

Priory Primary School

Achieving our best; supporting and celebrating each other.



11th Sept 2024

Dear Families,

Changes that came in to place for penalty notices from 19th August 2024

You may have seen in the press and on social media recently that there are changes taking place with regards to penalty notices for unauthorised absences.

These changes came into effect from 19th August 2024 with the biggest changes as follows:

- A penalty notice can be issued, from the Local Authority, if there is unauthorised leave during term time, which is defined as: 10 sessions (5 days) or more of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10 school week period can span different terms or school years.
- A penalty notice could result in a fine of £80.00 per child per parent, if paid within 21 days; rising to £160.00 per child per parent if paid within 28 days. You could be prosecuted if you do not pay the fine after 28 days.
- If a 2nd penalty notice is issued (within 3 years for the same child) a fine of £160.00 per child per parent must be paid within 28 days.
- The third time an offence is committed (within 3 years for the same child) a penalty notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Please see the attached details which we have received from Essex County Council to summarise.

Our attendance policy and leave of absence request forms will be updated to reflect these changes.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Claire Laver
Headteacher

Priory Primary School

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Essex County Council



Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools **after 19th August 2024**.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, including the U code (late after registers have closed).

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent (who allowed the holiday), per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court.

Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.