



ATTENDANCE POLICY

2025-2026

Stewards Academy

Part of the Passmores Co-operative Learning Community

The name and contact details of the Senior Attendance Champion – the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school, is:

Russell Perrin
Assistant Headteacher

rperrin@stewardsacademy.org

The name and contact details of the school staff member students and parents or carers should contact for more individual support with attendance

Samantha Keys-Kidd
Attendance & Family Liaison Officer
skeysidd@stewardsacademy.org

The name and contact details of the school staff member students and parents or carers should contact about attendance on a day-to-day basis is:

Your child's tutor
Your child's head of house

The name of our linked Governor with responsibility for monitoring attendance is:

Marie Erwood
merwood@stewardsacademy.org

Administration Assistants responsible for attendance can be contacted on:

Attendance@stewardsacademy.org

[Absence Line Number: 01279 772511](tel:01279772511)

This policy was reviewed and approved at the local governing body meeting on 24th September 2025.

The policy will be reviewed in line with changes in legislation and at least annually.

Student Attendance Policy

Introduction and Background

Stewards Academy recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are essential in order to raise standards of student attainment and to give every child / young person the best educational experience possible.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent or carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents or carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The DfE has produced guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: [Working together to improve school attendance](#). Our Attendance Policy reflects the key principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- ensure every student has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- ensure that students succeed whilst at school
- ensure that students have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school

It has been developed in consultation with school governors, teachers, local Headteacher Associations, the Local Authority and parents or carers and carers. It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance matters. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor student attendance.

In addition, all schools follow the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Our policy aims to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which students feel safe, secure and valued
- Raising awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. **It is a rule of this school that students must attend every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances and it is the headteacher, not the parent or carer, who can authorise the absence.**

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Stewards Academy, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for attendance and punctuality for all our students from the outset. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos, and day to day life. We recognise the connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

The name and contact details of the senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in our school is:

Russell Perrin rperrin@stewardsacademy.org

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents or carers, students and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools;
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families;
- Give parents or carers details on attendance in our newsletters in order to promote the benefits of high attendance
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers, and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law;
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance; This could be via certificates, badges, meetings and phone calls;
- Report to parents or carers/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress;
- Have conversations with students regarding their attendance / absences;
- Contact parents or carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes, however is not exhaustive:

- parents or carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g., because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session
- shopping trips
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents or carers to medical appointments
- their own or family birthdays
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher - may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority
- day trips
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed
- weddings of non-immediate family members. We class immediate family members as parents / carers, siblings who children reside with and grandparents or carers

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A student is defined by the Government as a **'persistent absentee'** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any student's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents or carers to resolve this. All students who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A student who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as **'severely absent'**. Students within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

Absence Procedures

Contact details to report your child's absence or lateness are:
Email attendance@stewardsacademy.org or
Absence line on 01279 772511

We thoroughly monitor all absences, and the reasons that are given.

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school on the first day of absence before *9.15am*, when our register closes;
- The absence line is an answer phone, where you can leave a message to advise us of your child's name, form and reason for absence. Alternatively, you can email attendance@stewardsacademy.org. You may get a call back after you make contact if further information is needed, so a decision can be made as to whether the absence is recorded as authorised.
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before *9.15am*;
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons. When determining whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents or carers and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS and Essex County Council Guidance on School Absence and Childhood Illness.

See Annex D below

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it is your responsibility to contact us;
- If we are unable to make contact with parents or carers by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding;

•A referral will be made to Local Authority if no contact has been made with parents or carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate), at which point your child will be considered to be “missing from education.”

If absence continues we will:

- Write to you if your child’s attendance is below 95% / causing concern and / or where punctuality is a concern;
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Attendance & Family Liaison Officer
- Create a personalised action / support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person’s role in improving the attendance patterns of your child;
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate;
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority for relevant legal sanctions if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Students who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and anxious and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all students are:

Your child is expected to arrive in school ready for period 1 to begin at 8:45am, where the morning registration is taken.

Registers close at 9:15.

Afternoon registration is taken at 2pm.

The school day ends at 3.15pm and all students should leave the school premises unless they are taking part in after school clubs and activities.

