



Sitwell Infant School

Headteacher: Mrs K. Peart

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20th September 2024

Dear Parents & Carers,

I am writing to inform you of the new rules relating to attendance and term time holidays, which came into effect on 19th August 2024.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age the right to access an education appropriate to their needs. It is a legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure that their child receives that education. Attendance at school is essential for children to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The Department for Education have significantly toughened the law in relation to school attendance and have now published revised guidance that will become mandatory from September 2024. Please ensure you read the following information and particularly review any holiday plans during term-time you may have as a family.

Requests for Leave of Absence

Parents must request permission in advance from school for leave of absence for any reason, including holidays. Headteachers cannot grant leave during term time unless there are very exceptional circumstances and cannot grant permission retrospectively. Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not be an exceptional circumstance. The 'H' code (authorised holiday) will no longer exist in the new absence codes, to reflect the change in policy.

If you take your child out of school without permission this may lead to enforcement action (penalty notice or prosecution). A meeting must be held to discuss this before leave is taken.

National Thresholds

From September 2024, schools will need to consider a Penalty Notice if a child misses 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Half of a day (am or pm) is considered as a 'session'. The threshold of 10 sessions can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, for example, eight sessions of unauthorised holidays in term time and two sessions for other unauthorised reasons. The ten school week period may span different terms or school years, for example: 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the summer term and a further 8 in the autumn term.

Penalty Notices

Under the new framework, Fixed Penalty Notices will be considered when a child has missed ten or more sessions (five days) due to unauthorised absence in a period of ten school weeks.



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In September 2024, Penalty Notices (fines) charged to parents will rise to £80 (if paid within 21 days) or £160 (if paid between 22 and 28 days). Where a penalty notice is unpaid, legal action would be pursued. Under the new framework, only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent for the same child within a three-year rolling period. Where a second Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent for the same child, the charge will be £160.

Paid within 21 days		
	1 parent	2 parents
1 child	£80	£160
2 children	£160	£320
3 children	£240	£480

Paid within 28 days		
	1 parent	2 parents
1 child	£160	£320
2 children	£320	£640
3 children	£480	£960

If a third offence is committed within a three-year rolling period, legal action/prosecution would be considered. School attendance is a high priority for everyone. The Local Authority and schools are committed to improving attendance and achievement and would like parents/carers to work with us to ensure the best possible outcomes for their children.

High expectations

At Sitwell Infants, we are passionate about our children's attendance and know that attending school is the most effective way to improve their life chances and future opportunities. We expect all children to attend school regularly and those families who struggle to send their child to school will be fully supported to improve this. Term time holiday requests will not be authorised unless very exceptional circumstances are met and reviewed by the Headteacher.

We continue to appreciate the amazing support that you give to our school in ensuring that your child is given the very best start to life. If you have any questions, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Peart
Headteacher



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