

## **Attendance Policy**

At Deer Park school we believe that effective teaching and learning takes place when students' attendance rate is high and punctuality is good.

### **Principles**

**At Deer Park school we will:**

- Enable continuity and progression of teaching and learning through good attendance.
- Encourage good attendance through a positive and secure learning environment.
- Promote the importance of good attendance and celebrate success.
- Prepare students for the world of work and leisure.
- Involve Parent/Guardians as partners in ensuring good attendance.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

### **National Guidance**

The policy is written to ensure statutory requirements for attendance and other factors are met as detailed in

- Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003
- Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- DFE Guidance Children Missing Education
- DFE Guidance For Attendance

It also takes account of the guidance produced by Hampshire County Council Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service;

- Behaviour and attendance resources for schools  
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hias/teaching-learning/behaviour-attendance/resources-for-schools>
- Behaviour and attendance  
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hias/teaching-learning/behaviour-attendance>
- Code of conduct Issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence from schools, February 2019

### **Rational**

**Aim:** For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential.

Deer Park school is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our students and endeavour to provide an environment where all students feel valued and welcome. Parents and students play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or guardians the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, and higher education, employment or training

### **Recording Attendance**

The School day runs from 8.30am until 3.00pm.

The Register will remain open until 9.00am but must be submitted by 9.00am at the latest.

Registers must be submitted by teaching staff straight after lunch before afternoon lessons commence. This should be by 2.00pm.

Further registers will be taken by subject staff at the start of every lesson.

A student will be marked either present or absent. Absences must either be marked as:

- Authorised: only the authorised person in school, the Headteacher or as delegated by the Headteacher, can authorise the absence; or
- Unauthorised: where no acceptable reason is given

It must only be recorded as authorised if;

- The pupil has been granted leave of absence, which has been approved beforehand by the school (this includes Traveller and Showman absence) or
- The pupil is unable to attend;
  - either because of sickness or some other avoidable cause, or
  - on a day that the student's Parents/Guardians' religion sets aside for religious activities.

A school can change an authorised absence from an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to Parents/Guardians. An example of this is where a Parent/Guardian states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

It is especially important we identify any students who are missing education as they may be at risk of significant harm. In some cases, there will be a good reason why a student is not at school; they may have health issues which mean they cannot attend. If this is the case the school must be notified as soon as possible and then they can offer support if needed.

## **Students unable to attend school due to health needs:**

If a student is long term absent due to ongoing health issues the school will require guidance and evidence from the medical profession on the child's needs, the length of absence and any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made in school for a return.

The school then may use a range of strategies or intervention to support the learner. These may include:

- Alternative timetables
- Reduced hours, reviewed regularly
- Adjustments to the school day/classes
- Liaison with the school nursing team
- Liaison with medical provision for education (e.g. Bursledon House)
- Early Intervention Service (EIS) referral for inclusion support
- Authorised absence for hospital visits
- Staff training from the medical profession if necessary
- In class support if needed.
- Where a student is signed off as medically unfit for school by a medical professional for more than 15 consecutive days, the School will notify the local authority who will work to provide suitable education.

## **Lateness and Punctuality**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. When students miss the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. It is a Parent/Guardian's responsibility to ensure their student arrives at school on time

A student will be marked as late (L) for the school/lesson if:

- they arrive at school after the 8.30am bell but before the register is closed at 9.00am
- they arrive after the register is closed at 9.00am but no later than 9.25am
- if they arrive to their lesson 5 minutes after the original start time and without a valid reason.

If a student arrives at 9.25am the register will be recorded as unauthorised for the morning session.

If a student has a persistent late record Parent/Guardians will be contacted by the Director of Progress and Achievement (DoPA) or Head of Student Services to discuss how to resolve the problem. If lateness persists, formal action in the form of a Penalty Notice or legal action may follow.

## **What to do if my child is absent?**

If a student is unwell or unable to come to school it is important that the Parent/Guardian inform the school on the first day and subsequent days, stating reasons for the absence.

