

Date Policy Drafted: January 2018

Date of Review: May 2019

Member of staff Reviewing Policy: Paul Cleary (Deputy Headteacher)

Approved by Governing Body: (Governor)

Date ratified by Governors:

Attendance Officer; Mrs L Smith

Attendance Support; Miss T Newcombe, Mrs E Round

The Legal Framework

Under The Education Act 1999, parents are responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education at school or otherwise. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence under this Act.

The DFE advice on School Attendance November 2016 and School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures January 2015 (updated January 2017) has been consulted before reviewing this policy. This school believes that good attendance is vital for all pupils if they are to gain the most from the education we provide. There are clearly documented links between regular attendance and attainment. The school attendance team will regularly check the attendance of pupils and where necessary the school will follow up with the child's parents. We hope that parents will assist us in our work of raising attendance levels throughout the school by:

- Ensuring the regular attendance of their child
- Informing the school when their child is absent from school
- Providing a reason for the absence
- Attending any meetings about their child's attendance, where necessary.

Aims

At The McAuley Catholic High School we firmly believe that all pupils benefit from regular school attendance. The aim of this guidance is to minimise the amount of time lost due to absence in order to maximise the educational potential of every pupil. This can be achieved with the support of parents by ensuring absence, including holidays, is not taken during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'*

At The McAuley Catholic High School, in order for an attendance record to be deemed good, it must be 96% or above:

- 100% Excellent Attendance
- 98% Very Good Attendance
- 97% Good Attendance

Each year, a number of pupils from every year group achieve 100% attendance, emphasising that it is an achievable target. Some achieve this level of attendance year upon year. Absence during term time, for any reason, interrupts a pupil's education and risks disrupting their educational progress.

- Pupils should aim for 100% attendance,
- 90% attendance means a pupil is missing the equivalent of ½ day of education every week.
- Pupils with 90% and below are classified as Persistent Absentees
- A pupil with 80% attendance all the way through secondary school (5 academic years) is the equivalent of missing a whole year of education.

Although absence is not the only factor that has a link to a pupil's attainment. There are other complex relationships, such as the strong link from prior attainment and the link between different pupil characteristics and attainment, which should be taken into account. The research report February 2015 provided an overview of the link between pupil absence and attainment based on available evidence. (*The link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 – Department for Education Research report – February 2015*)

Government figures show:

- At key stage 4, pupils with full attendance are 1.5 times more likely to achieve 5+ good GCSEs or equivalent and 2.8 times more likely to achieve 5+ good GCSEs including English and Mathematics than pupils with attendance between 80 - 85%
- At key stage 4 94% of pupils with no absence achieve 5 good GCSEs or equivalent as opposed to 84.4% who have attendance rates of 90 – 95%

- Pupils with no absence are 10.2 times more likely to achieve the English Baccalaureate than pupils with 80 – 85% attendance to key stage 4 lessons
- 90% attendance sounds quite good but..... 1 day off in 10 over 5 years equals 95 days which is 19 weeks and equates to half a school year

Only the Headteacher may authorise such absences. Absences without permission from school will be registered as unauthorised (equivalent to truancy).

* 'Exceptional Circumstances' for absence *may* include:

- illness of pupil
- representative event (for example sport, music or school)
- religious observance
- family bereavement (immediate family)
- employer/further education/school interview

Any other 'exceptional circumstances' will be at the discretion of the Headteacher and a pupil's attendance record will be taken into account when deciding whether or not to grant permission for absence.

'Exceptional Circumstances' DO NOT include:

- looking after family members
- birthday or other celebrations
- shopping
- attendance at local events e.g. Shows, Sports events etc.

School Responsibilities

The school will:

- contact parents on the first day if there is unexplained absence.
- consult parents if it is felt that absence is affecting progress.
- promote punctuality and good attendance as part of safeguarding practice.
- discuss with parents any problems with attendance and punctuality.
- liaise with the LA over specific attendance issues where necessary.
- develop clear procedures to enable pupils to come to school.
- support families to improve their child's attendance where necessary.
- refer pupils with poor attendance to the Local Authority for additional support.
- ensure that all pupils and parents understand the issues and procedures for attendance.
- ensure that all staff including administrative, support and non-teaching staff as well as Governors understand the issues and procedures for registration and attendance.
- determine the correct absence code following Department for Education guidelines.
- closely monitor pupils on personalised timetables, including those attending Alternative Provision, based on individual needs.

Attendance records are also used when writing references for future employers, colleges or universities.

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the motivation and leadership of the whole staff by demonstrating a commitment to promoting good attendance by:

- promoting a whole school approach to attendance with high expectations
- ensuring there is a clear policy for attendance that is regularly reviewed and updated, reflecting the practice and procedures within the school
- ensuring the monitoring and implementation of the agreed policy and procedures.
- analysing attendance data to identify areas for development and issues related to vulnerable groups
- providing regular reports to the Governing Body about attendance.
- being available, if appropriate, for parents who may wish to discuss specific problems or in-school difficulties which their child is experiencing.

- ensuring that appropriate training is provided as required on attendance.
- ensuring the governors are provided with key information regarding whole school and pupil cohort's attendance by providing data, analysis and commentary.
- ensuring attendance information is provided as evidence when external bodies inspect the school.
- ensuring regular celebrations of good attendance take place.

The Governors

The Governing Body of the school is actively engaged in promoting good attendance by supporting and encouraging pupils and teachers in their work. The Governing Body will ensure that a governor is available to support the school where appropriate and identify a specific Governor with responsibility for attendance.

The Governing body will be provided with attendance information as an indicator of overall school performance. Attendance, Persistent Absence and Punctuality data will be discussed at least termly with link Governors and presented at the Governors Standards Committee meetings

Representatives of the Governing body will access appropriate training if necessary to help them to understand the duty of the school to promote regular attendance.

The Governors will ratify the school attendance policy.

The Pastoral Leaders

Pastoral Leaders (Achievement Leaders (AL) & Behaviour & Achievement Mentors (BAM)) have a very important role to play in the school's framework for promoting good attendance within their respective year group[s] by:

- meeting with children and parents of children, who are developing or have developed, a pattern of absences, and agreeing actions which may lead to the child beginning to attend more regularly.
- ensuring that there are clearly understood attendance procedures, in place.
- agreeing attendance action plans with the child's parents/carers and individual students where a pattern of absence is a cause for concern.
- attending external meetings in relation to attendance as appropriate
- recognising and celebrating the good attendance of students in their year assemblies, tutor groups and through individual praise.
- Carrying out, or arranging for the conducting of, Student Voice interviews upon return from absence where deemed necessary

The Role of Form Tutors / Class Teachers / Key Workers

Form Tutors / Class Teachers / Key Workers are ideally placed because of their regular contact with pupils to assess whether the explanations received for a child's absence are reasonable, or if the child is at an early stage in developing a pattern of absence.

In our school we recognise that building a good relationship with pupils is vital in promoting good attendance by:

- ensuring that an accurate and timely register is taken in the morning and in each lesson, using SIMS lesson monitor. Registers should usually be completed within 10 minutes of the start of the session. Staff will reopen registers if students arrive after this time and ensure they are accurately completed.
- publicly praising those pupils who attend well, or make an effort to improve their attendance.
- using the school registration system accurately to record absences with 'N' code for the Attendance Officer inputting the correct code when evidence is obtained that authorises the absence or is coded as unauthorised.
- organise home visits / contact where absence is a concern, where appropriate
- referring unexplained absences or patterns to absence to the Pupil Attendance Officer.
- welcoming children back after they have been absent because of illness.
- taking specific steps to assist children returning to school when they have been absent.
- providing a positive role model through their own attendance and punctuality.
- To arrange and chair 'back to school' meetings with students

The Role of the Pupil Attendance Officer

- Collating information from external providers, dual registered placements, and Alternative Provision providers to obtain attendance information for pupils accessing this provision.
- Passing information received from parents at the school to the class teachers / key workers regularly and consistently.
- Beginning procedures for first day contact by the start of school each day to establish where a pupil is if not in school as expected each day. Text messages will be sent to support enquiries
- Keeping an accurate register on SIMS, chase missing marks / incomplete registers.
- Analysing attendance data for trends and to identify pupils at risk.
- Making phone calls to parents and sending out standard letters to parents about their child's attendance.
- Coordinating requests for absence from School and gathering evidence to support the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices, including liaison with sibling Primary Schools to ensure consistency with families
- Coordinating all attendance letters, printouts and EPN referrals as necessary , including identification of where these are required for poor attendance but not progressing them
- Generating daily lists of students who are late without good reason for submission to the Senior Leadership Team and Pastoral Leaders. Daily absence reports and weekly attendance reports are sent to the AL and BAMs

Parental Responsibilities

By law, parents have a duty to educate their children by ensuring regular attendance at school or otherwise. In order to facilitate this process, parents with children at The McAuley Catholic High School are expected to:

- inform school by telephone (01302 537396 ext 280), email or SMS text message (SchoolComms) on the first morning of any absence before 8.45am.
- inform the school of the anticipated return date due to absence and continue to contact school if this changes
- provide a note to cover the absence on the child's return to school, including providing medical evidence where necessary or appropriate
- ensure that their child gets to school on time
- ensure that their child catches up on missed work to avoid 'gaps' in their knowledge.
- not take family holidays during term time (see further guidance below)
- send their children to school in adverse weather unless the school has specifically stated that school is closed
- attend meetings in school associated with attendance as appropriate
- attend review meetings linked to personalised timetables and any changes as appropriate

This school believes that its pupils are able to achieve success when:

- School and family work in partnership.
- Parents take an active interest in their child's work.
- Parents ensure their child arrives in school at 8.50am for morning registration at 8.55am. The child will be deemed to be late if they do not arrive for registration.
- Parents ensure that their child attends school regularly and do not allow time off from school for trivial or unnecessary reasons.
- Parents contact the school on the first day of absence by 8.45am and provide the reason for absence and intended return date. Parents should continue to inform school by 8.45am each subsequent day of the absence.
- Parents avoid taking leave of absence during term time.
- Parents ensure that, so far as possible, any work that has been missed because of absence is completed, checking with the staff at school if necessary.
- Parents attend any necessary meetings and respond as quickly as possible to any letters and information about their child's attendance.

What will happen if my child does not attend school regularly?

- Initial concerns will be raised with the child by the Pastoral Team
- The school will contact you if they are concerned about your child's attendance to offer any support that may be required. A referral could be made to the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service if attendance continues to be a concern.
- Doncaster Council will use legislation to enforce attendance at school where parents do not fulfil their duty to ensure their children attend school regularly. This could mean a parent or carer enters into the Local Authority Enforcement Procedure which may lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court.
- A parent or carer could receive a Parenting Order, a Community Order, a Curfew Order and/or a fine up to £2500.
- A parent or carer can also be issued with an Education Fixed Penalty Notice for any unauthorised absence including taking an unauthorised leave of absence in term time.
- Remember school gives your child a wide range of opportunities and experiences both academic and social allowing them to develop their interests and achieve their full potential. Failure to attend school regularly will limit a pupil's access to this.

The Role of Pupils

This school believes that all pupils should attend regularly if they are to succeed and reach their full potential.

Pupils should:

- Aim for 100% attendance, only being absent through genuine illness.
- Arrive in school in time for registration at 8.55am
- Attend all lessons on time
- Understand that if they arrive late after registers have closed, they will be awarded a late mark.
- ensure they attend regularly in line with their timetable if they have a personalised timetable that includes attendance to offsite and alternative providers

Leave of absence in Term Time

In line with the Governments legislation no requests for holidays can be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. For the school to consider exceptional circumstances a leave of absence form must be submitted at least four weeks before the proposed start of the holiday and booking the holiday. Parents may be invited to a meeting with the school to discuss the request. For the School to consider exceptional circumstances the request must be put in writing together with any supporting evidence. A meeting or phone call may then take place to discuss the request. All holidays will be classed as unauthorised, unless you receive confirmation in writing from the School that the holiday has been authorised. There are no exceptions. All holidays or other leave periods that are unauthorised will be referred to the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

When a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, the penalty is £60 per child, per parent/carer when the payment is made within 21 days, after 28 days it will increase to £120. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that the parent/carer has failed to secure their child's regular attendance at the school. Please note that a separate Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child and all monies are payable to the Local Authority.

Every school day counts towards your child's future. Days off school add up to lost learning.

In total there are 175 non-school days a year. This gives families the opportunity to:

- spend time together
- go on family visits
- go on holiday or on days out
- attend routine appointments

The law says that parents do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time except in exceptional circumstances. If you do so without the schools authorisation this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may result in legal action.

