



The law requires the full attendance of students according to their individual program arrangements. We promote punctuality and discourage lateness. We coordinate our approach to non-attendance with the Education Welfare Service and other outside agencies as necessary. The management and staff at Brownhill Learning Community (BLC) work together with students and parents/carers to support student attendance targets. Excellent attendance is the single most important factor enabling us to provide the best support for pupils in achieving their personal goals.

1. Introduction

The majority of pupils who attend BLC will have previously experienced difficulties at mainstream school and this may include attendance concerns. It is with this in mind, that we aim to promote good attendance by offering a positive, individual experience of education, that allows a return to school if appropriate, but meets needs and entitlement, if not. We aim to treat all our pupils as individuals, and try to remove any barriers that do not encourage good attendance.

Staff at Brownhill Learning Community believe that regular school attendance is the key to enabling students to maximise the educational opportunities available to them.

2. Principles

- Good attendance is paramount to achieving full potential and being prepared for pupil's next destination.
- Pupils are at risk when not attending.
- Regular attendance demonstrates positive commitment on the pupils and parents/carers part to achieve full potential.
- BLC and parents/carers working in partnership will ensure the best possible education for our pupils.
- Support must be given to achieve and sustain regular attendance and punctuality.
- An appropriate curriculum and caring learning environment will promote good attendance.
- Students who feel valued and supported will attend their education.

3. Aims

- To collect information and data on previous attendance for all pupils and seek to improve it.
- To encourage all staff to promote good attendance via positive relationships. Including set procedures for attendance information.
- Where appropriate, provide flexible support for parents/carers and pupils who experience attendance difficulties.
- To promote good communication between BLC, parents/carers, pupils and support agencies.
- To develop a flexible curriculum with a range of accreditation, allowing all pupils to achieve their full potential.
- To continue to develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data, using evidence collated to form school actions and individual targets.
- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce both authorised and unauthorised absences.
- BLC to demonstrate a strong attendance ethos that improves the overall attendance of pupils and reduces the number of persistently absent pupils.
- Have access to attendance data and other information to improve school and pupil performance.
- Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance.
- Enable early intervention when an individual gives cause for concern.

4. Responsibilities for all pupils

Governing Body

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support Brownhill Learning Community to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensure staff receive training on attendance.
- Ensure the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all, including those who are educated off-site.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reports.
- Ensure there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of behaviour.
- Agree attendance targets and link these to the school improvement plans.

Parent/Carer

Under the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of Parents and Carers, to ensure the child or young person for whom they are responsible for has full attendance and is punctual. Failure to do so is an offence and can lead to prosecution. (See additional information sheet – School Attendance & the Law).

BLC will use Individual attendance targets, Individual timetables, Behaviour Care plans (BCP'S) and Parent/Carer agreements to monitor school attendance. BLC aims to support Parents/Carers in meeting their statutory responsibilities. At BLC we aim for 30 sessions for all students.

Parents and Carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.
- Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.
- Actively support the work of the school by instilling the value of education.
- Encourage attendance and take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Ask the school for help as early as possible if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Communicate as early as possible circumstances which may affect absence or require support.

Brownhill Learning Community

It is the responsibility of BLC to actively pursue the full attendance of each student through:

- Having a clear attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately completing admission and attendance registers, with staff rigorously recording attendance & absence, including the use of SIMS and lesson monitoring systems
- Having robust daily processes to follow up absences.
- Including specific actions and targets for those students with poor attendance.
- Building respectful relationships with pupils, families and other stakeholders in order to secure their trust and engagement. Make sure there is a welcoming and positive culture across the school.
- Ensuring BLC offers support to parents/carers and pupils to encourage and monitor achievement of attendance targets.
- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect.
- Taking into consideration the vulnerability of some pupils and the ways in which this may contribute to absence
- Understanding the importance of school as a place of safety where pupils can enjoy trusted relationships with staff and other pupils.

Leadership and Management

The senior leadership and management teams will:

- Offer a clear vision for attendance, underpinned by high expectations and core values. Which are communicated to and understood by staff, pupils and families.
- Make sure staff, pupils and families understand that absence from school is a potential safeguarding risk and understand their role in keeping children safe.
- Expect good attendance and punctuality from all pupils.

