Department for Education

Parental responsibility measures: attendance data collection (PRM-A) 2017

Guide to the collection of attendance penalty notices, parenting contracts, parenting orders and attendance case management

August 2017

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The data collection for attendance penalty notices (PNs), parenting contracts, parenting orders and attendance case management is an annual collection.

You are asked to make data return reports on the provisions relating to the use of attendance penalty notices, attendance case management (including fast-track), parenting contracts, parenting orders and education supervision orders by your local authority during the school academic year 2016 to 2017.

There are changes to the data to be collected for the 2017 data collection.

- Additional questions have been added on the reason for PNs being issued (q1a, q1b and q1c), the number of unresolved PNs at the end of the period (q6) and the number of supervision orders issued during the period (q15, q15a and q15b). These measures may be responded to on a voluntary basis for 2017.
- Ammendments have also been made to questions 2 to 5 to restrict each measure to PNs issued during the period only and to questions 7 to 9 to expend each measure to cover any cases of attendance case management. These amended data items remain mandatory.

Please see sections 1.2 and 2 for an explanation of the new measures.

Where schools and the police in your area use the attendance measures please also include these in your return. In particular sections 444A and 444B of the Education Act 1996 give head teachers and police officers the power to issue penalty notices and they must send copies to the local authority. We therefore expect local authorities to include these in their data returns to avoid under reporting on usage.

This data collection covers the school year **1 September 2016** to **31 August 2017**.

The deadline for submission of PRM-A data to the DfE by local authorities is **3 November 2017**.

All 152 local authorities are expected to provide the data by the deadline above.

1.2. Scope of the PRM-A data collection

Attendance measures

Penalty notices

Penalty notices can be issued for section 444(1) offences under the Education Act 1996. Penalty notices can only be issued to parents of pupils who were of compulsory school age (5-16) at the time of the alleged offence. Every local authority must draw up a local code of conduct for issuing penalty notices; this code will set out the occasions when it will be appropriate to issue a penalty notice. The deadline for a parent to pay a penalty in accordance with a penalty notice is 28 days. If a penalty is unpaid after 28 days the local authority must withdraw the notice and decide whether to prosecute the parent for the offence under section 444 (failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance).

Withdrawal provisions for penalty notices

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 set out the circumstances in which a penalty notice issued under section 444(1) can be withdrawn. The PRM-A data collection breaks down the possible reasons for withdrawal into the following categories:

- the penalty notice has been issued outside of the terms of the local code of conduct (Q4a);
- the penalty notice ought not to have been issued or issued to the person named as the recipient (Q4b);
- the penalty notice contains material errors (Q4c); or
- where after the expiry of 28 days the penalty notice is unpaid and the local authority has neither started legal proceedings nor wishes to take such action under section 444 (Q4d).

Local authority local codes should contain the grounds for withdrawal. Local authorities should not issue penalty notices unless they are willing to prosecute parents for the original offence of failing to secure their child's regular school attendance following non-payment.

Please read [statutory guidance: parental responsibility measures for attendance and behaviour](#) for further information.

Parenting orders

Local authorities can request a parenting order following a successful prosecution of parents for offences under sections 444(1) or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, for irregular school attendance. The courts can grant a parenting order as an ancillary order.

Parenting orders are imposed by the court and consists of 2 elements:

(i) parent must attend a parenting programme or counselling for up to three months; and

(ii) parent must comply with any other requirements that the court deem is necessary. This element can last for up to 12 months.

Requirements of parenting contracts

The law allows local authorities and schools to enter into a parenting contract with parents in respect of school attendance. Section 19 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 sets out that the contract is a written agreement between a parent and either the local authority or the governing body of a school and must contain both:

a) a statement by the parent that they agree to comply for a specified period with whatever requirements are specified in the contract; and

b) a statement by the local authority or governing body agreeing to provide support to the parent for the purpose of complying with the contract.

The contract is voluntary. It is a two-way agreement between the school /local authority and a parent and support must be provided which can include parenting skills classes /counselling/referral to other agencies for help/support.

