



Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

When the school, parents and students are working together to maximise attendance, this helps to foster positive relationships, high self-esteem, continuity of study and high achievement.

Students are expected to attend school every day that the school is open (100% of the time) unless they are unable to do so due to illness or unavoidable cause.

Good attendance is recognised through positive comments from teachers, support staff, tutors and certificates are awarded etc. See [APPENDIX 1](#) for schools that have individual reward systems to promote good attendance.

Daily Procedures for monitoring attendance:

Registers and monitoring of attendance is the responsibility of the tutors/classroom teachers in the first instance. Tutors/classroom teachers will ask pupils for letters explaining absence, look for patterns of absence or poor attendance. In addition they will comment on regular good attendance. If tutors/class teachers have problems in obtaining letters authorising absences or are concerned about any aspect of attendance, the pastoral team (secondary)/senior staff (primary) should be notified and will make contact with the parents.

If a pupil is absent without any contact from parents the pastoral team/classroom teacher should try and make contact with the parent.

In our primary schools some of the procedures may vary, but the principle of ensuring the best possible attendance remains, as does the meticulous tracking and following up of absence.

Regular attendance reviews

There are usually fortnightly meetings between pastoral team members/senior staff in primary and the assistant head teacher to review attendance. These meetings are to review attendance and any agency interventions required. In addition actions that need to be taken including referrals to EWO or other agencies and Medical Action Plans. The following groups of students are reviewed at those meetings:

- pupils referred to the EWO;
- pupils with attendance under 90% (Persistent Absentees);
- pupils with attendance under 96%;
- pupils of "at risk" groups eg. ethnic minorities, SEN, LAC, FSM, Other PP;
- school refusers;
- end of year review to establish students that need to be retained on first day calling or monitoring for the next academic year.

In secondary schools fortnightly meetings are also held with the EWO and Assistant Head to review caseload and plan additional interventions.

In primary schools EWO will meet regularly with senior staff to discuss issues and take appropriate action.

Action taken following reviews

From the end of term, if a child's attendance falls below 96%, the school will contact parents by letter to highlight the importance of good attendance and that their child's attendance has fallen below the school target.

Where attendance is a cause for concern, usually when attendance falls below 96%, the pastoral team/senior staff will liaise with the tutor/classroom teacher.

The following actions will be taken in accordance with the review procedures;

- contact made with parents, usually by letter;
- if there has been no improvement, a second letter is sent informing parents that further absences will not be authorised unless supported with evidence;
- if there is no improvement or still cause for concern, a second letter / contact is made inviting parents in to meet with Pastoral Team/Classroom Teacher as appropriate;
- if there is still no improvement or still cause for concern, either a further meeting will be held or a referral made to the EWO. Parents will be notified of a referral;
- possible request for information from the GP, school doctor or school nurse;
- referral to outside agencies if appropriate;
- legal action including issuing of penalty notice requests.

Additional support that may be used:

- school nurse;
- mentoring particularly with Pastoral Team/Classroom Teacher;
- referral to outside agencies e.g. psychologist, CAHMS, Social services, Compass, Parents Support, reintegration support, careers advisors, Youth Connect, CMES, Behaviour Panel, GP.

Absence during term time:

Absence during term time will not be authorised unless there are **very** exceptional circumstances and never at the following times:

- KS1 & KS2 SATS assessments;
- beginning of KS3 as pupils find it difficult to settle;
- Year 9 Assessments;
- KS4 due to examination preparations;
- if the pupil should be taking external examinations including GCSE module examinations;
- if attendance is under 96%;
- if there would be more than 10 days absence in any academic year.

If absences are not authorised, and they are still taken, the matter will be referred to the Children Missing Education Service and a penalty notice requested. If unauthorised holiday is taken no further absences will be authorised without medical evidence.

Further details of this (including cost) are included on the Penalty Notice Parents Information Sheet.

Procedures: A Leave of Absence Form can be collected from the main school offices. This should be completed by the parents/carers and passed to the pastoral team/classroom teacher at least two weeks ahead of the absence. The pastoral team/classroom teacher will review the attendance and pass to the Headteacher with regard to formal authorisation. If the absence is authorised this will be marked in the register and a letter will be sent to that effect.

If the absence is not authorised the parent will be notified in writing by post or email.

The Headteacher, will be responsible for overseeing the Penalty Notice Request.

