



Attendance & Lateness Policy

Last reviewed October 2023

Next review: October 2024

Aims

- To implement the 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' paper published by the DFE May 2022.
- To encourage prompt arrival at school.
- To encourage regular attendance.
- To ensure that routines are in place for monitoring attendance and for early identification of any difficulties.
- To work together with parents in order to achieve high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Roles & responsibilities

The School will:

- Give attendance and punctuality a high priority.
- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe and their presence is valued.
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality using newsletters and other communications to parents.
- Encourage parents to fully support the policy as a vital contribution towards their child's education.
- Encourage the children to have a positive attitude towards attendance and punctuality so that they can retain this into adult life.
- Ensure that attendance is effectively monitored and absences are followed up promptly.
- Communicate effectively with other agencies (Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), Health, Social Services etc.).
- Meet the legal requirements with particular reference to authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Ensure that all staff comply with the school policy and deal consistently with absence and punctuality.
- Ensure information is available for Governors and parents.
- Ensure good liaison where a change of school occurs.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Informing the Headteacher where there are concerns and acting upon them.
- Providing background information to support referrals.
- Monitoring follow-up after actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation (but not necessarily taking this any further – responsibility of School Business Managers).
- Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings.

Administration staff are responsible for:

- Following up specific requests from the Headteacher for information about individuals.
- Contacting the child's home on the first day of absence if the parent has not contacted the school by 9.30am.
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence.
- Monitoring individual attendance on a daily basis where concerns have been raised.
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school's Educational Welfare Officer. Providing a point of contact between individual teachers and the Headteacher
- Including information about attendance trends and percentages in the newsletter.
- Informing the Headteacher on a formal and an informal basis of patterns of attendance noted.
- Promptly issuing registers and processing on a daily basis.
- Collating attendance percentages.
- Processing and following up holiday forms.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance and implementation of 'Working to Improve School Attendance' guidance from DFE May 2022.
- Set the standard within school and promote a sense of responsibility with the children by encouraging an ethos of punctuality, manners and excellent attendance within school.
- Promotion of attendance issues during assemblies.
- Reminder correspondence to parents and carers regarding expectations.
- Acting as a point of contact for teaching and non-teaching staff where concerns need to be raised or advice sought.
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Ensuring that the attendance policy is followed and that the actions from EWO meetings are carried out.
- Liaising and discussing with parents and carers any issues relating to attendance and offer assistance by attendance at breakfast club and after school clubs.
- Feedback and discussions with the class teacher over individual cases.
- Reporting to Governors on attendance and any specific issues with individual cases.

We expect parents and carers to:

- Provide up to date contact numbers and changes of address.
- Notify the school when their child is unable to attend, with a reason, **as soon as possible on the first day of the absence.**
- Telephone the school again after the first day of absence to advise the school if the absence is continuing.
- In cases of lengthy absence, keep the school well-informed so that work can be sent home in certain cases and in order for the school to be prepared for the child's return.
- Provide a note indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician **before** the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.

- Provide a note when the child returns from an absence due to sickness. This should be on the first day of the child's return to school.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time each day (no later than 8.50am).
- Let the school know if their child is going to be late, e.g. if a car breaks down; if an urgent appointment has been made.
- Understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality and promote this with their child.

Strategies to Promote and Maintain High Standards of Attendance and Punctuality

- All new parents are given information on attendance as their child joins the school.
- Newsletters are used to promote this aspect of school life and serve as a reminder.
- Individual parents are approached where there is concern about their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Discuss the importance of punctuality and attendance in assemblies.

It is important to remember that the vast majority of children at Slingsby Community Primary School arrive on time every day. An important part of our attendance policy is that this good practice is commended and celebrated. In order to do this, we report attendance on school reports.

Registers

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 states that every school must keep an attendance register which must be available for inspection during school hours.

The law requires regular attendance. Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day: at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session.

The method of maintaining the class registers is via our data management system, SIMS. Class teachers complete a register on SIMS twice daily. Notes are added to individuals, regarding reasons for absence or late attendance, by either the teacher or the administrative staff. Half termly absence reports are printed and reasons for absence recorded using the relevant codes. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent, the register must show whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Our school doors close at 8.50am. Lateness after this time but before 9am is recorded as 'late before register' which is Code L.

Registers close at 9am. Lateness after this time is classed as 'late after the register has closed' which is Code U, unless it is for a medical appointment or a reason is provided which can be authorised by the Headteacher.

