

Sheerness West Federation

ATTENDANCE POLICY

September 22

Review: December 23

Policy Review Process	
Frequency of Review	Annually
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Policy Approval			
Policy to be approved by:		Federation Leadership Team	
Title	Name	Signed	Dated
Chair of Governing Body	Mr M Azzi		11/10/2022
Executive Headteacher	Mrs A Pattenden		11/10/2022
Head of Rose Street	Mrs S Mackay		11/10/2022
Head of West Minster	Miss H Brewer		11/10/2022
Date Policy Ratified by Governing Body / FLT			11/10/2022

This document is stored electronically in Office 365 and can be printed on request.

All due regard has been given to the Equality Act 2010 when creating the terms and conditions of this policy.

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Aims

Regular attendance and positive behaviour are critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them. This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 97% attendance and above for all our pupils and we use a variety of weekly, termly and annual awards to promote good attendance and punctuality.

The Governors, Headteacher and staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Sheerness West Federation

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole Federation culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- promote and support punctuality.

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](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Roles and responsibilities

At Sheerness West Federation there is a whole school, staff responsibility and approach for monitoring & improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for:

Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos

Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties

Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data

Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school

Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance

Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Executive Headteacher and Heads of School

The EHT and HoS are responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at both school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Where and when necessary, liaising with the LA to ensure penalty notices are issued

The Designated Senior Leader responsible for attendance (Attendance Champion)

The Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Ensuring that staff members are carrying out home visits on the first day of absence

The Attendance Champions (designated senior leaders) responsible for attendance are [Sam Mackay \(Rose Street\)](#) and [Hazel Brewer \(West Minster\)](#) and can be contacted via [01795 663012 \(Rose Street\)](#) or [01795 662178 \(West Minster\)](#)

The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Executive Headteacher and both Heads of School when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Use Fischer Family Trust data to monitor and analyse Federation data

The attendance officer is [Caroline Bean \(Rose Street\)](#) and [Lenaick Peters \(West Minster\)](#) and can be contacted via rsattendance@swfed.co.uk 01795 663012 or wmattendance@swfed.co.uk (01795 662178)

Class Teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. All children should be sitting in their classes by 8.45am every day.
- Class teachers will also make calls home if a child is absent to explain about the learning lost.
- Prompt/encourage good attendance

School Office Staff

Schools' office staff will:

- Take calls, emails or texts messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Liaise with the Wellbeing Teams and Attendance Officers regarding absence
- Compile lists for home visits?

Parents/Carers

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child(ren) attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Poor attendance undermines their education and sometimes, puts pupils at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour.

Parents are expected to:

- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.30am on the day of the absence (and where appropriate each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow the following procedures:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 8.30. The school has a text message service if you are unable to call the school.
- Or they can call into school and report to reception.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Engage in their learning

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
 - The original entry
 - The amended entry
 - The reason for the amendment
 - The date on which the amendment was made
 - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Gates close at **8.45am**, pupils must arrive by then EVERY school day.

The register for the first session will be taken by 8.50am at the latest and will be kept open until 9.00am at the very latest. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the relevant school:

Rose Street	West Minster
Telephone: 01795 663012	Telephone: 01795 662178
Email:rosestreet.office@swfed.co.uk	Email: westminster.office@swfed.co.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

[Please go to either office to complete a form](#)

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Both Schools' gates close at 8.45am. If you arrive at school after that time, you and your child must go to the School Office to speak to the staff members on duty.

Please note that being late even if for a few minutes each day will add up to a lot of lost learning over time.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the SWF Attendance Officer and/or Headteacher to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness – Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct effective from April 2017.

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, a Penalty Notice(s) will be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class punctuality.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

Contact the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. This will be a home visit by school staff (as with new legislation July 2022).

If nobody is at home we will leave a "Calling card" to ask for the parents/carers to contact the school. (If there is still no contact that day, we will try to reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts. We do reserve the right to contact the LA and/or the Police to take further advice in a case of emergency.)

