



Winchelsea School

**Guernsey Road
Poole BH12 4LL**

Attendance Policy			
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WINCHELSEA SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Winchelsea School is committed to providing an environment where all pupils are equally valued and respected, irrespective of age, gender, social class, ethnic origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation, and in which all pupils may develop to their full potential. Punctuality and regular attendance are crucial to pupil's achievement at school.

We aim:

- To provide a happy and stimulating working environment where all pupils may develop to their full potential, so that they leave school confident of adopting a positive and active role in society;
- To enable pupils to play a full part in determining their own futures, making their own choices and participating as good citizens in a developing, multicultural society.

Background

In February 2024, the Department for Education released new guidance to help schools, trusts, governing bodies, and Local Authorities maintain high levels of school attendance and improve consistency of support.

See guidance below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-regulations-for-schools-in-next-stage-of-attendance-drive>

To do this, the guidance focusses on managing attendance by:

- Preventing patterns of absence from developing by promoting good attendance;
- Intervening early by using data to spot patterns of absence before they become persistent and working with families to remove the barriers to attendance;
- Targeting support for persistent and severe absentees with all local partners working together to reengage pupils.

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Ensure that children want to attend school regularly in the first place;
- Support pupils and their Parents/Carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Make Parents/Carers aware of their legal responsibilities, and;
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets.

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Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/Carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage Parents and Carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As Parents/Carers, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Expectations

We expect that all Pupils will:

- Attend school every day;
- Attend school punctually;
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day;
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or a member of the Pupil Participation Team of any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that all Parents/Carers will:

- Ensure attendance in school is 95% or above; and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school **daily** of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school;
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school;
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child, and;
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

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We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere;
- Provide a safe learning environment;
- Provide an empathetic response to any Child's or Parent's / Carers concerns;
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Contact Parents/Carers on the day that a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from Parents/Carers. Although they may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested;
- Encourage 95% or above attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition;
- Regularly inform Parents/Carers of the % attendance of all pupils;
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Local Authority;
- Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the School Attendance Lead may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order;
- Notify the Local Authority after 10 days sickness.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that pupil's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. The main school gate is opened at 8.45am, from where all pupils should proceed directly to their classrooms with a member of the class team.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil;
- At the main school site registration takes place at 8:45am and pupils who arrive after 9:00am will be recorded as late to school;
- Registers close 15 minutes after registration opens, arriving after this time results in a late code being applied to pupil's record. Arriving 30 minutes or more after the register opens will result in an unauthorised code being used, these codes negatively impact a child's attendance record;
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm on the main school site;
- The closing of registers remains consistent across all sites, those attending 15 minutes late after the start time will be registered as late. Those arriving 30 minutes after the closure of the register will be marked as an unauthorised absence;
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be followed up by the school Attendance Lead;
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on a pupil's annual report and will be passed on to future schools.

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Times registers open at different sites

Winchelsea main site: 08:45
Kinson Academy: 08:45
Old Town Infant School: 08:45
Canford Heath Junior School: 08:45
Magna Academy: 08:45
Post 16 provision: 08:45
Broadstone Middle: 08:45

Monitoring Attendance and Responding to Concerns

All staff have a duty to informally monitor the pupils' attendance and to report any concerns they may have. In this way, pupil attendance is being monitored in the school at all times.

Parents and Carers can contact Helen Harrison who takes lead responsibility in school for attendance. Helen can be contacted via the main school telephone number 01202 746240.

The Attendance Lead will:

- Ensure that careful records of attendance are maintained;
- Make day to day attendance checks on those pupils whose attendance has been identified as requiring regular monitoring and flag concerns quickly;
- Ensure the school's arrangements for First Day Contact are robustly followed, always mindful of those children identified as 'vulnerable';
- Be the school's main regular link with the Local Authority;
- Continually monitor attendance and take action where a concern is raised;
- Formally monitor at least termly and report to the Governing Body.

There is a tiered system to respond to low and/or falling attendance levels:

Attendance below 95%: A standard letter is typically sent to any Parent/Carer whose child's attendance has dropped just below 95%. This letter is for information – it notifies the Parent/Carer of this attendance level and explains that the school will continue to monitor their child's attendance. Where the cause for a pupil's attendance dropping below 95% is very specific and clearly known and evidenced to the school, the school may decide that such a letter is not required or appropriate. For example, where a pupil has had a known and confirmed medical issue and where this is the only substantial cause for the lower attendance. In such circumstances, the pupil's attendance will be closely monitored – further reduction in attendance may prompt this initial letter, without the need to wait for the next formal half-termly audit. This letter is included in Appendix 1, although it may be adjusted to suit the circumstances if appropriate.

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Attendance between 90% and 95%: The standard letter described above may be used again where a pupil's attendance sits at this level. This letter may be used twice in succession but it assumes that the school has engaged in other dialogue with the family in between, either through telephone conversations, informal school gate discussions or meetings.

Appendix 4 can be used to record discussions and planning regarding attendance.

Attendance which is below 90%: Attendance at 90% equates to 19 days absence through a year and is therefore a cause for concern. In such circumstances, Parents/Carers will receive a specific letter which very clearly identifies that the attendance level is a significant concern.

Parents/Carers will be invited into school to a Fast Track to Attendance Meeting (except for in exceptional circumstances where the attendance is not a cause for concern such as known medical condition). Appendix 3 provides an example but the content will be specific to the pupil.

Parents/Carers are requested to attend the meeting, the purpose of which is to explore the reasons for their child's low attendance and formulate a plan for improvement.

As part of this meeting and discussion all stakeholders will be set actions with the intention of improving school attendance. The school Attendance Lead and Parents/Carers will be asked to enter into an Attendance Contract (Appendix 8).

Parents/Carers must continue to be aware that absences cannot be authorised without medical evidence unless there are exceptional reasons which render this inappropriate (for example, a known medical condition); schools cannot routinely authorise absence where a pupil's attendance has reached this level of concern and this will be explored at the meeting.

Following the initial Fast Track to Attendance meeting further meetings will be agreed at 6 and then 12 week intervals (Appendix 9). Following these meetings, the School Attendance Lead will write to Parents/Carers which will explain next steps (either Appendix 10 or 11).

During attendance meetings School Refusal Assessment Scales may be used to support discussions about the barriers to attendance. Please see Appendix 5 & 6.

Requiring Medical Evidence

As described earlier, Winchelsea School cannot routinely authorise absence where there are attendance concerns. Before requiring Parents/Carers to provide medical evidence, Parents/Carers will have been notified in writing, detailed in Appendix 2.

This would also typically be discussed with the Parents/Carers at attendance improvement meetings (including Fast Track to Attendance).

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Medical evidence may take many forms, depending upon the circumstances. Where a pupil has a specific medical condition which is clearly evidenced to the school (for example through an NHS paediatrician's letter or as detailed in the child's EHCP), this can be taken as evidence for ongoing absences rather than requiring the Parents/Carers to provide evidence after every absence. However, if there are any doubts, the school will take advice from the Local Authority School Attendance Worker as it will be necessary to understand the level of attendance that could be reasonably expected with that particular condition. In cases where there is no confirmed underlying health condition, medical evidence can take whatever form the school deems as appropriate and might include: GP appointment card, prescription or the school's direct observation. Either way, if a Parent/Carer asked to provide medical evidence, absences will not be authorised without such evidence.

Mental Health and School Absence

Winchelsea School recognise that many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, exams or variable moods. It is important to note that these pupils are still expected to attend school regularly and should not be a barrier to regular attendance.

Where there are difficulties with mental health Parents/Carers are encouraged to discuss this with the child's class teacher or Attendance Lead as soon as possible so that a plan can be created and implemented in order to alleviate specific barriers.

Winchelsea School are aware of its responsibilities where there is a mental health issue affecting school attendance as set out in the Department for Education guidance below.

[Summary-of-responsibilities-where-a-mental-health-issue-is-affecting-attendance \(2\).pdf](#)

Managing Lateness

The start time of school is documented on page 5.

Winchelsea will contact Parents/Carers if a child regularly arrives at school late. Teachers and other staff who notice a problem with punctuality will consult with the Attendance Lead before communication is made with Parents/Carers regarding the matter.

Persistent lateness will be addressed according to the particular circumstances; it is likely that persistent lateness will have triggered the previous low attendance measures. Advice regarding persistent lateness may be sought from the Local Authority.

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Parents/Carers Notifying the School of Absence and 'First Day Contact'

Parents/Carers are required to contact Winchelsea school on the first day of their child's absence and every day thereafter. If it is clear from the initial communication on day one that the absence will extend for a given period (for example, a child who has an infectious illness), it is not necessary for the school to be notified every day during the absence period but Parents/Carers must contact the school if the absence period becomes protracted. This is an important aspect of the school's safeguarding procedures. If a child is not registered at school in the morning, then schools must satisfy themselves that the child is safe. It is therefore necessary for Parents/Carers to telephone the school by 9.00am, giving a reason for their child's absence. This absence will then be recorded, either as authorised or unauthorised.

Parents/Carers are expected to telephone the main school office on 01202 746240 to provide an explanation for the absence. If Parents/Carers are unable to telephone then they can contact the school using the following email address enquiries@winchelsea.poole.sch.uk Parents/Carers should expect to receive a follow up telephone call to allow for open two way communication.

Administrative staff will contact Parents/Carers on the first day that a pupil is absent without explanation. In the first instance, a call will be made to the parent/carer. If no response is obtained, the school will endeavour to reach the parent/carer via telephone.

The flow chart in Appendix 14 outlines the steps that schools will take if they are unable to account for a pupil's wellbeing following their unexplained absence from school. At each stage of unsuccessful attempts to contact Parents/Carers, staff should also use other registered contacts for the pupil in an effort to make contact with Parents/Carers.

If the Headteacher has any cause for concern about the reason given for any absence, it will remain unauthorised until the matter has been discussed with the Parents/Carers and a satisfactory explanation secured. If the school does not accept the reason given the absence will remain unauthorised. For the absence to be authorised, there must have been no reasonable way in which the child could have come to school.

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Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally acting '*in loco parentis*' and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school;
- Parents/Carers must avoid arranging appointments for their child during the day. However, if it is unavoidable, Parents/Carers must notify the school of the appointment details. A child should only be taken out of school for their own appointment—not because another family member has an appointment. This includes collecting a child early so a Parent/Carer can attend an appointment for someone else;
- Parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leave, the expected return time. Please see Appendix 16;
Not doing so may result in an unauthorised code being applied to a child's attendance record;
- Unauthorised absences can result in the request to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice;
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, Parents/Carers are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site;
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their Parents/Carers will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupil as a missing person.

Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (Appendix 1), which came into effect 1st September 2013, Headteachers are only allowed to grant leave of absence from school in exceptional circumstances. The decision as to whether any request is considered as 'exceptional circumstances' rests solely with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, unavoidable and short; 'unavoidable' should be taken to mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time;

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- In considering whether or not to authorise a request for exceptional leave of absence in term time, the Headteacher will look at each individual case and only grant authorisation if the circumstances are truly exceptional. Additionally, any request should be made prior to the leave of absence and should be submitted to the school using the Request for Leave of Absence form (Appendix 16). Parents/Carers may be asked to provide additional information/evidence or meet with the school to discuss the circumstances;
- Only the Parent/Carer of who the child resides with can make an application for a leave of absence.

The following are examples of situations which would not *typically* be considered as exceptional:

- Family holiday / cheaper holiday dates;
- Educational visits arranged by family members during school time;
- Attendance at a wedding or christening (unless it relates to immediate family);
- Visiting relatives either abroad or in the UK;
- Limitations on Parents'/Carers' leave entitlement or dates or Parents'/Carers' profession or place of work making it difficult to coincide school and work holidays;
- A family member going for medical treatment abroad which could be reasonably carried out in the UK.

Parents/Carers will be notified of the Headteacher's decision at the earliest opportunity.

If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

A formal letter outlining arrangements for requesting term time absence due to exceptional circumstances will be issued to all Parents/Carers each and every September (Appendix 15). This letter also outlines other important aspects of attendance management including first day contact and lateness.

School Absence Query

Where the school has information or reason to believe that the reported absence does not provide an accurate account of events or information Parents/Carers will be contacted. Appendix 12 provides an example of the letter that would be sent to Parents/Carers.

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Failure to Ensure Regular School Attendance

Winchelsea School monitors attendance closely and any Parents/Carers whose children are identified as a cause for concern will be invited to attend an attendance meeting. If there is no improvement in school attendance, school will work in partnership with Parents/Carers and other relevant professionals to support pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis.

The school may also issue a Penalty Notice to Parent/Carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or the Local Authority. Before a penalty notice is issued, Parents/Carers will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

Fixed Notice Penalties

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 came into effect on 27 February 2004. Under Section 23 of this Act, the Education Act 1996 was amended with the introduction of two new subsections under Section 444 (subsections 444A & 444B) which made it possible for Penalty Notices to be issued for truancy offences. They are subject to the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 as amended ("the Regulations").

Penalty Notices are an alternative to the prosecution of Parents/Carers for failing to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends the school where they are registered or at a place where alternative educational provision is provided. The purpose is to offer swift intervention for cases of unauthorised absence before the problem becomes too entrenched.

A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or in certain cases where a pupil is subject to an exclusion from their education provision. It is important to note that it is the Head Teacher's responsibility to decide whether or not to authorise an absence.

The definition of "parent" under Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 includes all biological parents, whether they are married or not and includes any person who, although not a biological parent, has the parental responsibility and/or any person who, although not a biological 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.

Regular and punctual attendance of children and young people at school is both a legal requirement and essential in order for students to maximise the opportunities available to them.

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Rationale of Fixed Penalties Notices

The welfare of the child is paramount. Reasonable steps will be taken to ensure good attendance without the use of Penalty Notices and attempts must always be made to contact the parent/carer in order to try and resolve any difficulties. If a warning and offer of support does not result in significant improvement in attendance, the school and the Local Authority will work together to consider every aspect of a pupil's circumstances before deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice.

Issuing Penalty Notices

Under this policy, Penalty Notices may be requested by Head Teachers and will be issued by the Local Authority. The Local Authority is responsible for this administration and it is for them to make such arrangements for the operation of the scheme (not provided for in the government guidance or associated Regulations) as it sees fit, in consultation with its partners. Any person issuing a Penalty Notice in BCP must have regard to this Code of Conduct.

The Local Authority can only issue notices in respect of a pupil registered at a school in the area of the authority or for whom the authority has made arrangements for alternative educational provision (whether or not in the area of the authority) or who is not, at the time the notice is given, a registered pupil at any school but resides in the area of the authority. A Penalty Notice should be addressed to only one Parent/Carer but a Penalty Notice can be issued to each Parent/Carer liable for the offence regarding each of their children.

Appendix 13 would be used to request the Fixed Penalty Notice.

Criteria for issuing a Penalty Notice

The circumstances in which a Penalty Notice can be issued are listed below.

In these cases, excluding Leave of Absence in term time and in the case of an excluded pupil the Parent/Carer must receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued and given no less than 15 school days to effect an improvement.

General Non-School Attendance (repeated absences) and Unauthorised Lates.

All unauthorised absence, including unauthorised lates, will be followed up with the Parents/Carers. Where a Parent/Carer fails to engage or fails to provide an explanation for a pupil's failure to attend school regularly and attendance does not improve, legal action may be considered.

