



HILLINGDON
LONDON

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT GUIDANCE

**London Borough of Hillingdon
2024/25**

London Borough of Hillingdon

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT

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1. Introduction

1.1 Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

1.2 Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place. Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation; it must be a concerted effort across all teaching and non-teaching staff in school, the trust or governing body, the local authority, and other local partners.

1.3 Context to the guidance:

- Hillingdon's commitment: Hillingdon recognises the importance of parents as a child's first educators and believes they should be supported in playing an active and valued role in their child's education. Hillingdon is committed to ensuring all children are given the best possible start in life and ensuring they attend school regularly is an important part of this commitment.
- It is true that many children and families in Hillingdon have regular attendance and good punctuality, and we want to do more to celebrate that. We know there are examples of great practice happening every day in our schools. We are committed to learning from this.
- We know we have some strong partnership arrangements in place that we can strengthen to really make a difference together. We believe that by improving attendance, we will do the following:
 - ensure that attendance is everyone's business;
 - ensure that attendance is a key feature of all frontline council and services and partners' work
 - ensure more children have a happy and enriched life experience;
 - enable children to achieve more with their education provider academically, emotionally, and socially;
 - overcome some of the challenges we have all faced during and after the pandemic;
 - help children build positive, long-lasting friendships and lead happy lives;
 - improve the mental health and well-being of children and families;
 - reduce child exploitation and abuse, anti-social behaviour, and knife crime on our streets;
 - help children and families prosper socially and economically;
 - increase the chances of success in further or higher education or apprenticeships;
 - improve the employability of young people;
 - reduce the demand for support services; and improve lifestyles and better prepare our young people for adulthood and the world of work

1.4 Important information which underpins this guidance:

National

- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour](#)
- [Children missing education](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)
- [Alternative provision: education outside school](#)
- [Elective home education](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)

- [keeping children safe in education - statutory guidance](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)
- [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)

Hillingdon Council

- [Hillingdon's SEND and AP Strategy 2023-28](#)
- [Hillingdon Virtual School Handbook 2024/25](#)
- [Hillingdon Virtual School Handbook for CWSW 2024/25](#)
- [Hillingdon's policy for the alternative education arrangements of children who miss school due to health reasons](#)
- [Hillingdon Elective Home Education Policy 2024/25](#)
- [Hillingdon's Children Missing Education Policy 2024/25](#)
- [Hillingdon's Alternative Provision guidance 2024/25](#)
- Hillingdon's Exclusions and Suspensions guidance 2024/25
- [Hillingdon's Admissions Policy](#)
- Hillingdon's Attendance Strategy (under development)

Relevant legislation

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

2. The law on school attendance

2.1 The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

2.2 Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

2.3 This is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.

2.4 For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms.

3. The role of key partners in improving school attendance

All Schools

3.1 The most effective schools consistently promote the benefits of good attendance at school, set high expectations for every pupil, communicate those expectations clearly and consistently to pupils and parents, systematically analyse their data to identify patterns to target their improvement efforts, and work effectively with the local authority and other local partners to overcome barriers to attendance.

3.2 They also recognise that attendance cannot be seen in isolation and that the foundation to good attendance is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment in which all pupils want to attend and can learn and thrive. To manage and improve attendance effectively, all schools are expected to:

3.2a Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.

3.2b Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents understand.

3.2c Accurately complete admission and, with the exception of schools where all pupils are boarders, attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.

3.2d Regularly monitor and analyse attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put effective strategies in place.

3.2e Build strong relationships with families, listen to and understand barriers to attendance and work with families to remove them.

3.2f Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Academy trust boards and governing bodies

3.3 Improving attendance requires constant focus, and effective whole school approaches require regular ongoing support, guidance, and challenge. All trusts and governing bodies are expected to:

3.4a Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies.

3.4b Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

3.4c Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge trends, and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most.

3.4d Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

3.5 Multi-academy trust boards and governing bodies of federations are also expected to share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

3.6 Whilst it is expected that all trusts and governing bodies will provide support covering these areas, the approach to delivering it should be proportionate to the size of the group of schools and type of school(s) within it.

The local authority

3.7 As a minimum all local authorities are expected to:

3.7a Rigorously track local attendance data to devise a strategic approach to attendance that prioritises the pupils, pupil cohorts and schools on which to provide support and focus its efforts on to unblock area wide barriers to attendance.

3.7b Have a School Attendance Support Team which provides the following core functions free of charge to all schools (regardless of type):

- Communication and advice: regularly bring schools together to communicate messages, provide advice and share best practice between schools and trusts within the area.
- Targeting Support Meetings: hold termly conversations with schools, using their attendance data to identify pupils and cohorts at risk of poor attendance and agree targeted actions and access to services for those pupils.
- Multi-disciplinary support for families: provide access to early help support workers to work intensively with families to provide practical whole-family support where needed to tackle the causes of absenteeism and unblock the barriers to attendance.
- Legal intervention: take forward attendance legal intervention (using the full range of parental responsibility measures) where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.

3.7c Monitor and improve the attendance of children with a social worker through their Virtual School.

Independent settings and Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS)

3.8 Under the new [DfE guidance](#), it is expected that independent settings and INMSS adhere to all requirements in relation to school attendance as set out in **3.2**.

3.9 INMSS are expected to share their daily attendance data with the DfE via the Wonde MIS integration tool, however this does not apply to independent settings.

4. Hillingdon's Attendance Support team

4.1 Hillingdon's Attendance Support team was developed in the summer term 2024 using the basis of what was previously known as the Participation team.

4.2 The team consists of:

- Team Manager
- Senior Attendance Support Officers
- Attendance Support Officers
- Penalty Notice Officer
- Attendance Support Officer (MASH)

4.3 For more detailed information about the team, please visit [LEAP](#).

5. How the team supports schools

5.1 Core Offer:

5.1.1 Termly Targeting Support Meetings

- Meeting with the appropriate attendance / pastoral staff to discuss individual children
- Meeting with the Senior Attendance Champion (Attendance Lead)

5.1.2 Communication and advice

- Each school setting in the borough will have a named Attendance Support Officer (ASO) as a point of contact
- Fortnightly Attendance clinics (virtual) set up for schools to book an appointment to discuss key queries
- Bi-annual Attendance forums to share best practice and key messages
- Half termly locality-based networking opportunities to discuss localised issues or key cohorts

5.1.3 Legal Intervention

- Education Supervision Orders
- Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices
- Parenting Orders
- Taking forward attendance prosecutions

5.1.4 Multi-disciplinary support for families

- Supporting schools and families with access to the EHC team, SAS, Social Care and other key agencies who can provide early help and support in Hillingdon
- Providing advice to professionals working with children and families where attendance is a concern
- Acting as the lead professional in a Stronger Families Plan where attendance is identified as the core issue for a child.

6. **Persistent and severe absenteeism**

6.1 Where absence escalates and pupils miss 10% or more of school (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight across a full school year), schools and local authorities are expected to work together to put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers to attendance and reengage these pupils. In doing so, schools should sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence and understand the importance of school as a place of safety and support for children who might be facing difficulties, rather than reaching immediately for punitive approaches. Pupils with attendance of 90% or less are classed as **persistently absent**.

6.2 Particular focus should be given by all partners to pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (those missing 50% or more of school). These severely absent pupils may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and as such are likely to need more intensive support across a range of partners. Pupils with attendance of 50% or less are classed as **severely absent**.

