



# Arnot St. Mary

Church of England  
Primary School

# Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy approved on: .....

Ratified by: .....

Date for review: .....

## 1.0 Introduction

Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School recognises the clear link between the attendance and achievement of pupils. The aim of this policy, is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School to support learning and development.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding issues. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should aim to attend every day that the school is open. We set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%. ***As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.***

Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School believes Teachers, Parents, Carers, Pupils and all members of the school community have an important contribution in improving attendance and punctuality ensuring pupils attend to achieve. This Policy sets out how we will achieve this together and should be read in conjunction with the Attendance Roles and Responsibilities Guidance attached to this document.

## 2.0 Aims

- Maximise the overall percentage of pupil attendance and punctuality at Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School.
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent and raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community.
- Provide support advice and guidance for parents, pupils and staff.
- Develop clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data.
- Ensure a whole school approach to ensure consistency of intervention strategies.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, Health and other partner agencies.

## 2.1 Promoting regular Attendance at Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School:

This is everyone's responsibility, all members of staff, parent/carers and pupils. To help us all focus on this, Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School will ensure:

- Appropriate interventions are in place to improve punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum is provided and will be reviewed regularly.
- The need for high quality teaching and learning throughout the school is recognised as being essential to the promotion of attendance.
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support to minimise absence from school. This includes Arnot St. Mary CofE Primary School and multi-agency provision as appropriate.
- Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged and Looked After pupils and other vulnerable groups are given appropriate support, and attendance is monitored rigorously.
- Effective partnerships with parent/carers are encouraged through regular contact and support provided.
- Parents/carers are kept informed of pupils' attendance and punctuality through first day contact, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required.
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular incentives.
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with pupils in class and at assemblies.
- Staff attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure these are followed.

### 3.0 Attendance Expectations and Absence Procedures

A child not attending school is considered to be a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is required.

#### 3.1 Expectations of Parent/Carer

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is to be late.
- For routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments please ensure they are made outside of school hours.
- Contact school preferably by 8:30 am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend through illness, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is received as a result of your child's absence it is important that you respond to this text to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the School Office if the reason for absence requires a more personal contact.
- **In case of emergency** we need up to date contact numbers at all times so please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of two emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the Headteacher and can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays. Absence Forms can be requested from the school reception.

#### 3.2 If a pupil is absent we will

- Telephone and text the parent/carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9:30am.
- If no response is received and the absence is unauthorised a member of school staff will conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absences are increasing and we are not aware of a good reason the parent/carer will be invited to meet with members of the attendance team.
- If absences persist the attendance team will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Officer.

#### 4.0 Understanding types of Absence

Arnot St Mary CofE Primary School has to record every absence that a pupil takes from school and this is why it is important that parents/carers advise school about the cause of any absence, preferably by calling the school on the first day of absence and in writing on the pupil's return.

##### 4.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the Headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

##### 4.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not

approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get their mark.

This type of absence may lead to the use of Penalty Notices or other sanctions from the Local Authority. From September 2018 Arnot St Mary CofE Primary School can issue warning letters (in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct) to parents where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any one term. The warning period will cover a period of 20 schools days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time the school will refer to case to the local authority requesting a Penalty Notice be issued.

#### **4.3 Persistent Absence**

- Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DFE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DFE expects schools to intervene well before pupils reach a level of persistent absence.
- Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent/carer has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school as soon as possible to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.
- Parent/Carers are asked to contact Mrs Woods or Mrs Walls in the first instance.

#### **5.0 Why Regular Attendance is very important:**

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning. Pupils who have time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

- 90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

#### **6.0 The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)**

- The Education Welfare Officer – provides support for parents/carer and advice on problems relating to attendance, and encourages good communications between home and school.
- The EWO will always try to resolve the situation by agreement with the family but, if a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists the EWO will be required to give consideration to the instigation of legal proceedings which include; Penalty Notices, Parental Prosecution and Education Supervision Orders. Details regarding attendance law, penalty fines and legal interventions are available from the Local Authority.

