

31st March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Penalty Notice Notification for 'unauthorised absence'.

As you are aware all pupils are now required to return to school following the government's decision to open schools to all pupils for face-to-face learning.

It is important to make you aware that pupil attendance as from 8th March is now mandatory, unless as per government guidance it is COVID related, whereby Public Health advice is to be followed.

I am writing to you as we would like to ensure you know the changes to attendance, where Wiltshire Council will be implementing its policy for 'Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time' and 'Unauthorised Absence'. Therefore, going forward it is likely that Wiltshire Council may issue penalty notices for truancy (any unauthorised absence) as well as for unauthorised leave of absence (holiday).

To clarify this, if a pupil accumulates 10 or more sessions of any unauthorised absence, or unauthorised leave of absence within a specified six month period, the school must notify the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent, for each child, where this applies.

A penalty fine of £120 will apply, if paid within 21 days this is reduced to £60. If after 28 days the penalty has not been paid, legal proceedings will be taken through the magistrates' court for the unauthorised absence.

The following link will take you to the Wiltshire Council Education Welfare Department website where there is advice and guidance for parents/carers in relation to Attendance and expectations.

[Attendance and behaviour - Wiltshire Council](#)

For updated information regarding Attendance and Wiltshire Council guidance, please also refer to our school website, where all relevant information is also available to this effect.

Whilst we are highlighting attendance, I would like to remind you that your child is expected to be in school in good time before 0840 am, each day equipped and ready to learn.

If your child is late into school, they are required to sign in at the reception, where an 'L' late mark will be entered. Where a child signs into school late after the registration has closed officially at 0915 this mark will be recorded as a 'U', please note this is recorded as an 'unauthorised absence'. If your child has attended a medical appointment you should provide your child, where possible, with the medical evidence to enable the absence to be authorised. Failure to do so could result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Please do take this into consideration regarding the new process of issuing Penalty Notice's for unauthorised absence, as outlined above.

I would like to conclude that we as an Academy take great pride in good attendance and have not implemented this new guidance from Wiltshire Council until now as we wanted to allow our students to re-establish consistency and settle back into school following the first and second lockdown.

Following the third lockdown, and students' return to some form of normality with their education, we now feel that it is time and necessary for you as parents/carers to work with this, to support our policy for attendance, where we place great importance in re-establishing and promoting good attendance and emphasise how consistent attendance can enable your child to reach their full potential.

We are very keen to work with you to ensure that your child is attending school each day, enjoying the experience and their learning and most importantly making good progress.

We trust that you appreciate the importance of attendance and thank you in anticipation of your support.

Please do let us know where your child is struggling with attending school and we will look to support you with this wherever possible.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Paddock', written in a cursive style.

Mr Steven Paddock
Headteacher