

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY MEASURES 2017**

Parenting Contracts, Parenting Orders & Penalty Notices, (FPN's), are interventions available to promote better school attendance & behaviour.

All Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. This can be by regular attendance at school, at alternative provision or otherwise, (e.g. a Parent can choose to educate their child at home).

The definitions of a Parent are:

- All natural Parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who has Parental Responsibility for a child; and
- Any person who has care of a child, i.e. lives with and looks after a child

### **PARENTING CONTRACTS**

A Parenting Contract is a formal, written, signed agreement between Parents and either the Local Authority, (LA), or the Governing Body of a School and should contain:

- A statement by the Parents that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are set out in the Contract; and
- A statement by the Local Authority or Governing Body agreeing to provide support to the Parents for the purpose of complying with the Contract

Parenting Contracts can be used in cases of misbehaviour or irregular attendance at a school or alternative provision. Parenting Contracts are voluntary but any non-compliance should be recorded by the School or LA as it may be used as evidence in Court where an application is made for a Behaviour Parenting Order.

### **PARENTING ORDERS**

Parenting Orders are imposed by the Court and the Parents agreement is not required before an Order is made.

Parenting Orders are available as an "Ancillary Order" following a successful prosecution by a LA for irregular attendance.

Parenting Orders consist of two elements:

- A requirement for Parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions where they will receive help and support to enable them to improve their child's behaviour. This is the core of the Parenting Order and lasts for up to three months; and,
- A requirement for Parents to comply with such requirements as is specified in the Order. This element can last up to twelve months

All Parenting Orders must be supervised by a responsible Officer from the School, (Behaviour Orders only), or the LA. They are individually named in the Parenting Order.

Any breach by Parents without a reasonable excuse could lead to a fine of up to £1,000. The Police may enforce any breach of an Order by a Parent.

Parents have a right to appeal a Parenting Order to the Crown Court.

## **FIXED PENALTY NOTICES, (FPN'S)**

Penalty Notices are imposed upon Parents and are fines of £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. The Parents can only be prosecuted if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made. There is no right of appeal by Parents against the Penalty Notices. They are an alternative to the prosecution of Parents.

Dudley's LA's Code of conduct states that Penalty Notices can be issued where a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school. This includes: a number of unauthorised absences, within a rolling academic year or where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours.

Leave of Absence shall not be granted unless: (a) an application is made in advance to the School, and (b) the Head Teacher considers the request to have exceptional circumstances relating to that application. If Leave of Absence is taken after the Head Teacher has considered it and deemed it NOT to be for exceptional circumstances, or you do not make an application in advance, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence and may be referred to the Education Investigation Service.

Penalty Notices may also be issued where Parents allow their child to be present in a public place without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The Parents will be notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.