Attendance and the Law

Parents are legally responsible for making sure that their child attends school on a regular basis.

Attending Registration

Every school has to take a register of all students at the start of the day and in the afternoon. The Government allows schools to decide how long the registers will remain open, this is generally around 30 minutes, however this may be for a shorter period.

If a pupil arrives late to school but whilst the register is still open, they are marked as late (L on the attendance register). We believe that teaching students, the vital skill of reliability is important for them to achieve their full potential in school but also to support them for the wider world where punctuality is very important for employers and further education settings.

If a pupil arrives at school after the register has closed, without a satisfactory reason, this may be classed as an unauthorised absence (U code on the attendance register) and may lead to prosecution for not ensuring your child has regular school attendance.

Education Penalty Notices

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted. Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/pay-an-education-penalty-notice/#penalty

Leave in term-time

From 1st September 2013, the law gives no entitlement for parents to take their child on holiday during term time and we strongly advise parents against this. Any activity, holiday or event should be arranged during the 13 weeks of school closure. Leave of absence will have a detrimental impact on your child's educational achievement.

If leave of absence is taken during term-time parent/carers will receive a Penalty Notice from the Local Authority for taking a child out of school without the school's permission. From 1st September 2024 Penalty Notices cost £80 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days increasing to £160 per child, per parent if paid between 22 and 28 days.

From September 2024 fines can only be issued twice for unauthorised leave of absence during your child's time at school. On the third occasion we will be instructed to proceed to prosecution which then results in parents/ carers having to go to court which could have a detrimental impact as this gives a criminal conviction.

Further Information

DFE Document: Working Together to Improve Attendance (Effective 19th Aug 2024 onwards)

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance