



Dear Parents and Carers,

As I'm sure you are aware, there are a few changes relating to unauthorised absences from August 2024 and we want to let you know ahead of time. The following information is from the EWO.

For unauthorised absences from August 2024

Penalty Notices will increase to £160 per parent per child (discounted to £80 if paid within 21 days). If there is occasion to issue a second Penalty Notice for unauthorised leave of absence within a rolling 3 year period, it will be issued at the higher rate of £160 per parent per child, with no opportunity to pay at the lower level. A Penalty Notice cannot be issued if there is a third occasion of unauthorised leave of absence in the rolling 3 year period and it is highly likely that the local authority will take direct prosecution action in the Magistrates' Court which can result in you receiving a criminal conviction. Please also be aware that any cases of extended periods of unauthorised absence, linked to holidays or trips away, are highly likely to result in prosecution action by the local authority.

The national threshold will be 5 days/10 unauthorised sessions for a Penalty Notice to be issued, however schools will be able to issue for less if we feel this is warranted. For example, if a parent appears to be avoiding the 5 days by taking their child out of school on a bank holiday week or taking their child out repeatedly for less than 5 days. The Code of Conduct for unauthorised absences is currently being drafted by the Local Authority and will include further information on the above and is also expected to include details surrounding extended periods of absence (20 or more days).

Yours sincerely,

Miss Johnson
Attendance Officer

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