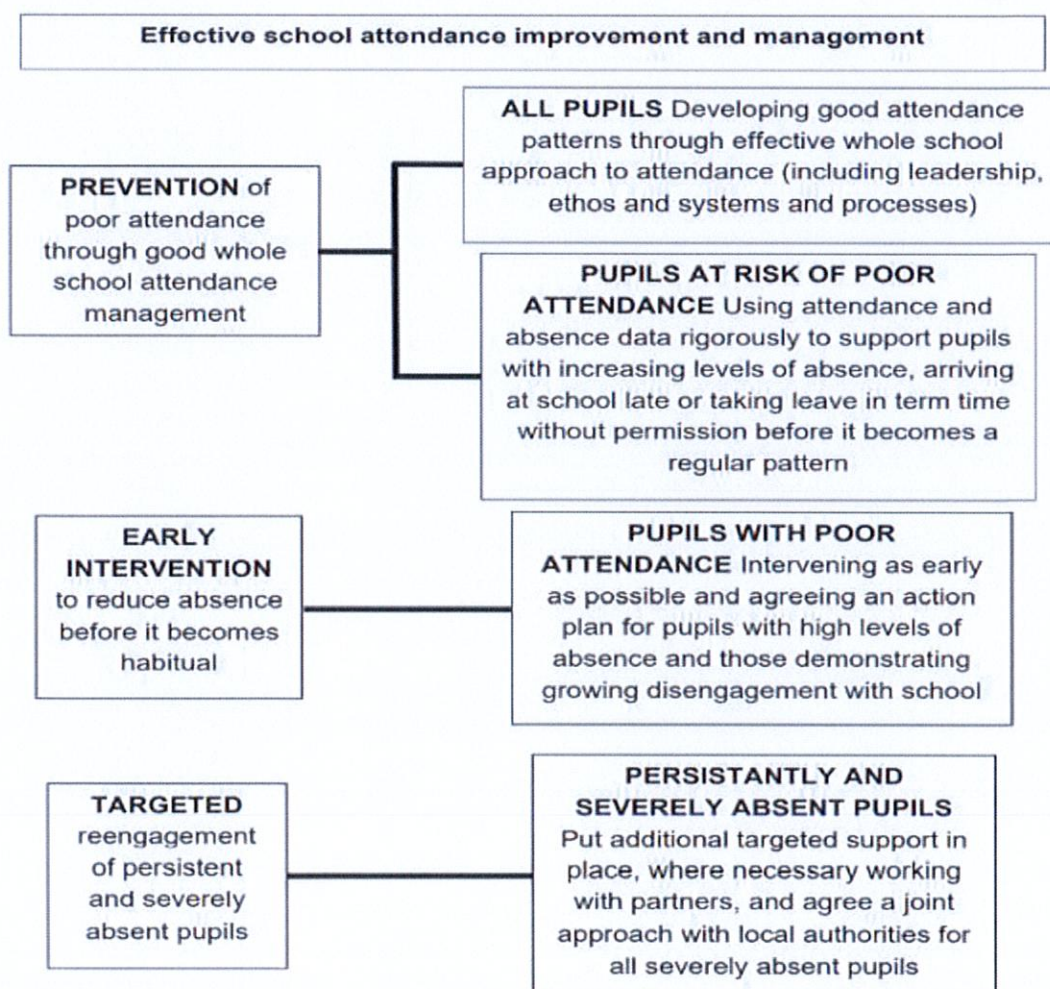
If a class are on a day trip, the register must be completed for both the morning and afternoon sessions. The afternoon session should not however be completed for those pupils that are not going on the trip (office staff will monitor this)

**Please note that registers must be completed accurately because they constitute a legal document and form part of a chain of evidence. They will also be needed for safety reasons such as in the event of a fire and to safeguard all pupils.**

## Strategies for promoting regular attendance

- A paid daily breakfast club is run to support parents/carers by allowing them to drop off pupils from 7.15am.
- Breakfast Bagels are provided every morning during registration for all children-fuel for learning.
- Praise, rewards and incentives schemes are implemented by the school to encourage good attendance by all.
- The school newsletter, website and class dojo is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality and provide up-to-date information.
- Parents Evening and induction meetings for all new families are used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

The DfE use a helpful diagram to describe the stages of an effective school improvement and management process:



