THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL GROUP LTD

Attendance, Engagement and Personalised Timetable Policy (5/8)

(*From Version 22 – Renamed the Attendance Policy)*

(Part of the TAS Relationship and Regulation Model known as (TRRM))

Author:	**HB**
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Version:	**22**

TAS Statement

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At TAS we believe that every young person deserves access to a full-time education. However, we also recognise that many of the young people referred to our schools have experienced significant barriers to education including trauma, anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance, SEND, disrupted educational experiences and adverse childhood experiences.

For many of these pupils, expecting immediate full-time attendance is neither realistic nor therapeutic.

Our responsibility is therefore not simply to record attendance.

Our responsibility is to remove barriers to attendance.

By meeting pupils where they are, rather than where we would like them to be, we are able to maintain engagement, protect wellbeing and gradually build confidence until every young person is able to access the highest level of education possible.

The TAS Principle

"Our ambition is the same for every pupil; only the starting point and the journey may differ."

Attendance is not simply about being present.

Attendance is about remaining engaged with education and continually progressing towards full-time learning.

Foreword

At TAS we have always believed that attendance should be viewed as a journey rather than a destination.

Every young person is different.

Some pupils arrive ready for full-time education.

Others may initially only be able to engage for a short period each week.

Our role is not to judge where a pupil begins.

Our role is to help them move forward.

Every personalised timetable has one clear purpose:

To provide a safe, achievable and ambitious pathway towards approximately 25–30 hours of meaningful education each week.

We never lower expectations.

We personalise the journey.

1. Two Measures of Attendance

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TAS monitors attendance in two ways.

Both measures are equally important and should always be considered together.

A. Statutory Attendance

All TAS schools record attendance in accordance with Department for Education legislation.

Morning Session

/

8:30am–12:00pm

Afternoon Session

****

12:30pm–4:00pm

A pupil attending both sessions receives:

**/ **

This represents 100% statutory attendance for that day.

This register is a legal requirement and must always be completed accurately using the correct DfE attendance codes within the first half hour of the registers closing. So by 9.30am and 2.00pm each day. The legal terminology for all school attendance in the UK is attendance for each session, and all schools record two sessions, an am and a pm. This was invented many years ago now to ensure pupils did not attend registration in the morning and then able to leave school for the rest of the day.

B. TAS Personalised Attendance

Alongside statutory attendance, TAS measures attendance against each pupil's personalised timetable.

Every pupil in TAS should have an agreed personalised timetable.

If a pupil attends all sessions on that timetable, they achieve:

100% TAS Attendance regardless of the number of hours currently being accessed.

This enables TAS to celebrate success whilst gradually increasing attendance towards full-time education.

A pupil may achieve 100% TAS Personalised Attendance where they fully attend the timetable currently agreed for them. This does not replace statutory attendance reporting, nor does it remove TAS's responsibility to work towards a full-time education offer wherever reasonably possible.

2. Every Pupil Has A Personalised Timetable

Every pupil attending TAS will have a personalised timetable.

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The timetable forms part of the pupils:

- Pupil Profile / Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Half-termly Review

It should be:

- agreed with the pupil wherever possible;
- agreed with parents/carers;
- shared with professionals where appropriate;
- reviewed at least every half term; and
- designed to increase engagement, attendance and independence.

Personalised timetables are not viewed as a reduced expectation.

They are viewed as an individual pathway towards full-time education and with the sole intent of improving engagement, attendance and independence.

Reduced timetables (those less than 25 hours) must be viewed as temporary, purposeful, reviewed regularly and used **only where they are in the pupil's best interests.** They must not be used as a behaviour sanction, informal exclusion, or long-term substitute for full-time education.

Any personalised timetable, timetable reduction, off-site arrangement, home learning arrangement or significant attendance concern must be communicated in the first part to the Headteacher and approved with the school CLT, before then communicating to parents/carers, referring schools, placing authorities, social workers, Virtual School Heads and relevant case workers where applicable.

The TAS Timetable Ladder (see Appendix A)

The TAS Timetable Ladder provides a graduated pathway from initial engagement through to full-time education.

Every pupil begins at the point where they are most likely to experience success.

This may begin with:

- a home visit;
- meeting for a hot chocolate in a safe community setting;
- one-to-one support;
- informal school visits;
- a short induction timetable;
- part-time attendance; or
- full-time education.

The aim is always to achieve **100% attendance at each stage before progressing to the next stage**.