All absence codes are available from SIMS on the key provided.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Absences can be authorised if they are for certain reasons e.g: sickness, religious observance, approved holiday, or absence following the death of a close member of the family. The ultimate responsibility to authorise absence rests with the Headteacher. If the Headteacher is not satisfied with the reasons provided, the absence may be categorised as unauthorised.

An absence will be classified as unauthorised for the following, non-exhaustive, list of reasons:

- A child is kept off school because a parent or sibling is ill.
- The parent cannot get the child to school.
- The child is taken on a shopping or other trip.
- The child is taken on holiday during term time.
- The child is absent due to a birthday treat/family treat.

- A child is absent due to family work patterns.
- The child refuses to come to school or wants to stay at home.
- A child is more than half an hour late without a satisfactory explanation.

Each child's unauthorised absences (including unauthorised holiday absences) will be noted and recorded on an annual report to parents.

It is a legal requirement for a school to report percentages of authorised and unauthorised absences to parents in the annual Governors Report and to the DfE. Slingsby C P School report attendance figures at each FGB.

Parents have a responsibility to telephone the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence if their child is ill. If a child needs to be absent for a medical appointment, a note or email must be received by the class teacher or school office before the appointment. When a child returns from a period of absence due to a sickness, an email must be provided.

In line with our Safeguarding policies, if the parent or carer has not contacted the school once the morning registers have completed on the first day of absence, the school will telephone the child's home to enquire about the absence. If no answer is received, the school will telephone the emergency contacts. If no answer is received from them, the Headteacher and another member of staff will visit the child's home until the location of the child is established.

Children will immediately be reported to the appropriate department if a child is MIE.

If a child is kept away from school without a satisfactory explanation for more than two days, the Headteacher will contact the parents or carers to discuss any issues preventing the child attending school and work together to find a solution or if there are concerns, refer to the appropriate Safeguarding Teams/ Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

If the child remains absent from school without satisfactory explanation, the Headteacher will send parents a letter reminding them of our Attendance Policy and expectations. If no satisfactory response is received and the child does not return to school, a further letter will be sent informing the parents or carers of the school's duty to inform the EWO about the child's lack of attendance.

Where there is cause for concern, i.e. when attendance is below 80% in any term, the reasons for this will be investigated and where appropriate, discussed with the EWO.

Holidays

- The law says that parents/carers do not have the right to take their children out of school for a holiday in term time.
- **All requests for absences must be made in writing to the Headteacher at least six weeks in advance.**
- The Headteacher has the discretion to grant up to a maximum of 10 days leave for family holidays in each school year for reasons of exceptional circumstances. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher and will not be granted unless exceptional circumstances are evidenced.
- Where a pupil fails to return within 10 school days of an agreed date, schools have the power to remove the child from the school roll.
- Early collection from school towards the end of the school day will not be authorised unless permission has been sought in advance, in writing, to the Headteacher or in cases of emergency.

Taking a holiday in term time means that children miss important school time. We would therefore request the co-operation of parents in considering the effect on their child's continuity of education before making requests for leave of absence in term time.

Medical Appointments

- Parents should inform the class teacher or school office in writing/by email indicating attendance at the dentist, doctor or optician **before** the arranged appointment unless an emergency situation has arisen.
- Children should be collected from and returned to the school office to be signed in or out when attending medical appointments during the school day. If a child has an appointment in a morning or afternoon session and does not attend school for the other session, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless it has been agreed with the Headteacher.

Public Performances

On occasions, children are involved in public performances for dance groups, theatres etc.

- The Headteacher has the discretion to grant authorised absence for these events.
- The Headteacher will consider individual circumstances, such as the attendance record of the child, whether the child would miss exams or any exceptional circumstances. Permission is at the discretion of the Headteacher and may not always be granted.
- Parents must obtain a licence to perform from the employing agency. This must be submitted to the Headteacher for completion.
- A letter must also accompany the licence, indicating the time out of school that the child will require in order to participate in the performances including time required for rehearsals.
- Parents are asked to reflect upon the effect performances would have upon their child as any absence because a child is tired after a performance will be recorded as unauthorised.

