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Background

Under existing legislation, parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (absences without a valid reason). Depending on circumstances such cases may result in prosecution under the Education Act 1996.

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The Law - The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003

The Act added two new sections (444A and 444B) to the Education Act. It introduced penalty notices as an alternative to prosecution under Section 444; the issuing of penalty notices is governed by:
 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007
 The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) 2013

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SBCs Role

- Work with the school and other agencies to decide on the best course of action to support attendance
- Inform school of the dates of the 15 day warning period
- Ask school to inform us at the end of the warning period if improvements have been seen and any other information (including the attendance certificate)
- We may come back with questions etc before issuing the warning period

Warning Periods



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When it can be applied

Warning Period requires 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in any 12 week period (Combination of Codes- O, G, U).
 WP = Warning Period

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Key Facts

SBC's code of conduct states that parent/s will only be issued with **one fine per academic year**.

However, there is no limit on the number of Warning Periods that can be issued as long as a Penalty Fine has not been issued within the same academic year.

When a child is regularly late, after the register closes, it is important to use the **U code**. We can not issue a Warning Period for L codes.

A warning period is 15 school days.

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Essential Information to Provide

- Registration certificate that clearly displays the O, U and G codes that make up the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence
- Records of school interventions to date, we will not issue a WP without prior school work/attempts with family
- Details of any referrals to agencies - this is something that is co-ordinated with the WP - please discuss with your Attendance Officer
- Please ensure any pertinent information connected to the pupil is conveyed

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Working Together

The aim of a warning period is to support schools in working with parents to improve their child's attendance. Warning periods are not designed to be punitive measures they are a method of the attendance team encouraging families, in a more formal manner, to work with schools and other agencies.