

Attendance – key points

- Pupils' attendance is monitored daily by school and the local authority (pupil welfare officer).
- The monitoring cycle is a rolling period of 10 school weeks starting from 19th August 2024.
- During that 10-week rolling period, if a pupil has unauthorised absence or is late for a total period of 10 sessions, (equivalent to 5 school days), then the local authority will issue a penalty notice.

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- A third penalty notice cannot be issued within 3 years after the first penalty notice was issued.
- If during those 3 years there is a third period of unauthorised absence (totalling 10 sessions within a 10-week rolling period), then other consequences or initiatives are used.

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- The penalty notice is a fine of £160.00 per parent, per child payable within 28 days (reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days – first penalty notices only).
- There is no appeal process to the penalty notices. The local authority can withdraw it if:
 - They agree it should not have been issued
 - It was issued to the wrong person, or
 - It contains material errors.

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- One possible consequence is the local authority may start legal proceedings to prosecute the parents.
- The maximum sentence is a fine of up to £2500.00 and/or up to 3 months imprisonment.

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- The 10-week period only includes term time so can overlap different terms and academic years. For example, looking at attendance on the 2nd of October, the 10-week rolling period would go back to the 12th June.
- After a first penalty notice, if the pupil has further unauthorised absence or lateness totalling 10 sessions within a 10-week rolling period, then a second penalty notice will be issued by the local authority.

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- Prior to prosecution, the local authority will speak to the parents and explore ways to support and improve attendance, for example through Early Help.
- Instead of prosecution, the local authority can consider an Education Supervision Order.

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