If Pastoral Support Plans and Individual Education Plans are arranged to address pupils' poor attendance and have a parenting support element to them (i.e. the parent is offered specific support as detailed above by either the school/local authority) then these should be included in your return as a parenting contract. However, if such plans do not offer any support to the parent and addresses only the pupils' needs then these should not be included in your returns as a parenting contract.

Parenting contracts as part of fast-track

Where local authorities enter attendance cases into the fast-track case management system they can also offer parenting contracts to parents at any time during the process, but prior to prosecution. If this is the case then you should record both the entry into fast-track at questions 7 to 9 and the use of the parenting contract at questions 13 and 14.

Additional attendance measures for 2016/17 collection

Education supervision orders

Local authorities must consider applying for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) before prosecuting parents. A local authority may apply for an ESO instead of or as well as prosecuting parents. The order is made in respect of the child and the local authority is appointed by the court to supervise that child's education, either at a school or at home, for a specified period of time.

Attendance case management other than fast-track

Attendance case management involves early intervention and a pupil specific approach to tackle absence problems (whether authorised or unauthorised) by the school, and when appropriate by the local authority. Common features of attendance case management include regular monitoring and follow-up of absence, identification of underlying causes of absence or mitigating circumstances, engagement with parents to prompt them to focus on their responsibilities to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and application of sanctions, for example prosecution, if improvements are not made within an agreed time-frame. Fast-track case management is one example of attendance case management but this wider term can encompass other local processes that incorporate similar features to those described.

1.3. Rationale behind the PRM-A data collection

Parenting contracts, parenting orders, penalty notices and education supervision orders are interventions available to promote better school attendance and behaviour. Good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects.

The PRM-A data collection provides information at local authority level on the volumes of parenting contracts, parenting orders, education supervision orders and penalty notices issued to address poor attendance in school to enable analysis of the effectiveness of these tools.

1.4. Data protection & security

Data kept on pupils (in any medium, including within a MIS) are personal data. The data must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. All staff that have access to personal data should be aware of their responsibilities under the act. Local authorities should advise schools about their responsibility to hold data in line with the act.

1.5. Data quality

It is important that the data collected by local authorities, for onward transmission to the department, is both accurate and complete. In Section 2, there is a complete list of data items that need to be submitted, together with an explanation of each of them.

2. Data required

Please include any relevant data provided to you by schools, including the numbers of parenting contracts offered and those that were accepted by parents/carers and cases entering and leaving attendance case management at school level.

Although we do not collect data regarding parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices in cases of behaviour/exclusions, local authorities should continue to keep such data for their own records in case of court action.

Further information on all the legal measures is available in the statutory guidance: parental responsibility measures for behaviour and attendance on the gov.uk website.

2.1. Explanation of measures

See Appendix 1 for a full list of the questions contained in the data collection exercise.

Penalty notices for unauthorised absence

Question 1 is asking for the total number of penalty notices for unauthorised absence that were issued during the period. The figures provided should include where a penalty notice is issued in relation to pupils attending an alternative provision such as pupil referral unit and who fail to attend that provision.

New to the 2016/17 collection, question 1a to 1c also asks for the total number of penalty notices issued by main reason, including: unauthorised holiday absence, late arrival, and other unauthorised circumstances.

This question aims to capture the main reason for issuing penalty notices.

Where there is a single reason for issuing the penalty notice, please record in the appropriate total. Where there is a combination of reasons, please consider the greatest cause of unauthorised absence and record it in the appropriate total. If it is difficult to identify a single greatest cause (for example, because there are two equally contributory factors leading to the unauthorised absence), record the cause deemed to be the deciding factor in the penalty notice being issued and record this in the appropriate total. The deciding factor could be the reason that caused the penalty notice to be issued at that time.

For example, if a pupil had 9 sessions of late arrival and 1 session of other unauthorised circumstances, then the greatest cause of unauthorised absence would be late arrival; this would be the main reason for issuing the penalty notice and should be recorded in the 'Arriving late' total.

Where there is another reason not in the list above then please record these cases in the 'other' total.

