



Co-op Academy
Bebington

Attendance Policy 2019

Agreed/Review by Governors March 2019

School seeks to ensure that all its students receive an education which maximises opportunities for each student to realise his/her full potential. School aims to provide a welcoming, caring environment in which each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with students and their families, as appropriate, to ensure that each student attends school regularly and punctually. School will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards, which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping. School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Philosophy

1. Student attendance has a direct impact on attainment and achievement; students will make more progress the more they attend.
2. Attendance is a whole-school responsibility shared by all school staff.
3. All staff should ensure that their routine actions and daily practice encourage and support attendance. To that end, attendance and the individual contribution made to attendance by all staff will form part of performance management procedures.

Aims

- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is a priority for all those associated with school
- To exceed national attendance averages whilst improving the overall attendance percentages of students at school and to minimise the percentage of students with persistent absence rates
- To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data
- To endeavour to improve the overall attendance of students at school to a minimum of 95%
- To implement the framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school
- To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students, with attendance action plans for students for whom attendance/punctuality is an issue
- To implement a system of rewards for good, improving and excellent attendance
- To promote effective partnerships with the Education Social Welfare service and with other services and agencies
- To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

Management of Attendance

Deputy Headteacher manages and co-ordinates school's attendance policy; which is implemented by the Senior Pastoral Leader, Attendance Officer, Pastoral Leaders and Form Tutors. Subject and non-teaching staff also fulfil a vital role in encouraging and supporting regular attendance and punctuality.

Sporadic Sibling and Last day of term Absence

In exceptional circumstances students can have a high amount of separate absences but in most cases, these are due to chronic illness which are supported by medical documentation and on-going medical appointments/treatments.

Students who have five sporadic absences or more due to a series of different medical issues and not supported by medical documentation will be challenged by school. Parents/carers will be expected to attend a compulsory meeting to discuss the absences and agree to an Attendance Action Plan, in order to monitor and improve attendance.

As a school we monitor closely patterns of absence including sibling and last day of term. Where patterns are detected parents/carers will be notified by letter in the first instance escalating to a meeting if no improvement made.

Strategies employed include:

- Consistent application of attendance policy
- Weekly and half termly reviews and analysis of attendance statistics for each year group and form are provided for Pastoral Leaders. This enables targeting of specific forms, significant groups and individuals whose attendance is a cause of concern and monitors progress
- Weekly report to SLT
- Termly report and analysis to full governing body in the Head teacher's report
- Annual INSET at the beginning of each school year on attendance procedures and priorities
- Inclusion in staff handbook and school prospectus
- Inclusion in student half termly reports to parents
- Inclusion in Induction evening for Year 7 parents

- Attendance leaflet available to all parents on website and hardcopy in new student entrants pack
- Standing item in all pastoral meetings
- All student 'leave of absence' will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. All parents required to request LOA and attend meeting to explain the reasons for the request
- Full time Attendance Officer/Parental Engagement Officer to make daily contact with families giving rise for concern
- Weekly targeted meetings with ESW service
- ESW to be present in school for 1/2 day per week to chair meetings, support Attendance Officer, Pastoral Leaders as well as students and their families
- Attendance panel interviews for parents and students to discuss strategies for improvement
- Reward system for students including celebration of individual successes e.g. 100% attendance and improving attendance
- Display attendance updates on notice boards and in form rooms
- Robust and rigorous use of Fixed Penalty Notices
- Staged intervention procedures displayed in every form room

Framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.

Headteacher

- Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with Governors

Leadership Team

- Ensure that due regard is paid to the impact of all decisions and planning on student attendance both in day to day practice and strategic and longer-term planning

- Ensure that attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to middle managers, departments and pastoral groups for plans to raise attendance

Senior Pastoral Leader

- Line management of all staff involved with attendance

Attendance Officer

1. Monitoring and Analysis

- To monitor attendance for the whole school and individuals
- To analyse attendance patterns and to formulate plans for improvement in conjunction with the schools pastoral team, Parental Engagement Officer, ESWO, parents and any other relevant agencies
- To monitor punctuality for the whole school and individuals
- To analyse punctuality patterns and to formulate plans for improvement in conjunction with the schools pastoral teams and parents
- To create and oversee Attendance Action Plans
- Produce graphical representation
- To ensure evacuation paper work is in folders
- To assign ESWO caseload so they are directed to most urgent cases.

