



PENALTY NOTICE FINES FAQ

If I have already booked a holiday for next year, could I receive a penalty fine at the new higher rate?

Yes, if the absence has not been authorised by the Head Teacher of your child's school. Remember, only a Head Teacher can agree whether an absence can be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Who can be issued with a penalty notice?

Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school.

In education law, anyone who lives with a child and who has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. For example, this will include step-parents and partners.

Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?

No, it applies to all unauthorised absence from school including holidays. Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed at 9.10am and failing to provide reasons for absence.

How do I request for my child to have leave granted during term time?

It will be for your child's Head Teacher to decide as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that will allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school. Forms are available on the school website or at the school office. Any request must be put in writing at least 14 days before the proposed absence.

Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued to the parent/carer?

No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive.

What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under s444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine is an opportunity for you to settle out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?

If you have any concerns regarding school attendance please get in touch with our Attendance Team

pcs-attendance@swale.at