A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE

# Attendance & Leave of Absence Policy

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## 1. AIMS

1.1 To share the responsibility for promoting school attendance amongst everyone in the schools and the broader school community;

1.2 To develop and implement an effective Attendance Policy that touches all aspects of school life, and relates directly to the schools' values, ethos and curriculum. To these ends staff particularly strive:

- to encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others, i.e. have a positive attitude to life-long learning;
- to value application, perseverance, initiative and independence of thought and action, as well as co-operative endeavours.

1.3 This Attendance Policy and its implementation is intended to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly by the implementation of specific measures, e.g.

- registering pupils accurately and efficiently;
- setting attendance targets for individual pupils and year groups;
- contacting parents, the same day when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised;
- 
- regularly monitoring pupil attendance and punctuality;
- reporting school attendance to parents via Arbor as well as attendance statistics to the Local Authority (LA) and DfE as appropriate.

1.4 To reinforce good attendance and to encourage improved attendance by using such measures as:

- informal comments from staff members;
- by the more formal issue of attendance rewards in tutor time and assemblies;
- by the use of rewards at regular intervals.
- Weekly compulsory catch up for pupils who have missed lesson time through absence.
- Conversations between pupils and relevant staff members when pupils are returning from an absence to ensure they are supported in catching up with any missed work/learning.

1.5 To monitor and evaluate this policy and its implementation by, amongst other means, rigorously collecting and analysing data about attendance to check our progress against measurable outcomes, e.g. National and LA-level targets.

## 2. RATIONALE

a) Good habits of attendance and punctuality will assist to develop self-discipline and responsibility in preparation for future employment.

b) Through monitoring attendance, staff can ensure the safety and academic progress of each pupil.

c) Regular attendance promotes the effective and continuous learning of all pupils.

d) Regular attendance promotes positive friendships and well-being.

e) This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- Working together to improve school attendance July 2026 (linked Appendix A)
- Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance August 2024 (linked Appendix B)
- Guidance for parents on school attendance – Office of the Children's Commissioner (linked Appendix C)
- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

## 3. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CHECKING PUPILS' ATTENDANCE

- When a pupil is absent, a member of school staff will contact home that morning via Arbor or telephone to establish the reason why, where a parent/carer has not contacted the school.
- If a pupil is absent and the Attendance Officer/Progress Leader/Assistant Progress Leader is unable to contact parents, then a member of staff will make a home visit if deemed necessary
- If absence continues or a pattern is seen to be developing the Personal Tutor, Assistant Progress Leader, Progress Leader, and any other relevant staff should be alerted.
- The EWO will work with the school (Vice-Principal, Progress Leader, Assistant Progress Leader and Assistant Progress Leader), pupils and parents/carers to improve attendance using a range of different strategies when a pupil's attendance falls below government guidelines and causes concern.
- If truancy is detected the parents/ guardian should be informed via Arbor, telephone or letter.
- Where the school-based strategies are deemed inadequate in combating truancy or poor attendance the Educational Welfare Service should be informed by school.
- A pupil is deemed late if they are not present at lines or in form when instructed when the school starts at 8.40am. Pupils should allow time to get to their position of lining up before 8.40am. Students arriving to form or lines after 8.40am will be marked late, required to enter through the front of school and hand in their mobile phone which they will receive back on completion of a 15-minute late to school detention on that day.
- If a pupil arrives at school after 9.30am, in line with government guidance, they will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence (U code). Please note that this counts as an unauthorised absence for a pupil's morning mark and will impact their attendance.
- If a pupil is late, they will be placed on a after school correction that day (15 minutes).
- If a pupil does not attend the 15-minute correction, they will be placed on a 45 minute C4 after school correction the following day. Notification will be sent via Arbor to parents, informing them of the date and the duration of the correction.
- Pupils who achieve 97% and 100% attendance each half term will receive virtual recognition via Arbor from the Progress Leader and Senior Link for their year.
- Pupils who receive 100% each week will be awarded RISE points.

- Pupils who have completed a whole half-term, term or academic year without absence will be acknowledged and celebrated.
- If your child is absent from school through illness the absence will be authorised with a phone call, email, or message via Arbor from parents on the day they return to school. If your child's attendance has been identified as a concern, electronic copies of medical verification must be provided for the absence to be authorised.
- Routinely, absences of 10 sessions (5 days) or more will not be authorised unless medical verification is provided in the form of an appointment card, prescription counter foil, doctor's note, or packaging for medication. Electronic copies are requested where possible. Please note that any evidence must be dated to support the date of absence.
- Parents and carers are asked to contact the school on the first morning of absence by 8.40am either by phone or email and contact each day the absence continues.
- At any point during an absence a member of staff from school may visit in order to satisfy safeguarding regulation and offer support where necessary

## 4. PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND TO COMBAT TRUANCY

Truancy from school: Is staying away from school for any reason other than:

- Illness of the pupil
- When the parents have obtained the school's prior permission by requesting leave of absence and this has been approved by the designated member of staff.
- Note that truancy is often not condoned by parents, but legally, it is still truancy. The schools' Behaviour for Learning policy will be followed in cases of truancy.
- The investigation of absence and truancy is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer who will report to; The Home School Liaison Officer, Progress Leader, Personal Tutor and Education Welfare Officer.

## 5. COMPULSORY CATCH UP

Poor attendance can lead to large learning gaps in pupils' learning. Compulsory Catch Up will provide pupils with the support to catch up on any learning that has been missed through absence.

When a pupil has been absent from a lesson, they are expected to catch up in their own time on any work that has been missed. When pupils return from an absence, they should use the Compulsory Catch Up Sheet which can be collected from their Personal Tutor, Progress Leader, Assistant Progress Leader or Progress Leader to make a record of the work they have missed for each subject. Once the pupils have completed the work, they must bring their Catch-Up log to their subject teacher who will sign it to confirm they have completed the relevant work for that subject.

Pupils are required to complete all catch-up work before Friday of the week following their absence. Pupils who have not completed all catch-up work will be required to stay for compulsory catch up on the Friday of the week following their absence where the school will provide support. Parents will be notified of this via Arbor.

## 6. PUNCTUALITY

The school day starts promptly at 8.40am. Note that pupils who are not present in lines or in personal tutor rooms before the 8:40am bell will be marked as late. Pupils who are marked as late will be required to hand their mobile phones into staff and will receive a after school correction for 15 minutes. If a pupil does not attend the 15-minute correction, they will be placed on a 45 minute C4 after school correction the following day. Notification will be sent via Arbor to parents, informing them of the date and the duration of the correction. This correction will be used to discuss the reason for being late and what support can be offered to improve the pupils' punctuality. If a child fails to attend their C4 detention then they will be placed in the AC in line with the Expectations for Learning policy.

### Persistently Late Pupils

If a pupil has accumulated more than 6 late marks over the previous 6 weeks, they will be classed as 'persistently late'. Parents will be notified via Arbor when a pupil has met this threshold and to arrange a parental meeting to set targets for the 6-week review.

The following process will be followed for those pupils who are on the persistent late list:

- If a persistently late pupil receives a further late mark, then a C4 detention will be issued.
- Pupils will remain on the persistently late list for a period of 6 weeks, after which a review will take place to review their punctuality.
- If a pupil fails to make the necessary improvements to their punctuality during the 6-week period, parents/carers will be invited into school to discuss the next steps.
- Pupils who fail to follow the process for persistent lateness will have escalated sanctioning in line with the Expectations for Learning Policy.

We understand that there may be occasions when pupils will be late for school due to unavoidable reasons. If this is the case, we ask that this is supported with a note or phone call from parents or guardians.

## 7. PERSONAL TUTOR (PASTORAL STAFF)

Personal Tutors and Progress Leaders play a key role implementing this policy. Personal Tutors will routinely discuss the importance of high levels of attendance with students and will review student attendance on a regular basis. Personal Tutors will use Arbor to identify any trends in absences and to also reward students for positive attendance levels.

## 8. SUBJECT TEACHERS

When a pupil is missing from their lesson for no apparent reason subject teachers should inform members of the attendance team who will follow the procedures outlined under General Guidelines, so that the pupil's absence can be further investigated. Subject teachers should monitor their class registers to check for patterns of irregular attendance. Subject teachers can also contribute to the reduction of unauthorised absence by delivering interesting and engaging lessons and insisting on punctuality for themselves, colleagues and pupils.

