



Dear Parent / Carer,

Changes to Penalty Notices

The Department for Education have made some significant changes to Penalty Notices for absence from school, which we need to make you aware of.

Leave of Absence (Holiday in term time)

If you request a Leave of Absence (holiday in term time) and this is not authorised by school, then you may be liable for the following Penalty Notice:

First Leave of Absence	£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days of the penalty notice being issued. This will rise to £160 per parent per child if paid within 21 to 28 days of the penalty notice being issued
Second Leave of Absence	Automatically charged at £160 per parent, per child <i>If taken within 3 years of the date of the first Leave of Absence request</i>
Third leave of absence	Consider referring to court for prosecution which may lead to a criminal conviction <i>If taken within 3 years of the date of the first and second Leave of Absence request</i>

Irregular Attendance

A Penalty Notice may also be issued if your child has irregular attendance at school. This is defined as your child being absent for 10 sessions within 10 school weeks (a session is a morning or afternoon in school). This absence can span different terms.

We see the issue of a Penalty Notice as a last resort and want to work with you to improve your child's attendance. If you have concerns, please contact us as we want to ensure the best for your child.

All of the above came into effect from 19th August 2024. Therefore, if you requested a Leave of Absence that was taken at the end of the Summer Term (July 2024), any Penalty Notice issued will be at the old rate of £60 per parent per child, rising to £120 per parent per child if not paid within 21 days.

If you have requested a Leave of Absence to be taken in September 2024, a Penalty Notice may be issued but this will be at the new rates as specified above.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs McGuire
Principal

☎ 0121 557 2573 🌐 st-pauls.sandwell.sch.uk

✉ principal@st-pauls.sandwell.sch.uk

St. Paul's C of E Academy | Robert Road | Tipton | West Midlands | DY4 9BH

From September 2024, the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices will apply

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 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.

The 10-school week period can span over different terms and school years.

Penalty Notice Fines will continue to be issued per parent per child.

For example: 3 Siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

1

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

Second Offence

(within 3 years of the First Offence)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

(Unpaid Penalty Notices after 28 days may result in a prosecution)

3

Third Offence and any further Offences

(within 3 years of the First Offence)

The third time that an offence is committed for either a term time holiday and/or Irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case may be proceeded straight to prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure.

If found guilty of the offence of 'failure to secure their child's regular attendance at a school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1,000 and you will have a criminal record

PLEASE NOTE: If you take any Leave of Absence PRIOR to 19th August 2024 (e.g. in July 2024) then the Penalty Notice will be at the old rate of £60/£120. Any Leave of Absence taken in September 2024 will be charged at the new rates as above