Punctuality

- Staff members are on duty on the playground from 8.40 am. Prior to that time, children are not supervised and remain the responsibility of parents. Children should not be waiting outside the door unaccompanied before 8.40am.
- The school day begins at 8.50 am, when the school bell is rung and the register will be taken.
- Children arriving after 8.50 am will be recorded as 'late before the registers have closed'. Children arriving after 9.00 am will be recorded as 'late after registers have closed'. Staff will complete the late registration form for any child arriving later than 8.50 am at the main entrance, which includes the reason given for the child's lateness and if their parent/carer was present.
- Parents and carers of children who persistently arrive late will be approached and reminded of these times and their obligation to comply. It will be explained that the lateness not only interrupts their child's education but also that of others in the class.
- If parents and carers know their child is going to be late for any reason, they should let the school know.
- If a regular pattern of lateness is observed, a letter will be sent home or a meeting arranged asking the parent or carer to explain the lateness or to ensure that punctuality is maintained.
- Repeated, unexplained lateness or persistent lateness without an acceptable reason will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer and/or Social Services where relevant.

Monitoring

- The Headteacher will keep the Governors informed about attendance matters.
- All staff will be expected to comply with the policy and any issues will be discussed at staff meetings.

Intervening with Lateness Concerns

The interventions that could be used for lateness concerns are:

1. If a child arrives late to school after 9am on 3 occasions over 10 school days, this will trigger the Headteacher to have an informal chat with the pupil's parent(s)/carer(s) about their child's punctuality.
2. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored and if there is no improvement and the child continues to arrive late after 9am on 3 occasions over 10 school days, this will trigger an Early Help Pupil Lateness Letter to be issued (see appendix 1).

3. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored and if there is still no improvement and the child continues to arrive late after 9am on 3 occasions over a 10 school days, this will trigger a Persistent Lateness Warning Letter to be issued (see appendix 2).
4. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored and if there is still no improvement in the next 10 school days, the parent(s)/carer(s) will be invited into school to have a meeting with the Head Teacher (see appendix 3).
5. Persistent lateness and any causes for concern will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service who will consider each case and work with families and the school to improve attendance. In some cases, Parenting Contracts may be put in place or fines may be issued.

Intervening with Absence Concerns

The interventions that could be used for attendance concerns are:

1. If there are concerns about a child's regular absence or trends are beginning to emerge, the Headteacher will have an informal chat with the child's parent(s)/carer(s) to try to address any barriers/offer support.
2. If a child's attendance is identified as less than 95% during the monitoring period, this will trigger an Early Help Pupil Attendance Letter to be issued to the parent(s)/carer(s) (see appendix 4).
3. The child's attendance will be monitored for 20 school days and if a child's attendance is less than 90% during the monitoring period, this will trigger the Formal Attendance Procedure and an Initial Warning Letter will be issued (see appendix 5).
4. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored for 20 school days from the date of the Initial Warning Letter, and if no improvement is made, the child's parent(s)/carer(s) will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel Meeting in School where attendance targets will be set for the next 15 school days (see appendix 6).
5. The child's attendance will continue to be monitored for 15 school days from the date of the Attendance Panel Meeting and if progress **IS** made, the child's parent(s)/carer(s) will be invited into school for a Review Meeting with the Headteacher.
6. If **NO** progress is made and targets are not met, it will be referred to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service who will consider each case and work with families and the school to improve attendance. In some cases, Parenting Contracts may be put in place or fines may be issued.

Other Relevant Documents:

- *Working to Improve Attendance in Schools 2022*
- *Request for absence during term time - NYCC letter and form*
- *Child Protection Policy*
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education Policy*

Appendix 1



Slingsby C.P. School
The Green
Slingsby
North Yorkshire
YO62 4AA
(01653) 628370

Head Teacher:
Mr. L. Smith
BA Hons QTS

1. Early Help – Pupil Lateness Letter

Pupil's Name:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Date:

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

Further to our conversation on [DATE] regarding your child's late attendance record, [NAME] has continued to be registered as late on another [NUMBER] occasions over the last 10 school days. Please find enclosed a copy of your child's registration certificate.

Please note that arrival after the close of registration at 9am is classed as an unauthorised absence. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 these absences could be used as evidence against you if legal action were to be considered by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

National statistics show that poor time keeping seriously affects a young person's chance of achieving their full potential. Arriving late may mean that your child misses important instructions for the day and can lead to feelings of isolation and disengagement from learning.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored over the next 10 school days from the date of this letter with the expectation that his/her attendance improves. If their attendance does not improve, we will invite you and [NAME] into school to discuss how school can help to remove any barriers to better their attendance and try to ensure no more learning is missed.

I hope that you will make the necessary arrangements to ensure that your child arrives at school on time in the future.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Mr. L. Smith

Head Teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)



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2. Persistent Lateness - Warning Letter

Pupil's Name:

Date:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

Following our conversation on [DATE], and Early Help – Pupil Lateness Letter dated [DATE] to address how school can help to support/remove any barriers to better their attendance to try to ensure no more learning is missed, your child has continued to be registered as late on another [NUMBER] occasions over the last 10 school days. Please find enclosed a copy of your child's registration certificate.

As previously communicated on [DATE] it is the legal duty of those with parental responsibility to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school and arrival after the close of registration at 9am is classed as an unauthorised absence. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 these absences could be used as evidence against you if legal action were to be considered by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

As your child attendance has not improved in the last 10 school days from the date of our last letter, we would like to invite you in to school on [DATE] at [TIME] for a meeting to discuss this matter further and work together to ensure your child arrives at school on time in the future.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Mr. L. Smith

Head Teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)



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3. Late Attendance – Invitation to Head Teacher Meeting

Pupil Name:

Date:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

A Persistent Lateness Warning Letter was issued to you on [DATE]. Unfortunately, your child's attendance has continued to be unsatisfactory despite this and other numerous contacts made with you by school.

I would therefore like to invite you in to school to discuss how school can help to remove any barriers and provide support to better your child's attendance to ensure they arrive to school on time every morning and no more learning is missed.

May I remind you that it is the legal duty of those with parental responsibility to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school. Failure to do so is an offence under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) or (1A) and, following referral to the Local Authority for statutory intervention, may be dealt with by the following: a prosecution in a Magistrates Court, a Penalty Notice being issued of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (if the conditions of a 15 day Warning Letter are not adhered to), or an application made to the Family Courts for an Education Supervision Order under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact the school direct to discuss an alternative time.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely

Mr. L. Smith
Head teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)



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4. Early Help – Pupil Attendance Letter

Pupil Name:

Date:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

I wish to draw your attention to the enclosed registration certificate for your child. [NAME]

has only achieved [NUMBER]% attendance so far this academic year. Unacceptable level of attendance is 95% and below, therefore the school are concerned about this level of his/her absence.

Irregular school attendance may have a serious impact on your child's academic progress if it is allowed to continue and you as parent/carer are legally responsible to ensure that [NAME] regular and punctual attendance is maintained.

We understand there may at times be unavoidable and genuine reasons for your child's absence of which the school should be informed as soon as possible. However, if your child continues to have absences from school, you may be requested to provide medical or other evidence before any further absence can be authorised. Medical evidence should be in the form of a doctor's note, appointment card or prescription.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored over the next 20 school days from the date of this letter with the expectation that his/her attendance improves.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Smith
Head Teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)



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5. Persistent Absence - Initial Warning Letter

Pupil Name:

Date:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

There are concerns regarding your child's attendance this current academic year, which currently stands at [NUMBER]%. This level of attendance is below the threshold by which the Department for Education (DfE) defines a pupil as being a persistent absentee (90% and below). This can seriously affect your child's academic progress if allowed to continue.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored over the next 20 school Days from the date of this letter with the expectation that his/her attendance improves. If your child's attendance does not improve, we will invite you in to school for an Attendance Panel Meeting in accordance with the next stage of the formal School Attendance Procedure. You will be expected to attend this meeting, bringing your child with you, if requested.

Any further absence your child may have due to illness or a medical condition needs to be supported by medical evidence before authorisation is possible by the school and it remains your responsibility to provide this evidence. You can obtain a Med 3 note from your GP each time your child is absent and forward this to the school office.

May I remind you that it is the legal duty of those with parental responsibility to secure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school. Failure to do so is an offence under the Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) or (1A) and, following referral to the Local Authority for statutory intervention, may be dealt with by the following: a prosecution in a Magistrates Court, a Penalty Notice being issued of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days (if the conditions of a 15 day Warning Letter are not adhered to), or an application made to the Family Courts for an Education Supervision Order under Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.

You will have the right to pursue your own legal representation regarding the above.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Smith
Head Teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)



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6. Formal Attendance Procedure – Invitation to Attendance Panel Meeting

Pupil Name:

Date:

D.O.B:

School: Slingsby CP School

Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms

An Initial Persistent Absence Warning letter was issued to you on [DATE]. Unfortunately, your child's attendance has continued to be unsatisfactory, despite this and other numerous contacts made with you by [myself/ the school office/school support staff and/or other agencies].

