

Learning &
Belonging

Police and
Criminal
Evidence
(PACE)

You and the law on School
Attendance
Children Act 1989
Section 36

Every Day
Counts

Raising Standards &
Aspirations

Where can I find help?

Locality	E-mail	Telephone
North Locality	northlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01258474036
Dorchester Locality	dorchesterlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01305224220
West Locality	westlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01308425241
Chesil Locality	chesillocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01305762400
East Locality	eastlocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01202868224
Purbeck Locality	purbecklocality@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk	01929557000

Information is also available on
the Dorset Council's website:
www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Further information can be found
on: [Global Search | Dorset Nexus](#)
for parent(s)/carer(s) and people
working with children

What does PACE mean?

PACE is the abbreviation for:

Police

And

Criminal

Evidence Act

Why does it affect me?

As your child is failing to attend school satisfactorily, the matter has been referred to The Inclusion Team.

We always seek to understand and come alongside families to support barriers impacting attendance. Legal intervention is always a last resort.

Anything you may say to the Inclusion Lead while they are working with you could be used in court as evidence. This is why you have received a PACE letter, but this does not automatically mean you will be taken to court.

Will I have to go to court?

No, not at present

This is the beginning of the process, however if your child fails to attend school regularly, court is a possibility.

What happens next?

The process is as follows:-

1. You will be asked to attend an attendance meeting with your child's school.
2. An action plan will be agreed with targets set.
3. You will then have a period of monitoring and support.
4. If attendance does not improve sufficiently, you will be called for Inclusion Panel where we will PACE caution you.

What happens if my child's attendance improves during this period?

If your child's attendance improves to the target set and the plan appears to be working, the case will be reviewed and if appropriate it will be closed.

The case can, however, be re-opened if your child's attendance level drops to an unsatisfactory level.

What happens if I do not cooperate and my child's attendance does not improve?

If your child still fails to attend school regularly, you could be prosecuted under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996.

A Final Warning letter will be issued and legal papers sent to the Legal Department. If you are found guilty, you could be fined up to £1000.

If you have failed to make reasonable efforts to ensure your child attends school, you may be prosecuted under Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996, which is a more serious offence and could result in a fine of up to £2,500, an Unpaid Work in the Community Order being made, or a custodial sentence being imposed.