The sum of the figures provided for questions 1a to 1c should add up to the total number of penalty notices for unauthorised absence issued in the period as indicated in question 1.

Question 2 and question 3 relate to penalty notices issued during the period only and subsequent payments made during the period within 21 days or 22-28 days of a penalty notice for unauthorised absence being issued.

Question 4 relates to withdrawals of penalty notices issued during the period only for unauthorised absence. Question 4 asks for the total number of penalty notices that were withdrawn during the period, with questions 4a to 4d asking for the total numbers of penalty notices withdrawn for different reasons.

The sum of the figures provided for questions 4a to 4d inclusive should add up to the total number of penalty notices withdrawn in the period as indicated in question 4.

Question 5 is asking for the number of cases prosecuted following non-payment of a penalty notice issued during the period only. The figure provided should include the number of summons served for unauthorised absence.

Question 6 is new to the 2016/17 collection, and is asking for the total number of unresolved cases at the end of the period (i.e. those penalty notices not falling into the paid, withdrawn or prosecuted category by the end of the period). With the addition of this question, the total of Q2-Q6 inclusive should equal the figure provided in Q1.

New to the 2016/17 collection: Attendance case management relating to absence from school

Note: questions 7-9 have been amended to include all cases of attendance case management in recognition of the fact that a number of local authorities do not use the fast-track case management process, but do use similar processes of attendance case management. Local authorities that use the fast-track case management process should continue to record their data here.

Question 7 should include, where possible, data on pupils being case managed for attendance at both a school and local authority level, including pupils being case managed within a fast-track case management process. If a parenting contract is offered as part of the fast-track or attendance case management process then please record this at questions 13 and 14 as appropriate.

Question 8 refers to the number of parents prosecuted (so, for example, where you bring a prosecution against both parents for a child's unauthorised absence, record '2'). The figure in question 8 (total number of cases prosecuted during the period) should refer to the number of attendance case management cases heard in court including those within the fast-track process.

Question 9 should include data on pupils that left the attendance case management or fast-track process having been case managed at either a school or local authority level. Please also remember to complete the reasons for withdrawal as set out in questions 9a and 9b.

Parenting orders for unauthorised absence

Question 10 should include the total number of parenting orders made by the courts following either a section 444(1) or 444(1A) prosecution.

Question 11 is asking about the number of parenting orders that were implemented.

Question 12 should include the total number of parenting orders not implemented during this period. This should identify the reasons why there may be a discrepancy between questions 10 and 11.

Question 12a should include parenting orders where the counselling or guidance programme has not begun within 6 months of the order being made due to a lack of the necessary parenting provision within the local authority. However, **do not** include details of parenting orders that cannot be implemented during the statistical period because a parenting programme does not start until the next statistical period, but include it in your next return.

Question 12b - should include parenting orders that could not be implemented because of breach by the parent.

The sum of the figures provided for questions 12a and 12b should add up to the total number of parenting orders not implemented during the period as indicated in question 12.

Parenting contracts for unauthorised absence

Question 13 should include the total number of parenting contracts offered within the period within the local authority area, which includes those offered by schools. However it should only include cases where a parent has formally been offered a parenting contract. Please only count cases where a contract has been offered in a face to face meeting with the parent.

Question 14 should record the number of parenting contracts that were accepted by the parents and again should include those offered by either the local authority or schools. The figure provided for question 14 should not be greater than the figure provided in question 13.

New to the 2016/17 collection: Education supervision orders

Question 15 is asking for the total number of education supervision orders issued in the period, with questions 15a and 15b asking for the total number of education orders issued instead of prosecution or in conjunction with prosecution.

The sum of the figures provided for questions 15a and 15b should add up to the total number of education supervision orders issued in the period as indicated in question 15.

Education supervision orders issued means those made by the Court.

3. How to make a return

This section provides information about the process of submitting your data to the department.

3.1. Collection dates

The collection:

- opens on 6 September 2017
- closes on 3 November 2017

You can only make a return during this period. No amendments can be made to your return after the collection closes on 3 November 2016.