6.3 If all avenues of support have been facilitated by schools, local authorities, and other partners, and the appropriate educational support or placements (e.g. an education, health and care plan) have been provided but severe absence for unauthorised reasons continues, it is likely to constitute neglect. Schools and local authorities should be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues in these cases and where these remain, conduct a full children's social care assessment.

6.4 In all cases, schools and local authorities are expected to make patterns of both persistent and severe absence a focus of their regular data monitoring and identify pupils and cohorts who need targeted attendance support as quickly as possible. Both persistent and severe absence should also be central to school, trust, and local authority level strategies for improving attendance.

7. What process should schools follow when trying to support poor attendance?

7.1 Schools are expected to offer a stepped and supportive approach to attendance. School should foster a welcoming ethos with high expectations for all, build a culture where all can and want to be in school and encourage all students to be ready to learn by prioritising positive attendance.

7.2 A school's daily actions and processes should aim to promote relationship building with children and families to prevent absence. This should involve rigorously using data to identify patterns of poor attendance at both an individual and cohort level so all parties can work together to resolve any issues before they become entrenched. Observed patterns and trends in data should be used by schools to inform conversations with children and families to promote attendance, as well using praise and incentives, swift absence follow up via phone or email, carrying out home visits and processing requests for absences in exceptional circumstances in a timely way.

7.3 When a potential pattern is spotted, children and families should be encouraged to share any potential barriers to school attendance and discussions held between all partners so an agreement can be made on what support can be implemented. Discussions and meetings should be offered at the earliest opportunity to the family so that any early support and reasonable adjustments needed can be swiftly identified and actioned.

7.4 Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or being engaged with, school and wider partners should work together to ensure the family understands the consequences of continued poor attendance and ensure support is in place to enable them to respond. This may include formalising the support on offer to the family via an attendance contract (see section 8). An attendance contract is designed to be a 3-6 month nurturing plan of improvement to prevent further escalation.

7.5 A flowchart demonstrating the process schools should follow in regard to attendance intervention can be found here and in Appendix A. This is also available in a written format (Appendix B) and as a roadmap infographic on LEAP.

8. Formal interventions for attendance

8.1 Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or are not appropriate (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time), Hillingdon's Attendance Support Team will liaise with school and the early help lead practitioner or social worker (where applicable) to take forward legal intervention to formalise support and/or enforce attendance. Hillingdon is expected to:

- Understand and make use of formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders and use them fairly and consistently.
- Set out clearly for pupils, parents, and schools when and how attendance legal intervention will be used where voluntary support is not appropriate, or where absence was not for legitimate reasons and support has not been engaged with and/or been successful. In Hillingdon, this is done through our [Code of Practice](#).
- Secure effective joint working with statutory children's social care services to work together where there are safeguarding concerns or absence becomes severe.
- Issue penalty notices in line with the National Framework where absence was unauthorised and support has been provided but has not worked or been engaged with or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).
- Take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort where all other routes have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate.

8.2 Hillingdon's Attendance Support team has a range of legal interventions available:

- Education Supervision Orders (ESOs)
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting Orders

- Fixed Penalty Notices

8.3 Before considering a legal intervention, schools must consider the use of an attendance contract to support the child and family with school attendance.

Attendance Contracts

8.4 An attendance contract is a formal written agreement between a parent and either the school (with the exception of independent schools and non-maintained special schools) or local authority to address irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. An attendance contract is not legally binding but allows a more formal route to secure engagement with support where a voluntary early help plan has not worked or is not deemed appropriate. An attendance contract is not a punitive tool, it is intended to provide support and offer an alternative to prosecution. Parents cannot be compelled to enter an attendance contract, and they cannot be agreed in a parent's absence.

8.5 There is no obligation on the school or local authority to offer a contract, and it may not be appropriate in every instance, but a contract should always be explored before moving forward to an education supervision order or prosecution.

8.6 The aim from the outset should be for the parent(s), and the pupil where they are old enough, the school and the local authority to work in partnership. Where a school and/or local authority decide to use an attendance contract, a meeting should be arranged with the parent(s). It should include the pupil if they are old enough to understand. The meeting should explain the purpose of an attendance contract and why using one would be beneficial in the family's circumstances. The parent(s) should be asked to outline their views on the pupil's attendance at school, any underlying issues and how they believe these should be addressed. The meeting should also allow them to share their views on the idea of an attendance contract and what type of support they think would be helpful to secure the pupil's regular attendance. Where a parent fails to attend the meeting without good reason or notification, further attempts should be made to contact them and arrange another meeting but all attempts at support should be recorded.

8.7 All attendance contracts should contain:

- Details of the requirements the parent(s) is expected to comply with.
- A statement from the school and/or local authority agreeing to provide support to the parent(s) to meet the requirements and setting out details of the support.
- A statement by the parent that they agree to comply with the requirements for the period of time specified by the contract.

8.8 Attendance contracts should have a review period of 4-6 weeks. Each individual contract should set out the duration it will be in place for.

8.9 Where a parent does not comply with the requirements set out in the contract, the lead practitioner should contact the parent and seek an explanation and decide whether it is reasonable, and the contract remains useful. If the explanation shows that the contract is proving difficult to comply with through no fault of the parent, then a meeting should be arranged with the parent to review and amend it. Where no explanation is given, or the lead practitioner is not satisfied with the explanation, they should serve the parent with a warning to explain that the contract is not working and may be terminated, and another course of action pursued, if the parent does not engage. This may be in the form of a letter, and record of it should be kept.

8.10 If there are further instances of non-compliance, they should arrange a meeting with the parent to review the contract and discuss how it can be made to work. Following this meeting, the school and/or local authority should decide whether the non-compliance is undermining the contract to the

extent that it is no longer useful in which case an alternative course of action (such as a different legal intervention) would need to be decided upon. The decision and reasons should be recorded.

8.11 Templates for attendance contracts can be found in the appendices.

Notice to Improve

8.12 A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers have not been engaged with by the parent or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents a final chance to engage. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is not appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to use one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (e.g. because the parent has already received one for a similar offence).

8.13 Where a Notice to Improve is used, it should be issued in line with processes set out in the Code of Practice for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school and is expected to include the following:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and details of the offences.
- The benefits of regular attendance and parents' duty under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.
- Details of the support provided so far.
- Opportunities for further support and the option to access previously provided support that was not engaged with.
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered if attendance improvement is not secured within the improvement period.
- A clear timeframe for the improvement period of between 4 and 6 weeks.
- Details of what sufficient improvement within that timeframe will look like.
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period.

8.14 What sufficient improvement looks like can be decided on a case-by-case basis taking the individual family's circumstances into account. For some families, no further unauthorised absences will be appropriate, for others some absence may be tolerable if considerable improvement is seen. Details of what sufficient improvement looks like for each case should be made clear in the Notice to Improve.

8.15 Where it is clear improvement is not being made; it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended. For example, a Notice to Improve stated there should be no further unauthorised absences in a 6-week period but the pupil is absent for unauthorised reasons in the first week. The parent should be informed before a penalty notice is issued if it is before the end of the improvement period.