2. Celebration – Liaising with Pastoral Leaders to:

- Celebrate attendance successes via assembly and reward systems
- Celebrate punctuality successes via assembly and reward systems

3. Contribute to the assessment and planning of work with children and families

- To make visits to home and liaise with all relevant professionals
- To attend attendance panel meetings covering all year groups including the preparation of all relevant paperwork

4. Carry out tasks agreed at planning meetings, e.g.
 - To take children into school
 - To provide support for children in school in conjunction with Pastoral Leaders
 - To work with the Education Social Welfare Officer (ESWO) to provide additional support
5. Support students and families
 - To establish relationships with students and carers which facilitate access to support services
 - To support families and carers (along with the Parental Engagement Officer) by helping to establish support networks and improve school attendance
 - To work directly with the ESWO on stuck cases.
6. Liaise with Education Social Worker, Pastoral Leaders, Parental Engagement Officer, Senior Pastoral Leader and Deputy Head teacher
 - To advise ESWO, DSL and Pastoral Leader of any child protection concerns and follow child protection procedures and guidelines
 - To provide written reports of intervention with children and families as appropriate for SLT and the Governing Body
 - To attend meetings as required
7. To liaise with SLT, Pastoral Leaders, ESWO, School Nurse, Parents, Carers and other relevant agencies regarding attendance concerns.
8. To refer to the Educational Social Welfare Service for serious cases
 - Organising the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices
 - Organising information for court reports or CP cases as required.
9. To work with members of the Pastoral Team to ensure students attending Alternative provision are monitored effectively via the Guild, phone calls to course leaders and site visits.
10. Work closely with other member of the attendance team -the Parental Engagement Officer and Attendance Clerk to ensure all necessary actions are undertaken.

Attendance Clerk

1. To supervise the student entrance each morning, recording names of students who are late.
2. To monitor truancy call, recording correct codes for absence.
3. To manually input registers for supply staff
4. To contact parents on a daily basis regarding attendance concerns.
5. To deal with parental queries regarding attendance.
6. To act as the lead for making decisions around students attending 1st Aid and external medical appointments.
7. To review registers and lesson monitor on a daily basis, resolving any issues that surface.
8. To organise form staff registers inserting/removing any important materials or items of communication.
9. To organise the whole school late detention each Friday. This will include the collection of students and communication with parents to inform them their child has been placed on detention.
10. To complete any other tasks commensurate with the role as directed by the Attendance Officer

Parental Engagement Officer

1. To work with selected PA students to improve overall attendance by
 - Making priority first contact phone calls each morning
 - Making home visits for 'hard to reach families'.
 - Holding onsite meetings with parents/students
2. Working with targeted groups of students- holding collective meetings.
3. To work in collaboration with the Attendance Officer to run targeted attendance initiatives e.g. the Christmas Challenge.
4. Making urgent visits for safeguarding concerns.
5. Providing appropriate support for families- liaising with SSC, Support services, Health Professionals and Pastoral Leaders to provide effective intervention.
6. Providing supporting evidence for court reports/FPN's.
7. Organising the collection of school refusers.

8. Developing strong links between home and school work by liaising with parents – this can include providing work for those students unable to attend school.
9. Support whole school priorities around attendance
10. Work in collaboration with the Attendance Officer and Pastoral team to complete any other suitable tasks commensurate with this role

Pastoral Leaders

In liaison with the Attendance Officer:

- Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to student achievement
- Ensure attendance features regularly in pastoral meetings
- Ensure that attendance features in all year assemblies and parents evenings
- To have overview of their year group's attendance
- To liaise with Form Tutors with regard to concerns
- To liaise with Attendance Officer with regard to concerns that have been escalated up following Form Tutor intervention
- To liaise with ESW with regard to intervention
- To monitor weekly data against targets (95% attendance)
- To contribute to action plans for escalated cases
- To collate attendance rewards on Sims

