

Freedom of Information Request – Response – 27835

Stage One Complaint Response Reference 0301-7577-5707-3095

“Please explain:

1. what checks its officers carry out into the accuracy of information it receives before issuing an FPN;

As part of Suffolk's referral process, schools are required to answer a series of supporting questions

- Has the national threshold been met for an FPN?
- Has the child been on roll at a Suffolk school since 19 August 2024?
- Has the parent received an FPN for this child since 19 August 2024?
- Has the previous school/local authority been contacted to confirm any FPNs issued since 19 August 2024?
- What are the dates of any previous FPNs?
- Has all appropriate support to secure regular attendance been offered?
- Have barriers to attendance been identified?
- Have sufficient support mechanisms been established to overcome identified barriers?
- Have all appropriate referrals been actioned?
- Is there a recorded action plan to improve attendance?
- What is the reason for escalation to an FPN?
- Was a Notice to Improve issued?
- Is issuing a penalty notice appropriate after considering any obligations under the Equality Act 2010, including where a pupil has a disability?
- Is the FPN being requested solely in relation to unauthorised absence arising from a term-time holiday?
- Where the school answers "No" to any of the support questions, it is required to provide the reasons for this.
- The school can also provide other relevant information/reasons which should be taken into account when the referral is considered.

2. how the Council satisfies itself that the information supplied by the school is sufficient and reliable for the purposes of the Council's own decision.

Schools have statutory responsibilities for maintaining their attendance registers and determining the appropriate attendance code. The supporting questions outlined above are an integral part of that process. They require the school to confirm the national threshold, previous FPN history, the nature and extent of support offered, identified barriers, referrals and action planning, the use of a Notice to Improve where appropriate, whether the case relates solely to an unauthorised term-time holiday, and whether relevant Equality Act 2010 obligations have been considered. The Council checks the attendance information provided and whether the relevant unauthorised sessions meet the national threshold and fall within the required rolling 10-school-week period.