Identify whether the absence is approved or not

Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

Where necessary, contact the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving a School Liaison Officer.

Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels during Parent Consultation Evenings and the annual written report.

Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters.

- Publish school % attendance figure poster and share attendance data on the website stating the school and class % attendance each week.
- Report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with the annual school report.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's 96% target for attendance or if they move in to a lower monitoring group.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and events.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Heads of School will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Head of School's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as follows:

- Bereavement of a close family member (the funeral only)
- Visiting a family member who is seriously ill
- Religious Observance (travel and ceremony only)
- Parents/Carers who are Service Personnel and have been away for a long operation time
- Any reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities
- Families who are recovering from trauma or crisis

Please note that all of the detail is on back of the relevant form which needs to be completed.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least **three weeks** before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via either school office. The Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Leave for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance for the funeral service only, not extended leave.
- Leave to visit family members are also not normally granted during term-time. Pupils may, however, need time to visit seriously ill relatives.
- Leave which takes the needs of the families of service personnel into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.
- Leave which makes reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Leave for families who may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis.

Legal sanctions

The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by the Heads of School, Local Authority Officer (SLO) or the Police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Strategies for promoting attendance

Weekly

Attendance assembly lead by School Attendance Champion

Attendance Mickey for highest class percentage.

'Catch Me Jar'

Displaying the attendance percentage in classes/on class dojo

Termly
Brunch

Annual

Certificates presented in assembly for 100% attendance

All 100% attendance in a draw to win a prize

Attendance monitoring

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you and then carry out a home visit
- Request medical evidence if the absence lasts longer than two days.
- Request medical evidence for every absence if the attendance drops over a period of time.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, if absences persist or non-engagement.
- Refer the matter to the School Liaison Officer if all other strategies have been used and court proceedings is the next step.

Monitoring attendance

We will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing attendance

We will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teacher and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The schools will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- Utilise home visits on days of absence

Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include:

- Allocation of additional support through the School Nurse, Family Liaison Officer, Well Being Manager, Pastoral Support or School Liaison Officer.
- If a child's attendance drops to 95%, their attendance will be monitored on a weekly basis and a Medical Evidence letter will be sent from the Attendance Officer. This letter will state that medical evidence will be required for all periods of absence.

If medical evidence is not provided, a penalty warning letter may be actioned. A penalty fine will follow if the parent(s) continues to not provide medical evidence. Once a child's attendance drops to 90% or below, the parent(s) will be invited to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and/or Deputy Head to discuss the matter and find a way to resolve the issue. Failure to attend the meeting or continued absence, will result in a referral to the School Liaison Officer or a Penalty Notice raised.

Children Missing in Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school have failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs A Pattenden (Executive Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection (safeguarding) policy
- School Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE – Possible Escalating Actions

Attendance expectations shared: school information, website, newsletters, assemblies, parent/carer consultation, induction, planners; staff training, weekly staff briefings

CT/ TA talks to the child

CT/ TA talks to the parent

Attendance Officer talks to the child /parent

Letter 1: raising concern, monitoring period set: 2 weeks

Letter 2: meeting with SLT/FLO monitoring, period set: 2 weeks

Attendance/Governor Panel, monitoring period set: 2 weeks

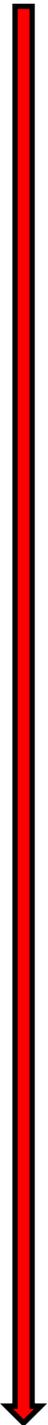
EITHER  OR

Letter 3: warning risk of a PN being issued, monitoring period set

Letter 4: Penalty Notice Warning letter sent by KCC - 15 day monitoring

Penalty Notice issued

AS1 Referral, KCC statutory casework begins



STRATEGIES
Intervention strategies should be explored at all stages when attendance is declining