ESWO

- To work with targeted students and families
- To liaise with all staff in school responsible for students' attendance
- To be based in school 1/2 day per week in order to create and support strategies, arrange and attend meetings to promote good/improved attendance

Form Teachers

- Ensure registers are completed correctly each day including punctuality in line with the legal requirements and the school policy
- Ensure that all members of the tutor group are aware of their current attendance and their current attendance target
- Ensure that reasons for absence are explained
- To celebrate attendance weekly with their form – individual rewards cumulative graph displays etc
- To work regularly with the form highlighting the need for good attendance
- To monitor lesson attendance
- To implement action plans, in the first instance, with regard to attendance falling below 93% for individuals
- To implement action plans, in the first instance, with regard to punctuality
- Make contact with parents of identified students where appropriate
- Escalate concerns to Pastoral Leaders and Attendance Officer
- To take part in any planning meetings as appropriate

Subject Leaders

- Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to student achievement and attainment within subject areas by the regular inclusion of attendance in meetings
- Establish departmental procedures to monitor and follow up attendance
- Use attendance data and learning cycle data, to identify and take action to improve the attendance of vulnerable students
- Monitor departmental staff to ensure that their roles with regard to attendance are carried out effectively and efficiently
- Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy

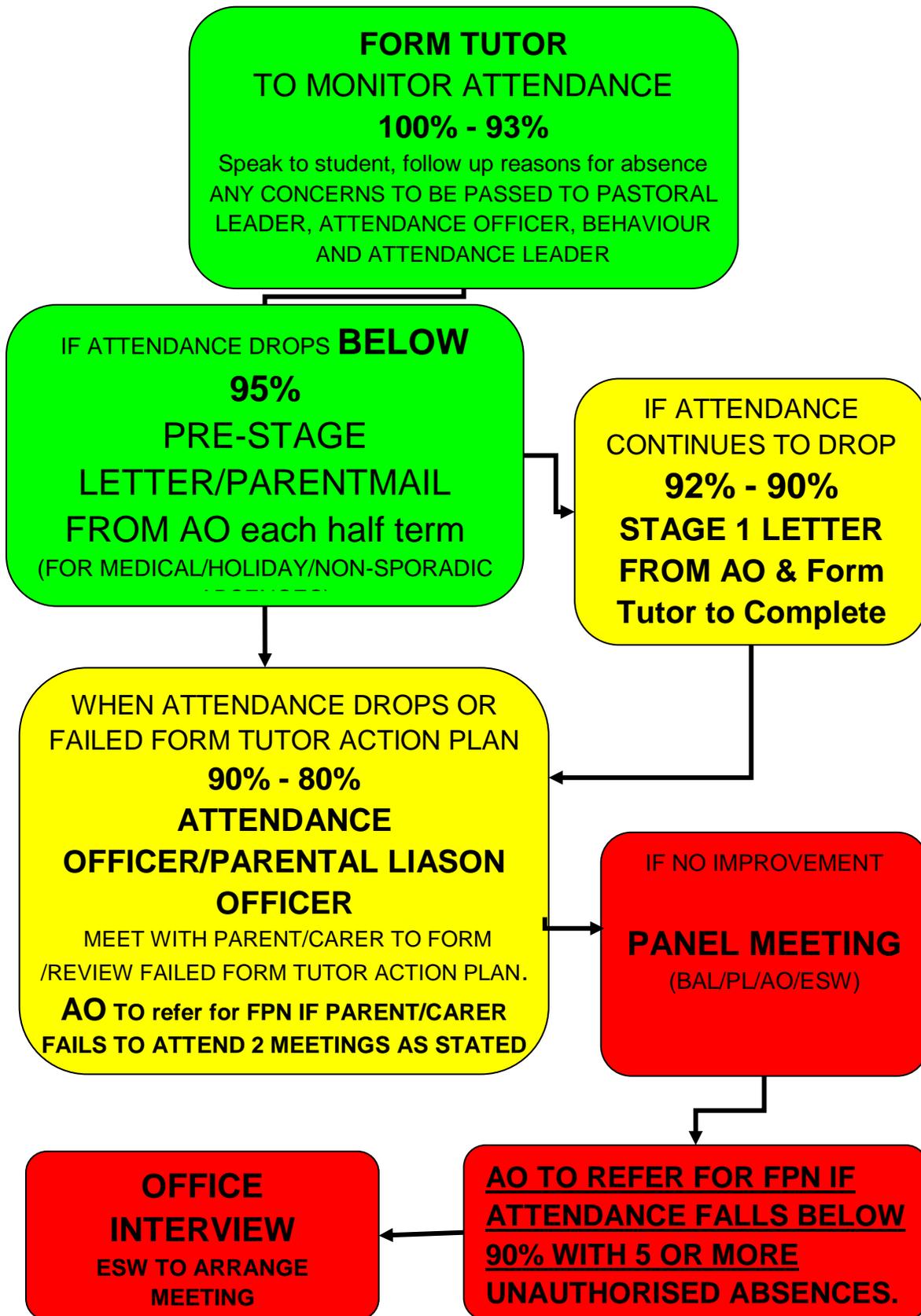
Subject Teachers

- To ensure that lesson registers are taken within the first 10 minutes
- To inform the main office of absence that is unexplained within 15 minutes on the pro-forma provided
- Use the lesson monitoring system to track attendance within teaching groups to identify patterns of absence
- Ensure students are aware that any absence has been noticed
- Monitor and report weekly on the progress of identified vulnerable students
- Take appropriate action in line with the attendance policy and distributed leadership model in response to any presenting attendance problem within a specific lesson
- To ensure that students catch up on missing work caused by any absence

