Legal Intervention: Avoiding Returned Paperwork

Presentation by Fliss Falconer - 10/11/2026

Summary prepared from the presentation and meeting transcript. This is an accessible takeaway rather than a verbatim record.

Support first
Legal intervention is a last resort within a continuing support-first approach. Schools should keep clear records of support, family responses and changes in attendance.

Prepare early
The journey may move from Notice to Improve to Penalty Notice and court, so a clear chronology and legal-ready evidence are needed from the outset.

Available support
GCC provides ELITE training, Schoolsnet guidance, current templates, models, checklists, Attendance Connections and General Line support.

Responsibilities
Schools investigate and record facts, prepare and proofread their evidence, and complete final checks. GCC tests the facts, clarifies gaps and considers progression. GCC does not prepare, mark or quality-assure the school’s case.

Relevant parents
Identify who caused or allowed the absence, not simply who completed the form. For separated families, establish who travelled, agreed the absence or had day-to-day care, while considering safeguarding.

Witness statements
Each relevant parent needs a parent-specific statement. All relevant children can appear together within each parent’s statement, and the wording must match the school’s records.

Exhibits
Documents must be separate, traceable, signed, dated, labelled, appropriately redacted and ordered to match the statement. Each child’s attendance certificate is a separate exhibit.

Declarations and checks
A declaration confirms checks have already happened. Use the current guidance and template, correct errors internally and arrange independent proofreading before submission.

Continuing responsibility
A Penalty Notice or prosecution may not change attendance. Schools must continue support, record keeping and preparation for any further intervention.

Pre-submission pause

Check the guidance, relevant parents, dates, facts, statements, exhibits and proofreading. If anything is incomplete, correct it before submission.