Penalty Notices

This letter alerts you to the use of Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences from school. Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) believes that any absence from school, for whatever reason, is detrimental to a child's long-term life opportunities and should therefore be avoided wherever possible. Reducing absence from school is a key priority, both nationally and locally, because missing school affects a child's attainment, disrupts routines, and may leave a child vulnerable to anti-social behaviour or youth crime.

A Penalty Notice is one option available to help secure an improvement in a child's attendance. A Penalty Notice can be requested by a headteacher, their authorised deputy or assistant headteacher, the police, or neighbouring local authorities.

If a request for a Penalty Notice is made and the relevant PCC checklist has been completed, and PCC accepts the request, the parent(s)/carer(s) will receive a formal written warning. This warning advises that they may receive a Penalty Notice and provides a period of 15 school days in which they may respond. During this 15-day period, the person(s) to whom the warning letter is addressed may submit any evidence they wish the school to consider, including medical evidence, to explain the absences. The headteacher or authorised person within the school will then determine whether the evidence is accepted and whether the register should be amended.

If evidence is not provided, or if the headteacher/authorised person does not accept the evidence, the headteacher will notify PCC, and a Penalty Notice may then be issued by PCC by first-class post. ***Please note that Penalty Notices may be issued separately to each parent or carer responsible for the child's attendance, including where they live within the same household.***

Payment information is as follows:

- If payment of £60 is made within 28 days of receipt of the notice, no further action will be taken.
- If payment is not made within the first 28 days, the penalty increases to £120, payable within 42 days of receipt of the notice.
- If payment of £120 is made within 42 days, no further action will be taken.
- If payment is not made within 42 days, the notice will either be withdrawn or the matter will be prosecuted under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Please remember that if there are reasons why your child is missing school, you can seek support and guidance from staff at your child's school. Please do ask for help before attendance becomes a significant concern.

www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/schoolattendance

Data Protection Act - *All information provided will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.*