

Absence Information

Absence is divided into two categories – authorised and unauthorised.

An absence is **authorised** when one or more of the following apply:

1. A student is prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause
2. A day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parents belong
3. Suitable transport has not been provided and the school is not within walking distance
4. Work experience; participation in approved public performance
5. Annual holiday. Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave for holiday granted total more than two weeks in any school year. The Headteacher can only authorise ten school days holiday in any school year.

Unauthorised absence occurs in two distinct forms.

- a) Those absences due to truancy where the student is sent to school by the parents but does not come to school or who 'disappears' after formal registration or who arrives after the register closing time and is counted as absent. To prevent the second form of truancy we use lesson monitor to check during lessons in the morning or afternoon session.
- b) Those absences where the reason for absence is inadequate. Our evidence for this is sometimes objective and is based upon information gained by home visits by the Education Welfare Officer.

If we do not receive a note explaining the reason, the absence will be counted as unauthorised.

Penalty Notices

The Government have introduced Penalty Notices under Section 23 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003. Hampshire Education Authority has in place a Code of Conduct regarding Penalty Notices.

- Penalty Notices will be issued to Parents/Carers if they do not ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school, unless the absence has been authorised by the school
- The School will make recommendations to The Educational Welfare Service (EWS). The EWS will issue the Penalty Notice
- The Penalty Notice will not automatically be issued at this time because the School will wish to work with the parent(s), child and EWS to try to improve attendance
- The EWS will be notified of any students with unauthorised absences of 20 or more half-day sessions in any 10-week period
- A Penalty Notice can also be issued for persistent lateness after the register has closed
- For the first offence there will be a written warning. However, if a parent takes a child on holiday during the term time without the School authorising the absence, a Penalty Notice may be issued without warning
- A Penalty Notice will not normally be withdrawn once it has been issued
- A Penalty Notice will incur a fixed fine of £50 if paid within 28 days
- The fine will increase to £100 if not paid within 28 days but before 42 days
- Non-payment of the fine will automatically lead to prosecution of the Parent/Carer under Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996
- There will be no right to appeal