



PATHWAY PRIMARY FEDERATION

Love of God and others as oneself



Whittington CE (VA) Primary
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Morda CE (VC) Primary School
Morda
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Shropshire, SY10 9NR

Friday 18 October 2024

Attendance and Term-Time Absence

Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you of some important changes to our schools' term time absence policy, which have been updated in line with the latest Department for Education (DfE) guidance. These changes aim to improve attendance and ensure that every child can make the most of their learning opportunities. This will be implemented consistently after half-term.

The DfE's updated guidance, *Working together to improve school attendance*, published in August 2024, reinforces the importance of regular attendance for pupils' academic success, social development, and overall well-being. The guidance highlights that parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly. Schools are expected to take action to address any unauthorised absences, and local authorities are tasked with supporting schools in improving attendance rates.

Key Policy Changes:

1. Requests for Term Time Absence:

In line with DfE expectations, requests for term time absence will continue to only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays or trips abroad during term time will not be considered exceptional, and unauthorised absences may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued by the local authority. Ten sessions of unauthorised absence (i.e. five days) in a ten-week period could result in a fixed penalty notice and repeated period of absence could result in further legal action (see attached diagram).

2. Attendance Monitoring and Support:

We will be closely monitoring attendance patterns and will work with parents to address any concerns early on. If a pupil's attendance falls below 93%, we are required to take action to support improved attendance. This may involve meetings with parents and, where necessary, referrals to external services for additional support.

3. Medical Absences:

If your child is absent due to illness, we kindly ask you to inform the school as early as possible. For prolonged or frequent absences due to medical reasons, we may request medical evidence to ensure appropriate support is in place for your child's return to school.

4. Communication and Engagement:

The new DfE guidance stresses the importance of open communication between parents and schools. We encourage you to reach out to us if you have any concerns about your child's attendance. We are here to work with you to ensure your child's regular attendance and success.

We understand that each family's situation is unique, and we are committed to supporting our children and families in meeting these new attendance expectations. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school office. The Federation Attendance Policy is also attached for your information.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that every pupil at Pathway Primary Federation can thrive through regular and consistent school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mr Carl Rogers

Executive Headteacher

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

1

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:

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

2

SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Please follow the link for the Publication that will start from 19th August 2024.
www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance