

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.