

Hardwick Green Primary Academy

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Principal: Mr C. Story

Deputy Principal: Mr J. Adams

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Dear Parent/Carer,

The Department for Education have made changes to attendance guidance that will become statutory and must be implemented after the 19th August 2024. These changes must be made by all Schools, Multi Academy Trusts and Local Authorities across the country, with the aim of ensuring consistent approaches.

Attendance Penalty Notices

Any attendance penalty notices issued after the 19th August 2024 will be issued in line with the new regulations. The new Penalty Notice regulations are:

- **First Penalty Notice within a 3 Year Period**

- Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent.
- The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

For example, 2 parents and 3 children

- Each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 if paid within 28 days
- Each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £80 each, with a family total of £480 if paid within 21 days

- **Second Penalty Notice within a 3 Year Period**

- The next time an offence occurs, within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child with no reduction.

For example, 2 parents and 3 children

- Each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960.

- **Further Offences within a 3 Year Period**

- The number of Penalty Notices that can be issued to a parent in respect of an individual child will be limited to 2 Notices within any 3-year period. Further offences will need consideration on whether alternative action is required including a prosecution in the Magistrates' court.

This will include Term Time Leave fines, and Irregular Attendance. Where a child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions (a session refers to each half a school day) or more in any 10-week period, the school must consider escalation to prosecution. As absence is so often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing, the school, trust and local authority will always work together with other local partners to understand the barriers



to attendance and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects pupils' right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement efforts, and where all other avenues have been exhausted, enforce it through prosecuting parents. These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks, or unauthorised absence.

It is therefore important to notify school every day that your child is absent, providing a reason, and where appropriate evidence of medical appointments or prescribed medication.

The Department for Education have updated the [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118422/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk)) available on the DFE website. This clarifies the expectations for parents, schools and the Local Authority to promote the importance of regular attendance at school, and to provide ideas for support and interventions when a young person is not attending school on a regular basis.

Regulations will come into force on the 19th August 2024 to mandate attendance data sharing by all schools.

This means that your child's attendance data will be shared with the Department for Education and the Local Authority every day. This will be live data. This will allow the DFE to provide schools with the tools to monitor and see improvement in attendance, and will allow the Local Authority to provide advice, support, and Early Help services. It will also allow tracking of attendance trends for example a child reported as ill the same day each week.

With all of these changes, the priority is supporting a young person to access school every day.

If your child is finding attending school difficult, is feeling anxious about attending school, or needs help to access their education speak to the school to arrange a meeting to discuss this further.



Chris Story

Principal, Hardwick Green Primary Academy



Darren Holmes

CEO, Enquire Learning Trust

