



Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: National Framework for Penalty Notices - School Absence

I am writing to you to discuss the changes implemented by the Government this summer, in regards to unauthorised absences from school. These changes have been widely publicised on the news and in media outlets and I believe it is important you, as parents and carers, are aware of how this will affect our school.

Previously, parents could be issued with a penalty notice by the local authority for their child's non-attendance at school. All local authorities must now follow the following national requirements:

1. Penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school are increasing from £120 to £160 per child, per parent. The amount is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
2. A parent may be issued with a penalty notice if their child's absence is unauthorised, and they miss 10 sessions (5 days) within a rolling period of 10 weeks. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years e.g., two unauthorised absences in the summer term and eight unauthorised absences in the autumn term.
3. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, the penalty notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160. There is no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.
4. The Government has set a national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period.
5. If the national limit of two penalty notices has been met, or exceeded, the local authority must consider the use of another tool to improve attendance. For example, prosecution or another attendance legal intervention.

Examples of unauthorised absence from school include (but are not limited to): a child/family member's birthday, any holiday took within term time or closure of a sibling's school for INSET/other purposes. Please note, if a child is absent and school are not contacted with a reason for absence, this will remain unauthorised until we are made aware of the reason for absence.

As mentioned in the School Newsletter (27/09/2024), **all holidays requested during term time are classed as unauthorised absence and Education Penalty Notices are issued automatically after 5 days.** This is in line with our policies and the guidance we have received from the Local Authority.

Our school attendance is an area we are deeply committed to improving and I would like to thank you all for your continued support in our efforts. If you require any further information on the changes listed, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,
Ian Cooper / Paul Nixon
Principal / Attendance Lead