It is now necessary to arrange an Attendance Panel Meeting to be held at Slingsby School, on [DATE] at [TIME] in accordance with the School Attendance Procedures. Would you please bring your child with you to the meeting or if in school he/she will be asked to join us (*if appropriate*).

It must be emphasised again that it is the duty of those with parental responsibility to secure the regular attendance of their children at school. Failure to do so is an offence under Section 444 (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact the school direct to discuss an alternative time. If you fail to attend, and do not provide a reason, then this may be used as evidence of your unwillingness to cooperate and the meeting may go ahead in your absence. You may wish to pursue your own legal representation with regard to any of the above proceedings.

Should you have any queries, or require further support, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number.

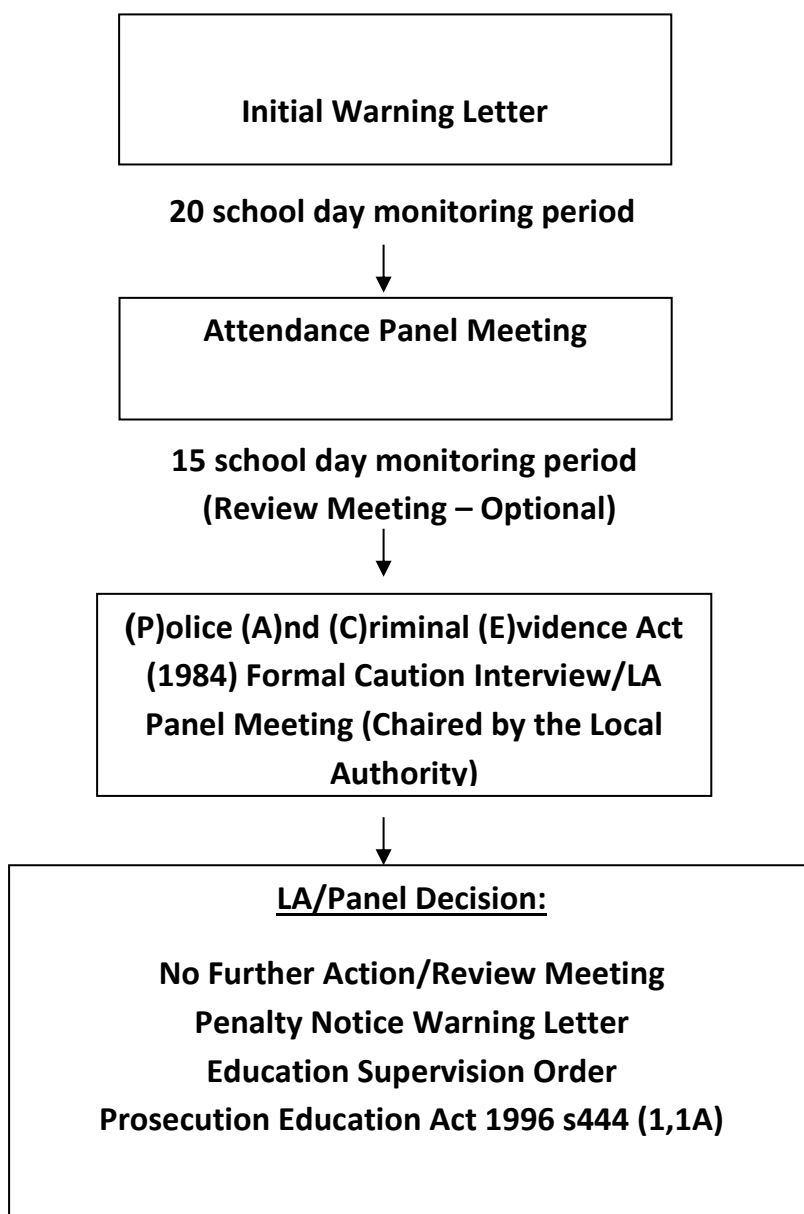
Yours sincerely

Mr. L. Smith
Head teacher

Encl: Flowchart (Information for Parents – Rights and Responsibilities)

Flow Chart of Slingsby School/LA Attendance Procedure – Time restricted

The following procedure will be undertaken by the school and the LA should there be no significant improvement in your child's attendance and unauthorised absence continues to be recorded on the school register.



If at any stage in the above procedure your child's attendance improves significantly, the school will not proceed to the following stage (normally 95% and above during the monitoring period).

However, your child's attendance will continue to be monitored by the school and, should there at any time in the future become further concerns, the above procedure will be continued onto the next stage or recommenced from the first stage depending on the severity of the situation.