

Dear Parents and Carers,

We need to make you aware of some important changes that could affect you if you choose to take your child out of school during term time.

Earlier this year the Department for Education published *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*. Within this document, it lays out the changes to issuing penalty notices that come into effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024.

## **Penalty Notice Changes**

### **Who is fined?**

Penalty Notice Fines will continue to 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.

### **What about absence that is unauthorised but not over a consecutive period?**

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions (5 complete days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period (the 10-week can span different terms and different academic years). This could include any unauthorised code as stated at para 175. Penalty notices can be used by all schools (with the exception of independent schools) where the pupil's absence has been recorded with one or more of the unauthorised codes. Please make sure that you make first day of absence contact with us to explain any absences for your child.

### **What are the penalty fees?**

#### **First 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.

#### **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 paid within 28 days.
- There will be no offer of a reduction.

#### **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 the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

#### **New two penalty notice limit in a three-year period**

The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024.

We understand that, financially, times are very tough for many families and so we wanted to make you aware of the changes being made by the government to combat holidays being taken in term time and low attendance generally.

#### **More information can be found at:**

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