Why shouldn't I take my child on holiday during term time?

Many parents and carers think it is reasonable to go on holiday during term time; this has a negative effect on their children's learning and ability to achieve.

If a child goes on holiday during term time, they are absent:

- 10 days absence = 95% attendance
- 19 days absence = 90% attendance
- 29 days absence = 85% attendance
- 38 days absence = 80% attendance
- 47 days absence = 75% attendance

How do I request leave of absence for a family holiday?

All requests should be made on an Application for Leave of Absence form which is available from the school office or website. A meeting may be arranged to discuss the request for leave of absence. You should also submit any evidence to support your exceptional circumstances (see below). This should be submitted no later than 21 days before the start of the holiday.

Will the school authorise taking my child away during term-time?

The Legislation for authorising absence in term time states that holidays will not be authorised 'except in exceptional circumstances'. Only the headteacher can grant term time leave and it is the headteacher who will consider your request and respond to your request.

What happens if the head teacher does not agree my request?

Your child's absence will be marked as unauthorised absence and you will be informed of this. If you take your child on holiday (or unauthorised leave from school) your child's school may request the Local Authority issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Penalty is £60 per parent per pupil and if not paid within 21 days this will increase to £120, failure to pay the full amount within 28 days will result in a summons to appear in the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Once the school has informed parents the leave of absence will be unauthorised, further unauthorised absence during the pupils time in school may count as an aggravated offence which could lead to a fine of up to £2,500 or imprisonment.

Contact:

Email: welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk

Tel: 01302 736504

Appendices

Number	Item	Page
1	Leave of absence request form	10
2	Student Leave of Absence Request granted letter	12
3	Student Leave of Absence Request declined letter	13
4	Unauthorised holiday / Leave of Absence suspected letter;	14
5	Attendance Concerns Letter 1	15
6	Attendance Concerns Letter 2	16
7	Student Voice Record Form	17
8	School Attendance Support Plan	18
9	Improving Attendance Action Plan	19
10	Doncaster RMBC Guidance for Parents on Attendance	20

Application for Leave of Absence 2019 – 2020
 (Please read the notes overleaf before completing this form)

The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (Amended September 2013) state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Child's Details			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
Address (inc Post Code):			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
Address (inc Post Code):			
Pupil Name (in full):		Date of Birth:	
Address (inc Post Code):			
Parent/Guardian Details			
Parent 1 Name (inc title):		Date of Birth:	
Relationship to Pupil:			
Address (inc Post Code):			
Parent 2 Name (inc title):		Date of Birth:	
Relationship to Pupil:			
Address (inc Post Code):			
Reason for the Request:			
First Day of Leave:		Last Day of Leave:	
Date to return to School:			
Adult accompanying Pupil:			
Signature of Parent:		Date:	
Headteachers Decision and reason for Decision:			
Signature of Headteacher:		Date:	

Notes for Parents

Please complete the Form overleaf and return it to the Headteacher for any application for leave of absence for the Academic year commencing 1st September 2018– 30th July 2020. The decision will be based on the **Education (Pupil Registration England) Regulations 2006 (Amended September 2013)**. Headteachers should determine the number of School days a child can be away from School **IF** leave is granted and may make the decision following advice from the Local Authority.

Any absence which does not meet the criteria of being **'an exceptional circumstance'** will be marked as unauthorised absence and as such you may be at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please be aware that **BOTH** parents are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice for **EACH** child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school in line with **Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003**.

*If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is **£60 per Parent per Child** when the payment is made within **21 days**. If payment is made after **21 days** but within **28 days** this will increase to **£120 per Parent per Child**. Failure to pay within **28 days** will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at School. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a Fine of up to **£1000**.*

The 2013 change to Legislation states that it is really important that every child attends school for as many of the 380 half day sessions of the school year as possible. It is the responsibility of Parents to ensure that their Children do not take unnecessary time off school.

Any absence taken during term-time destroys the continuity of the child's education and reduces chances of success. Absence in the weeks prior to formal external examinations will also disrupt revision and omit the reassurance that school staff can provide during the preparation period. Furthermore, if external examinations are missed, parents may be liable for repaying the cost of the entries

Absence taken during years 7, 9 and 11 and at the beginning of the academic year can also have a negative impact on transition and assessments.