This can be done by calling:

- Calling: Reception
- Reporting absence via the Insight App
- Emailing [absence@deerparksecondary.org](mailto:absence@deerparksecondary.org)

If no contact is made by the Parent/Guardian then an email or phone call will be made by the school regarding the student's absence. If no reason for the absence is given then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Only exceptional circumstances and unavoidable medical appointments will be authorised.

**Please be aware that if a student is absent from school for more than 5 consecutive days medical evidence will need to be provided (e.g. prescription, evidence of medication or a doctor's certificate).**

**Reasons such as the following will not be authorised:**

- Taking siblings to school/sibling school closure
- Parent/Guardian illness
- Day trips and treat days condoned by Parent/Guardians
- Holiday taken without exceptional circumstances
- Truancy
- Late arrival to school without a valid reason

**What will happen if your student's attendance drops?**

All student attendance is monitored; if attendance becomes a concern or falls below 95% or the school can see a pattern forming in their absences, then Parent/Guardians will be contacted by letter or telephone.

If a Parent/Guardian is in need of assistance or advice, then they are expected to contact either; the Head of Student Services, Student Support Officer or relevant Director of Progress and Achievement (DoPA).

If absences continue then other measures will be put in place. This may be a meeting with relevant staff or a home visit. In extreme cases of poor attendance referrals will be made to the Hampshire County Council's (HCC) legal panel or a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.

If a student is not seen and contact has not been established with any Parent/Guardian after three consecutive days of absence the school is required to start a child missing in education procedure, as set down by Hampshire County Council. The school will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with Parents/Guardians and the student, making enquiries to known friends and wider family.

### **Deer Park School's Attendance Stage Process**

When a student's attendance falls below 95% the following actions will ensue:

Stage 1 – Letter/phone call from the school to clarify reason for absence

Stage 2 – Formal letter from school expressing our continued concern that a student's attendance has not improved

Stage 3 – Formal letter requiring that a Parent/Guardian provides medical evidence to support absence related to illness and advising that absences will be unauthorised unless evidence is provided.

Stage 4 – Parent/Guardians invited for a formal meeting at the school - Penalty Warning given.

Stage 5 – Formal letter to Parent/Guardians advising that a referral has been made to the Attendance Legal Panel or Fixed Penalty Notice given.

At every stage it is imperative that Parent/Guardians ensure that there are good lines of communication with the school. The School will endeavour to support, advise and provide strategies for Parent/Guardians who are willing to engage.

### **Holiday requests during term time**

Further to the amendments to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence

during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a student can be away from school if the leave is granted.

In practice the school will:

- No longer authorise any requests for holiday taken during term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance. This may include:
  - Parent/Guardians serving in the armed forces with limited choice of leave
  - Parent/Guardians who work in the farming industry and work is dictated around harvest times etc.
  - Personal reasons which is deemed exceptional by the Headteacher.

**Any requests for holiday due to exceptional circumstances must be completed using the correct authorisation form on the school website. If leave of absences is deemed not exceptional the response the parent receives from the school will serve as a Penalty Notice Warning letter. Any unauthorised absence during this period of time may be subject to a penalty notice for non attendance being issued.**

The decision to authorise the absence is at the Headteacher's discretion based on their assessment of the situation. Circumstances can vary from school to school and so there can be no absolute rule on the subject.

### **Absence through child participation in Public Performances, including theatre, film or TV work & Modelling**

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the Headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C an authorised absence.

### **Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for Sport**

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is however, down to the Headteacher's discretion whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions are also at the discretion of the Headteacher and are not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association are providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

### **Gypsy Roma Traveller Showman and Showman families**

Absence of a child from a traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance Learning packs for traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

### **Child Missing Education Procedures and Actions**

#### **Third Day Absence**

If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parent/guardians or contacts after three days of absence the school will start a child missing in education procedure as set down by Hampshire County Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquiries to known friends, wider family. This may include a home visit to establish contact.

## **Ten Day's Absence**

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/guardian then the Local Authority is notified that the child is 'at risk of missing'. Children's Services Staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

If the whereabouts of a child is not discovered, the school will work with the local authority to ensure one or more of the following actions has taken place to establish a connection:

- a. make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details;
- b. check local databases within the local authority;
- c. check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems;
- d. follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC;
- e. check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force;
- f. check with agencies known to be involved with family;
- g. check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known;
- h. check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved;
- i. check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is;
- j. in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS); and
- k. home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives.