A Penalty Notice may be issued when a pupil has at least 10% unauthorised absence over the specified warning period. The absences do not need to be consecutive.

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Where a pupil is required to attend alternative education provision at a named site, school or pupil referral unit this policy remains in place. If a pupil transfers directly from school to alternative provision, the absences in both places of education will be taken into account when deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice.

Leave of Absence taken in term time

Regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration, England) 2006 Regulations was amended to prohibit a Head Teacher granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Under the amended regulations, a Head Teacher can agree to a leave of absence in term time only where there are 'exceptional circumstances'. No leave of absence should be agreed unless the Head Teacher is satisfied that there are such exceptional circumstances. The school will make the Parents/Carers aware of this possibility as far as possible.

When a leave of absence is taken and the school has not authorised the absence, the school may request that the Local Authority issues a Penalty Notice. Before requesting this, the school will ensure that, as far as possible, the Parent/Carer is informed that this may occur. Requests for Penalty Notices should be made by the school and signed by the Head Teacher or nominated Deputy as soon as possible after the unauthorised absence has occurred.

Although Parents/Carers will have been informed that a Notice may be issued if they choose to continue with the leave of absence, no caveat regarding a warning period to affect an improvement will be given.

A Penalty Notice may be issued:

- Where a Parent/Carer has taken the pupil on a leave of absence during term-time without the school's authorisation and there are unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) or;
- If more than one period of absence is taken during term-time within any 12 month period without the school's authorisation and there are unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) overall, or;
- Where the school has agreed to a specific number of sessions of leave during term-time due to exceptional circumstances, and any additional sessions of unauthorised leave have been taken outside of the agreed period.

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A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued in lieu of prosecution in cases where there is persistent unauthorised leave in term time within any 12-month period (3 or more periods of absence, regardless of number of sessions missed).

In the case of an excluded pupil

A Penalty Notice may be issued where a pupil is found by the school, Police or Local Authority service in a public place*, in school hours** without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion. The Local Authority will carefully consider reasons given by the Parent/Carer if a child is found in a public place, prior to issuing a Penalty Notice.

* Public Place means any highway or any place to which the public has access

** School hours is defined as 'a school session or a break between sessions on the same school day'

Procedure for withdrawing a Penalty Notice

There is no statutory right of appeal against a Penalty Notice.

A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn in any case in which it is determined that:

- It ought not to have been issued, or;
- It ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient;
- It appears that the notice contains material errors.

A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn in accordance with the above whether or not the period for payment referred to in the notice has expired, and whether or not the penalty has been paid.

Where a Penalty Notice has been withdrawn in accordance with the above a notice of withdrawal must be given to the recipient and any amount paid by way of penalty in pursuance of that notice must be repaid to the person who paid it.

Except as provided below no proceedings may be continued or instituted against the recipient for the offence in connection with which the withdrawn notice was issued:

- Where a Penalty Notice was issued and was withdrawn proceedings may be continued or instituted for the offence in connection with which that Penalty Notice was issued if both the following conditions are met.
- A further Penalty Notice in respect of the offence was issued at the same time as the first Penalty Notice was withdrawn; and
- The penalty has not been paid pursuant to that further Penalty Notice in accordance with the requirement of the regulations.

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Where the Penalty Notice is not paid in full before expiry of the period for paying it; and the Local Authority named in the notice has neither instituted proceedings against the recipient for the offence to which the notice relates, nor is it contemplating such proceedings, the authority must withdraw the notice.

Payment of Penalty Notices

The fine is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £160 if paid within 28 days. The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice (an invoice served by post is deemed to have been received on the second day after posting it by first class post).

Fines issued are payable to the Local Authority:

“Money received by a Local Authority under this process may be used by the authority for the purposes of any of their functions which may be specified in regulations namely issuing or enforcing Penalty Notices and prosecuting recipients who do not pay but, to the extent that they are not so used, must be paid in accordance with the regulations, to the Secretary of State for Education”.

