School attendance

Attending school regularly is very important to your child’s future. Children who miss school frequently can easily fall behind with their school work and may do less well in their exams.

Peterborough City Council, like all local authorities, has a duty to promote good school attendance for all children registered at their schools.

Research shows that children who do not attend school regularly achieve less well in their tests and exams and have more likelihood of being involved in antisocial behaviour or crime.

The Law

By law, all children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the first term following their 5th birthday. Once a child is of compulsory school age they must receive suitable full-time education. For most parents/carers, this means registering their child at a school. However, some choose to make other arrangements to provide a suitable, full-time education.

Once your child is registered at a school, you are legally responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If your child fails to do so and there are no exceptional circumstances for an absence, you are at risk of being issued with a penalty notice or being prosecuted in court.

Unacceptable absences

➤ birthdays
➤ family Visits
➤ shopping
➤ looking after other family members.

Only the school can authorise absences. If you know your child is going to be absent, you must notify the school in advance with full details.

Non-attendance

If a school identifies a child as having low attendance, letters expressing their concern will be sent by the school and to ask parents to get in touch. The attendance service is also notified.

Within the letter, the school may request a meeting to advise parents of legal responsibilities and examine any issues that may be causing poor attendance and draw up an action plan to improve the situation. If parents do not attend this meeting, the attendance officer will offer a home visit to discuss the concerns.

If there is no improvement in the child’s attendance, a legal meeting will be held. Following this, if there is still no improvement, legal proceedings may follow (https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance).

Holidays in term time

Full school attendance is vital for your child’s educational progress and we expect all parents and carers to ensure their children attend school whenever possible. All Peterborough schools discourage any term time absence.

Request a leave of absence

If you want to take your child out of school, you must complete the school’s leave of absence request form. The school will then consider the request.
Absence without permission

If you choose to take your child out of school for a holiday or any other leave of absence without permission from school, it will be recorded as a period of unauthorised absence. This means that you may be issued a *penalty notice* (https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance) (a fine) to pay.

Pay for

- **Fixed Penalty Notice (over 21 and up to 28 days)** (https://ix.e-paycapita.com/AIP/itemSelectionPage.do?link=payitemSelectionPage&itemId=1398&languageCode=EN&source=AIP&fc=06&pc=00065&ac=00360)

**Please note:** If a penalty notice for non-attendance is paid within 21 days, the charge is £60 per parent per child. If paid within 28 days, the charge is £120 per child per parent.