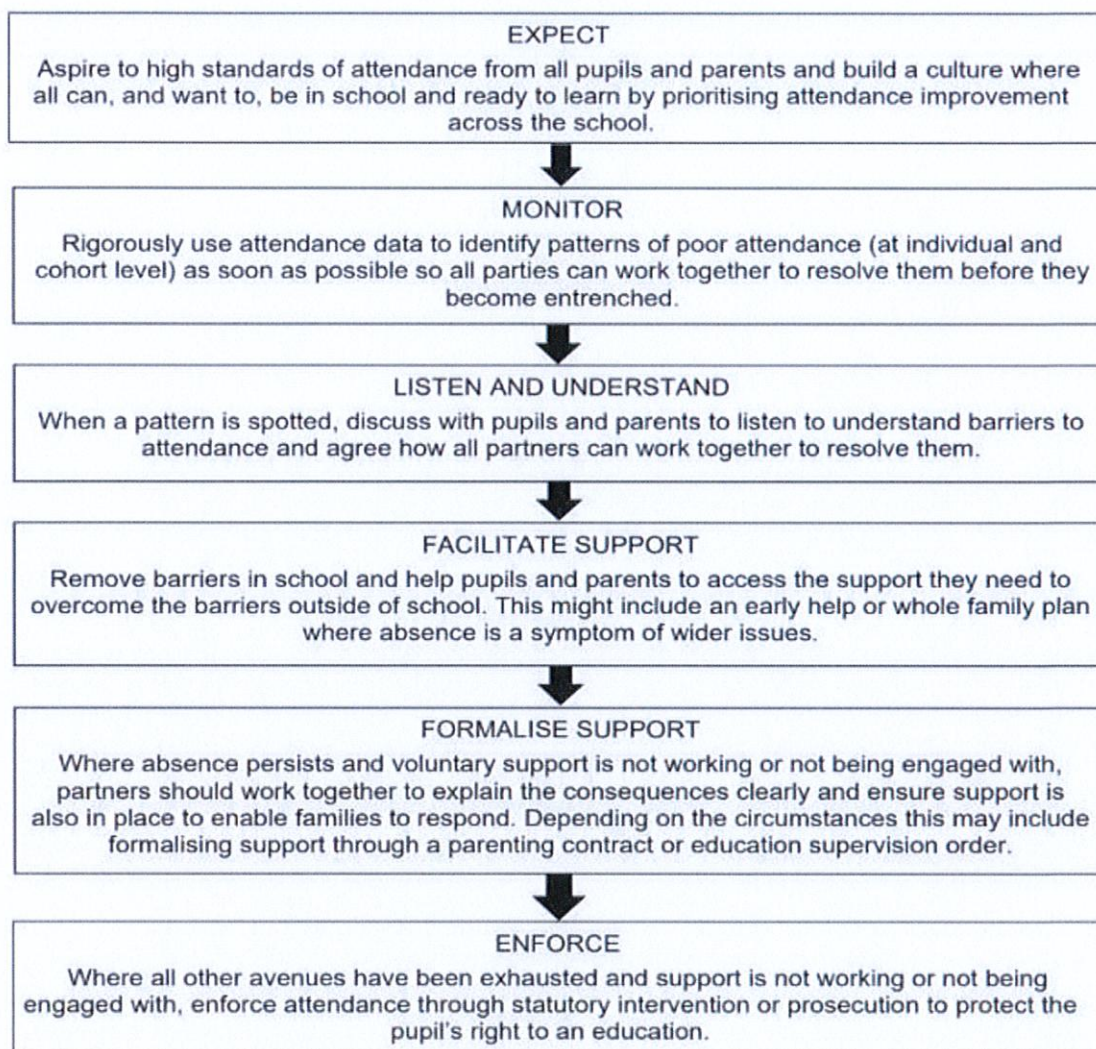


## **FAST-track to Attendance**

An Early Help procedure for improving pupil attendance including the legal process for taking legal action for ongoing unauthorised attendance for schools, academies and alternative providers and independent schools in Birmingham follow where there are concerns about unacceptable levels of individual pupil absence.

[file:///N:/Downloads/BCC FAST track to attendance guidance Sept 2023 AF %20\(5\).pdf](file:///N:/Downloads/BCC%20FAST%20track%20to%20attendance%20guidance%20Sept%202023%20AF%20(5).pdf)

Fast-track to Attendance is designed to reflect the model of support outlined in 'Working together to improve school attendance' [working together to improve school attendance](#)



## **Procedures for Leave in Term Time (Legal Process)**

The Education (Pupil Registration – England) Regulations 2013 and the Education (Penalty Notices – England) Regulations 2013 are in force and followed by this school. The law clearly states that parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and that head teachers can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced.

### **The local authority takes legal action under the process when:**

- A pupil has been taken an unauthorised “leave of absence” from school for minimum of 10 continuous sessions (5 days) ‘G’ code and;
- the school have followed the relevant local authority legal intervention process,
- Taking unauthorised leave in term time is therefore grounds for issuing a penalty notice (£60 per parent, per child e.g.: two children taking a one week leave of absence to visit family abroad would result in a fine of £240 for the parents).



## **'FAST-Track to Attendance'** **Quick Guide**

(Please refer to the full guidance)

Concerning levels of pupil absence either authorised or unauthorised

**Step One** – Early help including completion of Section 6 of the Early Help Assessment form with the child and Section 7 with the parents/carers in an informal meeting (if there is consent and engagement). (If a social worker/family support/early help worker is already involved there is no need to offer Early Help to parents/carers but Section 6 is still required)

At least one session of unauthorised absence

**Step Two** – Invite parents/carers to a school attendance review meeting (SARM) and hold the SARM. Complete a parent/school contract if the parents attend. **Do not move to this step unless Step One has been completed, including capturing the voice of the child and offering early help.**

The pupil has one further session of unauthorised absence after the SARM within a maximum 10 school week period.

**Step Three** – Send 'Formal Warning Notice' to each parent/carer individually with an up-to-date attendance printout and the 'School Attendance (Legal Action) - Information for Parents/Carers' leaflet. This will be your evidence. Do not move to this step if there has been no further unauthorised absence within 10 weeks of the SARM being held.

The pupil has a minimum of 10 further sessions of unauthorised absence since the Formal Warning Notice was issued (in terms of being 'reasonable' include a couple of days for postage). This could be within a 12-day period but no longer than 10 school weeks.

**Step Four** – Refer to ELIT  
(do not delay - refer as soon as just after they reach 10 further sessions - allowing the two days for postage of the formal warning notice - but not before or on the day of the 10<sup>th</sup> session)



### FAST-track referral – checklist!

To refer to ELIT, the school will have...

Actions	Completed? (Please tick)	N/A (Please tick)
Completed section 6 of the early help assessment with the child at the start of the intervention (no earlier than 6 months before the SARM)?		
Offered early help during an informal meeting with parents or, conducted a home visit if there was no response to phone calls and letters inviting parents to attend (no earlier than 6 months before the SARM)?		
Included both parents/carers if applicable?		
Used <i>#you'vebeenmissed</i> for children absent due to emotionally based school avoidance and consulted the STICK team? <b>(Please note that FAST-track from Step Two is not appropriate in instances where parents are working with you to address the EBSA, even if that work is not successful).</b>		
Sought consent for a referral to the school nurse where early help has not been successful and there is frequent illness absence, and referred?		
Ensured there is there at least one unauthorised absence after step one is concluded before the SARM?		
Given 7 days written notice for the SARM?		
Fully completed the SARM and asked the parents to sign the Parent/School Contract or, completed the last page completed if not attended?		
Ensured there is at least one further unauthorised absence accrued after SARM (within a 10-school week period) before sending the formal warning notice?		

Sent the formal warning notice to each parent separately to the correct address, and includes the legal information leaflet?		
Ensured there are 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a 10-school week period (or no sooner than 7 days) after the formal warning notice was sent?		
<p>Scanned all of the evidence onto one PDF to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a copy of the SARM form with the Parent/School Contract attached <b><u>OR</u></b> the back page of the form if the parents didn't attend</li> <li>▪ a copy of the SARM invitation letter</li> <li>▪ a copy of the Formal Warning Notice which would have been sent to the parents and included a copy of the child's attendance printout, and the 'School Attendance (Legal Action) - Information for Parents' leaflet</li> <li>▪ copies of attendance printouts for the current and previous academic years (with session comments if your system allows)</li> <li>▪ copies of communication logs with parents covering the current academic year if available</li> <li>▪ any relevant medical evidence provided by the parent to the school</li> </ul>		



## ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

### KEY

Present
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Not counted in possible attendances



- A whole school letter in line with Birmingham City Council Education is sent out at the beginning of the school year and details appear on the school website informing all parents/carers. This is in line with the policies in all other local schools.
- Parents requesting leave during term time are referred to the DSL and HT who will explain the procedures and the request put in writing or school enquiry email. The outcome of the request will clearly state if the leave is authorised or unauthorised and the consequences, this will be posted to the parents.

**Northfield Manor Primary does not authorise leave in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances and satisfied with evidence presented.**

### **Legal Framework**

For the purpose of this guidance, a parent means:

- 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).

For the purpose of this guidance:

- DSL means-Designated Safeguarding Officer(Mrs Sheldon)
- HT means-Head teacher (Mr Hull)

### **Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

<b>Review frequency</b>	Annually	<b>To be reviewed</b>	October 2024
<b>Ratified by Academy Council</b>	October 2023	<b>Signed by Academy Councillor</b>	M Sheldon