3.2. COLLECT

You should submit your data using COLLECT, our centralised data collection and management system. A separate COLLECT guide is available to help you use the system to complete and submit your return.

You won't be able to submit your return in COLLECT if it contains validation errors. These must be corrected before the 'submit' button becomes available (COLLECT will alert you to any fields where errors have been identified). The list of data items that can raise an error if not populated correctly is documented in Appendix 2.

You will still be able to submit your data where queries are present, although these must be accompanied by an explanatory note.

You may save your data and return to it later, as long as you have not pressed the submit button.

If you find that you are having problems submitting your data, please contact us by using the data collections service request form.

3.3. Secure Access

User names and passwords for COLLECT are managed by the Secure Access system. Your local authority has a number of delegated approvers who can allocate you access to departmental systems that use Secure Access.

You should contact one of your local authority approvers, if you need a username and password to submit data for the PRM-A 2017 collection.

More information is available on the Secure Access help screen.

You can also get help using the [Secure Access service request form.](#)

3.4. Further information

For further advice on the completion of any part of the PRM-A collection or on the use of COLLECT, local authorities should contact the Helpdesk by completing a [data collections service request form.](#)

Appendix 1: Questions in the PRM-A data collection

Penalty notices for unauthorised absence

1. Total number of penalty notices for unauthorised absences issued during the period

1a. Total number of penalty notices by main reason: unauthorised family holiday absence

1b. Total number of penalty notices by main reason: late arrival

1c. Total number of penalty notices by main reason: other unauthorised circumstances

Payment of penalty notices

2. During the period, the number of penalty notices paid within 21 days

3. During the period, the number of penalty notices paid between 22- 28 days

Withdrawal of penalty notices

4. During the period, the total number of penalty notices withdrawn

Reasons for the withdrawal of penalty notices

4.a. The number of penalty notices withdrawn as the penalty notice was issued outside the terms of the local code of conduct

4.b. The number of penalty notices withdrawn as they ought not to have been issued or issued to the person named as recipient

4.c. The number of penalty notices withdrawn as it appears that notice contains material errors

4.d. The number of penalty notices withdrawn as after expiry of 28 days, penalty is unpaid and LA does not wish to bring legal proceedings

Prosecutions relating to unpaid penalty notices

5. During the period, the number of cases prosecuted following non-payment

Unresolved penalty notices

6. Number of unresolved penalty notices at the end of the period (i.e. penalty notices not falling into the paid, withdrawn or prosecuted category by the end of the period)

Attendance case management relating to absence from school

7. Total number of cases entering attendance case management during the period, including those entering the fast-track case management system

8. Total number of attendance case management cases prosecuted during the period, including those within the fast-track case management system

9. Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn, before prosecution, during the period, including those within the fast-track case management system

Reasons for withdrawal of Attendance case management cases

9.a. Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn because attendance improved, including those within the fast-track case management system

9.b. Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn for another reason, including those within the fast-track case management system

9.c. Please specify the reason for those cases withdrawn for another reason in Q9b

Parenting orders for unauthorised absence

10. Total number of parenting orders granted following unauthorised absence prosecution (ancillary orders) within the period

11. Total number of parenting orders implemented following unauthorised absence prosecution within the period

12. Total number of parenting orders not implemented following unauthorised absence prosecution within the period

Reasons for not implementing parenting orders

12.a. Total number of parenting orders not implemented due to a lack of provision

12.b. Total number of parenting orders not implemented due to a breach by a parent

Parenting contracts for unauthorised absence

13. Number of parenting contracts offered within the LA following unauthorised absence within the period

14. Number of parenting contracts offered in Q13 that were accepted by parent

Education Supervision Orders

15.   Total number of education supervision orders issued during the period

15.a.   Total number of education supervision orders issued during the period in place of prosecution

15.b.   Total number of education supervision orders issued during the period in addition to prosecution

Appendix 2: errors and queries

Contact details

Data item	Error information
First name of attendance queries contact	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a text entry must be provided.
Last name of attendance queries contact	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a text entry must be provided.
Email address for attendance queries	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a valid email address must be provided. An error will be raised if the email address does not include the symbol '@'. To remove the error, ensure that the email address contains this symbol.
Telephone number for attendance queries	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numerical entry must be provided.

