

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING!

WHY DO I NEED TO INFORM SCHOOL?

Every half-day absence from school, by law, has to be classified as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of absence is always asked for.

Authorised Absences

These are mornings or afternoons away from school for a valid reason such as illness, emergency medical or dental appointments (routine appointments should always try and be made out of school hours) and emergencies.

Unauthorised Absences

An absence is classified as unauthorised if the reason was not recognised as acceptable. The Department for Education (DfE) and Local Education Authorities provide information for schools as to what is acceptable and what is not. Examples of reasons that would not be accepted:

- A birthday
- A shopping trip
- Day trips
- Holidays – unless they have been agreed by the head teacher.

SAFEGUARDING

By law, your child must attend school. If they are not in school and we are not informed, we have a duty to find out and know they are safe. If we do not find out or your child's attendance remains low, relevant referrals will go in to ensure your child is accessing their personal right to an education. Home visits maybe performed to ensured your child is safe – if there is no answer at the door, we may refer onto other agencies.

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING!

WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR PENALTY NOTICES, THE FOLLOWING CHANGES WILL COME INTO FORCE FOR PENALTY NOTICE FINES ISSUED AFTER 19TH AUGUST 2024.

PER PARENT, PER CHILD

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines (6 in total).

1ST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

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

5 CONSECUTIVE DAYS OF TERM TIME LEAVE

The Local Authority may issue Penalty Notice Fines for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was an intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week rolling period

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

2ND 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 paid within 28 days.

3RD 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' fine can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

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

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS ILL?

CONTACT THE SCHOOL

Please call the school office on 01482 755528 to inform us when your child is unwell. If your child has good attendance we may not need to request medical evidence.

However, if your child's attendance is causing concern, we may politely request that you provide medical evidence so that we can authorise your child's absence from school. This is important as it provides an evidence base (i.e. a clear picture) for your child's attendance across the year and can prevent any unnecessary future referrals to the Local Authority.

TO HELP SUPPORT YOU, PLEASE SEE THE EXAMPLES OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE BELOW TO EVIDENCE YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL.

EXAMPLES OF MEDICAL EVIDENCE

This can be photographed and sent to the school office via Class dojo/school email or alternatively can be brought into school in person. We accept:

- Appointment cards
- Appointment letters
- Screenshots of NHS appointment texts
- Photo of the medication label
- Photograph of the prescription before its cashed
- Photograph of the injury/illness (e.g. a chicken pox rash)