3. Riding the Waves Together

Progress through education is rarely a straight line.

Young people experience successes, setbacks and significant life events.

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For this reason, pupils may move both **up and down the TAS Timetable Ladder** throughout their educational journey.

This should never be viewed as failure, but a review of reasonable adjustment to meet their current needs.

It is a therapeutic intervention that helps pupils remain connected to education during periods of increased anxiety, trauma or personal difficulty.

We often describe this as "**riding the waves together**."

Sometimes the sea is calm and pupils progress quickly.

Sometimes the waves become rough, and we need to step back temporarily before moving forwards again.

Our commitment is simple:

We never give up.

We ride the waves together until every young person is ready to continue their journey.

4. Success

Success is measured through:

- statutory attendance;
- TAS personalised attendance;
- engagement with learning;
- progress through the Timetable Ladder;
- increased independence; and
- progression towards approximately 25–30 hours of meaningful education each week.

Our aim is always for pupils to achieve **100% attendance of their current personalised timetable** whilst continually working towards a full-time education offer.

5. Attendance and Safeguarding

Attendance is first and foremost a safeguarding responsibility. Whenever a pupil does not attend school as expected, our priority is to establish that they are safe.

Our first question is never: *"Why aren't they in school?"*

Our first question is: **"Are they safe?"**

5A. Contents of Admission Register *(This is the responsibility of the SBM)*

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, a long with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents/carers, a second contact and details of the school last attended.

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Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendments was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

The start date and finish date on the admissions register **MUST** tally with the attendance register, Behaviour Watch and the SLA (Service Level Agreement).

Every entry on the attendance and admissions registers must be kept by the school for a minimum of 3 years after the date the entry was made.

6. Arrival Process:

- Pupils will be greeted as per our meet and greet policy outside of school. Two members of staff in hi-vis will meet and escort pupils into school.
- Pupils will then go to the office and be met by the School Business Manager and asked to sign in on the school register, adding their own name, signature and time of arrival. (It is very important that we teach pupils to sign in themselves as this is the only proof/true record that we have that they have attended school at that day and time and this not being done has been raised in a previous police investigation.)
- Each pupil will receive a school lanyard stating name and pupil ID (Allocated TAS number linked to the admissions register.)
- The School Business Manager immediately updates both the TAS Attendance Tracker on Dropbox and the Behaviour Watch register.
- Daily completed sign in sheets are scanned and uploaded to Dropbox at the end of each day, for internal access and safeguarding audit trails.
- In the event of a fire alarm the School Business Manager will be responsible for taking the sign in sheets to ensure an accurate roll call.

Note: It is the responsibility of the School Business Manager (SBM) to oversee pupil attendance, follow policy and inform the headteacher of any absences.

At TAS we have a first day of absence contact policy and if a parent/carer knows that their child will be absent (or late) they should contact the School's Business Manager between 8.30 am - 9.00am to report the absence or late arrival on:- **01282 851800 and select the relevant number.**

6A First Day Contact Procedure

Where a pupil does not arrive at their agreed time:

Day One

- Contact the parent/carer.
- Make every reasonable attempt to speak directly with the pupil.
- Establish that the pupil is safe.
- Record all contact on Behaviour Watch.

If staff are satisfied that they have spoken directly with the pupil and there are no safeguarding concerns, a home visit is not normally required on Day One.

If staff cannot establish contact with the pupil, a same-day home visit must be completed.

Day Two

Repeat the above process and continue to encourage attendance through supportive conversations.

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Day Three

Where a pupil remains absent for a third consecutive day, a home visit must be completed, even where telephone contact has been made with the pupil.

This enables staff to maintain relationships, assess welfare, identify barriers and provide additional support.

NOTE: A lack of contact with either pupil/parent/carer for more than 24 hours is considered a SAFEGUARDING concern and appropriate action MUST be taken. (This means if you have tried phone calls, text and home visit and still nothing, you will escalate the absence and lack of contact to your campus DSL and headteacher, and further action MUST be taken)
Each TAS school has a trained Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).
The lead DSL's for the whole school group is Kirsty Swierkowski, the Deputy DSL for the whole group is Mark Walton. If you cannot speak to your DSL immediately, contact Kirsty Swierkowski or Mark Walton.

Safeguarding always takes priority over attendance.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility.

The School Business Manager, teachers, Campus Leadership Team, and Headteacher all have clearly defined responsibilities for monitoring attendance, maintaining accurate registers, contacting families, carrying out home visits where required, reviewing attendance data and ensuring statutory guidance is followed. These responsibilities should reflect the detailed operational procedures already established within the school.

8. Attendance Codes

All TAS schools will use the current DfE statutory attendance codes.

This includes, but is not limited to:

Code	Meaning
/	Present AM
\	Present PM
L	Late before registers close
U	Late after registers close
I	Illness
M	Medical appointment
B	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit
W	Work experience
D	Dual registration
C2	Personalised/part-time timetable (where appropriate under DfE guidance)
O	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason not yet established
G	Unauthorised holiday

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R	Religious observance
Y Codes	Exceptional circumstances
#	Planned school closure

Registers must always be completed in accordance with current DfE guidance and statutory requirements.

9. Monitoring and Review

Attendance should be recorded and monitored:

1) Daily through the school attendance register (SBM)
2) Daily on the class attendance chart (Teacher)
3) Daily on Behaviour Watch (Teacher)
4) Weekly through attendance analysis as part of the CLT meeting
5) Weekly at Team Meetings
6) Bi-weekly as part of staff supervisions
7) Half-termly through pupil/parent/carer reviews
8) Half termly through data submission reports to Powered by TAS
9) Termly at The Advisory Board Meeting

Attendance should never be viewed in isolation.

Attendance, engagement, wellbeing, behaviour, safeguarding and personal growth should always be considered together when reviewing a pupil's progress.

Attendance Data Analysis

Attendance data is analysed by the School Business Manager at the end of every week and certificates of praise for attendance of 100% are issued by the headteacher as part of the Friday Celebration.

TAS Percentage Attendance	Rating	Days Attended Weekly	Action
100%	Excellent	5 days	Headteacher hand out certificate
80%	Good	4 days	Teacher to issue pupil reminder
60%	Ok	3 days	Phone call home and nudge postcard to be sent home to parent/carer issued by teacher (template 2).
40%	Concerning (PA)	2 days	Phone call home and concern letter one (template 3) to be sent home to parent/carer issued by SBM.
20%	Worrying (SA)	1 day	Phone call home and worrying letter two (template 4) to be sent home to parent/carer, must have a meeting with Headteacher – issued by Headteacher
0%	At risk of losing TAS place (non attendance for 4 weeks)	0 days	Letter 3 (template 5) to be sent home to parent/carer – must attend a meeting with Headteacher and SENDco –

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			issued by Headteacher.
0%	Will be removed from roll (nonattendance for 8 weeks	0 days	Letter 4 (template 6) to be sent home to parent/carer – due to non engagement and nonattendance for 8 weeks, pupil will be removed from roll.

Final Commitment

At TAS:

- Every pupil deserves an education.
- Every pupil deserves a **personalised** pathway.
- Every pupil deserves adults who never give up.
- Every timetable should be ambitious whilst remaining achievable.
- Every pupil should be supported to move towards full-time education at a pace that is safe, sustainable and successful.

We do not expect every young person to begin their journey at the same place.

We do expect every young person to keep moving forward, and we promise to walk alongside them every step of the way.

Appendix A

	Timetable Ladder *Always aiming for 100% attendance of each step before moving up*
1	1:1 either at home, or another safe setting (Sometimes this may even start with a hot chocolate in Macdonalds)
2	1:1 in school, informal visits
3	1:1 in school, formal timetable
4	30 mins - 1 hour per day – slow induction timetable
5	1.5 hours per day
6	2 hours per day

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7	2.5 hours per day
8	3 hours per day
9	3.5 hours per day
10	4 hours per day
11	4.5 hours per day
12	5-6 hours per day
13	Mentor (pupil attending at least a timetable 7 and being a class mentor)
14	Leadership (pupil attending at least a timetable 9 and leading on a curriculum subject, delivery and planning)

EVERGREEN
FOREST NURSERY

EVERGREEN FOREST NURSERY / EYFS APPLICATION

Controlled amendment to the TAS Core Policy - September 2026

Document Status: This section forms part of the policy when the policy is applied to Evergreen Forest Nursery / Roots and Branches (2 - 4 years). It supplements, and does not replace, the remainder of this policy. Where a statutory EYFS requirement is more specific than general school-age wording, the EYFS requirement and the controlled Evergreen Forest Nursery operational annexes apply for nursery children.