Education Supervision Orders (ESO)

8.16 In deciding whether to progress to an ESO, the school and local authority should have exhausted voluntary support and be clear that making the order would be beneficial for the pupil and parent. Where safeguarding concerns exist, the lead practitioner should also discuss with the school's designated safeguarding lead and children's social care services and agree an ESO would be a more suitable option than a s.17 (Children in Need) or s.47 (Child Protection) plan. In all cases, local authorities must fully consider using an ESO before moving forward to prosecution.

8.17 ESOs are made through the Family or High Court, rather than Magistrates Court. They give the local authority a formal role in advising, helping and directing the pupil and parent(s) to ensure the pupil receives an efficient, full-time, suitable education. For the duration of the ESO, the parent's duties to secure the child's education and regular attendance are superseded by a duty to comply with any directions given by the local authority under the ESO.

8.18 The order initially lasts for one year, but extensions can be secured within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

8.19 If it is decided to progress with an ESO, the local authority should notify parents in writing of the intention to consider an ESO and set up a meeting to discuss with the parent (including the pupil if they are old enough to understand). Following the conversation, the local authority should make its decision and inform the parent and pupil of whether the case will be taken forward to court or not. Where the decision is to proceed, this can be combined with the service of an application notice.

8.20 Once an ESO is secured, an officer of the local authority should be chosen to act as the supervisor of the order on the authority's behalf; this does not need to be an attendance officer, rather it should be whichever lead practitioner is working with the family (including their social worker where appropriate). Schools should, however, work in partnership with the local authority and whilst the designated supervisor (the local authority) retains overall responsibility, schools can and should provide support and supervision where appropriate.

8.21 The supervisor must determine any directions (requirements the parent must adhere to) to give whilst the order is in force. There is not a prescribed list, but they may include:

- Requiring the parent(s) to attend support meetings
- Requiring the parent(s) to attend a parenting programme or counselling
- Requiring the parent(s) to access support services
- Requiring an assessment by an educational psychologist

8.22 Review meetings involving all parties (including the school) should be held every 3 months throughout the period the ESO is in force. At these meetings any actions and directions should be discussed and added or amended.

8.23 Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under the ESO, they may be guilty of an offence. Local authorities can prosecute in the Magistrates Court for persistent non-compliance with the Order and parents (upon conviction) will be liable to a fine of up to £1,000.

Attendance Prosecution

8.24 If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, or at a place where alternative provision is provided for them, their parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.

8.25 Local authorities have the power to prosecute:

8.25a Parents who fail to comply with a school attendance order issued by the local authority to require a parent to get their child registered at a named school (under section 443 of the Education Act 1996). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

8.25b Parents who fail to secure their child's regular attendance at a school, for which there are 2 separate offences: section 444(1) where a parent fails to secure the child's regular attendance; and section 444(1A) where a parent knows that the child is failing to attend school regularly and fails to ensure the child does so. The section 444(1) offence may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000) and the section 444(1A) offence may result in a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

8.25c Parents who fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a place where the local authority or governing body has arranged alternative provision (under sections 444 and 444ZA1A). This may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000), or if the parent is found to have known the child was not attending regularly and failed to ensure that they did so, a fine of up to level 4 (£2,500), and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

8.25d Parents who persistently fail to comply with directions under an Education Supervision Order (under Schedule 3 to the Children Act 1989) or breach a Parenting Order or directions under the order (under section 375 of the Sentencing Act 2020). These may result in a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

8.26 The decision to prosecute rests solely with Hillingdon local authority as an independent prosecuting authority.

8.27 The 1996 Act also sets out the circumstances in which a pupil has not failed to attend school regularly and therefore the parent has not committed an offence under section 444(1) or (1A) of the Act (the statutory defences). These are:

8.27a The parent proves the pupil was prevented from attending by their ill health or any unavoidable cause, including exclusion.

8.27b The pupil has been granted leave of absence by the school or, in the case of alternative provision, by a person authorised to do so.

8.27c The absence was on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong.

8.27d The parent proves the local authority were under a duty to provide transport to the school and have failed to do so.

8.27e If the school is an independent school, the parent proves that the school is not in walking distance of the pupil's home and the local authority have not made suitable arrangements for the child to either board at the school or be admitted to a state-funded school closer to home.

8.27f If the absence was from certain types of alternative provision, the parent proves the child is receiving education otherwise than by regular attendance.

8.27g If the absence was from alternative provision, the parent had not been notified about the provision in writing before the absence.

8.27h If the child has no fixed abode and the parent can prove that their trade / business requires them to travel, and the child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business permits, and (if the child is 6 or over) the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding 12 months up to and including the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

8.28 Templates for Attendance Panel Agreements and Parenting Contract Agreements can be found [here](#).

Parenting Orders

8.29 Parenting orders are an ancillary order that can be imposed by the Court following conviction for non-attendance alongside a fine and/or community order. Parents' agreement is not required before an order is made. They may be appropriate where the parent has not engaged in support to improve their child's attendance and where compulsion to do so would help change parental behaviour.

8.30 The order requires a parent to comply with the arrangements specified in the order by the Court which can include a requirement for parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions (e.g. parenting education or parenting support classes) where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's attendance for up to 3 months.

8.31 All parenting orders must specify a 'responsible officer' which will be named on the order. This should be the most appropriate lead practitioner working with the family.

8.32 Any breach of the order could lead to a fine of up to level 3 (£1,000).

Fixed Penalty Notices

8.33 Fixed penalty notices are served on parents as an alternative to prosecution where they have failed to ensure that their child of compulsory school age regularly attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative provision is provided.

8.34 Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes and that absence(s) constitutes an offence.

8.35 A penalty notice can be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences. They should usually only be issued to the parent or parents who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

8.36 Penalty notices are intended to prevent the need for court action and should only be used where it is deemed likely to change parental behaviour and support to secure regular attendance has been provided and has not worked or been engaged with, or would not have been appropriate in the circumstances of the offence (e.g. an unauthorised holiday in term time).

8.37 The threshold for issuing a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence. These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not. The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

8.38 The penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The payment must be paid direct to the local authority regardless of who issued the penalty notice.

8.39 If the penalty is not paid by the end of the 28-day period, the local authority must decide either to prosecute for the original offence to which the notice applies or withdraw the notice. Parent(s) can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired, and full payment has not been made.

8.40 There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

8.41 To make a referral for a fixed penalty notice to the local authority, please go via Hillingdon's [Stronger Families Hub](#).

8.42 For more detailed information of Penalty Notices, you can access Hillingdon's Penalty Notice Code of Practice [here](#).

9. Leave in exceptional circumstances

9.1 A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and is one of a range of options available to local authorities to encourage school attendance. The aim is to support parents to meet their responsibilities in law. These options will be used only where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or deemed insufficient to resolve the presenting problem.

9.2 Penalty Notices will only be used where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will

secure an improvement. They offer a means of swift intervention at an early stage, before attendance problems become entrenched. Whatever action is taken, parents and pupils will continue to be supported by school, with the aid of other agencies if appropriate, to overcome apparent barriers to regular attendance, through a range of intervention strategies.

9.3 Before making a Penalty Notice referral to the local authority, school staff should carry out a thorough investigation of the pupil's circumstances, reasons for absence and have considered referring to other agencies for support. Following such investigations, Headteachers are required to determine each case on its individual circumstances taking into account the results of any investigation, any other relevant information, any guidance, the school attendance policy, this code and the law.

