



# **Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances**

## **Procedures**

**Primary Behaviour &  
Attendance Partnership**

**Secondary Behaviour & Attendance  
Partnership**

**East Riding of Yorkshire Council**

**September 2016**

## **Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances Procedures**

The school will retain a supply of 'Absence from School Request Forms' and give to parents, together with the Information for Parents, as required. The policy, information on absence from school and request forms will also be available on the Council's website.

Parents must return the absence request form, together with any supporting documents, in reasonable time prior to the planned absence, to the school. If an absence is required at short notice the parent must make every effort to contact the Headteacher, or most senior member of school staff available, to discuss the planned absence.

Where children are absent from school without a prior request being made to the Headteacher the absence when it occurs cannot be authorised. The law now clearly states that no absence shall be retrospectively authorised.

If siblings or other children living in the same household (of compulsory school age) are known and identified on the 'Absence from School Request Form' and attend an East Riding of Yorkshire school, the Headteachers from both schools must reach a joint decision regarding the parent's request, preferably within five school days of receiving the absence request form. This will ensure a consistent approach across the East Riding of Yorkshire.

The Headteacher will decide if the request should be authorised or unauthorised using the 'Absence from School Decision Making Flowchart' and the principles within the absence from school for exceptional circumstances policy.

### **Absence from School Request Forms**

The parent wishing to remove the child from school should be the parent who completes the 'Absence from School Request Form'. Any disagreement between estranged parents should be resolved prior to submitting the request.

### **Authorised Absence Requests**

The Headteacher will write to the parent who has made the request, informing them of the decision, the date of the child's last school day before the absence and the date the school expect the child to return to school. Within the letter it will be clear how the absence will be marked on the child's attendance certificate. A copy of the letter should be sent to any parent who does not have day to day care and responsibility of the child but does have parental responsibility. A copy of both letters will be placed on the child's school file.

### **Unauthorised Absence Requests**

The Headteacher will write to the parent who has made the request, informing them of the reason why this decision was made. The letter will clearly highlight that if the parent decides to go ahead with the absence it will be unauthorised and a penalty notice, per child, may be issued to each parent with day to day care and responsibility. The letter should also mention both the number of days and sessions the absence is for. A copy of the letter should be sent to any parent who does not have day to day care and

responsibility of the child but does have parental responsibility. A copy of both letters will be placed on the child's school file.

### **Actions Following Return from the Requested Absence**

The school may take reasonable steps to ensure that the child catches up with missed work where appropriate.

### **Delayed Return Following Authorised Absence**

If the child does not return to school on the agreed date following their absence, the school will investigate this considering the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Children Missing Education Policy. It is important to follow this policy to safeguard children, for example from a forced marriage.

If a child returns to school later than the agreed date and the parent claims their return was unavoidably delayed, this absence must be investigated and the most appropriate code used. Advice on this can be sought from the Education Welfare Service.

### **Penalty Notice Referral Due To Unauthorised Absence from School**

Once the unauthorised absence has been taken and the child has returned, the school may complete a penalty notice referral form and email it to the following email address: [education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk), together with a copy of the 'Absence from School Request Form', the letter sent by the Headteacher to the parent and a copy of the child's up to date attendance record. During an academic year two penalty notices can be issued to any one parent with respect to each child.

If procedures have been followed correctly and the case meets the penalty notice criteria the education welfare service will issue a penalty notice.

### **Parent Pays Penalty Notice**

The case is closed and the period of time that the parent received the penalty notice for cannot be used in any further proceedings.

### **Parent Does Not Pay Penalty Notice**

If after 28 days the penalty notice remains unpaid, the education welfare service will liaise with the local authority Legal Services for consideration of it being dealt with in the Magistrates' Court. The school will be required to provide a Headteacher's certificate. The education welfare service will keep the school informed of the proceedings upon request.

### **Publicity and Awareness Raising**

The local authority will publicise the cross phase agreement to parents through the media and the publication of leaflets.

The school may produce leaflets and include information in newsletters etc, as agreed by the partnership.

## Useful Documents and Contacts

### Useful site - National

#### School attendance

For information and guidance on school attendance and updated regulations:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance/a00216341/school-attendance>

### Useful site – local authority

#### Documents produced by the Education Welfare Service

For information, guidance and referral forms:

[http://www.eriding.net/behaviour/attendance\\_index.shtml](http://www.eriding.net/behaviour/attendance_index.shtml)

For further information from the DfE regarding school attendance, complete the form via the link below marking it for the attention of the school attendance team:

<https://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus/df>

#### Contacts

Education Welfare Service

County Hall

Beverley

East Riding of Yorkshire

HU17 9BA

Email: [education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:education.welfare@eastriding.gov.uk)

Telephone: (01482) 392146