

National Framework for Penalty Notices for School Absence

Important information for parents / carers regarding increased penalty fines for unauthorised absence for holidays in term time and other changes.

As parents / carers you will be aware there is a great deal of focus on improving school attendance nationally.

We have received guidance from Staffordshire County Council regarding changes to issuing penalty notices for leave in term time.

These changes are significant and we would urge all parents / carers to take notice of them and the implication if pupils take unauthorised absence for holidays.

The changes to the law are introduced through the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 and came into effect from 19th August 2024

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 19th August 2024.

The first Penalty Notices for leave in term time will increase to £160 per parent per child but can be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued within three years of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued within the three-year period; therefore, the county council will deal with any further unauthorised leave through prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If the parent is found guilty, the potential fine is up to £1000.

Template letter - unauthorised absence for holidays

There is a new template letter for parents to accompany any requests for term time absence. These template letters will shortly be available on our school website.

We would urge all parents to be aware of these changes and the implications for significantly increased penalty fines if pupils are absent from school during term time for holidays or other unauthorised reasons.

Please see the attached FAQs for parents.