

## Penalty Notices for School Attendance from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

With the introduction of the National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes came into force for School Penalty Notices issued in Suffolk after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### National Threshold

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 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.

**Please note:** The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for 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 paid within 28 days.



### 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 could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

### Per Parent\*, Per Child

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent\*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

### \*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.

- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

\*based on a rolling 3 year period from the date of issue of first penalty notice

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