

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS

**The law states that a parent/carer is responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly and on time. Failure to do so renders the parent/carer guilty of an offence.**

- ✂ Compulsory school age is from 5 years to 16 years of age.
- ✂ Ideally a child's overall attendance should be above 96%.
- ✂ Parents/carers are expected to inform the school on the first day of their child's absence to give the reason why their child is not in school. Failure to do this means the school may code the absences as **UNAUTHORISED**. Prolonged non-contact from the parent could lead to a "Safe and Well Check" being initiated on the grounds of safeguarding, (this can if deemed necessary involve Social Services or the Police).
- ✂ A child's absence from school is either recorded as authorised or unauthorised by the school. Parents/carers **CANNOT** authorise their child's absence.
- ✂ School can request supporting evidence from parents/carers, this allows the school to determine whether the absence can be recorded as authorised.
- ✂ School will discuss with and may refer cases where appropriate, to their Education Welfare Officer, should a child's attendance become a concern or fall below 95%.
- ✂ The Department for Education (DfE) considers a child, whose attendance falls below 90%, as a "**persistent absent**" child. Schools are expected to address attendance at this level and refrain from authorising any further absences unless it can be substantiated or supporting evidence provided.
- ✂ Children are expected to attend school for 190 days per academic year; the other 175 days are spent at home with you 😊
- ✂ The regulations regarding holidays in term time changed on the 1st September 2013. These regulations prevent Head Teachers from authorising holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances. **PARENTS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO BOOK HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME WITHOUT FIRST SPEAKING TO THE SCHOOL OR EWO.**
- ✂ As of the 19th August 2024 a new national framework for penalty notices came into force regarding unauthorised absences. This means if your child accrues 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absences you may be liable for a penalty notice.
- ✂ In line with the new national framework there have also been changes to how the local authority issue penalty notices and proceed with prosecutions.

## FIRST OFFENCE

Parents will be issued with a penalty notice of £80 per parent, per child this must be paid within 21 days, if not paid the amount will double to £160 per parent per child to be paid within 7 days. Payment is required in full and failure to pay will result in the local authority submitting the matter for prosecution through the magistrates' court.

## SECOND OFFENCE

Parents will be issued with a penalty notice of £160 per parent per child, this will not be discounted. Payment is required in full and failure to pay will result in the local authority submitting the matter for prosecution through the magistrates' court.

## THIRD / FURTHER OFFENCES

Parents will be **NOT** be issued with a penalty notice and the matter will proceed directly to the magistrates' court, if found guilty a parent could be fined up to £2500 per parent, per child and / or receive a prison sentence not exceeding 3 months.

**NB. PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THIS IS AN OFFENCE OF FAILING TO SAFEGUARD A CHILD'S EDUCATION AND IF FOUND GUILTY THIS COULD SHOW UP ON DBS CHECKS, BACKGROUND CHECKS BY EMPLOYERS, INSURANCE COMPANIES, FINANCIAL SERVICES ETC. WHICH COULD POTENTIALLY HAVE REPERCUSSIONS FOR YOU.**

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