9.4 If a parent makes a request for leave for their child from school during term time and the Headteacher's investigation finds the request to be unreasonable, then a letter must be sent to the parent before the leave is taken advising the request has been declined. The letter should also inform the parent that should this leave still be taken, this will be coded as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's attendance record. A model letter for exceptional leave can be found in Appendix A.

9.5 Where unauthorised leave was taken and the parent did not seek prior authorisation, the Headteacher should still carry out a thorough investigation of the pupil's circumstances before making a referral for a Holiday Penalty Notice to be issued. If the Headteacher's investigation finds the leave taken to be unacceptable, then a letter must be sent to the parent before the leave is taken advising the request has been declined. The letter should also inform the parent that should this leave still be taken, this will be coded as an unauthorised absence on the pupil's attendance record. A model letter for unauthorised leave can be found in Appendix A.

9.6 All letters informing parents of the refusal to grant exceptional leave must also state they are at risk of being issued with a fixed penalty notice. This is a fine of £160 per parent per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days, it is reduced to £80 per parent per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day, then the parent(s) will be summoned to court.

9.7 If a family takes further exceptional leave within the academic year, the school can refer again with a request for the matter to be presented to the Magistrates Court, if this is stated in the attendance policy and the case has been discussed with the school's allocated Attendance Support Officer.

9.8 A checklist for use prior to making a referral for the issuance of a Holiday Penalty Notice can be found in Appendix B.

9.9 You can access Hillingdon's Penalty Notice Code of Practice [here](#).

9.10 You can access Hillingdon's Holiday Penalty Notice referral form via [LEAP](#).

10. Responsibilities relating to admissions

10.1 Schools must enter pupils on the admission register at the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed with, or been notified by the parent, that the pupil will attend the school.

10.2 If a pupil fails to attend school on the agreed starting day, the school must follow this up and try to establish the reason for absence.

10.3 Schools must record personal details of every pupil at the school in the admission register. The

register must include the following information for every pupil:

- full name;
- sex;
- the full name and address of each of the pupil's parents;
- which of the pupil's parents the pupil normally lives with and at least one telephone number by which each parent who the pupil normally lives with can be contacted in an emergency.
- day, month and year of birth;
- day, month and year of admission or re-admission to the school;
- name and address of the school last attended, if any.

10.4 It is vital that the admission register is kept up to date. Schools should encourage parents to inform them of any changes whenever they occur and ensure the admission register is amended as soon as possible.

10.5 Schools can notify the local authority of in-year admissions to their roll by using the online form [here](#).

10.6 Where a school notifies the local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, as set out in regulation 12(7), the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
- at least one emergency telephone number of any parent the pupil normally lives with;
- if applicable, the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil will start living there;
- if applicable, the name of the pupil's other school and when the pupil began or will begin to attend the school;
- the reason set out in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

10.7 Schools can notify the local authority of deletions from their roll by using the online form [here](#). Schools are not required to complete this form for expected transitions, such as Year 6 students moving to Year 7 or Year 11 leavers.

11. Responsibilities relating to the attendance register

11.1 Schools must take the attendance register at the beginning of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil (with the exception of a pupil who is a boarder) is:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Attending an approved educational activity as defined in regulation 6(4); or
- Unable to attend school due to exceptional circumstances as defined in regulation 6(5).

11.2 Schools must record whether the absence of a pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or not.

11.3 Schools must record the nature of the activity where a pupil of compulsory school age is attending an approved educational activity.

11.4 The national codes enable schools to record and monitor attendance and absence in a consistent way and are used to collect statistics through the School Census system. The data helps

schools, local authorities and the government to gain a greater understanding of the level of, and the reason for, absence and the delivery of education:

- Code / \: Present in school / = am \ = pm
- Code L: Late arrival before the register is closed
- Code K: Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
- Code C: Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances
- Code C1: Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad
- Code C2: Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
- Code E: Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
- Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
- Code M: Medical or dental appointment
- Code R: Religious observance
- Code S: Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
- Code T: Parent travelling for occupational purposes
- Code G: Holiday not granted by the school
- Code N: Reason for absence not yet established
- Code O: Absent in other or unknown circumstances
- Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed
- Code D: Dual registered at another school
- Code B: Attending any other approved educational activity
- Code J1: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment
- Code P: Participating in a sporting activity
- Code Q: Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
- Code V: Educational visit or trip
- Code W: Work experience
- Code X: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school
- Code Y1: Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
- Code Y2: Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
- Code Y3: Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
- Code Y4: Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
- Code Y5: Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
- Code Y6: Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
- Code Y7: Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
- Code Z: Prospective pupil not on admission register
- Code #: Planned whole or partial school closure

11.5 A full guide to attendance coding can be found [here](#).

12. Children missing education

12.1 Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

12.2 Children who are on roll at a school and refusing to attend or are failing to attend regularly are not a child missing education. These children should be treated as those struggling with their attendance and dealt with accordingly.

12.3 Before making a referral to the Children Missing Education team, schools should complete their own reasonable checks to ascertain a child's whereabouts. A simple guide to this can be found [here](#).

12.4 Where a child has moved abroad or out of the area and you have not been able to confirm they are on roll at a new school, or their whereabouts remain unknown a referral to the Children Missing Education team should be made using the referral form on Hillingdon's Stronger Families Hub.

12.5 Children Missing Education tracking and recording is a statutory requirement for all local authorities. Schools should make every effort to track children within 10 days of their last date of attendance. On the 10th day if the child has still not been found then a referral to the Children Missing Education team should be made using the [referral form](#) on Hillingdon's Stronger Families Hub.

12.4 Hillingdon's Children Missing Education policy can be found in full [here](#).

12.5 If you have any queries or require support in relation to a child missing education, please contact: childrenmissingeducation@hillington.gov.uk

13. Elective Home Education

13.1 Elective Home Education (EHE) is a right to all parent(s) to provide education for their children at home that does not involve them being registered on a school's roll. This is different to home tuition provided by a Local Authority or education provided by a Local Authority other than at a school.

13.2 Schools must notify the local authority when a parent withdraws their child from school to provide EHE. This can be done via Hillingdon's [online notification form](#).

13.3 Hillingdon's Elective Home Education policy can be found in full [here](#).

13.4 If you have any queries or require support in relation to elective home education, please contact: EHE@hillington.gov.uk

14. Exclusions and Suspensions

14.1 Types of exclusion:

14.1a Suspension - A fixed period suspension is used when a pupil is suspended from school for a fixed period. During the suspension they remain on the register of the school and are expected to return at the end of the suspension period. In line with the DfE guidance, schools must report all suspensions to the local authority on the day of issuance. This can be done via Hillingdon's [online notification form](#). Pupils should be coded as absent (authorised) for the period of their suspension.

14.1b Permanent Exclusion - A permanent exclusion is used to permanently remove a pupil from a school following a serious breach(es) of the school's behaviour policy. Schools can only remove a pupil's name from their register once the governor's review meeting has taken place, as well as any subsequent panels or appeals.

A pupil who has been permanently excluded would then be educated at another school or via some form of Alternative Provision.

In line with the DfE guidance, schools must report all permanent exclusions to the local authority on the day of issuance. This can be done via Hillingdon's [online notification form](#). Pupils should be recorded as dual registered with the identified Alternative Provision until they can be removed from the register.

14.1.c Lunchtime Suspension - Lunchtime suspensions are when a pupil is suspended from school during the period of lunchtime. Lunchtime suspensions are counted as half a day, and this must be recorded by the school on their attendance register. This type of suspension does not need to be reported to the local authority.