Additional Notes:

- tutors/classroom teachers are to have print outs of pupils in their groups under 90% attendance and who need monitoring;
- pastoral team/senior staff are to have print outs of the pupils who are under 90% attendance - with notes;
- pastoral team/classroom teacher will have a file with the details of any pupil with under 96% attendance including action taken. Senior staff will oversee this to ensure consistency across the school;
- pastoral team/classroom teacher need to know which pupils require monitoring;

- if a child is absent and the parent has not made contact with the school, the pastoral team/classroom teacher/receptionist will telephone home;
- report to be done with relevant information about action taken;
- there will be an annual report on attendance broken down by categories: girls, boys, years, ethnic origin, looked after pupils, SEN, FSM. There will be a central copy of this report.

Child Missing Education Service:

- the CMES will be given details of pupils causing concern through poor attendance;
- the CMES will be informed of any exclusions;
- the advice of the CMES will be sought with “stuck cases”, possibly to involve eg meeting;
- the CMES may be invited to medical action plan and school attendance meetings;
- formal referrals will be made to the CMES when attendance drops below 90% or 20 absences or when there are extensive unauthorised absences;
- review meetings held with lower attendees in KS4.

Some schools in the Midsomer Norton Schools' Partnership have different reward system in place for promoting and rewarding high attendance.

Beechen Cliff Secondary School



Praise and rewards have an important part to play in motivation pupils/students to achieve and maintain good or improved levels of attendance.

These rewards operate:

1. On an individual basis
2. On a Tutor Group basis
3. On a Year basis
4. Whole school

Categories to be rewarded:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------|
| 1. Excellent attendance | 100% |
| 2. Good attendance | 98% |

Tutors, Deputy Heads of Houses and Heads of Houses can send individual letters home praising good attendance. This process will be co-ordinated by Deputy Heads of House.

Critchill School (see appendix 2)



Longvernal Primary School

- Autumn term – Medal and certificate for 100% attendance, awarded at celebration assembly
- Spring term – Medal and certificate for 100% attendance, awarded at celebration assembly
- Summer term – Medal, certificate and trophy for 100% attendance for whole year, awarded at celebration assembly



Midsomer Norton Primary School

- The 3 classes with the best attendance will be celebrated in our weekly celebration assembly and in our weekly newsletter
- At the end of each term there is a special reward for children who have achieved attendance at 100% for that term
- Children with 97%+ attendance, receive a special attendance certificate, signed by the Head Teacher to take home and keep. Certificates are presented each half term, to reward those who achieve excellent attendance.
- Only pupils achieving 100% attendance and 6 lates or fewer for the whole school year, are eligible for the end of year reward.
- Pupils are informed on a weekly basis of attendance/punctuality achievements. The class achieving the highest attendance/punctuality, and the number of pupils achieving 97% -100% attendance are shared in termly assemblies.



Norton Hill

- 100% attendance for terms 1& 2; terms 3 & 4 and terms 5 & 6.
- 99% attendance for the year.
- 100% attendance for the year which are awarded at celebration assemblies.
- Parent's whose Child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence will receive a FPN warning letter. Any further unauthorised absences will result in a FPN.



- Tutor groups with the highest level of attendance at the end of the academic year will be rewarded a non-uniform day.

In monitoring of attendance at Norton Hill School parents/carers will be sent a letter notifying them when their child's attendance is below 96%.

Parents/Carers of pupils below 94% will receive a persistent absentee information letter and the guidance the school follows in relation to persistent absentees.

Parents/Carers of pupils whose attendance does not improve after the initial letter will be invited to meet with Pastoral staff to complete an action plan to improve attendance.

Parents/Carers of pupils whose attendance is a concern (below 90%) will be referred to the EWO.