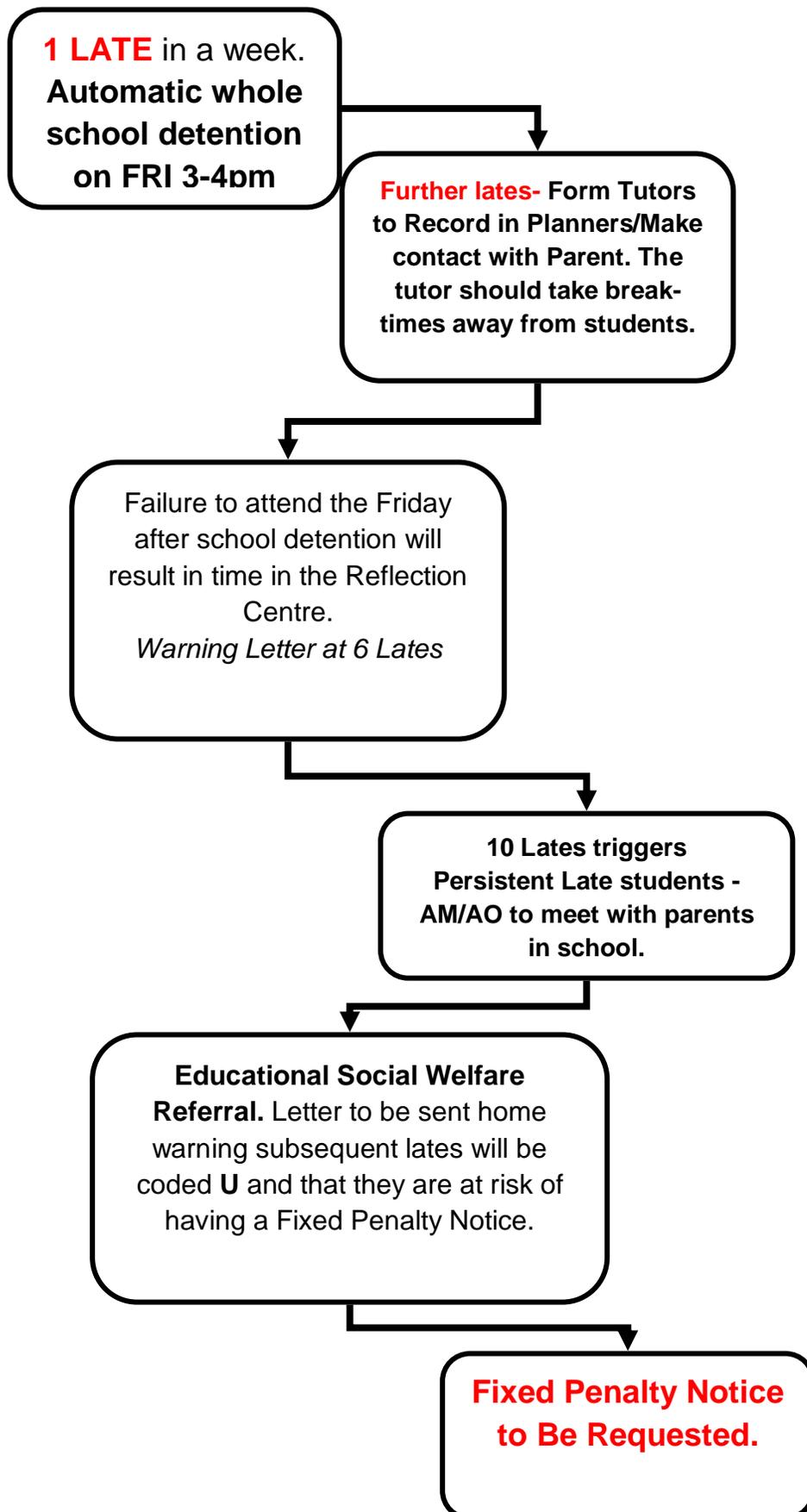
Non-Teaching Staff

- Maintain a high profile to attendance as a significant contributor to student achievement in all areas of work
- Non-teaching staff with responsibility for specific students, e.g. mentors have attendance as a key outcome of their work.

Flow diagram and escalation procedures



Punctuality Flow Chart



Attendance Panels

Improving attendance is a whole school priority. We all recognise the impact poor attendance can have on individual students in terms of their academic, social and emotional development. These panels will provide a forum to share concerns and hopefully find a positive path to addressing any underlying issues. It is our intention to work closely with families to address any concerns so parental engagement in this process is key

Pastoral Attendance Panel with Deputy Head, the Attendance Officer and Senior Pastoral Lead/ Pastoral Leader

Attendance concerns will be raised with the student and parents. There will be an opportunity to explain reasons for absence and identify how the school can support the student. An action plan along with key targets will be produced. This will be reviewed in a follow up meeting within a 4 to 6 week period. If no improvement is seen we will escalate to an Education Social Worker Panel meeting.

The criteria for being placed on this panel is as follows: -

- The student has previously failed an attendance action plan with the form tutor/ Pastoral Leader for that year.
- Attendance is a concern, below the 90% figure.
- There is pattern of repeated sporadic absence, at least 5 separate absences
- Students have unauthorised absences/reasons for absence are unclear or questionable.

Education Social Welfare Officer (ESWO) Panel with Mr Stormont (ESW), Deputy Head and Attendance Officer

This is a more serious process. A child's attendance at school is a legal requirement. This meeting will focus tightly on requirements to improve and next steps. A clear action plan with numerical targets will be created. If a student fails to meet these targets with a 4-week review period they will be taken to Office interview by the ESW service. This can result in the issuing of a further fixed penalty notice (FPN) or the implementation of a process to prosecute parents.

The criteria for being placed on the panel are as follows: -

- A student has attendance of below 85%.
- Ordinarily, a family should have been at the attendance panel previously. The exception being if a family have previously been issued with a FPN or been prosecuted.

Appendix 1

PROTOCOL FOR FIXED PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE AND EXCLUSIONS

Legal Basis:

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives designated LA officers, Head Teachers (and Deputy and Assistant Head Teachers authorised by them), and the Police the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 103 places a duty on parents to ensure their child is not present during school hours in a public place during the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion from school.

