

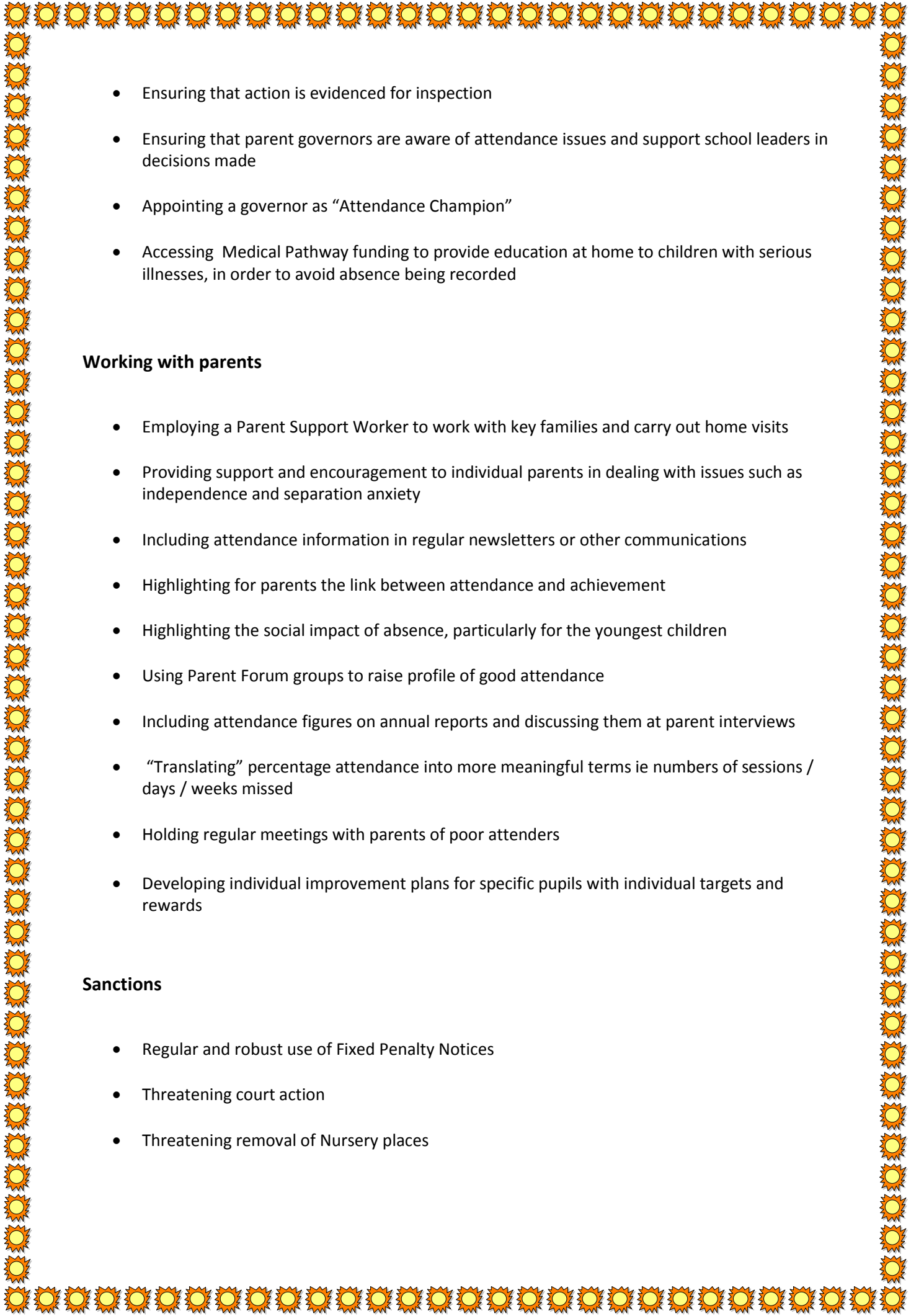
HINTS AND TIPS FROM SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS

Encouraging good attendance and overcoming barriers:

- Presenting certificates for good and improved attendance in assembly
- Using “best attendance” class rewards
- Holding whole school special events for children with good and / or improved attendance
- Establishing attendance themed displays around school, including in areas visible to parents
- Emphasising the importance of good attendance and punctuality from Nursery
- Offering free or subsidised places at breakfast club
- Using pupil premium funding eg on hiring a minibus to collect pupils
- Establishing a “walking bus” to collect children from home
- Brokering of arrangements with neighbouring families to bring children in
- Allowing administration of medicines in school
- Situating a member of the Nursery staff on the gate to receive the youngest children at the start of the day can prevent older children from being late for class

Establishing effective management systems

- Securing strong leadership of this area
- Developing a whole school attendance action plan
- Regularly including a section on attendance in the school improvement plan
- Ensuring attendance policies are explicit and detailed
- Ensuring Requests for Absence forms are clear and used
- Ensuring first day calling takes place. (NB: Calling parents’ work numbers can often help to establish whether unauthorised holidays are being taken!)
- Using progress tracking systems to track attendance and line up with achievement
- Ensuring all staff take responsibility for promoting good attendance

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- Ensuring that action is evidenced for inspection
 - Ensuring that parent governors are aware of attendance issues and support school leaders in decisions made
 - Appointing a governor as “Attendance Champion”
 - Accessing Medical Pathway funding to provide education at home to children with serious illnesses, in order to avoid absence being recorded

Working with parents

- Employing a Parent Support Worker to work with key families and carry out home visits
- Providing support and encouragement to individual parents in dealing with issues such as independence and separation anxiety
- Including attendance information in regular newsletters or other communications
- Highlighting for parents the link between attendance and achievement
- Highlighting the social impact of absence, particularly for the youngest children
- Using Parent Forum groups to raise profile of good attendance
- Including attendance figures on annual reports and discussing them at parent interviews
- “Translating” percentage attendance into more meaningful terms ie numbers of sessions / days / weeks missed
- Holding regular meetings with parents of poor attenders
- Developing individual improvement plans for specific pupils with individual targets and rewards

Sanctions

- Regular and robust use of Fixed Penalty Notices
- Threatening court action
- Threatening removal of Nursery places