

# Cabinet



Date of meeting:	11 February 2020
Title of Report:	<b>Attendance Consultation and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
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Your Reference:	AB.IM.21.01.2020/CAB1
Key Decision:	Yes
Confidentiality:	Part 1 - Official

## Purpose of Report

This report sets out the proposed revision to the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and the rationale for the proposed changes. This work has taken account of the responses received during the Attendance Consultation held during the period 2<sup>nd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

## Recommendations and Reasons

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the key decision to amend the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct which incorporates the following change to the threshold for holiday absence:

- The threshold of unauthorised holiday absence within the Code of Conduct will rise from 8 sessions to 11 sessions for unauthorised holiday absence only;
- The threshold will remain at 8 sessions for all other types of unauthorised absence.
- This will apply for a 12 month period.

This amendment to the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct will provide an opportunity for families to take a week of unauthorised holiday during term time every 12 months, whilst enabling schools to continue to tackle other types of unauthorised absence of children and young people from their school at an early stage.

The change will honour Pledge 42 by providing a framework to deliver this, whilst supporting schools to take action in relation to unauthorised absence and that includes unauthorised holiday absence. Schools have told us that the rise in unauthorised holiday absence is having a detrimental impact on children's outcomes and this needs to be considered in the context of Plymouth's challenging school landscape.

**Alternative options considered and rejected**

The option of changing the threshold for all categories of unauthorised absence within the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct from 8 sessions to 11 sessions was considered and rejected on the basis that it did not meet the outcome of supporting schools in addressing the impact of unauthorised absence for their pupils and tackle this effectively.

**Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

The work in relation to school attendance supports 'A Growing City'. It helps to make sure children and young people benefit from regular education in order to achieve; develop the necessary skills to be productive citizens who can make a sustained contribution to both the society and economy of the city. It will also help to reduce inequalities within the city.

The work in relation to school attendance supports 'A Caring Plymouth – Focus on prevention and early intervention' we work to ensure that the support offered to young people where school attendance is a concern is timely and takes steps to make sure the appropriate support is in place.

The work reflects our values of co-operation between partners and the recognition that as a society, we are responsible for each other. The proposed changes to the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct has taken account of the Attendance Consultation responses from both statutory agencies and families which was undertaken in September 2019.

**Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

The intention is that any potential additional finance and resource implications would be met within the service. The income generated from penalty notices can only be used to fund the administration costs associated with the penalty notice scheme. Therefore any cost relating to delivering the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct will be recouped.

**Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

The Attendance Consultation was made available online to the public and stakeholders in order to minimise the use of resources. If the Key Decision is made to change the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, it will not have additional environmental implications.

**Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:**

With regard to other implications linked to school attendance:

**Child Poverty:** Regular attendance at school provides a routine for parent/carers which allows them to take paid employment and reduce the impact of child poverty. It improves children's potential for future employment, education and training.

**Community Safety:** (due regard to preventing crime and disorder): Poor school attendance and bullying increases the risk of child exploitation and anti-social behavior. It is important to safeguard children who are vulnerable by ensuring children are seen and supported by professionals and families to reduce this risk.

**Health and Safety** (any health and safety implications): Regular attendance at school provides oversight and monitoring that identifies when a child is at risk, or vulnerable and in need of support. This identification enables support to be arranged in a timely way.

Risk Management (to identify any risk management issues): The management of children missing education and concerns arising regarding successful inclusion in school enable both action to be taken to safeguarding the individual child, and take steps to reduce the impact of this for other children. Close working with school and other partners is important to achieve this outcome effectively.

## Appendices


Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Attendance Consultation Summary Report							
B	Penalty Notice Code of Conduct							
C	Equality Impact Assessment							

## Background papers:

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Judith Harwood, Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 03/02/2020											
Cabinet Member approval: 											
Councillor Jon Taylor, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation											
Date approved: 29/01/2020											