- Convey clear messages about how absence effects attainment, wellbeing and wider outcomes.
- Recognise attendance as an important area of school improvement.
- Support the designated school attendance lead
- Form positive relationships with pupils, parents/carers.
- Liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance.
- Actively promote the importance and values of good attendance to pupils and their parents/ carers
- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority
- Ensure the attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

Education Welfare Service

It is the responsibility of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and the Education Welfare Service to give a statutory service and an additional bought in service to Brownhill Learning Community. This will include:

- Having a strategic approach to improving attendance and make it a key focus of the frontline council services.
- Having a school attendance support team that works with all schools to remove area-wide barriers to learning.
- Providing Brownhill Learning Community with a named point of contact in the school attendance support team who can support with queries and advice.
- Offering opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.
- Participating in the monitoring of attendance patterns within each site
- Consider and pursue legal action for non-school attendance
- Work with the school in reviewing and implementing attendance action plans
- Work with parents/carers and pupils to promote attendance

The full Service Level Agreement can be seen on request of the Head teacher or Attendance Link

BLC named Enforcement Education Welfare Officer: **Stella Burke**.
Education Welfare Officer is

Pupil

It is the responsibility of each pupil to attend 100% of their attendance programme and to arrive on time at their site (or education provision). If they do not attend their education provision, then legal responsibility is with the Parent/Carer. (See Parents/Carers responsibility) School day starts at 9am with late marks (L) commencing after 9.15am to accommodate particular access arrangements at venues. After 9.30am the student is deemed to be in centre, but unable to gain a full mark and will be marked as U, which will form part of the sessions accumulated towards persistent absenteeism.

5. Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.

Responsibility of Governors

Governors are expected to:

- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Parents are expected to:

- Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance
- Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support

Responsibility of BLC.

School is expected to:

- Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance.
- Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance
- Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance.
- If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi- agency effort with the local authority and other partners.

Responsibility of Education Welfare

Local authorities are expected to:

- Hold a termly conversation with BLC to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are at risk of becoming persistently absent
- Where there are out of school barriers, provide each pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.
- Ensure early help processes are in place.

6. Persistently absent pupils and severely absent pupils

BLC & EWS monitor all students who are deemed Persistent Absentees (government guidelines are currently 90% or below) and challenge all absence including authorised absences e.g. illness, medicals, holidays etc.

Responsibility of Governors

For persistently absent and severely absent pupils governors are expected to:

- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

For persistently absent and severely absent pupils parents are expected to:

- Work with school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.
- Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.

Responsibility of BLC.

For persistently absent pupils BLC expected to:

- Offer continued support for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent
- Where absences become persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove barriers. Where necessary this includes working with parents.
- Where there is lack of engagement, be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.

For severely absent pupils BLC are expected to:

- Agree a joint approach with the local authority.
- Establish a range of evidence based interventions to address barriers to attendance

Responsibility of Education Welfare

For persistently absent pupils local authorities are expected to:

- Offer continued support for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Work jointly with BLC and provide formal support options including parenting contracts (IASP) and education supervision orders.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's services and other statutory safeguarding partners.
- Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance, through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

For severely absent pupils local authorities are expected to:

- Ensure these students are a priority. Consider a whole family plan, or alternative form of education provision.
- Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

All Staff at BLC are responsible for the monitoring & evaluating of school attendance.

Monitoring and evaluation of **children's school attendance is the responsibility of all staff**, however there are key people with responsibility:

Head Teacher	Hannah Speakman
Saxon Hall Deputy Head	Laura Coe
Heights Lane Deputy Head	Catherine King
Darnhill Deputy Head	Clare Kemp
Business Manager - Senior Leadership Team (acting)	Wayne Hutchinson
BLC Learning Support lead – Senior leadership Team	Jayne Haigh
BLC attendance Lead	Nicola Sweet
Attendance Support Lead Saxon Hall	NS
Attendance Support Lead Heights Lane	NS
Attendance Support Lead Darnhill	NS
Welfare Lead – Senior Leadership Team	Wendy Nicholls
Education Welfare Officer	Stella Burke
SIMS Manager	Jill Rhodes
Governors of BLC	All Governors

Regular monitoring will take place by Senior Leadership Team/Senior Management Team and the Attendance Link/Lead Team with the 'upkeep' of the '**Improving Attendance Action Plan**'. Governors will also monitor attendance through the termly Headteacher Report.