## **Penalty Notices for Non Attendance and other Legal Measures**

In Education law, parents/guardian are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

### **Legal Measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness**

Hampshire Schools and Hampshire County Council will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance. Legal measures will only be considered through a referral to Hampshire's Attendance Legal Panels where:

1. The child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. The child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in any continuous 100 session period, and parents are complicit in the child's absence. This period may cross academic school years.

The following legal measures are for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:

- Parenting contracts set at Education Planning Meetings
- Parenting orders
- Penalty notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution

Where a child has unauthorised absence the school must enforce Hampshire's Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices or follow its guidance on other Legal Measures for Non-Attendance. The Code of Conduct is a statutory document that ensures that powers for legal sanctions are applied consistently and fairly across all schools and their families within the authority.

A copy is available from <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hias/teaching-learning/behaviour-attendance>

## **Penalty Notices for non-attendance - Hampshire's Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct states that:

Schools or Hampshire Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence where the pupil has been:

- absent for 10 or more half-day sessions (five school days) of unauthorised absence during any 100 possible school sessions – these do not need to be consecutive (codes G, U, or O on the register)
- persistently late (coded U) for up to 10 sessions (five days) after the register has closed
- persistently late before the close of the register (coded L), but the school has met with parents and has clearly communicated that they will categorise as unauthorised any further lateness (code O), and where the threshold of 10 sessions (five days) has been met
- absent for any public examinations of which dates are published in advance
- absent for any formal school assessments, tests or examinations where the dates have been published in advance unless the issuing of a Penalty Notice would conflict with other intervention strategies in place or other sanctions already being processed.

### **Legal Measures for absence taken when the Headteacher has declined parent/guardians request for leave of absence**

Where a pupil has unauthorised absence due to either:

1. non approval of a parent/carer's request for leave of absence or
2. a holiday that has been taken without permission and the unauthorised absence (coded G) is for 10 or more sessions (5 days) in any 100 possible school sessions/10 week period then a penalty notice for non-attendance will be issued.

If a child has other types of unauthorised absence (coded O and U) and the family or child do not require any agency support to improve the attendance then a single Penalty Notice is issued for either:

1. 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence or lateness in any 100 possible school sessions/10 week school period
2. 1 or more sessions of unauthorised absence during a public exam, formal school assessment or testing where dates are published in advance.

Parents and Guardians will be warned of the likelihood of a penalty notice being issued for unauthorised absence either via a letter, through the leave of absence request form, or through the school's attendance policy and website. The penalty notice is a fine that is issued to each parent/guardian who condoned (or was responsible for the child) during the period of unauthorised absence for which the fine has been issued. For each case of unauthorised absence the school or Hampshire County Council will decide whether a Penalty Notice is issued to one or more parent/guardian for each child. N.B This could mean four penalty notices for a family with two siblings both with unauthorised absence for holiday i.e. one PN for each child to each parent.

Each penalty notice carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being posted. If the fine is not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If the fine remains unpaid the Hampshire County Council will consider prosecution for the non-attendance. Payment methods are detailed on the Penalty Notices themselves. Penalties are to be paid to Hampshire County Council and revenue resulting from payment of Penalties is used by the County Council to help cover the costs of issuing Penalty Notices and/or the cost of prosecuting recipients who do not pay.

For further information parents/guardians can request a leaflet from their school and should visit Hampshire County Councils website at: <http://documents.hants.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-issuing-penalty-notices-for-unauthorised-absence-from-schools.pdf>

**Linked Policies:** Adverse Weather Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Behaviour for Learning Policy – Behaviour Management

Behaviour for Learning Policy – Exclusions

Child Protection Policy

Equality Policy

Safeguarding Policy

SEND

Supporting Students at School with Medical Conditions Policy

## **Appendix 1**

### **The role of the Parent/Guardian**

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

Parents will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
- Discuss with the tutor/class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by phone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request for leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- The leave of absence form is available on Deer Park's website at [www.deerparksecondary.org](http://www.deerparksecondary.org)