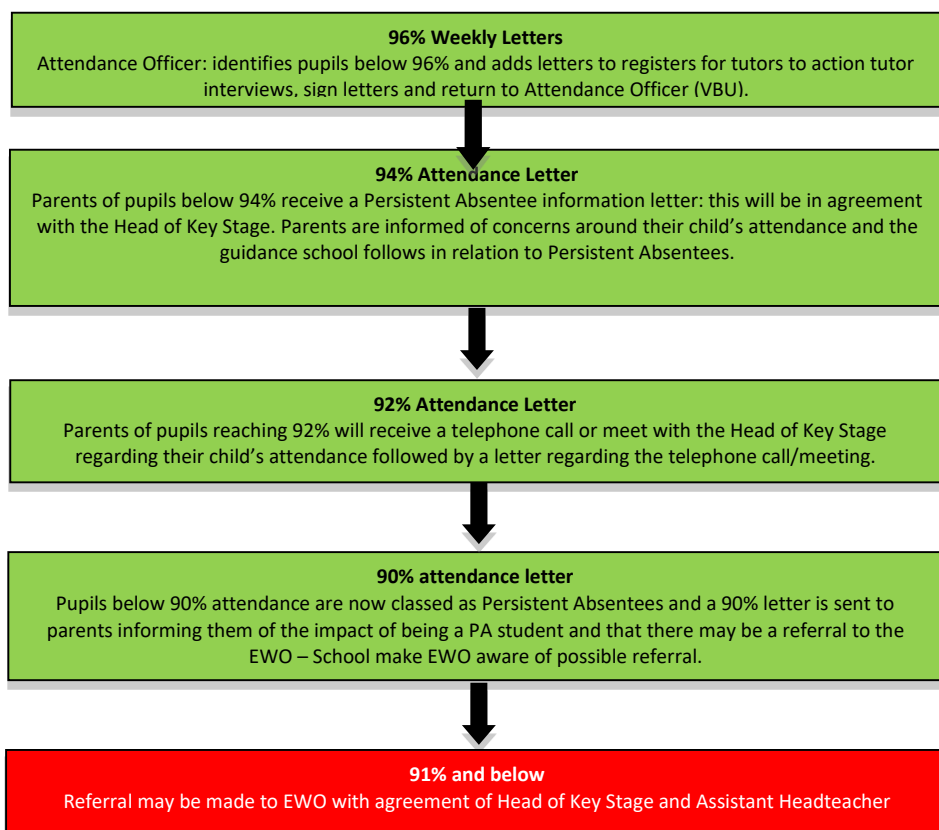
Somervale School

- A non-uniform day for 100% attendance in each term;
- 99% attendance for the year;
- 100% attendance for the year which are awarded at the annual celebration evening.



Please note that Somervale School are currently piloting a slightly different process for their regular reviews of attendance as follows;

- From April 2017- 94% letters will be sent to parents agreed with HOKS to address concerns.
- Warning letter re: Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) will be issued after 5 sessions and FPN issued at 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.

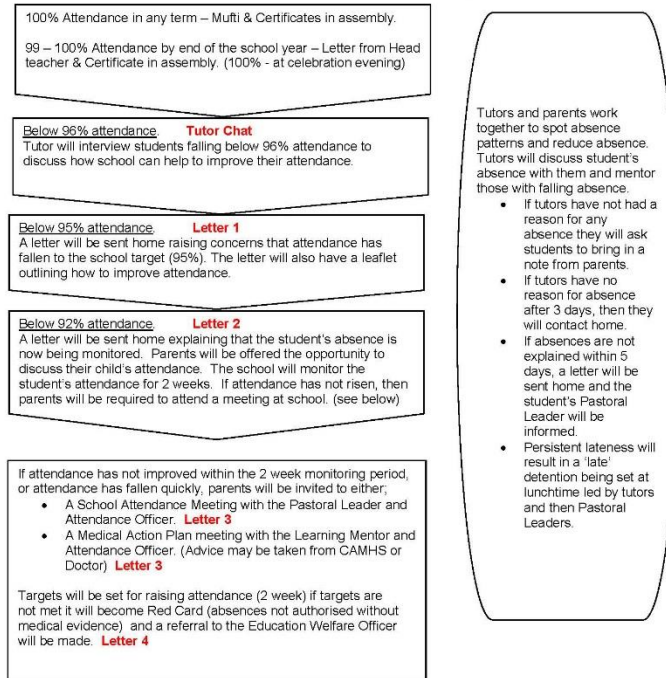




St Dunstan's

- A non-uniform day for 100% attendance in each term.
- 100% attendance for the year which are awarded at the annual celebration evening.

Attendance Flow Chart



Parents should notify the school by phone by 8.50 if their child is going to be absent that day. If parents have not contacted the school, and their child is not present in registration, the pastoral admin assistant will contact home to notify parents that their child is not present at school.

All houses will have an expectations assembly at the start of each year to highlight the importance of good attendance to school. It will also be revisited termly when celebrating the success of those tutor groups with the best attendance and punctuality.

Leave of absence will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances. Sickness will be unauthorised after 3 days if there is no medical evidence. It will be suggested that sickness should mean 24hours off school.

