

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE PUPIL ABSENCE REQUEST

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of underachievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid.

The Department for Education no longer allows Academy Heads to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. If you consider that your request for absence is exceptional, you will need to complete the form attached to this notification. A response will be sent to you as soon as possible. If leave is not authorised and you nevertheless withdraw your child from school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

If your child is absent from school without authorisation, you will be committing an offence under the Education Act 1996. We may submit a request to Suffolk Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued, in accordance with Sections 444A and 444B of the said Act. Penalty Notices are issued per liable parent, per child and each carry a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in legal action. Absence not authorised by the school may result in a prosecution in the Magistrates' Court under Section 444(1) or Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996, leading to a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.

'Parent' as set out in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, defines parent to include: natural parents, whether they are married or not; any person or body who has parental responsibility for a child (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and; any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child. Having care of a child means a person with whom a child lives and who looks after a child, irrespective of what their relationship is with said child.

The absence request **must be recorded** on this form (page 3); **letters will not be accepted**. Return this form to the School Office at least 15 school days **before** the start of the absence.



Contact: 01728 668291
office.yoxford@consortiumtrust.org.uk



Contact: 01728 648251
office.middleton@consortiumtrust.org.uk



Contact: 01502 723137
office.southwold@consortiumtrust.org.uk

Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences after 19 August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes apply to Penalty Notice Fines issued **after 19th August 2024**.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are 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.

National Threshold

There is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of **10 sessions** (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or different school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

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

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

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

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines up to £2,500.

Case found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate as **'failure to safeguard a child's education'**.



Yox Valley Partnership

Academy Head: Mrs Katy Last
k.last@consortiumtrust.org.uk



APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER (to be completed by each parent/carer)

If you consider an absence during term time to be an exceptional circumstance, please complete this form and return it to the School Office **at least 15 school days** before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Pupil Name: _____ DOB: _____ Year Group: _____

Home Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Name of Parent/Carer completing this form: _____

First day of absence: _____ Date of return to school: _____

Total number of days missed: _____ days Reason for absence: _____

Declaration:

I understand that if the absence request is unauthorised the school may request that Suffolk Council issue a Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty Notice is issued to each liable parent/carer of each child taken out of school and that this carries a fine of £80 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £160 if paid within 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay the fine, it may result in legal action being taken against me. I understand that parents have a duty to ensure their child's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) and Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Signed _____ Dated _____

Please inform us if you have a child in another local school – we will need to contact the school to discuss the absence request. Please note, we will need to share information about your child with the other school.

Name of child _____ Year _____ School _____

(Please ensure you give at least 15 school days' notice of the proposed absence)



Yox Valley Partnership

Academy Head: Mrs Katy Last
k.last@consortiumtrust.org.uk



To be completed by the school:

FAO – Academy Head

% Current	% Last Year	Comments

Name of child _____ Year _____ School _____

AUTHORISED:

Request has been authorised for the following dates **only:**

___ / ___ / ___ to ___ / ___ / ___

UNAUTHORISED:

Signed _____ Academy Head Date ___ / ___ / ___

Letter sent / Phone Call / other	Signed:	Date:
Action: PN Request	Signed:	Date: