

School Attendance Order – Information for parents/carers

What is a School Attendance Order?

A School Attendance Order is an Order issued by the Local Authority requiring the child to become a registered full- time pupil at the school named on the Order.

If you have not registered your child at a school you may be asked to provide evidence that they are receiving efficient, full-time education suitable for their age, aptitude, and ability, including any special educational needs they may have. If you fail to do this, you will be contacted by Harrow Council's Education Service.

If your child is put on roll at a suitable school a School Attendance Order will not be applied for. However, the child's school attendance will be monitored.

When is a School Attendance Order issued?

If you have failed to satisfy the Local Authority that your child is receiving suitable education, either in school or otherwise than at school, you will receive a formal letter giving you a deadline by which your child must be in school. The letter will also indicate the school which will be named in the School Attendance Order if you fail to do this.

The school Attendance Order would be applied for from the Magistrates Court once the deadline has passed.

What is suitable education?

Efficient Full-Time education according to the child's age, aptitude, and ability.

This must consider any special needs of the child.

Can I /we choose a different school to the one named in the School Attendance Order Letter?

Yes, if the school is suitable to the child's needs, has places available in the child's year group and agrees to offer a place. In this case the School Attendance Order will be changed to name the school chosen by you.

What happens if you still refuse to register your child at school?

Failure to comply with the School Attendance Order means that you have committed an offence. The Local Authority will prosecute you under Section 443 of the Education Act 1996. This offence carries a maximum fine of £1,000.

How long does a School Attendance Order last?

A School Attendance Order can continue to be in force for as long as the child is of compulsory school age. In practice, however, this is not usually the case.

A School Attendance Order can be revoked if –

- The Local Authority revokes the School Attendance Order as it is no longer needed.
- You are acquitted in court.
- A different Order is applied for and granted by the court e.g. an Education Supervision Order.

Where can I find help?

Harrow Council, Education Services. Tel: 020 8736 6461 Email: cme@harrow.gov.uk