## 9. POLICE

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 the police now have powers to remove truants found in public places and to return them either to their schools or a place of safety designated by the LA.

## 10. INTERNAL TRUANCY

a) Is either, registering and then leaving school, or missing particular lessons.

b) A register should be marked by the class teacher in every lesson.

c) The Attendance Team should continue to check and monitor attendance marks and codes throughout the day and flag any students who have previously been marked in, but have not received a mark for a specific lesson/lessons.

d) The Personal Tutor should check the register from the previous day to see if there were any incidences of absent marks for lessons. If internal truancy is discovered, then the Personal Tutor should take this up with the pupil; inform the Attendance Team and Progress Leader.

e) Internal truancy will be sanctioned in line with the Expectations for Learning Policy.

## 11. PROGRESS LEADERS AND ASSISTANT PROGRESS LEADERS SHOULD

Liaise with the Attendance Team and Personal Tutors, to ensure that the system is working and organise a full year attendance check where it is deemed appropriate. Look for patterns of non-attendance, internal and external truancy in consultation with the Attendance Team and Senior Link for the year.

## 12. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

All children of compulsory school age should receive suitable education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. If a child is registered at school, parents have the legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends regularly.

## 13. THE PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

To help fulfil their important role in their child's education, and to be as informed as possible in any communications or discussions with teachers, parents are requested:

- To ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually;
- To notify the school if their child cannot attend for any reason with a phone call/email/Arbor message to the school by 8:40am on the first day of absence and every subsequent day of absence, this is for the child's safety as well as administrative reasons;
- To work with the School and Education Welfare Service to resolve/alleviate any attendance problems or protracted absence;
- To ensure they request a 'leave of absence' form for their child if required during term time. Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Take an interest in their child's schoolwork;
- Support the School in its efforts to control poor behaviour;

## 14. PUPILS

- Pupils are actively encouraged to attend school regularly and to arrive punctually at school and at the start of lessons.
- Pupils should inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to their absence, e.g. bullying, racism, personal issues etc.
- Pupils will pass on absence notification from parents to their tutor.

## 15. LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) & EDUCATIONAL WELFARE SERVICE (EWS)

A. **Prosecution** - the LA has a statutory responsibility to ensure that a parent of a child of compulsory school age is registered at a school and attends regularly. If a parent fails to do this the LA may bring prosecution under the Education Act (1996). As a parent you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly and is punctual. If you fail to ensure this, you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996) which may lead to a fine of up to £2500 and/or a prison sentence. You may find yourself issued with a penalty notice.

B. **Penalty Notice** - the LA in conjunction with the school may issue a Penalty Notice if a child has 10 or more unauthorised sessions in a rolling 10-week period, where the pupil's attendance is causing concern and, or below 95% or if the child is absent for school due to an unauthorised holiday. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

   The penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The school must have notified the parents of the days the pupil must not be present in a public place. This type of penalty notice is not included in the National Framework and therefore not subject to the same considerations about support being provided or count towards the limit as part of the escalation process in the case of repeat offences for non-attendance. These penalty notices are charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

   Non-payment of fines can lead to prosecution under the Education Act (1996)

C. Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases on repeat offences-

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

## 16. THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body is legally responsible for many aspects of school management including the attendance register and so it is registered with the Data Protection Registrar under the Data Protection Act 1998. However, the Lead Principal manages the day-to-day running of the school and in so doing takes responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of this policy. The school will ensure that the register is marked with the standardised codes in accordance with the 2024 registration regulations. A copy of the registration regulations is available on request.

## 17. INITIATIVES TO IMPROVE ATTENDANCE RATES

The school has considered initiatives that are best for the school and students and always considers a pupil's individual circumstances, e.g. setting reward schemes such as electronic certificates for 100% attendance or effort to attend. Other helpful initiatives include:

- Implementing first day contact with parents of children who are absent from school without prior knowledge. It is hoped that this sends a clear signal to pupils and parents that absence is a matter of concern and will be followed up;
- Regular contact and support for parents and carers regarding their child's attendance.
- Encouraging attendance checks, scheduled or unscheduled, which is effective in monitoring post registration truancy;
- Live up to date attendance information for parents at all times via Synergy.
- Use of RISE points alongside a range of rewards to celebrate exceptional attendance or improved attendance.
- Having a senior member of staff responsible for attendance;
- The introduction of breakfast, break and lunch clubs.
- A pupil's attendance will be considered when applying for pupil leadership positions such as Students Leaders and Prefects. Exceptional attendance is compulsory for these roles along with school trips and reward trips.
- Weekly compulsory catch up to ensure learning and progress is supported through the catch up of any work missed though absence.