Education Welfare Service

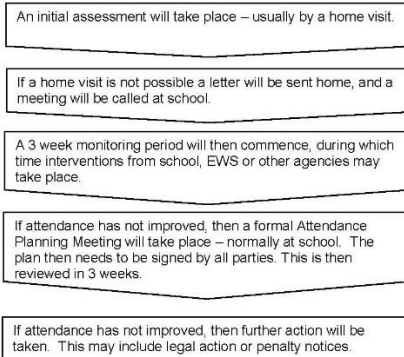
The Education Welfare Service Officer (EWS) meets with Pastoral Leaders, Learning Mentors and Pastoral Admin Assistant once a fortnight to review students whose attendance is causing concern and to discuss what actions and consequences have taken place. All actions are logged on the Red Cards for those whose attendance has fallen to that level.

EWS will look at lists of students below 96%, so that students whose attendance is falling are recognised quickly.

EWS may attend School Attendance meetings or Medical Action Plan meetings. (The school nurse may attend medical action plan meetings.)

If a student's attendance does not meet targets set in meetings held at school, the student's Pastoral Leader will consider whether a referral to the Education Welfare Services (EWS) is necessary and the Pastoral Admin Assistant will ensure that the referral is made.

Once a referral has been made the following process will take place.



St Mark's Secondary School



At St Mark's School we like to celebrate achievement.

Our Rewards System is based on House Points. Students have the opportunity to earn House Points in numerous ways. House Points are then put into a Prize Draw and the student has an opportunity to win a substantial prize.

Students with 100% attendance for the year receive a certificate and 10 house points and are invited to attend our Rewards Evening.

For every week a student has 100% attendance, they automatically receive 2 house points.

Every week Tutors are sent Attendance data for their tutees. Students are awarded with stickers and House Points if their attendance stays at 100% or increases from the week before. If the attendance drops then Tutors will enquire why and see if any support is needed.

Every Term, if a student's attendance falls between 97 – 100%, they are rewarded with a Certificate and 5 House Points.

As a school, we are keen to recognise and reward those students who consistently meet our expectations around behaviour and attendance. After consultation with the School Council, we have decided that a mufti day each half term is one way to show our recognition of their efforts. This will be done in Term 3 on a trial basis. Please see further details below.

Attendance

We want to reward students who attend school all day every day as we know this will help them make progress and achieve the best they possibly can in their time with us. Therefore, any student who achieves 100% attendance in a half term across the morning and afternoon sessions for the whole of the given half term will be entitled to wear mufti on the first Thursday of the following half term. In terms of this reward, no exemptions will be made for any students regarding any absences accrued either authorised or unauthorised. Any student with any absences (mornings after 9.10am) will not achieve this reward and will therefore not be entitled to wear MUFTI on the specified day.

Students will be informed by their Pastoral Progress Leaders on the first Monday/Tuesday of Term 4 as to whether they have achieved the above rewards and therefore if they are eligible for either or both of the half termly MUFTI reward(s). Any students not eligible for the above rewards must attend school in full school uniform.

Each half term, every student will have another opportunity to achieve this reward if they fulfil the criteria as above. If a student does not qualify for mufti in one half term, they can still achieve it the following half term.

*Where a student has a long-term condition related to their SEND which requires time off for hospital appointments, this will be taken into consideration. In line with Guidance in the Equalities Act 2010, reasonable adjustments will ensure that disabled children, including those with a long term medical condition, are not placed at a disadvantage to other children within our rewards system. All adjustments will be part of the SEND provision coordinated by the school SENDCO and will form part of the students pre-planned support package.

St Mary's Primary School



Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff. To help us all focus on this we will:

- give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters
- report to parents/carers annually on their child's attendance with the annual school report
- notify parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below 92%



Warning letter

Attendance Officer identifies students where attendance is below 96%. A Letter will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen to the school target of 96% and the guidance the school follows in relation to absence and mentoring. Parents asked to contact Attendance Officer to confirm receipt.

Attendance 95% or below School attendance meeting

A letter will be sent home explaining that the students' absence is now being monitored. Parents will be offered the opportunity to discuss their child's attendance with the Attendance Officer. This meeting will take place with parent and/or student. Minutes of this meeting will be sent home and a review will take place after two weeks.

Senior Leader attendance meeting

If attendance has fallen during the review period a Senior Leader Meeting will be arranged with the student and parents. Clear targets will be set and other intervention strategies will be discussed/implemented. A review will take place after two weeks.

