



Dear Parent/Carer,

All schools by law must follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance relating to school attendance. They must use the appropriate national attendance or absence code, and follow the criteria set out within the guidance. The statutory guidance states:

- A leave of absence must not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance.
- A leave of absence must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with.
- Schools must judge each application individually, considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Please note all schools are expected to regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence.

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to their educational progress. If the absence is not authorised and the leave is taken, schools may refer to the Local Authority for legal action. Please find attached information regarding Helping Parents understand Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance.

A single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by ALL schools in England, this is:

- 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.
- These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.
- For example, a 5-day unauthorised leave of absence would meet the national threshold. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, the fine will be:

- £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- If not paid within 21 days, the fine will increase to £160 per parent, per child, payable between the 22nd and 28th day.

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence, a reduced rate is not available. The amount therefore will be:

- £160 per parent, per child – payable within 28 days.

The third time an offence is committed, a Penalty Notice WILL NOT be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court.