## **Appendix 2**

### **The Role of the Director of Progress & Attainment (DoPA)**

The DoPA will:

- Monitor the relevant Year Group attendance and be fully aware of any issues relating to student absence that is of concern.
- Meet fortnightly with the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral to discuss students of concern.
- Heighten staff awareness of attendance as a whole school issue by including it as a standing agenda item at Year Team meetings.
- Monitor and publish the weekly percentage of the Year group in relation to other Year groups and whole school percentage.
- Record the end of year attendance percentage of each student so that a five-year attendance record can be included in each student's progress file at the end of Year 11.
- Contact Parent/Guardians of poor time-keepers and reinforce school expectations.
- Place students on Social & Year Detention for lack of punctuality.
- Using the Attendance Flow Diagram, put into place the relevant intervention (stage 1-5) and record on the Attendance Tracker.
- Celebrate outstanding student attendance by: presenting termly certificates in the Year Assembly; presenting certificates for Year 11 leavers who have achieved outstanding attendance over 5 years.
- Record all interventions on the Deer Park attendance tracker.
- Heighten staff awareness of attendance as a whole school issue by including it as a standing agenda item at PDG (Pastoral Development Group).
- Complete the relevant stage letters.
- Provide a range of strategies for both students and Parent/Guardians to engage with to support their improved attendance and highlight areas of need and signpost accordingly.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **The Role of the Tutor**

The Tutor will:

- Record attendance figures accurately at AM registration using E-reg.
- Monitor trends of absence and inform Year Staff when appropriate.
- Insist on an absence note on a student's first day back after illness.
- Notify Director of Progress and Achievement (DOPA) to make Parent/Guardian contact if a Student is absent for 2 consecutive days with no explanation.
- Notify Director of Progress and Achievement to make Parent/Guardian contact if an absence note is not produced by the second day of a student's return to school.
- Promote the advantages of good attendance with their tutees and celebrate students' high attendance.
- Undertake training as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations.