14.2 Headteachers, Governors and Local Authorities must by law, have made reference to DfE guidance (Sept 2022) when making decisions on permanent exclusions and administering the exclusion process. Whilst the guidance does not have the force of statute, there is an expectation that it will be followed unless there is a good reason to depart from it.

14.3 Where a school has concerns about a pupil's behaviour it should try to identify whether there are any causal factors and intervene early to reduce the need for a subsequent suspension/exclusion. In this situation schools should make contact with any services that may already be involved with the young person to understand the reasons for their decline in behaviour. If there are no current involvements, schools should consider what services might be best placed to support the pupil. Advice on this can be sought by booking a virtual clinic session with the Hillingdon's Vulnerable Learner's Support Manager. This can be done by emailing: vulnerablelearners@hillingdon.gov.uk
Other suggested services can be found on [LEAP](#).

14.4 Hillingdon's Exclusions and Suspensions guidance can be found in full [here](#).

14.5 If you have any queries or require support in relation to exclusions or suspensions, please contact: exclusionssupport@hillingdon.gov.uk

15. Part-Time Timetables

15.1 All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

15.2 A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision.

15.3 There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

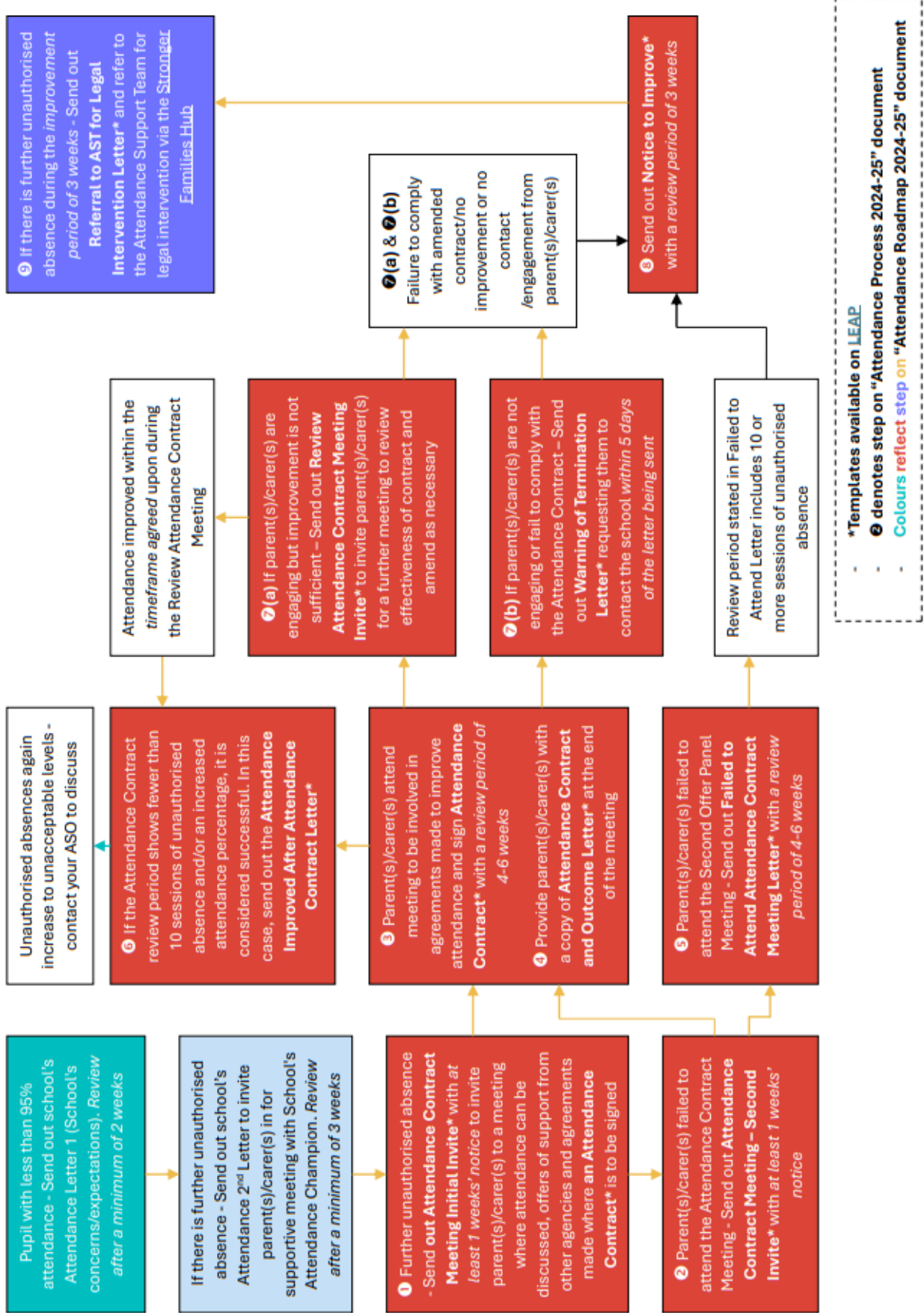
15.4 Schools must notify the local authority of any pupils placed on a part-time timetable by using the online form [here](#).

15.5 A part-time timetable should be reviewed regularly and no less than six weeks from implementation. If a part-time timetable needs to be in place for longer than 6 weeks, a new form should be submitted and parental consent obtained.

15.6 You can access Hillingdon's guide to Part-Time Timetables [here](#).

Appendix A: Attendance Process Flowchart

Attendance Process Flowchart 2024-25 - Formal interventions that are to be held by the school



Appendix B: Attendance process

Below is an attendance process that has been created in line with the Working Together to Support School Attendance statutory guidance effective from August 2024. This will support the implementation and delivery of the Department for Education’s expectations for attendance.

Prior to beginning the process below, schools should follow their usual attendance day to day processes. Where pupils have been identified to have poor attendance, a letter notifying the parent of this and at least one meeting with the attendance lead/champion should have been held inviting the parent(s) to discuss via a letter sent home. Under the old guidance this was previously letter one and two that was sent to the child’s parent(s). A template for letter two is available [here](#). The letters to be used in the new process are:

1. Attendance contract meeting – initial invite attendance concerns
2. Attendance contract meeting - second invite attempt
3. Attendance contract template for attendance meeting
4. Attendance contract outcome letter
5. Failed to attend attendance contract meeting
6. Attendance improved after attendance contract
- 7a. Attendance contract review meeting invite – parent(s) engaging
- 7b. Attendance contract review termination warning letter –parent(s) not engaging
8. Notice to Improve (termination of attendance contract)
9. Referral to AST for legal intervention

For the letters contained in the process table, please use the following link in the description section of the table below.

Attendance process & letters 2024-25

* [Colours reflect steps on “Attendance Roadmap 2024-25”](#)

Letter	Description	Review / Monitoring Time Frame
1. Attendance contract meeting – initial invite attendance concerns	Template available here on LEAP. This is the first opportunity to invite parents to a formal meeting (Formerly known as an Attendance Panel Meeting). This invite will offer parents the opportunity to request an alternative meeting such as online or telephone to ensure attendance and engagement is maximised.	Give at least one weeks’ notice for this meeting. If parent fails to attend, telephone contact should be attempted and recorded.
2. Attendance contract meeting - second invite attempt	Template available here on LEAP. If the parent fails to attend the first meeting and does not notify the school that they are unable to attend, a second invite is to be sent noting that the first meeting was	Give at least one weeks’ notice for this meeting. If parent fails to attend, telephone contact should be attempted and recorded.

