



Tuesday 25th June

Dear parents and carers,

We are writing to you because the government have introduced new rules for all schools and local authorities about pupil attendance and a new national framework for penalty notices. All schools and local authorities have to follow this statutory guidance from 19th August 2024.

What's important to us with attendance and punctuality?

- Children attending school regularly and being on time
- Working in partnership with pupils and families – providing the right support and removing barriers to attendance
- Good communication between home and school

What's staying the same?

- Absence for holidays taken during term time will not be authorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- If a request for leave is denied and the pupil is absent for 5 days or more then the school is expected to refer the case to the LA. The LA will issue a penalty notice.

What's changing?

- Penalty notices can be issued where a pupil is absent for repeated incidents of unauthorised leave in term time that fall below the 5-day threshold.
- the number of unauthorised absences to 10 unauthorised absences (5 days) in the most recent 10 school week period.
- the number of penalty notices that can be issued to a parent in respect of the same individual child to 2 within a 3-year period.
- It increases the amount of the penalty notice from £120 to £160 (if paid within 28 days) and £60 to £80 (if paid within 21 days) for the first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of the same individual child in a 3-year period.
- It sets the amount of any second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same individual child within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice was issued to £160 to be paid within 28 days. No discounts.
- Further absences will proceed for prosecution in the Magistrate Court for the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the first penalty was issued.

Our Attendance and punctuality policy will be updated and shared early in the Autumn term to reflect these changes. More information can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance If you have any queries, please speak to us. There's a useful summary of changes on the next page of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Fowlie

Headteacher

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

FIRST OFFENCE

1

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.