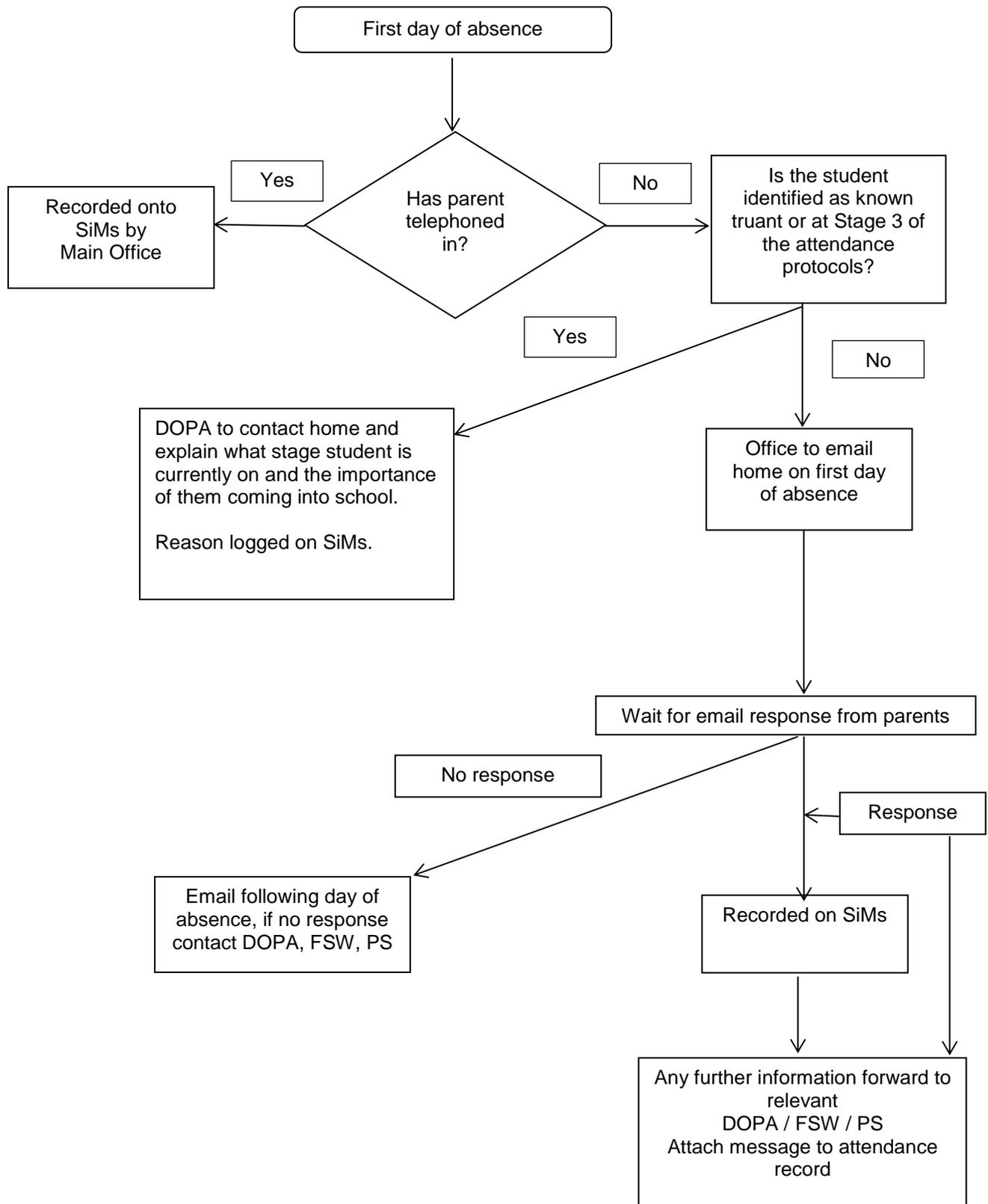
## **Appendix 5**

### **The Role of