	<p>missed and again offering an alternative to a face-to-face meeting.</p>	<p>Following the failure to attend a re-scheduled second meeting, arrange to hold a separate professionals meeting to discuss support and document not using the attendance contract documentation in point 3 below as it cannot be completed in the parent(s) absence.</p>
<p>3. Attendance contract template for attendance meeting</p>	<p>Template available here on LEAP. This is an updated version of the previous Parenting Contract/Attendance Panel Agreement. A more detailed agreement has been created, designed to ensure school are reflecting all supportive interventions implemented or attempted or suggested. The document should be as detailed as possible to ensure that it is in line with Department for Education (DfE) expectations of support provided to pupil. Other relevant professionals should be invited to attend and notified that school have arranged this meeting. <u>This paperwork is only to be used if parent attends attendance contract meeting. If the parent(s) fail to attend arrange a professionals meeting to discuss/address concerns and document not using the attendance contract documentation.</u></p>	<p>If parents attend, monitor attendance over a <i>4–6-week review period</i>.</p> <p>The review period can be anywhere within the 4-6 weeks. This can be decided based on the pupils' attendance at the start of the process. It is recommended that the lower the attendance the shorter the review period. However, if there are 6 sessions of unauthorised absence before the end of the review period, this may trigger an attendance review meeting. (see 7a).</p> <p>When reviewing, assess improvement in proportion to the student's starting attendance at the beginning of the attendance process. For example, if a student had an attendance percentage of 80% at the time of the informal support meeting and at the end of the of the attendance contract review, their attendance increased to 87%, this can be considered as an improvement, even if the threshold of 10 sessions have been met. Each pupil's case is to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, depending on their circumstances. If unsure, seek advice from your allocated Attendance Support Officer (ASO).</p>
<p>4. Attendance contract outcome letter</p>	<p>Template available here on LEAP. This letter is attached to the attendance contract. It is to be completed alongside the attendance contract and a copy given to the parent at the end of the meeting.</p>	<p>This is a covering letter that accompanies the completed attendance contract.</p>

	Only to be used if parent attends Formal Support Meeting to complete the attendance contract.	
5. Failed to attend attendance contract meeting	Template available here on LEAP. This letter is to be used if parent(s) fails to attend the attendance contract meetings arranged and has failed to reschedule or engage with any attempted contact by the school.	Within one week - arrange a Professional meeting to discuss, create, implement and identify interventions of support. Notify parents of the decisions of this meeting and continue efforts to engage with parents and pupil.
6. Attendance improved after attendance contract meeting	Template available here on LEAP This letter can be used at various stages of the attendance process if interventions have worked, and attendance has improved.	To be sent after a period of review and improvement in attendance has been made. Case can remain open and continuously monitored if appropriate.
Use one of the following options in the letter depending on the circumstances: 7a. Attendance contract review meeting invite – parent(s) engaging 7b. Attendance contract review termination warning letter –parent(s) not engaging	<p>Templates available here on LEAP</p> <p>If improvement is not sufficient invite parents for a further meeting to review effectiveness of contract and amend as necessary. Failure to comply with contract consider terminating the attendance contract and issuing a Notice to Improve in point 8 below.</p> <p>Where a parent(s) fails to comply with an attendance contract or engage they should be sent a warning letter to state the contract maybe terminated and other action pursued. Allow a short period of review. If there is no contact/engagement from the parent(s) or no improvement go straight to issuing a Notice to Improve.</p> <p>Where a parent failed to attend both attendance contract meetings offered and a professionals meeting was held instead; if there are still unauthorised absences, the above steps are not necessary and a Notice to Improve can be issued.</p>	<p>Each pupil’s case is to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis along with timescales, depending on their circumstances. If unsure, seek advice from your allocated ASO.</p> <p>Each pupil’s case is to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Where non-engagement is present, proceed to issue a Notice to Improve in point 8 below.</p>
8. Notice to Improve (termination of attendance contract)	Template available here on LEAP. This notice is advised by the DfE issued and must be sent prior to a referral to the LA for a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN). Some circumstances	A 3-week review is held following this letter. When reviewing, assess improvement in proportion to the

	<p>may negate the need for this notice, please refer to the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance as to where this applies here. This letter will offer a further period for improvement and will detail all efforts made by the school so far to encourage improved attendance by addressing the barriers to education.</p>	<p>student's starting attendance. Each pupil's case is to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis along with timescales, depending on their circumstances. If unsure, seek advice from your allocated ASO.</p> <p>Where a child is under 50% and all attempts at support have failed consider a Social Care referral to intensify support as outlined in the Working Together to Improve School Attendance where there are safeguarding concerns (section 21 DFE bullet point 3)</p>
<p>9. Referral to AST for legal intervention</p>	<p>Template available here on LEAP This letter is to notify parents that all attempts at support have failed, and that parent engagement has not been sufficient to secure an improvement in their child's attendance and that school is therefore referring the matter to LBH for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Once a discussion has been held with the school's allocated ASO, complete a referral to the Attendance Support Team for legal intervention via the Stronger Families Portal here.</p>

Please note that outside of the above process, schools should continue to provide ongoing support, monitoring, and consistent attempts at engagement. All contact or attempted contact must be recorded. Other meetings may also be required outside of this process and communication with other professionals to provide multi-disciplinary support for families. If a child has a Social Worker, they must be notified of every unauthorised absence.

Letters can be slightly amended if required to accommodate different circumstances and to highlight any additional efforts made by the school.

Appendix C: Attendance Contract Meeting- Initial Invite

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

Re: Invitation to an Attendance Contract meeting to discuss: <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

****Choose the most appropriate option below and delete accordingly****

1. *Did not attend supportive meeting with Attendance Lead:*

Due to the decline in the regular attendance of your child and the lack of engagement with previous attempts to support with regular attendance, we now require you to attend an attendance contract meeting on <insert> at <insert>.

2. *Attended supportive meeting with Attendance Lead but attendance has not improved:*

Unfortunately, your child's attendance continues to decline and regular attendance at school has not been maintained. At our supportive meeting held on <insert> we created a plan to help you and your child overcome barriers to attending school, however it has not been successful. To further support, we now require you to attend an attendance contract meeting on <insert> at <insert>.

This meeting will be held at school. If you require the meeting to be held in a different setting such as virtually, via telephone, a home visit, or if this time or day is not convenient, please contact <insert> by <insert> for alternative arrangements to be made.

Your views and those of your child will be sought and taken into consideration during this meeting where we will complete an attendance contract agreement, the terms of which are negotiated.

Please be aware further action from the school will mean we have no alternative but to refer this matter onto the School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council. You may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider other appropriate legal interventions.

Please bring with you any medical evidence such as a GP/Consultant letter or certificate, any prescribed medication (not bought over the counter) for any considerations that may be given to your child's absences being authorised on health grounds.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Lead
Cc: Headteacher

Appendix D: Attendance Contract Meeting- Second Invite

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

Re: Invitation to an Attendance Contract meeting to discuss: <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

Your child has failed to regularly attend school and despite invitations to meet and implement a support plan with you for your child, you have failed to attend or reschedule as outlined in previous letters sent.

