



Henry Chadwick Community Primary School

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Dear parents/carers

CHANGES TO PENALTY NOTICES – UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

As you will be aware from the Government's latest campaign, improving attendance in schools is a key priority. The DfE have, therefore, published new guidance and regulations which come into force in August 2024. The main changes which everyone needs to be aware of are:

- a) A revised set of codes
- b) Schools will be sharing daily attendance data with the DfE
- c) Changes to penalty notices

The important change which all parents and carers need to be aware of is the change to penalty notices, as detailed in "Working Together to Improve School Attendance", which was published during February 2024. These changes will impact on parents who are booking term time holidays for September 2024 onwards. This is a Government directive and something which we, as a school, must adhere to. Requests for absences during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences (extract from Working Together to Improve School Attendance)

A reminder that a penalty notice is an out of court settlement, which is intended to change behaviour, without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour, they are unlikely to be the most appropriate tool. Therefore, from Autumn 2024, only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160, which will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

New guidelines - If there is a second unauthorised absence within a three-year period, which results in a second penalty notice being issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil this will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within three years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where there is a third request for an absence (or subsequent times) within those three years, alternative action will be taken, including the possibility of prosecution.

Please note that Penalty Notices and any other legal action is instigated by the Local Authority and not school and fines are paid to the Local Authority and no payment is received by school.

If there are any questions please ask.

Vicki Barnes
Headteacher

Every day counts..... Every minute matters.....