#### **7.0 Leave of absence in Term Time**

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must be in truly exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

Parents/carers can receive a Penalty Notice for taking their child on holiday during term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

## 8.0 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons, it can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

### 8.1 How we manage lateness

The school gates open at 8:40 and the school day starts at 8:50. Registers are taken between 8:50 and 9:00am by the class teacher. School gates close at 8:50. Children arriving after this time should enter through main reception. Children arriving between 9:00 and 9:30 will be deemed late. Children arriving after 9:30 will be deemed absent and receive a U code on the register.

- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence. If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register, the school may request the local authority issue a Penalty Notice.

If a Parent/Carer has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the school office who will offer support to resolve the problem.

## 9.0 People Responsible for Attendance Matters at Arnot St Mary CofE Primary School

All school staff, parents/carers and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success.

## 10.0 Removal from Roll

From the 1st September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

**As a school we are now required to:**

- Inform the LA in **every** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register
- Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
- Provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Give the attendance officer comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing.
- If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a *child missing in education*. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

# Appendices

## Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance Whole School Approach

When	Whom	Actions Expected
<b>DAILY</b>	<b>Pupils</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive on school site between 8:40 and 8:50</li> <li>• Be in class on time for registration at 8:50</li> </ul>
	<b>Class Teacher</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registers are completed on Class Mark each day on time</li> <li>• Ensure attendance has a high profile in class</li> <li>• Discuss absence with pupils returning to school</li> <li>• Welcoming long-term absentees back into the class</li> </ul>
	<b>Admin &amp; Pastoral Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers</li> <li>• Ensuring input of accurate attendance marks in the register via SIMs</li> <li>• Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before xxxx)</li> <li>• Log on SIMS, parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences</li> <li>• Ensure all Late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to SIMS</li> <li>• SIMS in touch messages sent to parent/carers who have failed to contact regarding their child's absence and also pupils who arrive late.</li> <li>• First day absence phone contact with parents/carers, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned.</li> <li>• SLT and class teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required</li> <li>• Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the class teachers.</li> <li>• Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits</li> <li>• Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the First Day contact systems.</li> <li>• Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff.</li> </ul>
	<b>Senior Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with</li> <li>• Safeguarding requirements.</li> <li>• Liaison with Pastoral staff regarding support work with identified pupils</li> </ul>

When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	Class teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance</li> <li>• Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by making contact with parent/carers where appropriate.</li> <li>• Update information on attendance boards</li> </ul>
	Pastoral & AdminStaff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informing SLT and EWO of pupil patterns of absence.</li> <li>• Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for class teachers and pupil rewards</li> <li>• Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parent/carers</li> <li>• Pupils rewards</li> <li>• Provide weekly Punctuality data for class teacher and pupil rewards</li> </ul>
	Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and Tracking of staff not completing registers in line with</li> <li>• Safeguarding requirements.</li> <li>• Liaison with attendance team to interrogate attendance data</li> </ul>

When	Whom	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	Pastoral & Admin Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement</li> <li>• Use attendance data to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils</li> </ul>
	Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that attendance features in ALL parents evenings</li> <li>• Monitor and track attendance/PA Action Plans</li> <li>• Liaise with EWO to share information and agree joint actions re action plans or other pupils causing concern</li> </ul>

TERMILY	Senior Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those at off site provision</li> <li>• School Attendance Review</li> <li>• Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance</li> <li>• Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and that systems are operating effectively.</li> <li>• Report to SLT on attendance matters</li> <li>• Ensure school prospectus, parent/carers welcome booklet and school newsletters promote Attendance</li> </ul>
	Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors</li> </ul>