A final attendance contract meeting has been arranged for <insert> at <insert>.

This meeting will be held at school. If you require the meeting to be held in a different setting such as virtually, via telephone, a home visit, or if this time or day is not convenient, please contact <insert> by <insert> for alternative arrangements to be made. If we do not hear from you by this date, we will assume you will be in attendance for the meeting.

Your views and those of your child will be sought and taken into consideration during this meeting where we will complete an attendance contract agreement, the terms of which are negotiated.

In the event you do not attend, a professionals meeting will be held to discuss support that may be put in place to assist your child, and you will be notified of the outcome.

Following this meeting, if continued unauthorised absence persists, it may result in the school referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council for legal intervention. Please be aware further action from the school will mean you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions

Please bring with you any medical evidence such as a GP/Consultant letter or certificate, any prescribed medication (not bought over the counter) for any considerations that may be given to your child's absences being authorised on health grounds.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead

Cc: Headteacher

Appendix E: Attendance Contract Template

**** ATTENDANCE CONTRACT TEMPLATE FOR ATTENDANCE MEETING (PLEASE DELETE) ****
Attendance Contract Agreement
(Formal Support Meeting)

The child named in this agreement has been identified as having low attendance; the aim of the attendance contract is to address this by improving the pupil's outcomes, enhancing communication, providing support and ensure a nurturing environment.

Full name of pupil:					
DOB:		Age:			
Full address:					
School Name:					
School year:					
CIN/CP:	Yes/No	SEND support:	Yes/No	EHCP:	Yes/No
Date of meeting:					

Persons with Parental Responsibility (*this includes the birth parent(s) and persons with parental responsibility or who have day to day care of the child*)

Parental Responsibility	Full name	Address	Telephone Number	Tick to confirm Present
Father				
Mother				
Guardian				

All present at meeting

Professional	Full Name
School senior attendance lead	
School attendance officer	
Other professionals:	
Keyworker/Social worker/Housing officer/SEND Officer/ YOS Officer/ School Nurse/GP or other health professional/ Safer Schools Police Officer	

Reason for Attendance contract

<insert> attendance is currently <insert> out of a possible <insert> sessions.

<insert> has only managed to attend <insert> sessions.

1. Actions taken to date to improve student's school attendance:

Please tick all boxes that apply, adding dates, people, outcomes and engagement

SCHOOL SUPPORT/ INTERVENTIONS OFFERED

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting with Head of Year | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting with Attendance Lead | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone calls / regular check ins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home visits | <input type="checkbox"/> In school counselling / pastoral | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Interventions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outside school hours sessions | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplemental online learning / learning packs | <input type="checkbox"/> Trusted / safe person assigned |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safe / quiet place offered | <input type="checkbox"/> Time out card / emotion cards | <input type="checkbox"/> SENCO involvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance report / rewards | <input type="checkbox"/> Any other support / interventions | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time timetable |

Please expand on the above selection, providing further information including plans, dates, professionals, outcomes and engagement

<insert>

REFERRALS / MULTI AGENCY RESPONSE

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAMHS referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Stronger Families Key worker referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Information provided on online resources (Kooth, Knus, Young Minds) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SEND Advisory referral | <input type="checkbox"/> EHCP application / SENDIASS information | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative Provision / education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In year application for other schools | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pupil Support referral | <input type="checkbox"/> Informal managed move / respite arrangements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Nurse involved / appropriate NHS teams | <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to other agencies (P3, Young carers, Targeted youth services, HACS, Brilliant Parents) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please expand on the above selection, providing further information including plans, dates, professionals, outcomes and engagement

<insert>

Any comments from other agencies involved / invited to this meeting

<insert>

2. Child's comments:

(Where appropriate the pupil can attend the attendance contract Meeting, however their views must

be sought).

My School and Me booklet completed prior to meeting and attached for primary age pupils who are not attending the meeting Yes No

What are the barriers to attending school for the child:

<insert>

What are the child's aspirations, expectations and goals

<insert>

Tick any of the following that the pupil agrees will be helpful in improving attendance, and that they agree to.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparing for school the night before (Bag, uniform, check journey, set alarm) | <input type="checkbox"/> Access online counselling (Kooth, Knus) | <input type="checkbox"/> Engage with named/trusted person / mentor (name)
_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inform trusted person of any issues, problem or barriers | <input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular activities. School clubs | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

.....

3. Parent(s)/carers comments:

What are the barriers to school attendance for the parent(s)/carer: *(Use this space to capture the comments as to why their child has poor attendance and any barriers they are experiencing)*

<insert>

Tick any of the following that the parent(s)/carer agrees will be helpful in improving attendance, and that they agree to.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Phone school when there are issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Take child to GP to seek appropriate referrals | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Brilliant parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engage with Key Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Book medical appointments outside of school hours where possible | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain good communication with school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> If unwell send child to school. If necessary, school will send the child home | <input type="checkbox"/> Use sanctions for poor attendance and rewards for improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend parent's evenings and any other school meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consider other educational options most | <input type="checkbox"/> Make use of breakfast / after school clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Implement time limits on phone –ensure |

suited to your child

appropriate bedtimes

Other

.....
.....

4. How is this absence affecting the child's progress at school? What can we as a school do to support the pupil to maximise their potential:

Provide details on academic progress and social development, if possible, attach a recent report or class teacher report.

<insert>

5. What is going well for the child in school

Include detail on positive aspects of their school life:

<insert>

6. What will the school do to help?

Include any further or ongoing action /intervention by the school

<insert>

School will be available for advice and support during the review period. If the child named in the agreement does not attend regularly and punctually, the school may refer to and request the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council to consider:

- Issuing a penalty notice referral from the school of £160.00 to each parent/carer, per child. If paid within 21 days, the penalty notice is reduced to £80.00 to each parent/carer, per child
- Attendance prosecution at the Magistrate's Court
- An Education Supervision Order
- A Parenting Order.

7. What can the Local Authority do to Help?

Your school Attendance Support Officer at the Hillingdon Council is <insert> and will be responsible for providing impartial advice to both school and parents on ways to overcome attendance issues/ barriers. Upon request they can attend meetings dependent on availability.

8. What should parents/carers do:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open and available and is on time for registration
- Provide medical evidence to the school if the child's absence is due to illness. Please bring with you any medical evidence such as a Consultant letter or certificate, any prescribed medication (not bought over the counter) for any considerations that may be given to your child's absences being authorised on health grounds.
- Where possible send your child into school if they are too unwell to let the school decide whether they are well enough to stay in school. If the school feels that he/she is too unwell, then you will not have to provide medical evidence for that absence.
- Contact the school should there be difficulties with the above points

The pupil's attendance will be monitored over a period of 4 to 6 weeks from <insert>

I accept the attendance contract agreement is true reflection of what was discussed, decisions made above and agree to comply with the requirements.

_____ Signed Parent/Carer (delete where appropriate)

_____ Signed Parent/Carer (delete where appropriate)

_____ Signed Pupil (where appropriate)

_____ Signed School Attendance Lead/Headteacher
(delete where appropriate)

_____ Attendance Officer

_____ Other Professional(s)

_____ Date

Appendix F: Attendance Contract Outcome Letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

Re: Formal Support - Attendance Contract Meeting to discuss: <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

Thank you for attending the attendance contract meeting on <insert>

Please find attached a copy of the Attendance Contract Agreement signed by you and your child (where appropriate). Your views, opinions and comments and those of your child were taken into consideration at the meeting and have formed part of the agreement.

