



Applications for Absence from School

PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ ALL OF THIS LEAFLET BEFORE MAKING YOUR APPLICATION.

Please ensure holidays are not booked prior to making your application to school.

Applications must be made at least 28 days prior to the potential date of absence. Not only is this a statutory requirement, it also enables teachers to plan for any known absences. If you need to apply with less than 28 days, please discuss this with the Head Teacher first.

All holidays taken in school term time will be unauthorised and may be referred to the Local Authority for a penalty notice if they breach their attendance rules.

The Government Document 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' was updated in August 2024 outlining the recent changes in law for requests for absence.

The law on school attendance and right to a full-time education

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. **This means their child must attend every day that the school is open**, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

National Threshold

- There is a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England; this is 10 sessions (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.
- The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

The following changes came into force **on 19th August 2024**.

- All schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold.
- The pupil must have at least **10 half days of unauthorised absence** (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period

Cost of a penalty notice - Per parent, per child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent in term time would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines (eg: 3 children x £160 x 2 parents = £960 fine.) If parents are separated, both parents will still be fined.

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 ([Section 576 of the Education Act 1996](#)) states that, in relation to a child or young person, a 'parent' includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility for or care of the child.

Parent refers to a person who typically has care of a child or young person if the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after them, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

First offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave of absence or unauthorised absence the amount will be:

- **£160** per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- Reduced to **£80** per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second offence (within 3 years)

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

- **£160** per parent, per child within 28 days
- There is no reduced sum available in this instance.

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable, and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice. Payment after the deadline may be accepted in exceptional circumstances. In this situation, the higher amount of £160 is usually payable and must be paid immediately and in full.

When paying a penalty notice fine, parents are essentially agreeing to an out of court settlement in respect of the unauthorised absences to which the notice refers. Payment in full against the penalty notice discharges the parent's legal responsibility for the period of unauthorised absence outlined in the Notice and the parent cannot be subsequently prosecuted for that period.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed 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 up to **£2,500**
- Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate due to '*failure to safeguard a child's education*'.

On rare occasions in the past, it has come to our attention that some parents have lied to the school about their child's absence, claiming that they are ill when in fact they are on holiday. Please be aware that in these instances, schools have now been advised to refer such absences for penalty notices.

We would always prefer that parents are honest with us. Please do not put unnecessary responsibility on your children to be dishonest about where they have been; this is very difficult for children who know what is right and wrong.

I would urge you to come and speak to me if you have any concerns regarding this.

As always, your cooperation with this new attendance policy and procedure is appreciated.

Kind regards,

Headteacher

Application Form for a Child's Absence from School



North Wheatley
CofE Primary

Pupils Name	Class	Date of Birth
Home Address		
Dates requested for absence		Number of school days that will be missed
Reason for absence request (please note as much information as possible must be provided and supporting evidence, where appropriate.)		
Parent/Carer Making the application Print full name	Signature	Date

Please return completed your application form to the school office, giving AT LEAST 28 days prior to the requested absence date. School Office Use Only

Date / time form received	Does this request meet the 28 days notice period?	Child's Current attendance and historical Record of attendance
Child's age at time of requested absence:		Number of sessions missed:
Prior to the application, number of sessions of unauthorised absence in last ten school weeks:		Total number of unauthorised sessions if the child does not attend school on dates requested:
Headteachers decision/notes		Date of Decision:
To be referred for a penalty notice if taken?		
Date Letter / email sent to parents informing of the decision:		