

Can I be prosecuted if I pay the Fixed Penalty Notice but my child is still missing College?

You won't be prosecuted for the period included in the Fixed Penalty Notice.

However, a prosecution may be considered for further periods of poor attendance. Each case is considered individually by the Education Welfare Service.

Can I get help if my child is not attending College regularly?

Yes, we have a dedicated attendance team who can offer support and advice to help secure improvement in your child's attendance. It is important you seek help at the earliest opportunity. Please contact our attendance department via the College office or email: attendance@mrc-academy.org.

Tel. No. 01730 812451

Midhurst Rother College is keen to work with parents/carers to resolve poor attendance issues rather than resort to enforcement actions such as Fixed Penalty Notices or Court.

Please remember that unauthorised holidays of 5 days or more taken during term time may result in a West Sussex County Fixed Penalty Notice of **£60** per parent per child or further legal action.

**Fixed Penalty Officer
Education Welfare**

West Sussex County Council
Centenary House
Durrington Lane
Worthing
West Sussex
BN13 2QB

Helpline
8am to 1.30pm
Monday to Friday

0330 222 8200



Attendance Matters



**Do you realise
unauthorised absence
could attract a fine?**



Midhurst Rother College

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What is a Fixed Penalty Notice?

It is a fine charged for unauthorised absence from College.

The Fixed Penalty Scheme operates in West Sussex when poor attendance becomes an issue. This leaflet provides a brief overview of the Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme and what it could mean to you and your child.

Who issues them?

The Local Authority issues the written notices through the Education Welfare Service (EWS).

Is a warning given?

YES. A written warning letter will be issued by the College in which you will be told the extent of your child's absences. There is now no improvement period before the fine is issued. A referral may result in further legal action.

What is the fine?

£60

(Paid within 21 days of receipt of notice)

After which it goes up to

£120

(Paid within 28 days of receipt of notice)

When are they used?

Parents/Carers are legally responsible for ensuring school age children receive a suitable full time education. With only 187 days in the College year, there are 178 non-College days left for holidays, treats and shopping.

Taking holidays and other unnecessary absences in term time means your son/daughter will be missing vital elements of their education.

Unauthorised Absence Explained

It is important to realise that **only the College** can authorise any absence, not the parent or carer. When a pattern of absence begins to cause concern, you will be contacted by a member of the attendance team who will seek to work with you. We may request medical evidence to support repeated absence. Further absences may be deemed unauthorised.

In any 10 week period, 10 sessions of **unauthorised** absence may trigger a **Fixed Penalty Notice**. Each day counts as two sessions (morning and afternoon registration) Extended unauthorised absence may result in further legal action.

Important aspects of attendance which are looked upon as unauthorised absence:-

- If no contact is made and satisfactory explanation is provided to College for absence, it is deemed unauthorised.
- When a student persistently arrives late at College (after the register closes)
- When a student is found in a public place during an exclusion from College

It is very important to remember that holidays taken in term time are deemed unauthorised.

How do I pay?

The information on how to pay is included on the Fixed Penalty Notice. Please note that the payment cannot be made in part or by instalments.

What happens if I don't pay?

If the fine is not paid within 28 days the Local Authority is required to commence proceeding in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of poor College attendance by your child. If proven a fine of up to £2500 and/or a parent order or a community sentence could be enforced.

Can I appeal?

NO. There is no statutory right of appeal once a notice has been issued. You can, however, make a representation once a warning has been issued should you wish.

