

18th June 2024

Dear parents/carers,

Important Information about Attendance

I am writing to inform you of national changes relating to school attendance. A new national framework comes into force on 19th August 2024, which mean all maintained schools, academies, and independent schools will have the same rules in place for supporting children's attendance.

All pupils are encouraged to attend school regularly and to be punctual. We work closely with families to achieve this and expect everyone to be committed to excellent attendance. Regular school attendance is vital in ensuring that children maximise the educational opportunities available to them while safeguarding their personal safety and well-being.

School years are precious for every child and young person. I truly believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils, and the whole Trust and school community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance.

It is important that parents/carers understand the changes to Penalty Notice Fines in relation to unauthorised school absence. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly. Unauthorised absences will be reported to the Local Authority Attendance Service by the school and consideration may be given to a Penalty Notice or legal proceedings for non-attendance.

Please see overleaf a summary of the changes to the thresholds and fines, which come into effect on 19th August 2024. These changes are being made by the Department for Education (DfE) and apply to all maintained schools, academies and independent schools.

The Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance '**Working Together to Improve School Attendance**' has been updated and outlines the changes that will come into force on 19th August 2024; you can view the full guidance by visiting:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

As always, I am grateful for your support and co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Katy Last
Academy Head

Penalty Notice Fines for Unauthorised Absences after 19 August 2024

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 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 will be 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'**.



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