BLC will use **Attendance Panels** for identified pupils with attendance concerns, and may include Senior Management, Attendance Leads, EWO, teaching staff, School Health and other agencies/staff deemed necessary to improve school attendance. An attendance improvement plan will be put into place.

Truancy

All staff at BLC believes in the importance of continuity in every child's learning. Staff are also concerned about each child's safety, welfare and happiness. If staff are suspicious that a child might be playing truant, action is taken immediately. It is a **parent's responsibility** to ensure their child attends school and stays there for their education provision.

If truancy is a concern, BLC will inform the Education Welfare Officer and Parents/Carers. Parents/Carers are contacted, by either telephone or a home visit. We encourage parents to bring their child back to school, so that the reasons for truancy can be discussed and, we hope, resolved.

Traveller Absence

It is expected that Traveller children attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible. To protect traveller parent/carers from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances in a year. This is only when the parents are engaged in trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as possible as that trade permits.

There is an expectation that parents must advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen and inform school of the proposed return dates.

Brownhill Learning Community will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family are travelling and intending to return.

Traveller students will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The student is on roll and attending another visited school
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service.
- The student is undertaking computer based distance learning that is evidenced.

Traveller Education Service Contact: Will MiKinlay.

Religious Observance

Brownhill Learning Community acknowledge the multi faith nature of British society and recognise that on some occasions, religious celebrations and festivals may fall outside school holiday periods.

Consideration will be made by school for authorised absences due to religious festivals.

Dual Registration

Pupils can hold status as:

- BLC roll
- Dual registration
- School roll

All excluded pupils will be on the BLC roll; medical pupils/school age mothers usually will have dual status whilst with BLC and those students who are being monitored or assessed will be on school roll.

Dual registered pupils are the responsibility of the holding school. The school will register pupils as 'D' for those sessions at the BLC. The responsibility is with the school to check on attendance of dual registered pupils. If the child is absent the school contact, BLC and the student is marked absent on SIMS.

Dual registered pupils can only be removed from school roll, if deemed appropriate, after a meeting involving the appropriate representatives.

Assisted Travel Provided under EHCP's

In accordance with the BLC Travel Policy implemented in September 2015, and reviewed in June 2017, students who are provided with transport to and from their place of education must maintain 95% attendance.

Failure to comply with the Policy could result in the withdrawal of transport support.

Excellent and improved attendance

Good and improved attendance will be rewarded through class chart points.

Behaviour Care Plan (BCP)

Main Objective:

To offer support to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and access the support offered to him/her in order to improve school attendance and access the education provision provided.

The purpose of a BCP is to support the young person with improving/sustaining school attendance.

This is a very individual support plan that requires needs assessing to identify barriers that stop a pupil accessing their education provision offered. When need is identified only then can BLC/EWS support the student.

The objective to a BCP must always be to aim for a full education (30 lessons per week) for each pupil.

The outcome of a BCP:

- Attendance is improved with pupils achieving their full potential.
- Pupils are at a low risk when attending school
- Regular attendance demonstrates positive commitment on the pupils and parents/carers part to achieve full potential.
- BLC and parents/carers work in partnership to ensure the best possible education for pupils.
- Support is put into place to achieve and sustain regular attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils access an appropriate curriculum and caring learning environment that will promote good attendance.

How are they used?

- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will implement and sign the BCP. The plan will be reviewed every 2 weeks; maximum of 6-week plan can be put into place.
- The headteacher and school attendance lead is notified of all BCP's in place. These are monitored to ensure they are reviewed and have a positive impact on pupil's attendance.
- Senior Management are responsible for the upkeep and reviewing of the BCP
- The pupil and parent should be part of any agreement to the BCP & will need a parent/carer agreement signed. The parent/carer agreement must be explained and their responsibility to support the plan.
- The Head Teacher and the EWO will need to be informed of all BCP's that are in place for more than 6 weeks. The school attendance lead will need to be informed of the reasons why the BCP is in place. The school attendance lead and learning support lead will discuss any concerns in relation to the BCP with the head teacher and SLT.

If a pupil is to have a **Part-time timetable (PTT)** and not on the standard 30 lessons per week then a BCP must be initiated by the senior team before the part-time time-table is started. Part time timetables should only be used for a short period of time (maximum 2 week) with the emphasis being on aiming for a full time-table.

Part- time timetables should not be used for behaviour management of a student.

Any part time timetable will have the parent/carer agreement explained and must ensure that they understand their responsibility to supporting the BCP.

If a pupil/parent does not agree/keep to the part-time timetable, then this will be withdrawn and the pupil will be expected to come to school on the standard 30 lessons per week.

7. COMMUNICATION regarding absence.

Informing school, of absence & lateness.

Parents and Carers are asked to notify BLC on the first day of absence/lateness either by telephone or personally. (Preferably by the close of register – see below) Telephone number for BLC - **0300 303 8384**. If the pupil is having more than 1 days absence, then parent/carer must inform school every subsequent day unless told otherwise.

If a child is unable to attend school, parents must make sure the school is fully aware of the circumstances and the reason for absence. Schools are very limited in the type of absences that they can accept and that they are required to notify the Local Authority if a pupil misses school for an unacceptable reason. The Head teacher reserves the right to decide whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

BLC uses a SIMS registration system. The register is completed in the morning and afternoon at 9.00 a.m. and 1.00pm. A pupil will receive a late mark (L) if they arrive after 9.15a.m but before 9.30am. All pupils who are late must report to the office. Registers officially close at 9.30a.m and 1.30p.m. Pupils who arrive after this time will receive a late after registers close mark (U), which equates to an unauthorised absence.

If school receives no explanation by parents for the child's absence/lateness, then the child's absence is considered to be unauthorised. It is not acceptable for parents to pass messages regarding absences to school transport drivers or escorts. Brownhill LC will not accept this method of communication and your child will be marked unauthorised.

BLC will monitor and challenge all pupils at risk of being persistent absentees by establishing robust escalation procedures. We will:

- Make daily absences calls
- Carry out regular home visits if a child has been absent for three or more days without reason for absence
- Send attendance letters to parents/carers
- Invite parents to meetings with the school attendance lead to address barriers

Holidays in term time

Holidays **will not** be authorised by the Head teacher, unless it is classed as an exceptional circumstance. 'Exceptional Circumstances' are deemed to be rare, significant, unavoidable and short, that could not reasonably be taken at another time. Holidays taken will be recorded as BLC Attendance Policy

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an unauthorised holiday (Code G). Any absence of 10 sessions (5 school days) or more will qualify for a fine. No warning will be issued, as parents will be aware of this through letters, verbal communication, a statement on the school website and a leaflet in our school admission procedure. Fines will be issued to each parent of £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid within 28 days.

Appointments during the school day

Parents/carers are asked to make routine medical appointments before or after school. However, it is understood that sometimes this is not possible. Parents/carers must provide school with a copy of all appointment cards / letters when taking a child out of school. We ask that parents ensure their child returns to school after the appointment where necessary or attends school prior to the appointment. School will challenge parents where a child has missed a whole day of school due to a medical appointment. Please note that where appointments are made before the start of a school day and where children are not back in time for registration then a child will receive an authorised absence mark for that whole session (Code M).

School Attendance & the Law

Legal Implications - Failure to attend school regularly

Legal Proceedings can be taken against parents/carers for failure to ensure regular attendance at school for a child in their care.

Parents/carers can be summoned to appear before **Magistrates** who will also be able to force parents/carers to attend court.

Fines can be a maximum of **£2500** for each parent/carer and/or a possibility of **imprisonment for up to 3 months**. Magistrates can also consider other sentencing options such as Parenting Orders or Community Service.

(Education Act 1996 – Section 444 (1))

“If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence.”

Parenting Orders

(Section 8 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998)

Parenting Orders can be made in the **Family Court, Magistrates Court and all Criminal Courts (adult, youth and crown)**. The court may consider the desirability of issuing a Parenting Order in addition to any fine imposed.

Parenting Orders are made when a person has been convicted of an offence under Section 443 (failure to comply with a School Attendance Order) or Section 444 (failure to ensure regular attendance at school) of the Education Act 1996 (Section 8 (1) (d)).

Section 98 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 states that where a school or local authority have reason to believe that a pupil has behaved in such a way as to cause, or be likely to cause, significant disruption to the education of other pupils or significant detriment to the welfare of that pupil or other pupils or to the health or safety of any staff. Or, where the pattern of behaviour (if continued) could lead to the pupil being excluded.

Parenting Orders are available as a ‘free-standing order’ by direct application by the governing body of a school, or local authority to the Magistrates’ Court, they must be made within 40 school days of the date upon which the latest instance of serious misbehaviour occurred or, if applicable, the date on which the exclusion review process ends. If a parent has

already entered into a parenting contract, an application can be made within 6 months of the date the contract was signed.

Parenting Contracts

Section 19 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 states that parenting contracts can be entered into where a child who is a registered pupil has engaged in behaviour connected with the school which is likely to cause significant disruption to the education of others, significant detriment to the welfare of the child himself or of other pupils or to the health and safety of staff or the pupil is at risk of exclusion.

A parenting contract is a formal written signed agreement between parents and either the local authority or the governing body of a school and should contain:

- A statement by the parents that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are set out in the contract; and
- A statement by the local authority or governing body agreeing to provide support to the parents for the purpose of complying with the contract.

Parenting contracts can be used in cases of misbehaviour or irregular attendance at school or alternative provision. Parenting contracts are voluntary but any non-compliance should be recorded by the school or local authority as it may be used as evidence in court where an application is made for a behaviour parenting order.

BCP & IASP are a form of parenting contract.

Education Supervision Orders

(Education Act 1996 – Section 447 and Children Act 1989 – Section 36)

An Education Supervision Order is an order requiring a parent/carer and their child to follow directions made in the Order and work with the Education Welfare Officer to improve their child's school attendance.

An Education Supervision Order allows the Local Authority to give directions to the parents and the child to support the child in receiving a proper education. The Order can last for up to 12 months. It is possible to extend the Order for a further 12 months with a maximum duration of 3 years.

When an Order is made, the parents/carers are legally required to comply with any directions the Court makes under the Education Supervision Order. If they persistently fail to comply with any directions, then they may be guilty of a criminal offence under Schedule 3, Part III, paragraph 18(1) Children Act 1989, resulting in a fine of up to £1000 in addition to other costs.

If a child fails without good reason to comply with the direction, then the family will be referred to Social Services who must investigate your families' circumstances.

Education Supervision Orders can be sought in order to “advise, assist and befriend” children and young people to help them attend school. The Orders would be considered in the Family Court.

Where a child is not complying with a school attendance order or is not attending regularly at school, at an alternative provision or any place which they are required to attend. Then an Education Supervision Order can be made.

School Attendance Orders

(Education Act 1996 – Section 437 – 439)

“If it appears to a local education authority that a child of compulsory school age in their area is not receiving suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, they should serve a notice in writing on the parent, requiring him/her to satisfy them within the period specified in the notice that the child is receiving such education ... the Authority shall serve on the parent a School Attendance Order ... requiring him/her to cause the child to become a registered pupil at a school named in the order. If a parent on whom a School Attendance Order is served fails to comply with the requirements of the Order, they are guilty of an offence, unless they prove that they are causing the child to receive a suitable education other than at school”.

School Attendance Orders can be made specifying which school a child should attend.

Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School Advice to Parents/carers and Carers The anti-Social behaviour Act 2003

- ***What is the Anti- Social Behaviour Act 2003?***

Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the Local Authority and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance.