Senior Leadership Team (SLT)**

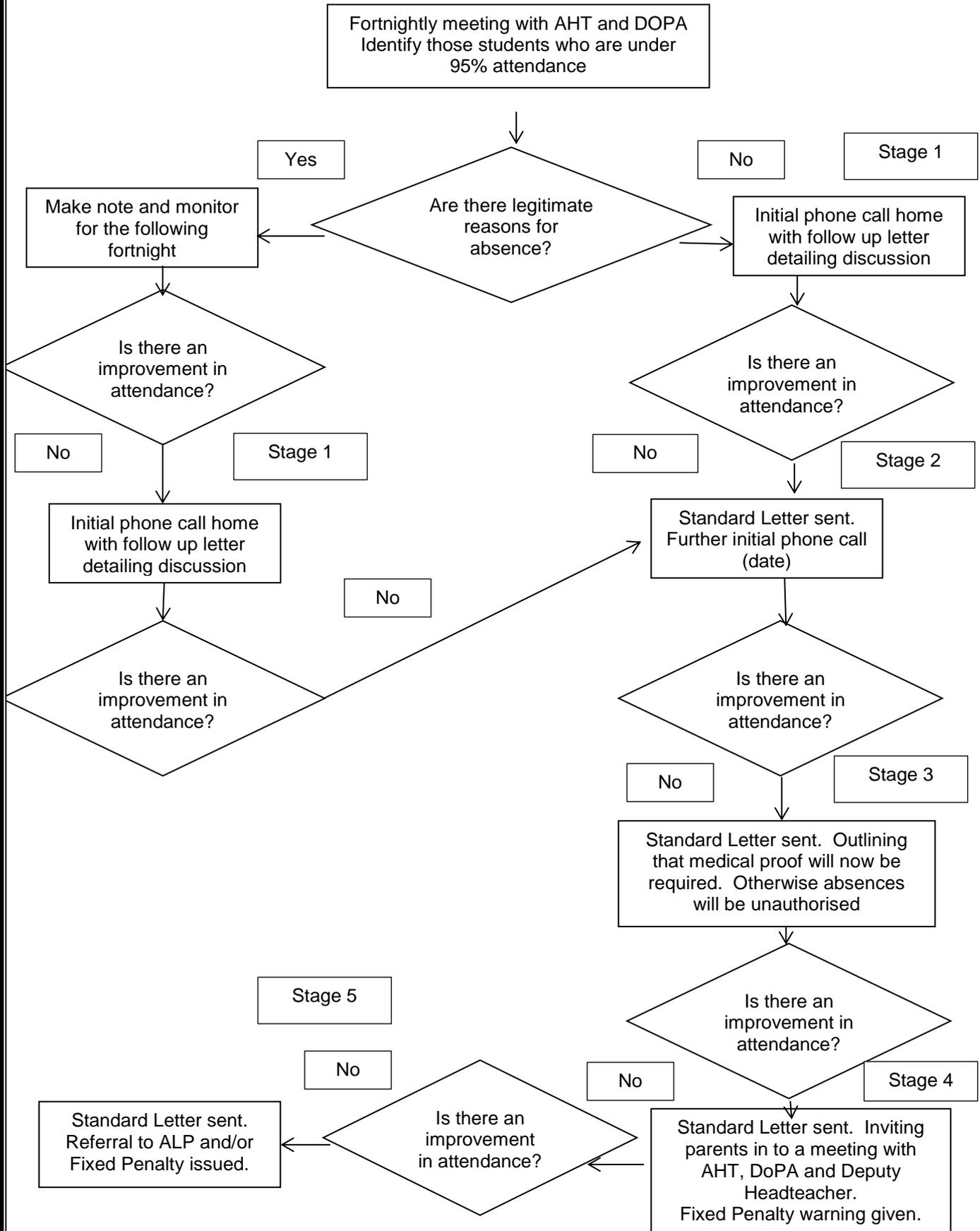
SLT will:

- Oversee and monitor the implementation of the Deer Park school Attendance Policy.
- Ensure the weekly updates to Attendance Tracker are completed.
- Monitor the level of unexplained absences, and liaise with pastoral staff as necessary.
- Monitor the level of student lateness to school, and liaise with pastoral staff as necessary.
- Discuss with DOPA as standard item in Link meetings.
- Discuss attendance with DOPA at weekly meetings and oversee interventions.
- Report attendance data to Governors termly via Governors' meetings.
- Undertake annual training to ensure consistent and equitable delivery and cohesion with other enforcement sanctions.
- Organise and chair Stage 4 attendance meetings.
- Complete referral paperwork and attend all attendance legal panel meetings.
- Undertake training as necessary to ensure compliance with regulations.

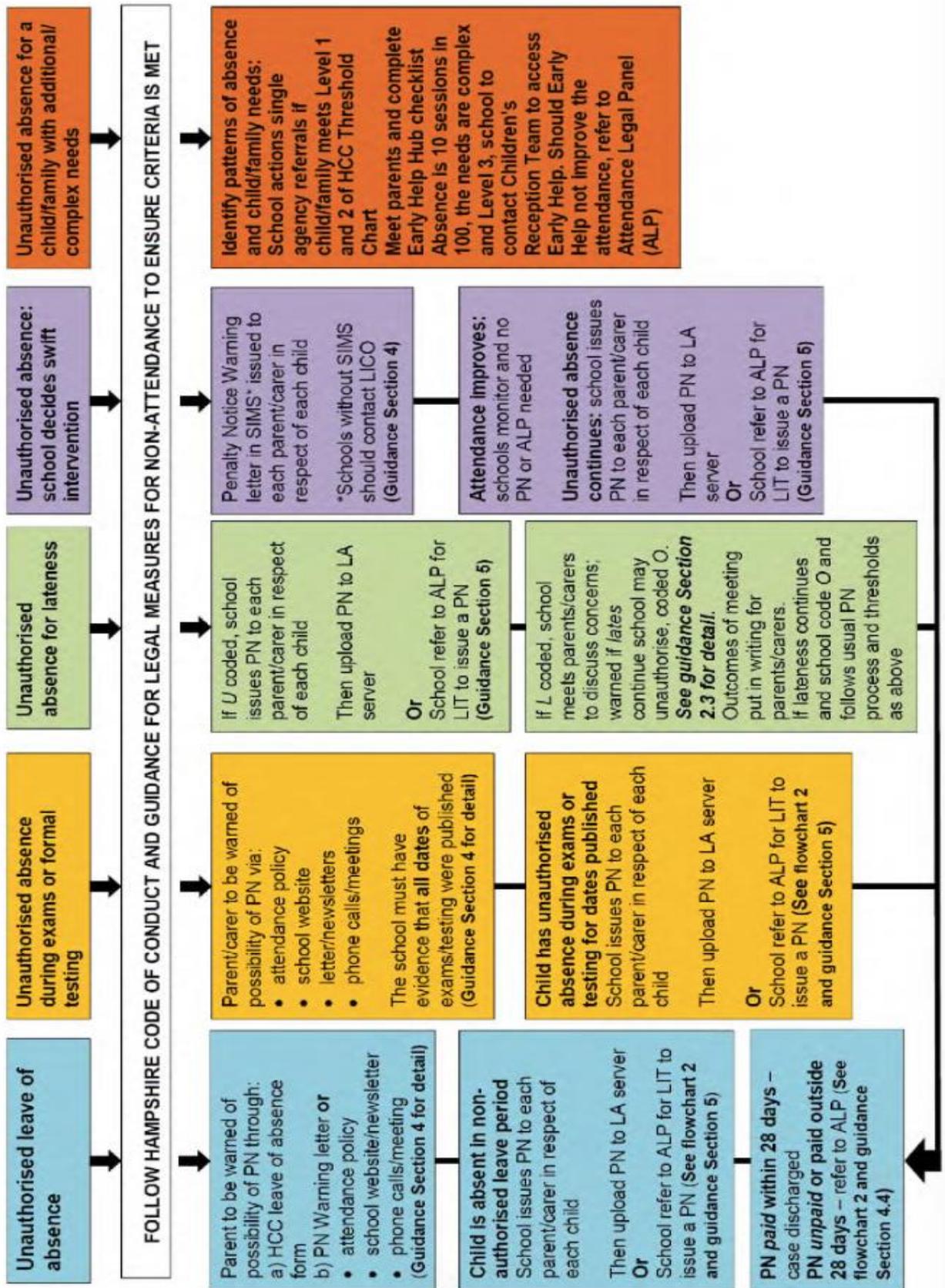
## Appendix 6 First Response Flow Chart



## Appendix 7 Stage Flow Chart for Improved Attendance



Flowchart for the legal measures available for different types of unauthorised absence



**Attendance Legal Panel for unauthorised absence.** Please note that this **FLOW CHART** of routes is a guide **only** and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis

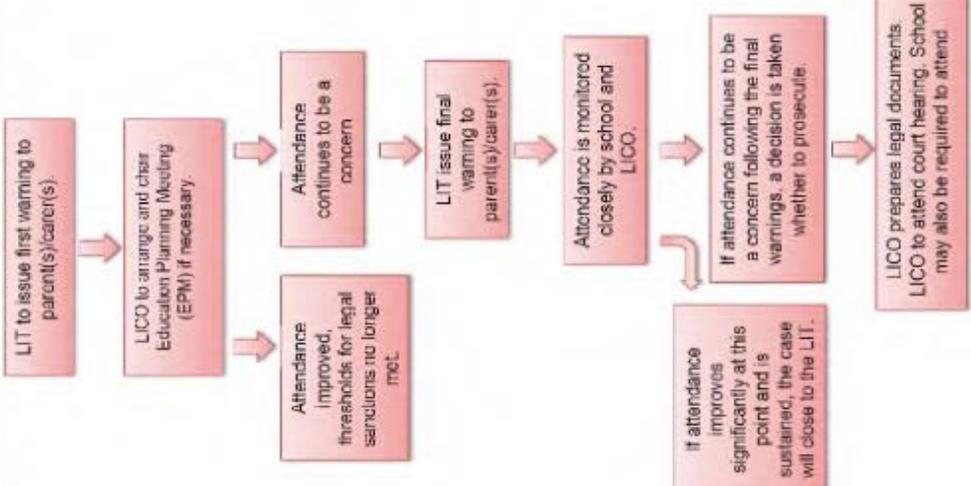
**Attendance Legal Panel (ALP).** See *guidance Section 5 for details*  
Held monthly in each district. Referring schools to attend and present their cases.