It was agreed your child's attendance will be monitored over period of 4 to 6 weeks from <insert>.

Please remember to provide the school with medical evidence if your child is absent during the review period as agreed as part of the attendance contract.

If there is no improvement and continued unauthorised absence persists during this time, it may result in the school referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council for legal intervention.

Please be aware further action from the school will mean you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions.

Further information that you wish the school to consider or if you need advice and support, during the period, please do not hesitate to contact me and advise either in writing or by a phone call.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead
Cc: Headteacher

Appendix G: Failure to attend Attendance Contract Meeting letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

Re: Formal Support - Attendance Contract Meeting to discuss: <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

In my letter dated <insert> you were invited for a second opportunity to attend an attendance contract meeting on <insert> to discuss your child's continued poor attendance. You have failed to attend on two occasions and did not notify the school of this, nor did you request an alternative method to conduct the meeting.

Your child's attendance will be monitored over period of 4 to 6 weeks from <insert>.

Please remember to provide the school with medical evidence if your child is absent during the review period as agreed as part of the attendance contract.

Support agreed at the professionals meeting held has been put in place and will still be available to support your child. The school will continue to attempt to engage you in this process. However, if there is no improvement and continued unauthorised absence persists, it may result in the school referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council for legal intervention. Please be aware further action from the school will mean you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions

Further information that you wish the school to consider or if you need advice and support, during the period, please do not hesitate to contact me and advise either in writing or by a phone call.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead
Cc: Headteacher

Appendix H: Attendance Improvement Letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

At the attendance contract meeting held on <insert> an agreement was signed stating that your child should attend school regularly, punctually and every day that the school is open and available. The agreement took into consideration your views and those of your child, where appropriate.

Your child's attendance and punctuality has been reviewed and I am pleased to see that it has improved. The matter will not be progressed from here if improvement is maintained.

I will continue to monitor your child's attendance and should it again become a cause for concern, contact will be made.

Please be aware that should your child's attendance decline and there are unauthorised absences, it may result in the school referring the matter to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council for legal intervention. Please be aware further action from the school will mean you may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80. If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions.

Should you need further information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Lead

Cc: Headteacher

Appendix I: Attendance Contract Review Meeting (non-engagement) Letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

RE: Formal Support - Attendance Contract Review to discuss: <insert>

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

Following the attendance contract meeting on the <insert> we are disappointed that there has not been sufficient improvement in your child's attendance, or their attendance has not been maintained.

I would like to offer you the opportunity to come in for a meeting on <insert> at <insert> to discuss how the attendance contract can be adjusted and reviewed to help it work. At this meeting we can review any progress or issues and decide whether the contract is still useful or if it requires amendments. If you are unable to attend this meeting, please contact the school so we can offer an alternative date by <insert>.

Failure to attend this meeting may result in the attendance contract being terminated and an alternative intervention being considered.

It is important children attend school regularly and on time every day that the school is open and available for attendance. Here at <insert>, our priority is to ensure our pupils reach their full potential which can only be done when pupils attend school regularly.

Please be aware further action will mean that the school will have no alternative but to refer this matter onto the School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council.

You may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Lead
Cc: Head Teacher

Appendix J: Warning of Termination Letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

RE: Formal Support - Attendance Contract failure to comply

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

Following the Attendance Contract meeting on the <insert>, we are disappointed that there has been no significant improvement in your child's attendance.

I attempted to contact you on <insert> to discuss reasons your child has been unable to comply with the actions agreed in the contract, without success.

As there has been no improvement and you and your child have failed to fulfil the agreed actions, we will now have to consider terminating the Attendance Contract and consider legal intervention.

It is important children attend school regularly and on time every day that the school is open and available for attendance. Here at <insert>, our priority is to ensure our pupils reach their full potential which can only be done when pupils attend school regularly.

I would like to offer you the opportunity to contact us to discuss any barriers to complying with the attendance contract within five days of the date of this letter. Failure to do so will result in the contract being terminated and further action being necessary.

Please be aware further action will mean the school has no alternative but to refer this matter onto the School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council.

You may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will need to consider appropriate legal interventions

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Attendance Lead
Cc: Head Teacher

Appendix K: Notice to Improve Letter

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

NOTICE TO IMPROVE: FINAL WARNING NOTICE

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

Further to our recent <visit/meeting/letter/agreement>, I am concerned that your child's attendance has not improved and is still a cause for concern. Your child's attendance currently stands at <insert>. <insert> of these absences are unauthorised / <insert> these absences are for illness/medical appointments.

To date, the school has offered you the following support to improve your child's attendance.

SUPPORT OFFERED	DATE AGREED	DATE REVIEWED	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AT DATE OF SUPPORT	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AT REVIEW OF SUPPORT
<i>e.g informal meeting with form tutor</i>	<i>01.10.14</i>	<i>22.10.24</i>	<i>6 sessions</i>	<i>10 sessions</i>

Failure to improve attendance will result in a consultation with the Attendance Support Team if there are any further unauthorised absences during the review period of <day after letter sent – date in three weeks' time>. The case will be referred on to the Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council for legal intervention to be considered and you may be at risk of prosecution under **S444 (1) Education Act 1996**. If the unauthorised absence fails to improve during the review period, a penalty notice may be issued before the review period is completed.

Improvement in your child's case would need to consist of (*here detail if it is improved attendance on a specific day that is required, general overall improvement in attendance, unauthorised lates, on time for registration, no unauthorised absences, appointments outside of school etc.*)

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure their child receives suitable efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or education otherwise.

Section 444 (1)(A) of the same Act states that where a parent of a child who knowingly and without reasonable justification fails to ensure regular attendance of a registered pupil at that school, the parent of the child shall be guilty of an offence against that Section. Hillingdon Council may, where necessary, institute legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under this section of the Education Act 1996 against those parents concerned.

Poor attendance is taken very seriously at our school and research shows a clear link between absence and poor progress in schools and colleges and future life opportunities.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact me on <insert> and I can arrange a meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix L: Referral Letter to Attendance Support for Legal Intervention

**** PLEASE NOTE THIS LETTER MUST BE EITHER POSTED OUT TO BOTH PARENTS, OR GIVEN IN PERSON AND NOT BE GIVEN TO THE CHILD TO PASS ON (PLEASE DELETE) ****

Parent(s)/carers name
1st Line of address
2nd line of address
ABC 2DE

Date: <insert>

Dear <insert>

RE: Referral to The Attendance Support Team

Name of Child: <insert>

D.O.B: <insert>

Registered pupil at: <insert>

Current Attendance: <insert>

As stated in our previous letters, your child's attendance has not improved and therefore we have no other option but to take further action which is to refer this matter onto the School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council.

The School Attendance Support Team at Hillingdon Council may consider legal intervention against you for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly and punctually.

You may be at risk of a Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence or prosecution. This is a fine of £160 per parent, per child payable within 28 days. If paid within 21 days it is reduced to £80 per parent, per child. If the fine is not paid by the 28th day you may be summoned to court.

If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

If a parent then commits a third offence in a three-year rolling period, Hillingdon Council will consider appropriate legal interventions

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours Sincerely

Headteacher