

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: National Framework for Penalty Notices - School Absence

I am writing to inform you of changes the Government will implement from 19 August 2024 concerning unauthorised absences from school. It is important that you take a few minutes to read this letter so that you understand what the changes are.

Parents can already be issued with a penalty notice by the local authority for their child's non-attendance at school. From the 19 August 2024, the Government will standardise the process for penalty notices. All local authorities must follow the national requirements.

From the 19 August 2024:

- Penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school are increasing from £120 to £160 per child, per parent. The amount will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A parent may be issued with a penalty notice if their child's absence is unauthorised, and they miss 10 sessions within a rolling period of 10 weeks. Ten sessions are usually the same as 5 school days. The 10 weeks may span different terms or school years. For example, two unauthorised absences in the summer term and eight unauthorised absences in the autumn term.
- A penalty notice may also be issued, after consideration of all the information, where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold or repeated absence for birthdays or other family events. This is a discretionary power that is included with the code.
- The changes apply to any unauthorised absence taken from the start of the new academic year. For example, a holiday in term time which has a start date after the 19 August 2024.
- If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, the penalty notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160. There is no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

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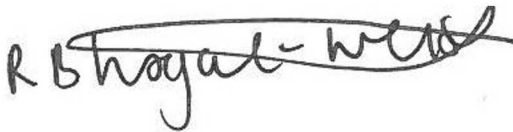
- The Government has set a national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period.
- If the national limit of two penalty notices has been met, or exceeded, the local authority must consider the use of another tool to improve attendance. For example, prosecution or another attendance legal intervention.

The local penalty notice code of conduct will be published on Liverpool City Council's website and has been drawn up in consultation with headteachers and governing bodies of state funded school and Merseyside Police Force.

The Council believe 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 queries regarding the changes to the penalty notice process for school attendance, please contact the EWS helpline on 0151 233-3916 or email ewshelpline@si.liverpool.gov.uk

Yours faithfully



Reena Bhogal-Welsh
Director of Education & Inclusion