**OTHER ACTION ADVISED** – The case may not be accepted for legal intervention and alternative action may be advised by the panel, such as completing an Early Help Assessment or making a single agency referral to PBS, CAMHS, school nurse, etc

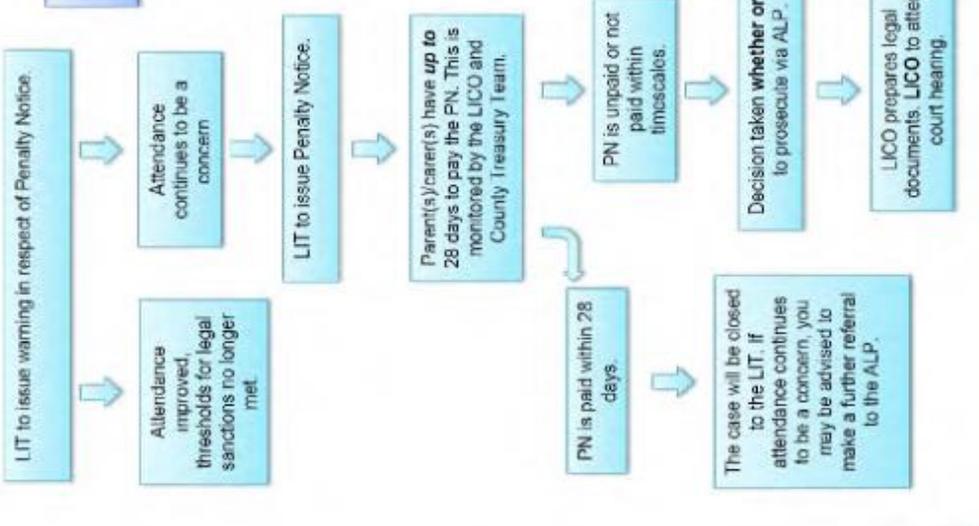
**Legal intervention agreed**

The case will be opened to the Legal Intervention Team (LIT) and Legal Intervention Court Officer (LICO)  
Any case opened requires SIMS registration certificates to be sent to the LICO on a fortnightly basis (unless the referral is following an unpaid Penalty Notice issued by school)

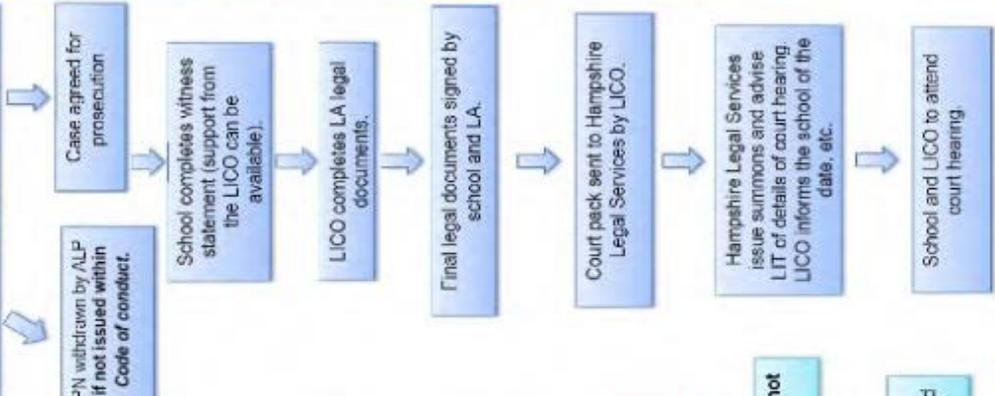
**Unauthorised absence without issuing of Penalty Notice or prosecution**



**Swift intervention – Penalty Notice (PN) issued by LIT**



**Prosecution following unpaid PN issued by school**



**Education Supervision Order (ESO) or School Attendance Order (SAO) or Parenting Order**

- 1) An Education Supervision Order may be appropriate alongside or instead of parental prosecution. This order is applied for through the Family Court and is an order placed upon the child. It is the duty of the LA to consider an ESO when legal action is being sought.
- 2) A School Attendance Order will be considered when a child is not on school roll.
- 3) A Parenting Order may be considered by the court or
- 4) A voluntary Parenting Contract will be agreed at an Education Planning Meeting (EPM).