

School Attendance Fixed Penalty Notices

INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

What is a Penalty Notice?

The law says that parents/carers whose children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason are committing an offence and the parents/carers may be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court.

Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 introduced additional powers under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 authorising Local Authorities to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.

Suffolk County Council Education Attendance Service is responsible for issuing Penalty Notices.

When will a Penalty Notice be issued?

We aim to work with schools and parents/carers to improve pupil attendance but will issue Penalty Notice fines when unauthorised absence occurs

AND

Where a pupil is stopped with parents/carers during a truancy sweep and the absence is not authorised by the school.

Suffolk County Council will issue **each parent/carer with a Penalty Notice fine for unauthorised absence for each child.**

There is no Statutory Right of Appeal once a notice has been issued.

There are limited circumstances in which the fine may be withdrawn

How do I pay and what happens if I do not pay?

Details of payment arrangements will be included on the Penalty Notice fine.

The penalty must be paid in full

The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 between 21 and 28 days

The amount is prescribed by the Government and the local authority does not determine the amount of the fine. Monies raised from the fines may be used by Suffolk County Council for the operation of the scheme and surplus sent to DFE.

If you do not pay the penalty in full within 28 days of the issue, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against you in the magistrates Court for the original offence of failing to ensure your child attends school regularly. This may lead to a fine up to £1000.

Payment of the penalty notice discharges your liability for the period to which the notice relates.

What can I do to help my child attend school regularly?

- Send your child to school on time every day
- If your child is unwell, contact the school on the first day of absence and return your child to school as soon as possible
- Make sure your child knows you do not approve of them missing school
- **Take holidays only during school holidays**
- Make sure your child goes to school with the correct uniform and equipment
- Take an interest in your child's education
- Talk to staff as soon as any issues arise in school.

Suffolk County Council is committed to providing all children with the best start in life and works hard to improve the attendance of children.

Tackling Non- Attendance:

- Increases children and young people's opportunities
- Increases children's attainment
- Makes children safer
- Reduces anti-social behaviour
- Reduces the risk of children becoming involved in crime and alcohol/substance misuse.

For further information about Penalty Notice Code of Conduct contact

Your child's schools

Or

www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/schools/pupil-attendance-and-penalty-notices

or

Email: penaltynotice@suffolk.gov.uk

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