



# VERNON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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25<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## Summer Term Attendance Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

The government guidance *'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'* becomes statutory on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The new guidance sets out changes to the law on school attendance and keeping admission registers and sets out the new National Framework for Penalty Notices. Our school attendance policy will reflect the new statutory guidance from the start of the academic year in September 2024.

### National Framework for Penalty Notices

The government has introduced new rules concerning Education Penalty Notice fines. The aim of the new rules is to reduce the number of days missed by children due to unauthorised absence, especially for unauthorised term time holidays. These rules come into force on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 and will therefore take effect from the start of the 2024-2025 school year. They will apply only to offences taking place (and fines issued) from then onwards.

Education Penalty Notices are mainly issued to parents/carers who take their children out of school for term time holidays, weddings, family visits and other purposes. Parents/carers are reminded that schools are only able to authorise leave of absence if satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. This will rarely be the case for family holidays, given that 13 weeks of school holidays are available to families each year. We would therefore ask parents/carers to ensure that all holidays are arranged to take place in the school holidays.

From September, a fine must be considered if a child misses five consecutive days of school for unauthorised absence (Inset training days can be included where there was intent to be absent from term time leave). A fine will also be considered if a child misses 10 sessions (half days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The threshold can be met with "any combination of unauthorised absence". For example, four sessions in term time plus six instances of arriving late and can also span "different terms or school years". As a school we want to work with you to ensure each child has good attendance, so please let us know if you are concerned with your child's attendance.

Please see the additional attached guidance from Cheshire East Council regarding the new National Framework for Penalty Notices.

Kind regards,

The Attendance Team



*'Nobody else is quite like me'*



## PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING !

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force on 19 August 2024.

### Penalty Notices will be issued for

**Term time leave:** Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days.

**10 Sessions of Unauthorised absence in a rolling 10 week period:** A Penalty Notices may be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10 week period.

However, we retain the discretion to issue a Penalty Notice before the threshold is met. For example, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the above thresholds.

### Per Parent/Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will continue to be issued per parent per child. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular school attendance the fine will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of the issue, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

(Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

### Second Offence

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first penalty notice, for either term time leave or irregular attendance the second penalty notice will be charged at:

£160 if paid within 28 days. (Unpaid penalty notices may result in a parental prosecution)

### Third Offence

On the third time that an offence is committed within 3 years of the first penalty notice for either a term time leave or irregular attendance a penalty notice will not be issued. The case may proceed to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000 or legal proceedings under Section 444 (1a) can include a fine of up to £2500.