## 18. THE INTRODUCTION OF MENTORING

- Learning Mentors are school-based employees who help identify and support pupils by early intervention and by helping them overcome problems inside and outside of school, leaving teachers more free time to teach. The role of the Mentor includes Contributing to assessment of pupils entering or returning to school; after periods of long-term absence an appropriate reintegration package will be discussed between all parties.
- Students who are struggling to attend school as a result of Emotional Based School None Attendance (EBSNA) will receive additional support from the Care, Guidance and Support team who are trained in this complex area. The school may also access support, input and advice from the local authority and the EWO for students in this situation.

## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW:

### 19. PUPILS

The degree to which the social inclusion targets have been met – these include,

- pupil achievement, e.g. increase in attendance over time;
- the numbers of fixed-period and/or permanent exclusions;
- Any improvements in the support infrastructure for disruptive and disaffected pupils and those responsible for teaching them;
- The number, frequency, or extent of incidents of poor behaviour in school;
- The rate of reintegration into mainstream education of pupils who have been out of school;
- The incidences of bullying;
- Any pertinent feedback from pupil voice, this may take the form of questionnaires such as moods and feelings and Strength and Difficulty Questionnaires (SDQ).

### 20. OUTSIDE AGENCIES & LA

- The instigation of effective links with LA's behaviour support plans;
- The effectiveness of a partnership approach, making full and appropriate use of the experience and expertise of all agencies with relevant skills, e.g. the Education Welfare and Educational Psychology Services, voluntary organisations, and the private sector wherever appropriate;

### 21. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION

A child going missing from education, particularly repeatedly, can be a warning sign of a range of safeguarding issues. This might include abuse or neglect, such as sexual abuse or exploitation or child criminal exploitation, or issues such as mental health problems, substance abuse, radicalisation, FGM or forced marriage.

There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education, but some children are particularly at risk. These include children who:

- Are at risk of harm or neglect
- Are at risk of forced marriage or FGM
- Come from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller families
- Come from the families of service personnel
- Go missing or run away from home or care
- Are supervised by the youth justice system
- Cease to attend a school
- Come from new migrant families

Children who have failed to take up a school place or who have been unexpectedly absent from school for 5 or more consecutive school days are potential Children Missing from Education. We will follow our procedures for unauthorised absence and for dealing with children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual

exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of going missing in future. This includes informing the local authority if a child leaves the school without a new school being named and adhering to requirements with respect to sharing information with the local authority, when applicable, when removing a child's name from the admission register at non-standard transition points.

Staff will be trained in signs to look out for and the individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risks of potential safeguarding concerns which may be related to being missing, such as travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage. Staff will also be trained to identify and support students who demonstrate Emotional Based School Non-Attendance factors (EBSNA)

If a staff member suspects that a child is suffering from harm or neglect, we will follow local child protection procedures, including with respect to making reasonable enquiries. We will make an immediate referral to the local authority children's social care team, and the police, if the child is suffering or likely to suffer from harm, or in immediate danger.

## 22. PLANNING

- The consideration of attendance issues in development planning (to include behaviour policy). Planning should have a clear implementation strategy and statement of objectives and targets, together with performance indicators against which the effectiveness of provision can be measured;
- The effects on school ethos/atmosphere related to attendance and related policies;

## 23. STAFF/INSET

- Involvement by all staff in INSET courses relating to attendance issues;
- Senior Leadership involvement in attendance issues;
- Any improvements in the support infrastructure for disruptive and disaffected pupils and those responsible for teaching them;

## 24. INDEPENDENT REPORTS

- Analysis and publication of OFSTED/HMI/LA reports and Challenge Partners.