**9.0 Table of Escalation of Interventions**

Attendance %	RAG	Intervention	Lead Responsibility
100% Attendance is Excellent		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewards and Praise</li> </ul>	Class Teacher Pastoral Staff Senior Leader
99% - 97% Attendance is Good		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rewards and Encouragement</li> </ul>	Class Teacher Pastoral Staff Senior Leader
96% - 90% Attendance is a Concern		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to pupils &amp; contact parent/carers</li> <li>• Parent meetings</li> <li>Return to school discussions</li> <li>Safe and well safeguarding visits</li> <li>Persistent absence warning letters</li> </ul>	Class Teacher Pastoral & Admin Staff Senior Leader
Below 90% Attendance is a Serious Concern		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular next action planning meetings</li> <li>Safe and well safeguarding visits</li> <li>• visits               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plans</li> <li>• Legal intervention</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Senior Leader Pastoral & Admin staff Governors EWO



## Universal Good Practice all Schools

### There is an expectation for all schools to:

- Have a policy that sets out clearly the expectations, systems and procedures for ensuring regular school attendance.
- Have defined within the policy what regular school attendance is.
- Include in the policy the times the register is open and closed .
- Report regularly to Governors on overall absence, PA and vulnerable groups.
- Make effective use of the data available to analyse trends over time and identifying pupils who may be at risk. All data must be benchmarked against national performance.
- Have a dedicated Governor with responsibility for oversight and scrutiny of attendance .
- Have a nominated senior leader responsible for ensuring school attendance is a high priority and there are effective procedures in place to address pupil absence.
- Have clear roles, responsibilities and contributions for the whole school community.
- Ensure all registers are accurately recorded.
- Ensure all staff use the correct attendance codes and do so consistently.
- Focus resources on preventing pupils becoming PA .
- Have a robust first day response system in place.
- Involve parents - communicate frequently, emphasise the role of parents working in partnership with the school .
- Issue regular reminders to parents of the procedures for notifying the school of pupil absence.
- Contact parents as soon as a pattern of absence begins to occur.
- Where appropriate, personalise the support. Set success criteria and monitor progress.
- Make effective use of incentives and positively reintegrate absentees.
- Incorporate attendance into all aspects of school life, including the school development plan, meeting agendas, parents evenings and transition planning.
- Schools should continually review their performance in relation to attendance.

## Escalation of Absence Tier 1

### School absence procedures:

- Schools must ensure parents are aware of the requirement to notify the school on the first day of their child's absence.
- Parents will be required to provide a reason and an expected date of return to school .
- There is an expectation for all schools to have in place a first day response system. This process must be initiated, if the school has not been notified why a child is absent. This can be by telephone call, text or email.
- Schools must ensure contact is prioritised for vulnerable children.
- For all pupils who attend off site provision daily liaison (AM / PM) must be undertaken with the external provider to ensure accurate recording of pupil attendance.
- Schools must be able to account for all children who are absent on a daily basis and the reason for absence is determined.
- If a child is absent and they require additional support to return to school. A referral should be made to the relevant agency - tier 2 targeted support
- Schools should always consider a whole family approach as factors such as adult mental health and domestic abuse are key features in households where there is poor attendance. In such cases an early help assessment such be initiated by the school and a multi-agency plan formulated that is regularly reviewed at Team Around the Family Meetings.
- If a child is absent without authorisation, there is an expectation for schools to challenge and inform parents of the outcome, if the child does not return to school.
- It is recommended school staff conduct a home visit if contact cannot be made with parents.
- If a pupil's absence continues without authorisation, contact must be made at the earliest opportunity with the parent to discuss concerns. A meeting in school with the parent should be arranged.
- The schools SLT attendance lead must be informed daily of all vulnerable children who are absent and the outcome of actions taken.
- SLT attendance lead must prioritise pupils not attending by safeguarding requirements.
- If a pupil's absence relates to unauthorised leave in term time due to a family holiday, schools should complete a PN request form in accordance with the Code of Conduct and submit to the LA. The referral must be made as soon as the pupil returns to school.

