



Dear Parent / Carer,

Please find below important information from the Local Authority that we are required to share with all parents concerning absence from school / college. It is for information only and outlines the actions that could be taken against parents / carers regarding attendance.

Penalty notices for Non-school attendance

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any 12 week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £50, which must be paid within 28 days. If payment is made after 28 days but within 42 days, the penalty is increased to £100. Where a fine remains unpaid after 42 days, the matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance for the following reasons:

- if their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once;
- if they go on holiday in term without school's permission or are late returning from an extended holiday;
- if they have not cooperated with the Education Welfare Service following a referral from school after they have taken steps to address the absences with the parent / carer and pupil;
- if their child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion.

The Education and inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued in relation to this matter.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, contact your school and ask for help. Support is also available from the Education Welfare Service on telephone number 0161 342 2297.

Yours sincerely,

D J Davies
Principal