



Children's Services
(Education and Inclusion)
King's House
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Date 19th June 2015
Our ref: GM

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To All Parents/Carers,

Re: School Attendance

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance Matters!

DFE research suggests that if a student's attendance improves by 1%, attainment improves by 5-6%. Therefore, in order to support excellent attendance across the City, Brighton & Hove City Council has revised the Code of Conduct. The revised document is an important part of a range of strategies and policies we use to support excellent attendance and attainment for students.

In Brighton & Hove we aim to ensure that all pupils attend school all of the time and our commitment is to promote excellent school attendance. We know that this is a priority for all schools. Pupils who attend school all of the time are more likely to positively develop academically and socially, improving their life chances. Schools will be using various strategies to support students and families and working together to raise attendance. Where a need for an external support agency is identified, it will be discussed with families and appropriate referrals will be made.

You may or may not know, that it is a legal requirement under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 that parents of children of compulsory school age ensure that their child/ren receive full-time education. A child reaches compulsory school age at the start of the term on or after their fifth birthday, and continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday of June in the school year that they reach 16. A Fixed Penalty Notice cannot be issued to children in reception who have not yet reached compulsory school age. Additionally, this legislation does not apply to parents who have chosen to educate their children at home under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

In addition to the above, Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 enable Local Authorities to issue penalty notices for certain offences. These notices can be used as an

alternative to prosecution under section 444 and enable parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty. This Code of Conduct is issued under The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended). The Council's Behaviour and Attendance Team is authorised to act under this code and will ensure the consistent, fair and transparent application of the policy regarding penalty notices throughout the City.

To raise awareness of the new Code of Conduct, schools must ensure that literature provided to parents/carers in connection with attendance must include the warning that parents/carers may be issued with a penalty notice if leave is taken without permission. This literature might include Attendance and Behaviour Policies, Home School Agreements, website information etc.

Schools must also ensure that if a parent has had their request for leave during term time refused because of lack of evidence of exceptional circumstances, parents are issued with a warning letter.

Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "G. Manton". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Gill Manton
Attendance Lead