EYFS Attendance Status

For children below compulsory school age, the school's statutory attendance-code framework and the TAS Timetable Ladder do not apply in the same way as they do to compulsory-school-age pupils. Nursery attendance will be recorded against the child's booked/expected sessions and monitored as a safeguarding, welfare, continuity and entitlement matter.

No absence of a nursery child will be dismissed because attendance is non-compulsory. Unexplained, prolonged, repeated or concerning absence may indicate unmet need or safeguarding risk and must be followed up in accordance with the Evergreen Forest Nursery EYFS Attendance, Absence, Missing Child and Collection Annex.

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First-Day Response and Safeguarding Escalation

Where a nursery child does not attend an expected session and no explanation has been received, staff will make timely contact with the parent/carer using the child's recorded contact details. The response will be proportionate to the child's circumstances, known vulnerabilities and pattern of absence. Where contact cannot be established, explanations are inconsistent, or there is any safeguarding concern, the DSL must be informed and safeguarding procedures followed. Home visits, welfare checks or referrals will be considered through safeguarding risk assessment rather than applied as an automatic school-age attendance sanction.

Emergency Contacts

The nursery will hold sufficient current emergency contact information to enable timely contact and safeguarding action. Parents/carers are responsible for notifying the nursery promptly of changes. Staff will verify and update contact information at appropriate intervals and whenever concerns arise.

Controlled EYFS Cross-References

This policy is implemented particularly through Annex B - EYFS Attendance, Unexplained Absence, Missing Child, Collection and Non-Collection; Annex N - Emergency Evacuation, Fire, Lockdown and Critical Incidents; and Annex O - EYFS Complaints, Records and Statutory Notifications.

Document-Control Note

EYFS amendment baseline: September 2026. Review whenever the EYFS statutory framework, safeguarding requirements, registration/inspection arrangements or the Evergreen Forest Nursery operating model materially changes. The core policy retains its existing whole-policy review cycle unless TAS governance sets an earlier review date.

Template 1 – Level Green Attendance (Dropbox – TAS General – Processes

Attendance Certificate

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Awarded to

- -

for a weekly attendance of 100%

Signed by ……

Template 2 – Nudge Postcard



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Dear Parent/Carer,

This is a nudge.....your child's school attendance has fallen to 60%, which is below an acceptable level.

We encourage you to speak with your child as soon as possible and work together to improve their attendance to prevent any further action from being necessary.

Please remember, we are here to help. If you would like support or guidance, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

Teacher: .....

Number: .....

Campus: .....

Warm regards,

The Alternative School Group Limited - 01282 851800

Template 3 – Concerning Letter 1

"INSERT OWN CAMPUS LETTERHEAD/LOGO"

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer of (***Inset Pupil Name***)

Your child is falling into the concerning category of attendance, achieving only 2 days attendance per week.

This letter is to prompt you and your child to urgently address this and improve attendance to avoid any further actions.

TAS Percentage Attendance	Rating	Days Attended Weekly	Action
100%	Excellent	5 days	Headteacher hand out certificate
80%	Good	4 days	Teacher to issue pupil reminder
60%	Ok	3 days	Phone call home and nudge postcard to be sent home to parent/carer issued by teacher.
40%	Concerning (PA)	2 days	Phone call home and concern letter one (template 3) to be sent home to

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			parent/carer issued by SBM.
20%	Worrying (SA)	1 day	Phone call home and worrying letter two (template 4) to be sent home to parent/carer, must have a meeting with Headteacher – issued by Headteacher
0%	At risk of losing TAS place (nonattendance for 4 weeks)	0 days	Letter 3 (template 5) to be sent home to parent/carer – must attend a meeting with Headteacher and SENDco – issued by Headteacher.
0%	Will be removed from roll (nonattendance for 8 weeks)	0 days	Letter 4 (template 6) to be sent home to parent/carer, due to non engagement and nonattendance for 8 weeks, pupil will be removed from roll.

If you would like support on how to improve your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact your child's headteacher, teacher or SENDco.

Add in relevant contact telephone numbers of each contact prior to sending the letter

Kind regards

(***Name***)

School Business Manager

Attached: Annex A – Information for parents/carers regarding penalty notices.

Template 4 – Worrying Letter 2 (to be posted through letterbox or sent first class post)

"INSERT OWN CAMPUS LETTERHEAD/LOGO"

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer of (***Inset Pupil Name*****)**

Your child is falling into the worrying category of attendance, achieving only 1 day's attendance per week.

