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 he Attendance and Engagement Service who will offer advice and support over a six week period to help you to improve your child's attendance. If this fails and it is felt that you are not making sufficient effort, you may be prosecuted.

Anything you may say to the Attendance and Engagement Officer during the six weeks 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:-

- An Attendance and Engagement Officer will write to you to arrange a visit to your home to discuss the situation and complete an assessment form
- The Attendance and Engagement Officer together with you, your child and your child's school will agree an action plan, called a Parenting Contract.
- Your child will be set an attendance target that must be achieved.
- You will then have six weeks to follow the plan and improve your child's attendance.

What happens if my child's attendance improves in the next three weeks

If your child's attendance improves to the target set and the contract appears to be working, the case will be reviewed in another three weeks.

If there has been some improvement, but not enough, the plan will either be changed if necessary and reviewed in another three weeks, or legal action can be taken..

What happens if my child's attendance target is reached?

If the target is reached, the case will be closed, but it can be re-opened if your child's attendance level drops.

What happens if I do not co-operate 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. 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

Where can I find help?
Contact the Attendance and Engagement Service, the contact details are listed below:-

Central Area—(Oxford)
Knights Court
Cowley
Oxford
Tel: 01865 323444

North Area—(Banbury, Bicester, Chipping Norton, Witney, Eynsham,, Burford, Woodstock, Kidlington)
Samuelson House
Banbury
Oxon
Tel: 01865 816666

South Area—(Abingdon, Didcot, Faringdon, Wantage, Henley, Thame)
Foxcombe Court
Abingdon
Oxon
Tel: 01865 323513

Information is also available on the Internet at
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
Oxfordshire County Council's website

www.oxfordshireservicesdirectory.org.uk
Directory for parents/carers and people working with children

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Attendance and Engagement Service

Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE)

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

Your questions answered

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Working for you