Failure to Pay (Penalty Notice for School Absence)

If a Parent/Carer has not paid the Penalty Notice in full before the 28 days allowed, the Local Authority can look to commence legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failing to ensure a child attends school regularly unless there are reasons for withdrawal as stated in Section 6 above. Prosecutions will be brought by the Local Authority under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 which provides for two truancy offences. If found guilty of the basic truancy offence under Section 444(1), the Parent/Carer could receive a fine of up to £1,000.

Failure to Pay (Penalty Notice for Exclusion)

If a Parent/Carer has not paid the Penalty Notice in full before the 28 days allowed, the Local Authority is required to commence legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of failing to ensure a child is not in a public place during the ‘specified days of exclusion’ unless there are reasons for withdrawal as stated in Section 6 above. If found guilty under Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act, the Parent/Carer could receive a fine of up to £1,000

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Right of Appeal

Under the Regulations, Parents/Carers have no right of appeal against the Penalty Notice but if they believe it to be wrongly issued or need further information and advice, they should immediately contact the Local Authority.

Supplemental

If a Penalty Notice is not paid or not paid in full within twenty-eight days, the fact that the Penalty Notice was offered in lieu of a prosecution will be brought to the courts attention.

Although a Parent/Carer may receive a Penalty Notice for each child/young person for whom they are responsible, no Parent/Carer will be issued with more than 3 Penalty Notices per child/young person in a school year). If there are further absences, meaning that this limit is exceeded, then the Parent/Carer is liable for prosecution.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Winchelsea School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting at the next school;
- The address of the new school;
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority Tracking Officer.

Fast Track to Attendance

Fast Track to Attendance is a 12-week process where clear attendance targets are set at the initial meeting and a Parenting Contract is drawn up together which is aimed at resolving any issues preventing regular attendance, and identifying any support required to enable regular attendance. The contract is then signed by all parties.

A Fast-Track Review Meeting is held six weeks after the initial meeting to review attendance and the contract, making any amendments required.

A final meeting is then held at 12 weeks. If attendance has improved and targets have been met, then a support plan will be drawn up to ensure the improvement is maintained.

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At each review a decision will be made as to whether grounds for legal action are met (either prosecution or a Fixed Penalty Notice in lieu of prosecution). This will be based on whether attendance is improving, and whether the plan is working or can be made to work.

If attendance remains poor, then a request can be made to the Local Authority to issue either a Fixed Penalty Notice or initiate legal proceedings.

Parents/Carers need to be aware that as there is a chance that legal proceedings could be initiated, the information set out in the contract and contact with them over the Fast-Track period could be used as evidence in court.

Links to other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Allergies policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Supporting pupils with health needs who cannot attend school

Any questions about this Policy or how it is applied should be directed to Helen Harrison.

Appendix Summary

Appendix 1: Attendance Audit Letter 1

Appendix 2: Attendance Audit Letter 2 Invite to Meet

Appendix 3: Attendance Audit Letter 3 Fast Track to Attendance

Appendix 4: Attendance meeting discussion record with Parent Carer

Appendix 5: School Refusal Assessment Scale Child

Appendix 6: School Refusal Assessment Scale Parent

Appendix 7: How to score the school refusal assessment scale

Appendix 8: Attendance Parenting Contract_ Letter 3 FTtA

Appendix 9: Attendance Parenting Contract_ Letter 3 FTtA Review Week 6_12

Appendix 10: Appendix 10_Letter_Successful FTtA

Appendix 11: Appendix 11_Letter_Unsuccessful FTtA

Appendix 12: Letter: Reason to believe a child is or has been on holiday letter_ not unwell

Appendix 13: FPN01 FIXED PENALTY NOTICE REQUEST FORM August 24

Appendix 14: Procedure for unexplained absences

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Appendix 15: Formal letter notifying Parents/Carers of arrangements for requesting term time absence due to exceptional circumstances

Appendix 16: Request for leave of absence in term time due to exceptional circumstances