This letter is to prompt you and your child to urgently address this and improve attendance to avoid any further actions.

TAS Percentage Attendance	**Rating**	**Days Attended Weekly**	**Action**
100%	Excellent	5 days	Headteacher hand out certificate
80%	Good	4 days	Teacher to issue pupil reminder
60%	Ok	3 days	Phone call home and nudge postcard to be sent home to parent/carer issued by teacher.
40%	Concerning (PA)	2 days	Phone call home and concern letter one (template 3) to be sent home to parent/carer issued by SBM.

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20%	Worrying (SA)	1 day	Phone call home and worrying letter two (template 4) to be sent home to parent/carer, must have a meeting with Headteacher – issued by Headteacher
0%	At risk of losing TAS place (nonattendance for 4 weeks)	0 days	Letter 3 (template 5) to be sent home to parent/carer – must attend a meeting with Headteacher and SENDco – issued by Headteacher.
0%	Will be removed from roll (nonattendance for 8 weeks)	0 days	Letter 4 (template 6) to be sent home to parent/carer due to non engagement and nonattendance for 8 weeks, pupil will be removed from roll.

As your child is only at 20% attendance this has triggered an urgent meeting with the headteacher. Please call the headteacher on this number (**insert correct contact telephone number)** to arrange a meeting.

Kind regards

(***Name***)

Headteacher

Attached: Annex A – Information for parents/carers regarding penalty notices.

Template 5 – At risk of losing place Letter 3 (to be posted through letterbox or sent first class post)

“INSERT OWN CAMPUS LETTERHEAD/LOGO”

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer of (***Inset Pupil Name*****)**

Your child is falling into the at risk of losing TAS place category of attendance, not having attended at all.

This letter is to prompt you and your child to urgently address this and improve attendance to avoid any further actions.

TAS Percentage Attendance	**Rating**	**Days Attended Weekly**	**Action**
100%	Excellent	5 days	Headteacher hand out certificate
80%	Good	4 days	Teacher to issue pupil reminder
60%	Ok	3 days	Phone call home and nudge postcard to be sent home to parent/carer issued by teacher.
40%	Concerning (PA)	2 days	Phone call home and concern letter one (template 3) to be sent home to parent/carer issued by SBM.

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20%	Worrying (SA)	1 day	Phone call home and worrying letter two (template 4) to be sent home to parent/carer, must have a meeting with Headteacher – issued by Headteacher
0%	At risk of losing TAS place (nonattendance for 4 weeks)	0 days	Letter 3 (template 5) to be sent home to parent/carer – must attend a meeting with Headteacher and SENDco – issued by Headteacher.
0%	Will be removed from roll (nonattendance for 8 weeks)	0 days	Letter 4 (template 6) to be sent home to parent/carer due to non engagement and nonattendance for 8 weeks, pupil will be removed from roll.

Due to non-attendance your child is now at risk of losing their place at TAS and this has triggered an urgent meeting with both the headteacher and SENDco. This can be a supportive meeting looking at an alternative provision within TAS to meet your child's needs.

Failure to cooperate and attend this meeting, your child will lose their place at TAS and you will be facing prosecution.

Please call the headteacher on this number (**insert correct contact telephone number)** to arrange a meeting as a matter of urgency.

Kind regards

(***Name***)

Headteacher

Attached: Annex A – Information for parents/carers regarding penalty notices.

Template 6 – Letter 4 – pupil will be removed from roll (to be posted through letterbox or sent first class post)

"INSERT OWN CAMPUS LETTERHEAD/LOGO"

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer of (***Inset Pupil Name*****)**

As we have had no engagement and your child has not attended school for the last 8 weeks, your child will be removed from TAS roll.

This letter is to prompt you and your child to urgently address this and have discussions about next steps.

TAS Percentage Attendance	**Rating**	**Days Attended Weekly**	**Action**
100%	Excellent	5 days	Headteacher hand out certificate
80%	Good	4 days	Teacher to issue pupil reminder
60%	Ok	3 days	Phone call home and nudge postcard to be sent home to parent/carer issued by teacher.
40%	Concerning (PA)	2 days	Phone call home and concern letter one (template 3) to be sent home to parent/carer issued by SBM.
20%	Worrying (SA)	1 day	Phone call home and worrying letter two (template 4) to be sent home to parent/carer, must have a meeting with Headteacher – issued by Headteacher
0%	At risk of losing	0 days	Letter 3 (template 5) to be sent home to

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	TAS place (nonattendance for 4 weeks)		parent/carer – must attend a meeting with Headteacher and SENDco – issued by Headteacher.
0%	Will be removed from roll (nonattendance for 8 weeks)	0 days	Letter 4 (template 6) to be sent home to parent/carer due to non engagement and nonattendance for 8 weeks, pupil will be removed from roll.

Due to non-attendance and non engagement your child will be removed from TAS roll.

Please call the headteacher on this number (**insert correct contact telephone number)** to arrange a meeting as a matter of urgency.

Kind regards

(***Name***)

Headteacher

Attached: Annex A – Information for parents/carers regarding penalty notices.

Template 7

ANNEX A

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/CARERS REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES

Tackling Poor School Attendance

The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Education Act 1996

Information for Parents and Carers

Introduction - The law gives powers to the Local Authority and other designated bodies to issue penalty notices where a parent/carer is considered able but unwilling to ensure their child's school attendance. Reducing absences from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others, and can leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime.

What is a penalty notice? Parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classed as unauthorised. Depending on the circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court unless the fine is unpaid after 28 days. Full payment of the penalty means that parents/carers can avoid being prosecuted and convicted.

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What is the cost?

- ***First offence.*** *The fine is £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.*
- ***Second offence within three years.*** *The fine is a flat rate of £160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days with no early payment discount.*
- ***Third offence within three years.*** *A penalty notice cannot be issued. Instead, the local council must consider alternative legal action such as a Parenting Order or direct prosecution.*

How are they issued? Penalty notices will always be issued by post to your home and are issued to each parent/carer individually in respect of each child.

When are they issued? The Council considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that penalty notices may be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absence occurs, such as:

*unauthorised absence truancy (including pupils found during truancy sweeps); parentally condoned absence without good reason; persistent late** arrival at school; unauthorised leave in term time delayed return from authorised leave;*

*In every case a pupil must have had a minimum of 5 school days unauthorised absence in a term or 10 school days unauthorised absence over 2 consecutive terms before a penalty notice is considered. ** persistent lateness refers to pupils who arrive after the school register has closed*

** The expression "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent of the child but who has parental responsibility for him or her, or who has care of the child.*

*** persistent lateness refers to pupils who arrive after the school register has closed*
*Is a warning given? In cases of unauthorised absence and persistent lateness**, you will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Notice being issued. This will tell you the extent of your child's absences and give you 15 school days in which to bring about an improvement. In that time, your child should have no unauthorised absences from school.*

In cases of unauthorised leave, warnings will be issued where sufficient notice of the intended absence has been given. This means that in some cases, penalty notices may be issued without a warning.

Is there an appeal process? There is no statutory right of appeal once a penalty notice has been issued. However, on receipt of a warning or penalty notice, you can make representations should you wish.

How do I pay? Details of payment arrangements will be included on the penalty notice. You need to be aware that payment in part or by instalment is not an option with penalty notices. No reminders will be sent.

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Can I be prosecuted if I pay the penalty, but my child is still absent from school? Not for the period stated in the penalty notice, since payment of the penalty discharges your liability for that period. However, it could be the case that a prosecution might be considered for further periods of poor attendance not covered by the notice, depending on the circumstances. If this is an issue, it is vital that you work closely with your child's school.

What happens if I do not pay?

Defaulting and Court Prosecution (Up to £2,500)

If you fail to pay a penalty notice within ***28 days****, or if you commit a third offence within three years, the local authority can prosecute you in a Magistrates' Court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.*
Court outcomes depend on the severity of the offence:

- ***Standard offence (Section 444(1)).*** *Failing to ensure regular attendance can result in a court fine of* ***up to £1,000****.*
- ***Aggravated offence (Section 444(1A)).*** *If a parent knows their child is absent without authorisation and fails to act, the court can impose a fine of* ***up to £2,500****, a community order, or a jail sentence of* ***up to 3 months****.*
- ***Criminal record.*** *Being found guilty in a Magistrates' Court results in a criminal record, which can appear on enhanced DBS checks.*

Can I get help if my child is not attending school regularly? Yes, the local Council and your child's school will give you advice and support if you need help to secure an improvement in your child's attendance. It is very important that you speak with the school or with your local Council at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries at all about securing your child's school attendance.

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