Examples;

- Rewards, short and long term
- Discussion with trusted adult
- Buddy
- Sticker chart
- Certificates
- Positive report
- Attendance report
- Group change
- Change of teacher
- FLO/PSL support
- SLT/MLT Mentor
- Peer support
- SEN support
- Other additional needs support
- Adjusted curriculum
- Study support
- Learning Support Unit
- Part time/Full time off site provision
- Early Help
- Social Care referral

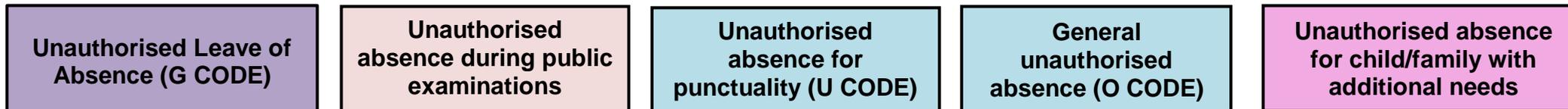
Appendix 3: Attendance Monitoring Groups

<p>Green Group 96% - 100% (No risk)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% = Attended school every day – Outstanding!!!! • 99.5% = 1 day absent (6 lessons missed) • 99.0% = 2 days absent (12 lessons missed) • 98.4% = 3 days absent (18 lessons missed) • 97.9% = 4 days absent (24 lessons missed) • 97.4% = 1 week of school missed • 96.8% = 6 days absent (36 lessons missed) • 96.3% = 7 days absent (42 lessons missed)
<p>Yellow Group 93% - 95.9% (Risk of underachievement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95.8% = 8 days (48 lessons missed) • 95.3% = 9 days absent (54 lessons missed) • 94.7% = 2 weeks of school missed • 94.2% = 11 days (66 sessions missed) • 93.7% = 12 days absent (72 lessons missed) • 93.2% = 13 days absent (78 lessons missed)
<p>Amber Group 90% - 92.9% (Serious risk of underachievement)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92.6% = 14 days absent (84 lessons missed) • 92.1% = 3 weeks of school missed • 91.6% = 16 days absent (96 lessons missed) • 91.1% = 17 days absent (102 lessons missed) • 90.5% = 18 days absent (108 lessons missed) • 90.0% = 19 days absent (114 lessons missed)
<p>From September 2015 any student whose attendance is 90% or less will be deemed to be “Persistently Absent (PA)”, this is the equivalent of 19 or more missed school days over a full academic year. Over a five year period a child whose attendance is at 90%, will miss a half of a school year; that’s a lot of lost education.</p>	
<p>Pink Group 85% - 89.9% (Severe risk of underachievement “PERSISTENTLY ABSENT”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89.5% = 4 weeks of school missed (120 lessons missed) • 88.4% = 22 days absent (132 lessons missed) • 87.4% = 24 days absent (144 lesson missed) • 86.3% = 26 days absent (156 lessons missed) • 85.3% = 28 days absent (168 lessons missed)
<p>Red Group 0% - 84.9% (Extreme risk) “PERSISTENTLY ABSENT”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84.2% = 6 weeks of school missed (180 lessons missed) • 80.0% = 38 days absent (228 lessons missed) • 70.0% = 57 days absent (342 lessons missed) • 60.0% = 76 days absent (456 lessons missed) • 50.0% = 95 days absent (570 lessons missed) • 40.0% = 114 days absent (684 lessons missed)

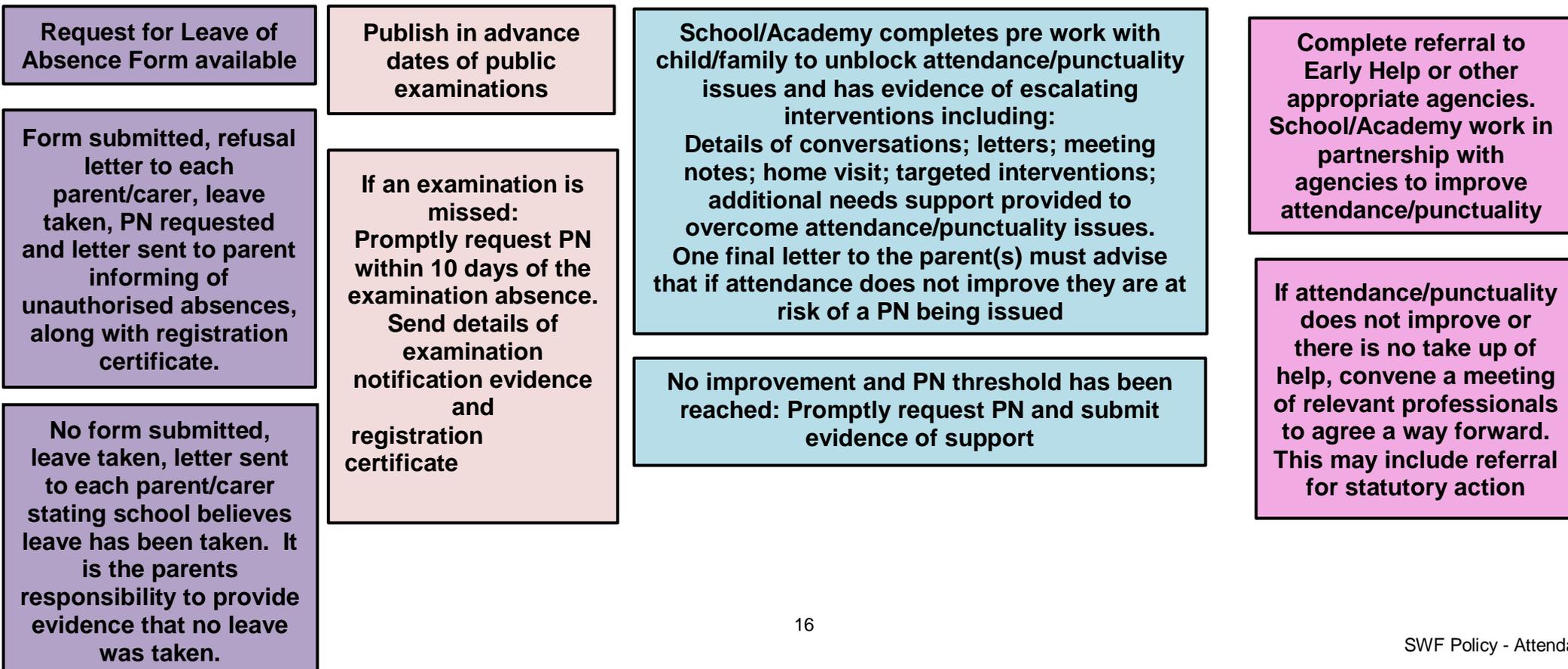
SHEPPEY CLUSTER – FLOWCHART FOR LEGAL MEASURES AVAILABLE FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

(To be read in conjunction with KCC Code of Conduct)

**ATTENDANCE 10+ UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES WITHIN 100 SESSIONS
ENSURE THE ABSENCES ARE UNAUTHORISED (O, U OR G CODES)**



Parent/Carers warned of the possibility of a PN via attendance policy, website, newsletters, phone calls, meetings and letters



Appendix 5: Attendance Groups

Attendance Groups (this is per academic year)			
Green	97% - 100%	Up to 5 Days	No Risk
Yellow	96.1% - 96.9%	7.5 Days Missed	Risk of underachievement
Amber	95% - 96%	12.5 Days Missed	Serious risk of underachievement
Pink	90% - 94.9%	15 Days Missed	Severe risk of underachievement
Red	0% - 89.9%	17.5 Days Missed	Extreme risk - Court action

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

