



My Ref: FOI 6612
Enquiries to: Information Requests
E-Mail: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

Dear Requester,

Re: Request for Information – Freedom of Information Act 2000

I wish to confirm that the council has completed its search for the information which you requested.

The information requested and our findings are as follows: -

Please provide figures for the last two full academic years (2023/24 and 2024/25) where held:

- 1. Whether your authority records, at the point a penalty notice is issued, the reason recorded for the child's absence — that is, whether you are able to link a penalty notice to the recorded reason for the absence it relates to.**
- 2. Of the penalty notices issued for unauthorised absence, the number where the child concerned had a recorded medical condition, mental-health need, or was recorded as experiencing anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA) — where this information is held.**
- 3. Of the penalty notices issued, the number where the child concerned was recorded as having special educational needs (SEN support or an Education, Health and Care Plan) — where this information is held.**
- 4. Whether your authority has any policy or guidance in place on issuing penalty notices in cases where a child's absence relates to a mental-health condition, anxiety, or SEND — and if so, a copy or link.**

Format and scope

Where possible, I would be grateful to receive this in a machine-readable format (Excel or CSV).

To help keep this request within the cost limit under section 12 of the Act, I have kept it deliberately narrow. If any single element cannot be answered within the cost limit, please answer the remaining elements — in particular question 1, on whether the link between penalty notices and absence reasons is recorded at all — rather than refusing the request in full. A statement that a particular piece of information is not held is itself a helpful and valid response.

The Figures in relation to the number of penalty notices issued can be found on the Education Welfare Service website.

The LA does not record the reason for absence or the SEND status of the child when issuing a Penalty Notice.

The LA issues the Penalty notice on behalf of the school who hold the decision making and responsibility for authorising and unauthorising absence, recording reasons provided for absence and the SEND status of the child.

Penalty notices are issued in line with the national framework and Barnsley's code of conduct which can also be found on the Education Welfare Service website.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact Information Requests Via email.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the way the Directorate has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. Please clearly mark your correspondence 'Complaint' and address it to:

Barnsley MBC
Information Requests Team
PO Box 634
Barnsley
S70 9GG
email: informationrequests@barnsley.gov.uk

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: -

Customer Services Team
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Email: <http://www.ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>

Kind regards,

Information Requests Team, Barnsley MBC

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