Improvement

Attendance Officer will monitor and will contact should attendance decline again.

No improvement

A referral will be made to the Local Authority (CMEO). Persistent absence students (under 90%) - cases will be managed by the Attendance Officer.

Absence

Parents should notify the school by phoning by 08.50 if their child is going to be absent that day. If parents have not contacted the school then an email will be sent home to notify parents that their child has not arrived for morning registration. Morning registration closes at 09.30.

Leave of absence will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

No absence due to illness will be authorised after three consecutive days unless medical evidence is provided.

Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) warning letter will be issued after 5 sessions of unauthorised absence and FPN issued at 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.

Rewards

- 100% attendance certificate and letter home for terms 1&2, terms 3&4 and terms 5&6.
- 100% attendance certificate for the year at celebration assemblies.
- 99/100% attendance letter home at the end of the year.
- Year group competition - tutor groups with highest attendance weekly and termly will receive Progress Leader rewards e.g. - mufti day or sports activity.
- Year group competition - Year group with the highest attendance at the end of the year rewarded with mufti day or a specifically targeted activity.



Appendix 2

Critchill School Attendance Procedures

Aims

Our attendance policy is relevant to all pupils at Critchill School, including Post 16 students and aims to:

- Support all pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- Enable all pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment.

Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all pupils have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer.

As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly.

Expectations

We expect that all pupils will:

- Attend school every day
- Attend school punctually

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually.
- Discuss promptly with the class teacher or School Office any problems that may affect their child's school attendance.
- Ensure that they contact the school daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.

Examples	Authorised Absences	Unauthorised Absences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genuine illness of the child; • hospital/dental/doctor's appointment for the child; • Prescription or evidence of medication • major religious observances • visits to prospective new schools • External exams or educational assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shopping /day trip / visit to a theme park; • a birthday treat; • oversleeping due to a late night; • looking after other children / other family member; • Appointments for other family members.

- If a pupil is absent for more than 4 days due to illness a parent will need to provide Medical Evidence before the illness is marked as absent. This may be an appointment ticket or card for the drop in centre or doctors.
- Medical appointments are made out of school time if possible. If these are within school time an appointment letter/card to evidence this is shared with the school office.
- Contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.

- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

We expect that the school will:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's or parent's concerns.
- Keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- Contact parents when a pupil fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence. If we have no contact with the parents for 2 days we will try to gain contact by calling all other contact details we have for the child. After 10 days we will register the child as a 'Child Missing in Education' and inform the EWO.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. (Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a Consultant, Paediatrician or other relevant body may be requested.)
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of pupils whose attendance is falling below thresholds. As a result, Critchill School have set a 'level of concern' threshold of 92.5% and parents of pupil's who fall below this will be contacted.
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality.
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Education Welfare Service may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality when attending school is crucial. Lateness causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is really important therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

The school doors are open from 9.00am until 9.20am

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil.
- Registration takes place at 9.05am and children who arrive after 9.20am will be recorded as late.
- Registers close at 9.30am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the Local Authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.15pm.
- Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with through a letter home to parents after five lates and a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher after 10 lates and may be referred to the Education Welfare Service.
- A pupil's attendance is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

Pupils Leaving During the School Day

The school staff must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the School Office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.

- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the children as a missing person.

Leave of Absence

The school holidays and INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change. Holidays should be taken during these times.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations (Appendix 1), holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the School Office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and the Education Welfare Service will be notified.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance.

Penalty Notices for Holidays

In line with the amendments made to The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when pupils are taken out of school for 5 or more day's holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- Penalty notices are issued to each parent, for each pupil.

The Education Welfare Service can also instigate legal proceeding against parents under section 444 Education Act 1996 or apply to family proceeding court for an Education Supervision Order to secure regular attendance.

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

- At Critchill School we hold regular reviews of attendance. If a pupil's attendance is identified as a cause of concern then a letter is sent to advise parents.
- If there is no improvement then a second letter is sent inviting parents to a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher. If attendance remains a concern then a referral is made to the Education Welfare Service.
- The Education Welfare Service may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent/carers who are failing to secure their children's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measures to improve attendance proposed by the school or EWS Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

Changing Schools

- It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Critchill School as soon as possible. (An Annual Review would then be arranged).
- A child will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:
 - The date the child will be leaving the school and starting the next.
 - The address of the new school.
 - A new home address if appropriate.

The child's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the child will be registered as Missing from Education and the Local Authority will be notified.