## Escalation of Absence Tier 2

### Targeted Support:

#### Schools:

- Day 1-3 school to attempt to make contact with the parents. If no response is received conduct a home visit Repeat daily. (For vulnerable children inform the relevant practitioner, social worker, family support worker, EWO)
- Day 4 if the child is still absent, contact the parent inviting them to a meeting in school (for vulnerable children consult with the relevant practitioner on the appropriate next steps) continue to undertake FDR and home visits.
- Day 6 If the parent does not attend the meeting and the absence continues, if there are no additional vulnerabilities and the pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in one term (and there has been no prior legal intervention) The school to issue a penalty notice warning letter in accordance with the Code of Conduct and in agreement with the EWO.
- Schools need to consider the nature of a pupil's absence over time, any educational or school-based issues, contributory family issues and the pupil's perception (where age appropriate)
- Establishing what the key issues are and whether they are predominately related to the pupil, family or school will help to decide the most appropriate intervention.
- School to action referrals for single/multi agency support:
- **Education Welfare Service: traded offer**  
Single referrals - a referral can be made to for pupils at risk of PA. In agreement with the school, EWS will make contact with the parent by initial letter or conduct a home visit.  
Casework intervention - Fast track and time focussed case management model to improve the attendance of individual pupils .
- **School Nurses**  
If a health/medical condition has been provided as an ongoing explanation for absence, you can with consent of the parent/ carer refer to the school nurse via their referral form to explore further.
- **Early Help**  
Schools that purchase the School Family Support Outreach Service can refer families direct to this team. The team will lead on the assessment, plan and review and will undertake direct work.
- Liverpool children (aged 5-9) who have complex social needs, that is, needs that unless addressed, are likely to lead to escalate to Children's Social Care, should complete a Pre-EHAT and refer the family to the Early Help Hubs..

## Local Authority Intervention Tier 3

### Local Authority:

- **Penalty Notices - Unauthorised leave of absence in term time - Holidays** LA to issue a penalty notice without warning and in accordance with the Code of Conduct following a request from schools. If the PN is unpaid after 28 days the LA to consider instigating a prosecution.
- **Penalty Notices - Unauthorised absence** LA to issue a Penalty Notice in accordance with the Code of Conduct following the issue of a penalty notice warning letter by the school. If the PN is unpaid after 28 days the LA to consider instigating a prosecution.
- **Education Supervision Orders**  
The LA will consider in every case, prior to prosecution if it would be appropriate to apply for an ESO if a child is not being properly educated .
- **Non Attendance Prosecution 444/441a**  
The LA will consider enforcement where a pupil's unauthorised absence rate exceeds 10%. Prosecution may be considered at an earlier stage dependent upon the circumstances and subject to negotiation with the school. [EWS 12 week casework/prosecution flowchart.](#)

