

CHR/SP

5th September 2024



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Leave of Absence Penalty Notice

You may have already seen in the national media that, from 19th August 2024, the new National Framework for issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absence will apply. The local authority has requested that we write to all parents to notify them of the changes and the wording below is taken from information issued to us by Sandwell.

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

Penalty notice fines will continue to be issued per parent per child. For example, two parents with three children would receive a total of six penalty notices.

First Offence: the first time a penalty notice is issued for a term time holiday or irregular school attendance, the penalty notice will be charged at £160 per parent per child, paid within 28 days – reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. Unpaid penalty notices after 28 days may result in prosecution.

Second Offence (within 3 years of the First 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 notice, the second penalty notice will be charged at £160 per parent per child, paid within 28 days; there will be no reduction if it is paid within 21 days. Unpaid penalty notices after 28 days may result in prosecution.

Third Offence and any further offences (within 3 years of the first offence): the third time that an offence is committed for either a term-time holiday and/or irregular attendance, a penalty notice will not be issued, and the case may be proceeded straight to prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'failure to secure their child's regular attendance at a school', the magistrates can impose a fine up to £1,000, and this will result in a criminal record.

Please note that St Michael's requires at least two weeks' notice to process the leave of absence form. The form should be completed by the parent with whom the child resides, as shown on our school system. Both parents MUST be listed on the form, even if they do not reside at the same address. You must also list all other adults over the age of 18 who reside at the same address as the child, including step-parents, siblings, and grandparents.

For any leave of absence PRIOR to 19th August 2024 (e.g., in July 2024), the penalty notice will be at the old rate of £60/£120. Any leave of absence taken in September 2024 will be charged at the new rates above.

Your faithfully,



Mrs Christina Handy-Rivett
Headteacher

Headteacher: Mrs C Handy-Rivett, BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

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