Student Leave of Absence Request granted letter

Our Ref: PCL/LOA1

«Parental_Salutation»

«AddressBlock»

01 October 2019

Dear «Parental_Salutation»

Re: «Forename» «Surname» «Reg»

Thank you for your request regarding special leave from school.

I give permission for «Forename» to be absent from school from *****.

Please ask «Forename» to speak to teachers to ensure that any work missed is copied up to date in order that she does not fall behind.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Rooney
Headteacher

Student Leave of Absence Request declined letter

Our Ref: PCL/LOA3

01 October 2019

«Parental_Salutation»

«AddressBlock»

01 October 2019

Dear «Parental_Salutation»

Re: «Forename» «Surname» «Reg»

Further to your Leave of Absence request which you have submitted for the dates ***** I have to inform you that I have declined to authorise this request as it does not fall within exceptional criteria. The two exceptional circumstances are:

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be evidenced by production of the policy document of the organisation.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.

This means that any absence taken in relation to this request would be classed as '**unauthorised**' and recorded as such. You may also be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Please be aware in line with Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 **BOTH** parents are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice for **EACH** child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is **£60 per parent per child** when the payment is made within **21 days**. If payment is not made within this timescale the penalty amount will double to **£120 per parent per child** made within **28 days**.

Failure to pay within **28 days** will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a fine of up to £1000.

For your information, I enclose a copy of the Local Authority's Information for Parents about Fixed Penalty Notices and I would advise you to read this information very carefully.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Rooney
Headteacher

Unauthorised holiday / Leave of Absence suspected letter;

Our Ref: PCL/LOA2

«Parental_Salutation»

«AddressBlock»

01 October 2019

Dear «Parental_Salutation»

Re: «Forename» «Surname» : «Reg»

It has come to my attention that «Forename» was absent from school from ***** due to a holiday.

I have to inform you that I have declined to authorise this period of absence as it does not fall within exceptional criteria. The two exceptional circumstances are:

- Where it is company/organisational policy for an employee to take leave at a specific time in the year and there is no opportunity for a family holiday in school holidays. This must be evidenced by production of the policy document of the organisation.
- Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark upon a tour of duty abroad.

This means that any absence taken in relation to this request would be classed as '**unauthorised**' and recorded as such. You may also be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Please be aware in line with Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 **BOTH** parents are at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice for **EACH** child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is **£60 per parent per child** when the payment is made within **21 days**. If payment is not made within this timescale the penalty amount will double to **£120 per parent per child** made within **28 days**.

Failure to pay within **28 days** will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at school. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a fine of up to £1000.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Rooney
Headteacher

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS LETTER 1

«salutation»
«address_block»
01 October 2019

Dear «salutation»

«chosen_surname», «chosen_forename» : «reg»

As part of the school's continued efforts to ensure each child achieves their full potential, we are monitoring attendance very closely. The Government guidelines indicate that an average attendance in School is 96% . The Local Authority have issued guidance for schools to ensure that we are proactive in promoting good attendance at all times.

I am writing to you as I am concerned that «chosen_forename»'s attendance at this time is a cause for concern and if improvements in «his_her» attendance do not take place then «his_her» ability to progress to «his_her» full potential will be inhibited.

We will continue to monitor «chosen_forename»'s attendance and will look to support you in any way we can. Should you have any questions regarding this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Assuring you of our support at all times.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Attendance «percentage_attendance»%

ATTENDANCE CONCERNS LETTER 2

Att Letter 2

«salutation»
«address_block»
01 October 2019

Dear «salutation»

«chosen_surname», «chosen_forename»: «reg»

As part of the school's continued efforts to ensure each child achieves their full potential, we are monitoring attendance very closely.

«chosen_forename»'s current attendance level is «percentage_attendance»%. The Government guidelines indicate that an average attendance in school is 96% and therefore «chosen_forename»'s attendance this half-term is cause for concern.

Due to this attendance level, and following Local Authority Guidelines, I can no longer authorise any absences and attendance will be closely monitored for the next half-term. I would appreciate it if you could ensure that «chosen_forename»'s attendance improves and no further intervention is needed. I do however need you to be aware that if «chosen_forename»'s attendance continues to decline, then I will need to consider a referral being made to the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer for further intervention.

The Officer will endeavour to support you but does have a statutory responsibility to ensure regular attendance is maintained and so may need to follow Local Authority Enforcement Procedures.

If you have any questions about this letter or wish to discuss in private any circumstances that are causing short term difficulties in attendance then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Enc. Attendance Certificate

Student Voice Record Form, post absence;

NAME	TUTOR GROUP	FORM TUTOR	DATE	
CURRENT % ATTENDANCE			ATTENDANCE TARGET	
			TO BE REVIEWED ON	
REASONS FOR ABSENT				
WHAT I DISLIKE ABOUT SCHOOL				
WHAT I NEED TO DO IMPROVE MY ATTENDANCE				
HELP I NEED TO REACH MY TARGET				
SIGN BY PUPIL		SIGNED BY ATTENDANCE OFFICER		

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PLAN

Date

Name	DOB	Class / Yr
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Parent / carer agree to:

- Ensure preparation for school is done the night before
- Ensure child is up and ready for school on time
- Bring child to school every day unless ill
- Contact school on first day of absence with reason
- Provide up to date contact details

School agrees to:

- Build a pupil profile i.e. attendance patterns over time / reasons for non-attendance / unauthorised absence etc.
- Keep an attendance chart for child to complete daily
- Reward good attendance - i.e. stickers given for attending school for a whole week / certificate for half a term
- Keep appropriate agencies informed of attendance pattern i.e. improved / not improved / serious cause for concern

Agreed by

Parent / carer

School

Datereview date

Improving Attendance Action Plan

Pupil	Parent/Carer	School Contact	Start date:
D.O.B			Review date:
Reasons for absence			
Actions to be taken	By	What will happen?	How will we know it is working?
Monitor and give support	School	Referral will be made if attendance does not improve	Attendance and achievement will improve.
Get ready for school on time and be ready to learn	Pupil	Be ready and focussed to learn.	Rate of learning will increase.
Ensure your child attends school regularly and on time.	Parent/Carer	Ensure full school attendance	Attendance will improve.
	Other family members		
Monitor attendance and punctuality	Attendance support services	Contact family directly	Attendance and punctuality will improve
	Other agencies		

Doncaster RMBC Guidance for Parents on Attendance

Information for Parents

What is an Education Penalty Notice?

The Anti-Social Behavioural Act 2003 introduced Legislation that made provision for a Local Authority to issue Education Penalty Notices. These notices require a fine to be paid by parents/carers of pupils who have unauthorised absence from school during term-time.

An Education Penalty Notice (EPN) can be issued in three situations:-

1. If a Holiday or other leave of absence is taken during term-time without the authorisation of the Headteacher.
2. If a Pupil has a period of unauthorised absence from School following an EPN warning letter, and the attendance does not improve within 15 days. (If you do receive a warning letter from your child's school about their attendance you should get in touch with the school as soon as possible.
3. If a pupil is excluded and is found in a public place during school hours.

Any absence which does not meet the criteria of being 'an exceptional circumstance' will be marked as unauthorised absence and as such you may be at risk of receiving an Education Penalty Notice. Please be aware that BOTH parents are at risk of receiving an Education Penalty Notice for EACH child of the family with a period of unauthorised absence from school in line with Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. What are the Penalties?

If an Education Penalty Notice is issued the penalty is £60 per parent per child when the payment is made within 21 days. If payment is not made within 21 days the penalty amount will double to £120 per parent per child and must be paid by the 28th day of issue. Failure to pay within 28 days will result in a summons to appear before the Magistrates Court on the grounds that you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance at School. If the case progresses to Court you may receive a Fine of up to £1000.

What must I do?

If you are having difficulties in ensuring your child attends school regularly, you should contact your child's school in the first instance. If you receive a warning letter from your school or Doncaster Council about your child attendance you should get in touch with the school as soon as possible, to discuss the reason for your child's absence from school. You should avoid taking your child out of school for a holiday unless there are exceptional circumstances as you may receive an Education Penalty Notice.

Can I get help if my child is not attending school regularly?

The Local Authority supports schools, parents and pupils so that high levels of attendance can be achieved. In the first instance you should contact your child's school who will offer advice and support. You can also seek advice from the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service on 01302 736504. Every school in Doncaster is supporting the message that school attendance is a high priority. We hope that parents will help us to ensure that all Doncaster children achieve the very highest levels of attendance at school.