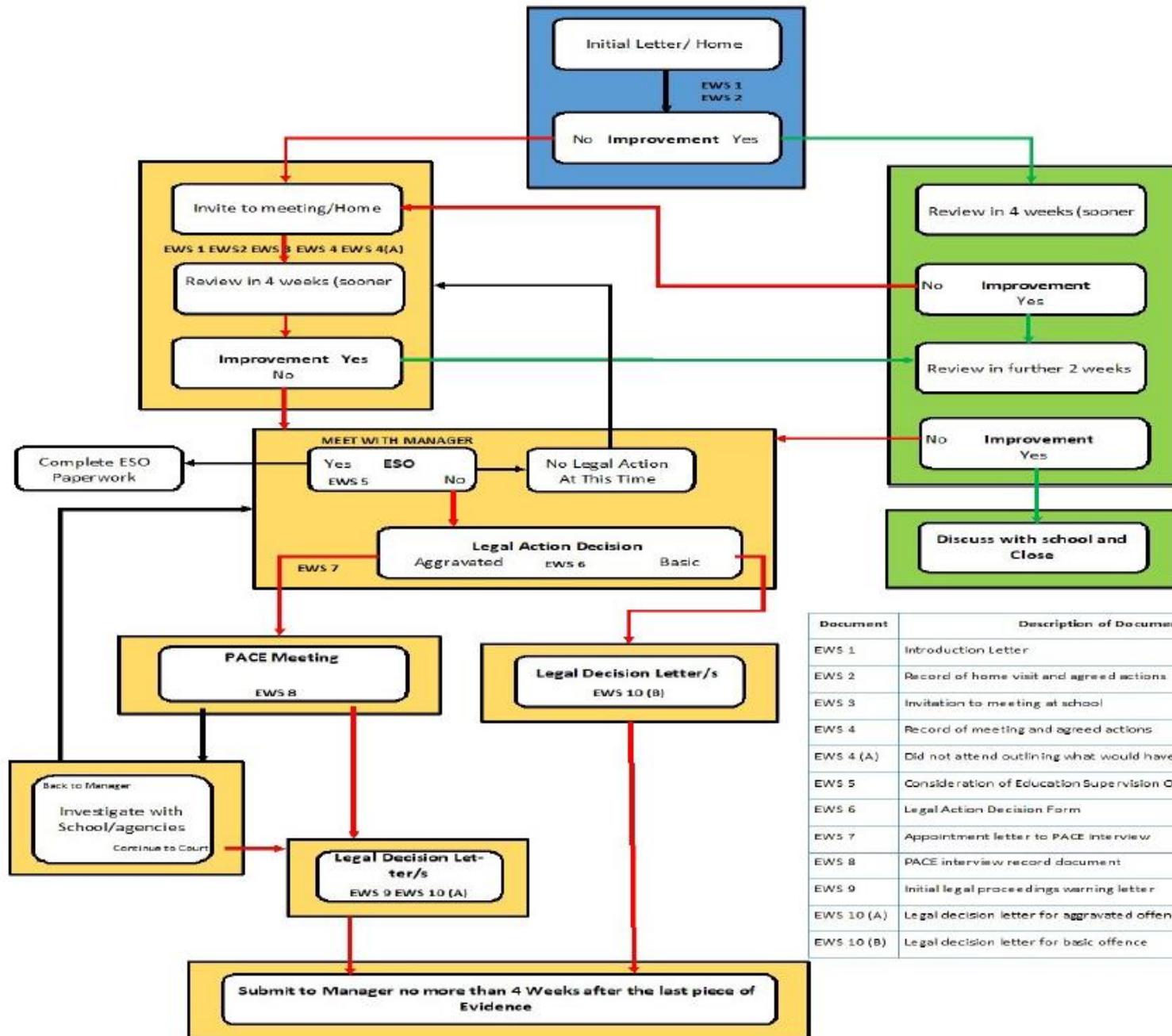
## Preventing Persistent Absenteeism

Autumn Term 2021/2022	99%	98%	97%	96%	95%	94%	93%	92%	91%	90%				
Number of sessions absent	2	3	5	6	7	8	10	12	14	16				
	Spring Term 2021/2022			98%	97%	96%	95%	94%	93%	92%	91%	90%		
	Number of sessions absent			6	8	11	13	17	19	22	25	28		
	Summer Term 2021/2022			98%	97%	96%	95%	94%	93%	92%	91%	90%		
	Number of sessions absent			8	12	15	19	23	27	30	34	38		

# Education Welfare Service Process

School Action

## Referral Form



Document	Description of Document
EWS 1	Introduction Letter
EWS 2	Record of home visit and agreed actions
EWS 3	Invitation to meeting at school
EWS 4	Record of meeting and agreed actions
EWS 4 (A)	Did not attend outlining what would have been discussed
EWS 5	Consideration of Education Supervision Order
EWS 6	Legal Action Decision Form
EWS 7	Appointment letter to PACE interview
EWS 8	PACE interview record document
EWS 9	Initial legal proceedings warning letter
EWS 10 (A)	Legal decision letter for aggravated offence
EWS 10 (B)	Legal decision letter for basic offence