



What are the penalties for unauthorised absence or poor attendance?

Under the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the local authority and schools have statutory powers to tackle poor school attendance and/or unauthorised absences.

An unauthorised absence is any absence that the headteacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by the parent. If your child accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence you may be liable for a penalty notice (one days absence equals two sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions etc).

Penalty notices

Penalty notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absences developing.

They will be issued by post direct to the home of a parent after possibly just one warning, or in the case of absences without acceptable cause, warnings may not be given.

This includes pupils caught on truancy sweeps, persistent late arrival after the close of registration or unauthorised absence that has not been authorised as an absence from school for exceptional circumstances.

In these cases the warning is given on the absence request form and detailed within this information leaflet and no written warning will be given. Fines are issued for unauthorised absence of 5 or more days and each school day is divided into 2 registration periods. For example, if your child is absent for one day this equals 2 sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions.

If you ignore a declined request

If your request is declined, and you still take your child out of school, each parent within your household will be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school.

If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Support and guidance on attendance is always available and if you have any questions about this, or if you need help to achieve an improvement, then please contact your child's school to discuss this.

Please note: we advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from their school first. Headteachers cannot retrospectively authorise absence from school under any circumstances.

<https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/learning/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-attendance/holidays-during-term-time-and-authorised-absence-from-school/>