

ATTENDANCE UPDATES

DUDLEY UPDATES 24-25

Dear Parents and Carers,

From September, all schools have to follow updated statutory guidance around attendance in schools. You can read the new guidance [here](#). This will mean changes for schools and parents, which is reflected in law. These changes are intended to help improve school attendance for all children nationally. It is important to understand that these changes are statutory, and, as such, we have to follow them fully. I have listed the main changes, that affect parents, below. We want to ensure every child has the best chance to achieve, and regular attendance plays a huge part in that, and we will work with you to help if there are any attendance concerns.

As you are aware, holidays are not authorised in term time. This is being enforced further from September. We also are aware that some parents have taken their child(ren) on holiday in term time but telling us that their child is ill. If schools suspect that this is the case, then we will unauthorise the absence and the responsibility then rests on parents to prove that their child was ill.

Please be assured we want to work with you to ensure your child attends school as much as possible, but we have to follow the statutory guidance. There are also changes to fines for unauthorised absences which are also explained below.

The main changes to these guidelines are:

- ✓ Increased expectations on schools to improve attendance, especially for those pupils who may be considered vulnerable.
- ✓ Recapping on the legal responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child attends school regularly.
- ✓ An increase in fines to parents for children missing school without exceptional reasons and an increase in powers to schools and Local Authorities to issue these fines.
- ✓ Schools retain the right to grant absence for exceptional circumstances, but this does not include absence for taking part in protest activities.
- ✓ Term time holidays continue not to be considered to be exceptional circumstances.
- ✓ Schools are being asked to inform the Local Authority of any pupil looking like they will miss 15 days due to illness.
- ✓ Schools are being asked to inform social workers and or/youth offending services for those pupils who have one.
- ✓ Schools should be increasingly mindful of pupils with mental health difficulties and work with parents and pupils to overcome these. This in itself, is not a reason to not attend school.

Please see the leaflet overleaf for more information.



Kind Regards,
Mrs Wainwright

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing

Per Parent, Per Child	Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example, 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
National Threshold	There will be 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. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.
First Offence	The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.• Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
Second Offence (within 3 years)	The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £160 per parent, per child paid 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 the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500. Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

