



*Knowsley Council*

## EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES

**A Guide for Parents/Carers**

**January 2016**

### **WHAT IS AN EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICE?**

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As a parent/carer it is an offence if your child fails to attend school regularly. Absences are classed as unauthorised if without a valid reason or school cannot or has not given permission.

In some circumstances parents/carers may be prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

An Education Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution and aims to improve attendance. If paid within the timescale, this prevents the matter escalating to the Magistrates Court for the period concerned.

### **WHY AM I BEING SENT THIS LEAFLET?**

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This leaflet has been sent to all parents/carers and confirms the commitment of all schools to improve attendance. It aims to raise awareness of the need for your child(ren) to attend regularly and on time in order to achieve their best. It is important parents/carers understand their responsibilities and the consequences of unauthorised absence. Parents/carers of children who have had at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during this academic year at school are at risk of receiving an Education Penalty Notice.

### **WHEN ARE EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICES USED?**

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You may be issued with an Education Penalty Notice for any of the following reasons:

- 10 sessions (5 days) in any 10 week period of **consecutive** unauthorised absence including an unauthorised leave of absence (e.g. holiday).
- 10 sessions (5 days) in any 10 week period of **non-consecutive** unauthorised absences.
- Unauthorised absence due to truancy – including pupils stopped on truancy operations.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).
- Being found in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I RECEIVE AN EDUCATION PENALTY NOTICE?**

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- Payment within 28 days of a notice is £120.
- Payment is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days.

### **HOW IS A PENALTY NOTICE ISSUED?**

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By post, to your home address.

### **HOW DO I PAY?**

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Details of payment arrangements will be included on the Education Penalty Notice. You cannot pay in part or in instalments.

### **CAN I APPEAL?**

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There is no right of appeal once a notice has been issued, but you can discuss with the school/ School Attendance Service when you have received an Education Penalty Notice.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I DO NOT PAY?**

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You have up to 28 days to pay the Penalty Notice in full. After which the authority has a statutory duty to consider instigating legal proceedings.

If proven, this can result in a range of fines up to £2500 and/or a range of disposals such as parenting orders or community sentences.

### **CAN I GET HELP IF MY CHILD IS NOT ATTENDING REGULARLY?**

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Yes, the Local Authority and your child's school will give you advice and support if you need to help secure an improvement in your child's attendance. It is crucial that you speak with the School or the School Attendance Service at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries about your child's attendance.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS OFF SCHOOL?**

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- Telephone the school as early as possible on the first morning of their absence to give the reason.
- Make routine dental and doctor appointments after school or during school holidays.
- If you have to make an appointment during school hours let the school know about the appointment in advance. You may be asked for medical evidence or an appointment card if your child is regularly absent due to illness or dental/medical appointments.

### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS TRUANTING?**

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- Talk to them to find out why.
- Try to understand what is happening to your child and help them to resolve the problem.
- Contact the school to discuss the situation and look for solutions

### **USEFUL CONTACTS:**

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If you have any queries regarding your child's attendance or you wish to discuss an Education Penalty Notice you have received, then please contact:

**KNOWSLEY COUNCIL  
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SERVICE  
C/O HUYTON MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS  
ARCHWAY ROAD  
HUYTON  
L36 9YU**

**TEL: 0151 443 5147**