The powers came into force on the 27th February 2004.

- ***Why has it been introduced?***

Reducing absence 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.

Above all, missing school seriously affects children's longer-term life opportunities.

- ***What is a Penalty Notice?***

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (those for which the school cannot or has not given permission). Depending on 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 whilst still securing an improvement in a pupil's attendance.

Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction.

- ***What are the costs?***

From 1st September 2013, £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

- ***How are they issued?***

By post to your home.

- ***When are they used?***

Rochdale Local Authority 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:

Overt truancy (including pupils found during truancy sweeps)

Inappropriate parentally condoned absence.

Excessive holidays in term time or excessive delayed return from an extended holiday without prior school permission.

Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed).

The Authority never takes such action lightly and would far rather work with parents/carers to improve attendance without having to resort to any enforcement actions. Attendance is of such

importance to all of us however that the Authority will use the powers if this is the only way of securing a child's schooling.

- **Is a Warning Given?**

Yes, you will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Notice being issued, which will tell you the extent of your child's absences and give you 15 school days in which to effect an improvement? In that time, your child must have no unauthorised absences from school. There is no limit to the number of times formal warning of possible Penalty Notice issue may be made in any particular case.

- **Is there an appeal process?**

There is no statutory right of appeal once a notice has been issued, but on receipt of a warning you can make representation 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 installment is not an option with Penalty Notices.

- **What happens if I do not pay?**

You have 28 days to pay, after which the prosecution process is triggered under the provisions of section 44, Education Act 1996.

This can attract a range of fines up to £2,500 and/or a range of disposals such as Parenting Orders or Community Sentences depending upon circumstances.

Absence from school

Children are required to attend school for 190 days each year.
The Local Authority target for attendance in schools is at least 95%.

Attendance during one school year	Equals days Absent-	Which is Approximately weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	58 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	116 lessons

85%	29 days	6 weeks	174 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	232 lessons
75%	48 days	10 weeks	290 lessons
70%	57 days	11.5 weeks	333 lessons
65%	67 days	13.5 weeks	391 lessons

**How does your child's attendance compare with this target?
Please remember, that children who miss a lot of school achieve less.**

Parental responsibility

What is parental responsibility?

Parental responsibility (PR) is where an adult is responsible for the care and well-being of their child and can make important decisions about the following points for example:

- Food
- Clothing
- Education
- Home
- Medical treatment

Who has parental responsibility?

Married couples who have children together both automatically have parental responsibility.

Parental responsibility continues after divorce. Mothers automatically have parental responsibility. Where the parents are not married, the unmarried father has parental responsibility if:

- His name is registered on the birth certificate – this is the case for births registered after 1 December 2003. Fathers can re-register if their names have not been placed on the birth certificate before this date.

- He later marries the mother
- Both parents have signed an authorised parental responsibility agreement.
- He obtains a parental responsibility order from the court.
- He obtains a residence order from the court
- He becomes the child's guardian

Why would someone want parental responsibility?

If you are living permanently with a child, in a parental role, you may feel that you want the authority, stability and recognition. This is especially so if the other parent has no contact, or is abroad, unknown or dead.

Without parental responsibility you cannot make the decisions about a child's life, such as choice of school or religion, surname or guardian on your death.

If you are a step-parent, you cannot automatically have the child live with you on the death of a resident parent unless you have parental responsibility and so the other parent (providing that he or she has parental responsibility) will take the child.

If someone new gets parental responsibility, do others automatically lose it?

No, several people can have parental responsibility at the same time. Adoption and care proceedings are different. Parental responsibility can be lost where:

- In the case of parents their child is adopted.
- In the case of a person having acquired parental responsibility through a court order, that order later being revoked by the court.
- In the case of a local authority with care order and the court later revoking the care order.
- In the case of a guardian where the court appoints another guardian.

How long does it take and what does it cost?

If you have to go to court there is a duty to deal promptly with all matters concerning children and applications are treated as priority matters. The court fees are straightforward, but if you have to go to court you should obtain legal advice and discuss fees with your solicitor.