

July 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

## **Re: National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence**

I am taking this opportunity to write to inform you of some important changes the Department for Education is introducing regarding school attendance and the issuing of penalty notices when children are absent from school.

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices has been being introduced. The new regulations will come into effect from the 19th of August 2024. The aim is to improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England.

The national framework includes:

- A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of ten sessions (usually equivalent to five school days) for any unauthorised absence within a rolling ten school week period. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years. For example, two sessions of unauthorised absence in the summer term and a further eight during the autumn term.
- An increase to the rate of a penalty notice from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at £80.
- A national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool must be considered (such as prosecution or another attendance legal interventions).

This means that if you have applied for a leave of absence to take place from September 2024 and the school has not agreed to authorise it, you may receive a penalty notice at the level prescribed by the new framework.

Please be aware that new legislation does not allow schools to authorise any holidays in term time or authorise leave retrospectively.

The local authority is in the process of consulting with schools and partner agencies to develop a revised local code of conduct. The document will be published on Birmingham City Council's website.



The Council believes good attendance is essential to support your child in getting the most out of their education and we thank you for your continued support.

If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to contact the school who may be able to offer support for your child and family.

Yours sincerely



Sue Harrison  
Strategic Director of Childrens and Families