Attendance questions

Penalty notices for unauthorised absence

Question	Error Information
Q1: Total number of penalty notices for unauthorised absences issued during the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. The sum of the figures provided for questions 1a to 1c should add up to the total number of penalty notices for unauthorised absence issued in the period as indicated in question 1.
Q1a: Total number of penalty notices issued due to unauthorised family holiday absence	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.

Question	Error Information
Q1b: Total number of penalty notices issued due to late arrival	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q1c: Total number of penalty notices for absence due to other unauthorised circumstances	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q2: During the period, the number of penalty notices paid within 21 days	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q3: During the period, the number of penalty notices paid between 22-28 days	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q4: During the period, the total number of penalty notices withdrawn	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the total entered for Q4 does not equal the sum of questions Q4a, Q4b, Q4c and Q4d. To remove the error ensure that Q4 equals Q4a plus Q4b plus Q4c plus Q4d.
Q4a: The number of penalty notices withdrawn as the penalty notice was issued outside the terms of the local code of conduct	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q4b: The number of penalty notices withdrawn as they ought not to have been issued or issued to the person named as recipient	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q4c: The number of penalty notices withdrawn as it appears that notice contains material errors	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q4d: The number of penalty notices withdrawn as after expiry of 28 days, penalty is unpaid and LA does not wish to bring legal proceedings	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.

Question	Error Information
Q5: During the period, the number of cases prosecuted following non-payment	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q6: The number of unresolved penalty notices at the end of the period (i.e. penalty notices not falling into the paid, withdrawn or prosecuted category by the end of the period)	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the total entered for Q2-6 inclusive does not equal the sum of questions Q1. To remove the error ensure that Q2-6 equals Q1.

Attendance case manangement relating to absence from school

Question	Error Information
Q7: Total number of cases entering attendance case management during the period, including those entering fast-track case management	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q8: Total number of attendance case management cases prosecuted during period, including those within fast-track case management	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q9: Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn, before prosecution, during the period, including those within fast-track case management	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the total entered for Q9 does not equal the sum of questions Q9a and Q9b. To remove the error ensure that Q9 equals Q9a plus Q9b.
Q9a: Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn because attendance improved, including those within fast-track case management	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q9b: Total number of attendance case management cases withdrawn for another reason, including those within fast-track case management	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q9c: Please specify the reason for those cases withdrawn for another reason in Q9b	A query will be raised if this field is left blank when a number greater than 0 has been entered for Q9b. To remove the query a comment should be entered into the field.

Parenting orders (for unauthorised absence)

Question	Error Information
Q10: Total number of parenting orders granted following unauthorised absence prosecution (ancillary orders) within the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q11: Total number of parenting orders implemented following unauthorised absence prosecution within the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q12: Total number of parenting orders not implemented following unauthorised absence prosecution within the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the total entered for Q12 does not equal the sum of questions Q12a and Q12b. To remove the error ensure that Q12 equals Q12a plus Q12b.
Q12a: Total number of parenting orders not implemented due to a lack of provision	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q12b: Total number of parenting orders not implemented due to a breach by a parent	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.

Parenting contracts for unauthorised absence

Question	Error Information
Q13: Number of parenting contracts offered within the LA following unauthorised absence within the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q14: Number of parenting contracts offered in Q13 that were accepted by parent	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the value entered for Q14 is greater than the value entered for Q13. To remove the error, ensure that the value for Q13 is not greater than the value entered for Q13.

Education supervision orders

Question	Error Information
Q15: The total number of education supervision orders issued during the period	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero. An error will also be raised if the total entered for Q15 does not equal the sum of questions Q15a and Q15b. To remove the error ensure that Q15 equals Q15a plus Q15b.
Q15a: The total number of education supervision orders issued during the period in place of prosecution	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.
Q15b: The total number of education supervision orders issued during the period in addition to prosecution	An error will be raised if the field is left blank. To remove the error a numeric value must be entered which is greater than or equal to zero.

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