



Chesil Education Partnership
Weymouth Children & Young People's
Services Hub
307b Chickereil Rd
Weymouth
DT4 0QU
Telephone: 01305 225777

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Information for all parents and carers on the importance of attendance and the Attendance Process

Dear Parent or Carer

The schools within Weymouth and Portland regularly work together through the Chesil Education Partnership (CEP). Members of the partnership are committed to ensuring the best for all our learners and work together to support children and families. All schools are working very hard to promote good attendance and have common systems in place to work with families when attendance drops below an acceptable level. The Chesil Education Partnership support schools to deal with situations when a child's attendance fails to improve and continues to be below acceptable levels.

You will be aware of the importance of good school attendance in improving a young person's chance of success in life and in establishing positive attitudes to life long learning. There is clear evidence of the link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement. Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of school, only 35 per cent achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and maths, but 73 per cent of pupils who attend 95 per cent of school will achieve this. *(DfE June 2012)*

If a child has an attendance level of below 95 % this means they will have missed an average of one day a fortnight in school. Over a school year this will represent four weeks of absence. If this level of absence were maintained for a five year period it would mean half a school year would have been missed.

Across the CEP if a school is concerned about a child's attendance they will talk to the parents and write to them to explain why. They will then monitor attendance expecting to see an improvement. The Early Intervention Service will be made aware of the school's concerns. If no improvement is made, the family will be invited to attend an Attendance Panel.

Our schools and colleges are determined to ensure that all our students have the opportunity to achieve success and have an excellent record attendance. All students' attendance is monitored. Where there is cause for concern you will be contacted and attendance closely monitored for the next six weeks. If attendance has not improved sufficiently - usually at least 95% you will be invited to an attendance panel.

The panel is an opportunity for the school, family, the Early Intervention team and the county solicitor to meet together to discuss why a child has such high absence rates and to hopefully come up with solutions to any problems.

The panel can recommend several outcomes including a further six week period of close monitoring with specified targets for attendance, issuing a £60 Penalty Notice, a parenting order or seeking prosecution which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or custody.

The attendance process is designed to identify poor attendees quickly and address the issues that are affecting their attendance. When attendance improves monitoring will continue and if it falls the attendance process will be resumed.

All schools hope that the Attendance Panel will not be needed and that all pupils will have a good record of attendance. Chesil Education Partnership's aim is to work together to give your child the opportunity to benefit from their time at school and for them to be happy and successful.

Yours sincerely

Vicky Prior
Chair, Chesil Education Partnership