## 25. CATEGORIES OF AUTHORISED ABSENCE

For all absence known in advance pupils should be encouraged to give advance notice and to supply evidence in electronic form where possible, such as dental appointment cards, a letter of invitation for interviews, etc. In all cases tutors should consider criteria such as the nature of the event; its frequency (is it a one-off, or likely to become a regular occurrence?); whether the parent gave advance notice; the pupil's overall attendance pattern, etc.

a. **Illness, medical and dental appointments**- pupils should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours. A pupil receiving medical treatment on site should be marked 'present'. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools and EWOs can consult the School Health Service, or the pupil's GP and medical verification may be sought.

b. **Interviews with prospective employers**, or for a place at another school (including entrance examinations): If the interview takes place during Year 11 and the school is satisfied it is linked to future education or employment prospects, absence can be recorded as 'approved educational activity.'

c. **Dual Registration**: Where a pupil is dually registered at two institutions, e.g. a mainstream school and a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) or special school, the pupil is registered as having an approved education activity while they are attending the other institution. A similar situation arises whilst traveller children are traveling; during this time they should enrol with another school. N.B. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not acceptable alternatives to attendance at school.

d. **Public performances**: The Local Authority must license a pupil aged 5 – 16 to take part in a public performance. Licensed participation should therefore clearly be treated as authorised absence.

e. **Birth of a child to a pupil**: A pupil who becomes pregnant should be allowed up to 18 weeks' authorised absence to cover the time immediately before and after the birth of the child. This period will include two 6-week periods of tutoring to support the pupil.

f. **Approved educational activities off-site**: The following activities show when the approved educational activity category can be used:

   - Field trips and educational visits, in this country and overseas with school.
   - Participation in or attendance at approved sporting activities;
   - Interviews with prospective employers, schools or for a place at a further or higher education establishment;
   - Link courses, whereby pupils attend an FE college for part of the time;
   - Pupils receiving part of their tuition off-site at another location while remaining under overall supervision of the home school, i.e. a flexible arrangement short of formal dual registration. This can include special tuition for children with medical issues that remain on the school roll that receive home tuition.
   - Approved work experience placements.

### 26. EMPLOYMENT

While children are of compulsory school age, they may not be employed full-time. They are; however, free to undertake a range of part-time jobs. All children of compulsory school age who choose to work part-time must be registered with the Local Authority. For further details, contact your local Education Welfare Service. Please note that any part time job must not be during school hours.

### 27. EARLY LEAVING

A child enrolled in a school remains on the register until the last Friday in June in the year of their 16th birthday.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### 28. AIMS

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which the school monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. The school is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence is not taken in school time. Absence during term time for any reasons interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

## 29. THE LAW

From August 2024, The Department for Education statutory guidelines and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In addition, paragraph 38 of the DfE's Working Together to Improve Attendance states *'Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.'* This is the same for SEN and Non SEN students and advice from the DfE and Local Authority reinforces this.

## 30. LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

The school will not routinely grant permission for leave of absence to be taken in term time and discourage parents/carers making an application for leave except in "special or exceptional circumstances".

Leave of absence requests should be submitted 6 weeks prior to the requested date. Requests not submitted within this time frame may not be considered.

The school will only consider leave of absence for one period of absence within an academic year.

The school will not grant permission except when special/exceptional circumstances exist for leave to be taken in term time. The school will not grant a leave of absence in the following time periods.

- During transition time when a pupil is settling into school.
- During preparation time for examinations, including mock exams.
- During school and public examination periods and in the period surrounding course work deadline dates for all year groups.
- The pupil already has unauthorised absence or poor attendance.

## 31. SPECIAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Each leave of absence application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. If a pupil is meeting the school's expected attendance of 97%, the Head of School or person designated by the Head of School may consider that the following circumstances are "special" or "exceptional". This is not an exhaustive list but serves to indicate potential 'special' or 'exceptional' situations.

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for administrative purposes, family, religious or cultural reasons.
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation, and this has been confirmed by evidence from the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.

## 32. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parents/carers may be required to attend a meeting with the designated member of staff to discuss their request for term time leave.

Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for leave in term time within 10 school days of the date of the application.

When leave of absence during term time is agreed by the school, the absence will be recorded as 'C' on the school attendance register. This will mean that the absence has been recorded as authorised absence on the school attendance register.

If the leave of absence during term time is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'G'. This will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is taken out of school for leave of absence during term time without the prior permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £160.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice is paid within 21 days, the penalty reduced to £80.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days, the Local Authority will commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.