**Changes to School Attendance**

The Department for Education has set new guidance for School Attendance that came into force as of **effect from 19th August 2024**. Schools, Governing Bodies, and Local Authorities must have regard to it as part of their efforts to maintain high levels of school attendance.

The introduction of the new National Framework will see the following changes come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised absence.

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/carer to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

**Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for term time leave of five or more consecutive days of absence. Additionally, Penalty Notice Fines may be issued when there have been ten sessions of absence in a ten-week period. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence. This may include four absences plus six instances of arriving late. The period of ten school weeks can also span different terms or school years.

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to the Magistrates’ Court. Here fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child. 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’ and may impact on job applications and travel abroad.