

A High Performing Specialist School

Head of School: Mr Zumon Chowdhury

Attendance letter for Parents/Carers

Dear Parent/Carers,

I would like to inform you about important changes to the national framework regarding school attendance and the issuance of penalty notices for unauthorised absences. These changes have taken effect from August 19, 2024. Please take note of the key points below:

Key Changes to Penalty Notice Guidelines

- **Term-Time Leave:** Penalty notices will be issued for **5 consecutive days or more** of unauthorised absence during term time.
- **The 10 Sessions Rule:** Penalty notices will also apply if a child accumulates for **10 sessions (half-days)** of unauthorised absence or lateness within a 10-week period.

Fines for Penalty Notices

- **First Offence:** £160 per parent, per child, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- **Second Offence:** £160 per parent, per child, with no reduction for early payment.
- **Third Offence:** If the issue continues, the case may be referred to the **Magistrates Court**, where fines of up to **£2,500 per parent, per child**, could be imposed.

Importance of School Attendance

Regular school attendance is vital for your child's **academic success, personal development, and access to extra-curricular activities**. Research shows that pupils with better attendance generally perform better in both exams and assessments.

Legal Obligations and Exceptional Circumstances

Parents are legally required to ensure their child attends school regularly, excepting specific cases, such as illness or religious observance, apply. School leaders will assess whether an absence is due to **"exceptional circumstances"**, though requests for holidays during term time are rarely approved.

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Support for Attendance Issues

If your child is facing challenges with school attendance, please do not hesitate to contact your child's Head of Year for support. We are here to work with you to understand and address the reasons for any absences.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Attendance/Pastoral Team. I appreciate your cooperation in ensuring that your child's attendance is a priority.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. L Hannan

Attendance Support Officer

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