

Please ask for: **Education Welfare Service**
Direct Line: **0116 454 5510**
E-Mail: education.welfare@leicester.gov.uk
Fax No: **0116 454 0787**
Date: **Autumn term 2018**



Positive Attendance: Helping Children and Young People to Succeed

School is an important part of the lives of children and young people. It is where they begin to develop new skills, make friendships and it helps prepare them for their future. When a child misses school, they can miss out on these vital opportunities and their learning and friendships may suffer. Whilst 90% is an excellent result in a test, an attendance level of 90% is poor, children are classed as persistently absent and children's outcomes in school can be badly affected. Any absence that is not authorised by the school is a reason for concern.

Parents and carers have the legal responsibility to ensure that a child attends school regularly and arrives on time. Absence taken during the school term can have a negative impact on a child's education. Therefore:

- Schools rarely agree to parents taking their children out of school for the purposes of leave of absence / holidays in term-time. This is not an automatic entitlement and only the Head teacher can authorise this if a parent applies in advance and the Head teacher's view is that there are **exceptional circumstances**. **If your child misses school for the purposes of a holiday or a trip and the absence is not agreed, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice, or you may be prosecuted.**
- Penalty Notices may also be issued to parents whose children have 20 or more unauthorised absences in a 12 week period. Penalty Notices are a fine of:
 - **£120 per parent per child if paid in full within 28 days** (reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days)
- If a Penalty Notice is not fully paid within 28 days and there is no reason to withdraw the Notice, the Local Authority has no option but to prosecute a parent in the Magistrates' Court for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- In Court, if a parent pleads guilty, or is found guilty, they will then have a criminal record. A fine of up to £2,500, up to 3 months imprisonment or a community penalty could be imposed together with a parenting order.

You can help your child by ensuring that they arrive on time and that you arrange any appointments for them (e.g. dental check ups) outside school hours. If your child has regular absences the school may require medical evidence.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any issues affecting your child's attendance, please contact your child's school in the first instance or the Education Welfare Service on (0116) 454 5510.

Ellen Collier
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