How we manage lateness:

- Registers are taken at 8.45am and your child will receive a late mark ‘L’ if they are not in registration by that time. Students will be given a detention if they are late for school.
- Students arriving after the school day has started at 8.45am are required to sign in at Student Services as late and then be escorted to their lesson by a member of staff. At 9.15am the registers will be closed, in accordance with the Regulations. If your child arrives after this time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site ‘U’, but this will **not** count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.
- If students arrive after 8:45am they will be given an after-school detention for 30 minutes. This will be issued for the next available day, and you will be notified via an email and on Arbor.

In summary:

Arrival at school after 8.45am is marked as late to school and a detention will be issued.

Unauthorised lateness could result in the school referring to the Local Authority for sanctions and/or legal proceedings. If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with a member of the attendance team or the pastoral team, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents or carers and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class and individual punctuality.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents or carers, and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Child and Family Support Worker or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual early help plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some students face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include students who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain however, we will work with families and students to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners where appropriate.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all students who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness.

See Annex A for summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

The name and contact details of the school staff member students and parents or carers should contact for more detailed support on attendance is:

Samantha Keys-Kidd Attendance & Family Liaison Officer skeyskidd@stewardsacademy.org

Local Authority attendance support services

Local Authority Attendance Specialists work strategically by offering support to schools, families, and other professionals to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents or carers are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parents or carers should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance

does not improve, legal action may be taken in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Annex B for the Essex Code of Conduct), or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

School Attendance and the Law

New legislation was passed, The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 which introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parents or carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parents or carers may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now 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 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

See Annex B for the Essex Code of Conduct.

There is no entitlement in law for students to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The School Attendance (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his / her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications

for a leave of absence must be made in writing, in advance, on the prescribed form provided by the school. Leave of Absence Application forms are available from Student Services or on the school website and should be completed four weeks in advance of the proposed leave.

The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and also that all parents or carers who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and Essex Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

At Stewards Academy exceptional circumstances will be interpreted as:

... being of unique and significant emotional, educational, or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time (as determined by the headteacher). The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

If leave of absence is authorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parents or carers are, however, advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

Deletion from Roll

For any student leaving Stewards Academy secondary school other than at the end of year 11, parents or carers are required to complete a 'Students moving from school' form which can be obtained from the school office. This provides school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address, name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and appropriately safeguard all our students, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parents or carers keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for key family members in case of emergency.

Under Student Regulations 2006, all schools are now **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the student being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that student, and in any event no later than the time at which the student's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a student's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the student has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Absence data

We use data to monitor, identify and support individual students or groups of students when their

attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit student attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Students) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent students are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.

We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents or carers and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents or carers have a duty to make sure that their children attend school, on time, every day.

All school staff and the Governing Body are committed to working with parents or carers and students as this is the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance at our school as possible.

Annex A: Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (August 2024)

[Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\):](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.</p> <p>Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness).</p> <p>Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance.</p> <p>Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.</p>	<p>Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand.</p> <p>Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.</p> <p>Accurately complete admission and attendance registers.</p> <p>Have robust daily processes to follow up absence.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on.</p> <p>Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.</p>	<p>Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures.</p> <p>Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.</p> <p>Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed.</p> <p>Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.</p>	<p>Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services.</p> <p>Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice.</p> <p>Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.</p>

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.</p> <p>Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met.</p> <p>If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school continue to work with the local authority and partners.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.</p> <p>Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance.</p> <p>If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.</p>

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners.</p> <p>Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who needs it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and:</p> <p>Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders.</p> <p>Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners.</p> <p>Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).</p>

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and:</p> <p>All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision.</p> <p>Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in</p>

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them.</p> <p>Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.</p>

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
<p>Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance.</p> <p>Proactively engage with the support offered.</p>	<p>Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance.</p> <p>Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.</p> <p>Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals.</p> <p>Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.</p>	<p>Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.</p>	<p>Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families.</p> <p>Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons, would not otherwise receive a suitable education.</p>

Annex B – Essex County Council – Education Department
Code of conduct – Penalty notices for school absence/suspended pupils
Applies from 1 September 2024

Annex C



Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools after 19th August 2024.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

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

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

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 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, including the U code (late after registers have closed).

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

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

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court.

Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Annex D – Illness Absence Guidance

<https://seureschools.essex.gov.uk/DisplayDocument.aspx?DocID=276>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UK_HSA-should-I-keep-my_child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)