The power to issue the Fixed Penalty Notices must be applied fairly and consistently taking in to consideration the requirements of the Human Rights Act and Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Legislation.

The Education [Penalty Notices] [England] Regulations 2007 set out the framework for the operation of Fixed Penalty Notice Schemes. The Local Authority has the prime responsibility for the introduction of a protocol with schools and Merseyside Police being partners agreeing to the protocol.

Rationale:

Five key outcomes for children and young people are identified in Every Child Matters and in the Children's Act [2004] as follows:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

Access to education is central to each of these outcomes. Regular and punctual attendance of students at school is both a legal requirement and essential for students to maximise their potential.

Wirral's Education Social Welfare Service seeks to ensure that every child and young person receives the maximum benefit from the education opportunities provided by the Local Authority. The Service utilises a range of strategies and interventions, working in partnership with children and young people, parents and families, school staff and other agencies to overcome barriers to education and achieve improved outcomes.

Sanctions of any nature are for use as a last resort and only where parental cooperation in this process is either absent or insufficient to resolve the problem. Sanctions are a means of enforcing attendance, where there is a reasonable expectation that their use will secure an improvement, and not a punishment.

For the purposes of this protocol and other school attendance issues, a parent is as defined under section 576 of the Education Act 1996 i.e. All natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person; and any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person. Having care of a child or young person means that

a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child, is considered to be a parent in education law.

Also for the purposes of this protocol: School hours means a school session or a break between sessions on the same school day; a public place means any highways or other place to which the public have access but does not include a school; the days of an exclusion are known as the specified days and will be detailed in a notice given to the parent.

Circumstances When Fixed Penalty Notices Will Be Issued:

Use of Fixed Penalty Notices will be restricted to **2** per student in any academic year for unauthorised absence but 1 per half term in the case of exclusion. Both parents of the student may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice irrespective of whether the child resides with them. Parents may be issued with a warning letter but in extreme cases a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued without prior warning.

The issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice will be considered as being appropriate in the following circumstances:

(a) Parentally-condoned Absences

Head Teachers may submit a written request to the Education Social Welfare Service using the appropriate proforma asking for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to the parents of a student when absences are believed to be condoned. School, in partnership with the Education Social Welfare Service, will provide written evidence that the student's attendance is below 90% and that more than 10 days of the absences are unauthorised. School will work with the Education Social Welfare Service and will also provide evidence that the parents have failed to cooperate with a signed and agreed Action Plan or Parenting Contract aimed at improving attendance or failed to attend at least two meetings or School Attendance Panels without reasonable explanation. School will also provide evidence that efforts have been made to visit the parents at home to discuss their child's attendance [either by a member of staff or by the Education Social Worker or by another agency] and that the case has been discussed in detail with the Education Social Worker. The views of any other agencies working with the family should also be considered. In considering whether to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice the Education Social Welfare Service will consider any exceptional or mitigating circumstances. In the first instance

the response from the Education Social Welfare Service may be a Warning Letter emphasising that attendance must improve within 15 school days and that parents should liaise with appropriate school staff to address the barriers to regular school attendance.

After 15 school days progress will be reviewed and a decision made about issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. If the Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the Education Social Welfare Service will consider whether it is appropriate to prosecute the parents for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly under Section 444 Education Act 1996. School staff may be required to provide evidence in court. If a Head Teacher wishes to challenge a decision made by the Education Social Welfare Service in respect of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice they should contact the Head of Service in the first instance to discuss the matter.

(b) Unauthorised Holidays in Term Time

Head Teachers may submit a written request to the Education Social Welfare Service using the appropriate proforma asking for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to the parents of a student when excessive holidays are taken in term time. School must provide written evidence that the holiday was unauthorised and in excess of 5 school days. School should take into account any exceptional or mitigating circumstances. In the first instance, the response from the Education Social Welfare Service may be a Warning Letter emphasising that holidays should not be taken in term time. School should inform the Education Social Welfare Service if further holidays are taken in term time and consideration will again be given to issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice. If the Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the Education Social Welfare Service will consider whether it is appropriate to prosecute the parents for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly under Section 444 Education Act 1996. School staff may be required to provide evidence in court.

