

Fixed Penalty Notices for irregular attendance at school

Important information for parents

1. Overview

Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure their child attends school regularly. They can be used in cases where absence has not been authorised by the Head Teacher.

A Penalty Notice can be issued when support has not been engaged with or when support is not appropriate, for example, leave of absence during term time.

2. Leave

Head Teachers are unable to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation **would not** constitute an exceptional circumstance.

3. Absence

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if there are **5 days (10 sessions)** of absence in a period of **10 school weeks**, where absence has not been authorised.

A notice may be issued where the threshold (5 days / 10 sessions) has not been reached, for example if there are several periods of leave.

4. Amount

Within a 3-year period:

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued and **legal action** may result.
(prosecution)