If a Head Teacher wishes to challenge a decision made by the Education Social Welfare Service in respect of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice they should contact the Head Of Service in the first instance to discuss the matter.

(c) Excluded Students in a Public Place

Merseyside Police may submit a written request to the Education Social Welfare Service using the appropriate proforma asking for the parents of a student of compulsory school age to be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice when the student is found in a public place during the first

five days of a school exclusion. There may be times when it is necessary for an excluded student to be in a public place e.g. medical appointment or emergency. Consideration will be given to possible justification for the presence although ultimately it will be up to the Courts to decide if the notice is contested. To be justified there needs to be an element of unavoidable presence. Consideration will also be given to the number of times an excluded student is seen, the parents' actions or inactions, the justification put forward and the parents' overall attitude. Referrals for notices relating to exclusions will only be accepted from Police and Police Community Support Officers to ensure that if the Fixed Penalty Notice is challenged proof of evidence will be available via the Police Stop Form. This provision is in addition to the independent powers of Merseyside Police and does not fetter their discretion. In consultation with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team consideration may also be given to the use of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract. In the first instance, the response from the Education Social Welfare Service may be a Warning Letter emphasising that the parents may be served with a Fixed Penalty Notice if the offence is repeated.

(d) Students stopped during a Truancy Sweep

Although Fixed Penalty Notices will not be issued during Truancy Sweeps it might be appropriate for a notice to be issued following students being stopped during a sweep in some circumstances. The Education Social Welfare Service will take into consideration whether the student has been stopped before on a Truancy Sweep, their level of school attendance, and whether absences have been authorised or unauthorised by school. The Education Social Welfare Service will also consider requests from other Education Authorities for a Fixed Penalty Notice to be issued to the parents of a child who attends a Wirral school but lives in their area or is repeatedly stopped on their truancy sweeps. The decision on whether to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or not will be taken by Education Social Welfare Service in accordance with this protocol. In the first instance, the response from the Education Social Welfare Service may be a Warning Letter emphasising that the parents may be served with a Fixed Penalty Notice if the offence is repeated.

Procedure for Issuing Fixed Penalty Notices:

In order to ensure consistent delivery, retain home-school relationships and ensure cohesion with other enforcement sanctions, only the Education Social Welfare Service will issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

Fixed Penalty Notices will only be issued by post and never hand delivered to meet Health and Safety Requirements by avoiding potential face-to-face confrontation. The Notice will be deemed to have been received on the second working day after posting unless it is shown otherwise.

At the same time as the 15-day warning letter is sent to the parents. A check will be made with CADT for any reasons why a Fixed Penalty Notice should not be issued.

Procedure for Withdrawing Fixed Penalty Notices:

Once issued a Fixed Penalty Notice may only be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

The Fixed Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person

Or

It was issued outside of the terms of the local protocol

Or

It contains a material error

And

It has not been paid in full, and the LA has not, and does not intend to, instigate proceedings.

Payment of Fixed Penalty Notices:

Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Fixed Penalty Notice.

Payment of the Fixed Penalty Notice discharges the parent liability for the period in question and they cannot subsequently be prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for the period covered by the Fixed Penalty Notice.

Payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid between day 22 and 28.

The Local Authority retains any revenue from the Fixed Penalty Notices to cover enforcement costs.

Non-payment of Fixed Penalty Notices:

Non-payment of a Fixed Penalty Notice will result in the withdrawal of the notice and may trigger a prosecution of parents by the Education Social Welfare Service under Section 444 Education Act 1996.

Policy and Publicity:

Use of Fixed Penalty Notices as a sanction is included in the Authority's Attendance Policy. All School Attendance Policies should include information on the use of Fixed Penalty Notices and this will be brought to the attention of all parents. The LA will include information on the use of Fixed Penalty Notices in promotional/public information material.

Reporting and Review:

The Education Social Welfare Service will report to partners on the deployment and outcomes of Fixed Penalty Notices and will review this protocol at regular intervals.