

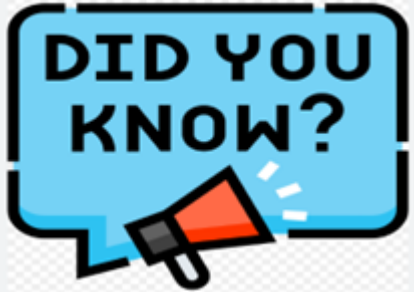


# Attendance at South View Community Primary

Information for  
Parents and Carers

*including Changes in Law from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024*

# Why Does Good Attendance Matter?



- ▶ If your child attends school every day, they have the potential to achieve their best, educationally and socially.
  - ▶ 10 days off per year = 94.7% attendance
  - ▶ Whilst 90% attendance might sound good ...
    - ▶ 90% = ½ day off each week per year
    - ▶ 90% = 1 month off school per year
    - ▶ 90% = 1 whole school year in career
- ... reducing continuity of education

## 'Unauthorised Absence'

An unauthorised absence, is recorded where no acceptable reason is given. Only the school can authorise an absence. Significant unauthorised absences can result in a penalty notice being issued.

Also, some secondary schools do look at attendance levels when offering places on appeal, in particular, the rates of 'unauthorised absence'.

# What is a Penalty Notice?

- ▶ A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from August 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at the higher rate. Any further offences will result in criminal prosecution.
- ▶ The law will be clear that where a Penalty Notice threshold is met – in each individual case, the school must consider if a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

Lincolnshire County Council have the discretion to issue Penalty Notice fines before the above threshold is met in cases where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the threshold, or for repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.

## Unchanged

Penalty Notice fines are issued Per Parent, Per child. This means that fines are issued to each parent, for each child who is absent. For example: If 2 siblings are absent for a term-time holiday this will result in each parent receiving 2 separate fines.

# Impact of Lateness and Poor Attendance



The playground gates open at 8:40am and close at 8:45am. If your child is late we will ask you to sign them in at main reception.

- ▶ 5 minutes late a day = 3 days lost per year
- ▶ 10 minutes late a day = 6 days lost per year
- ▶ 15 minutes late a day = 10 days lost per year
- ▶ 30 minutes late a day = 19 days lost per year

## The Impact of being late or absent regularly

Children do not like being late or absent from school! It can affect them in many ways —

- ▶ **Nervous or embarrassed coming into class and not being sure what is happening.**
- ▶ **Issues with friendships.**
- ▶ **Lower academic attainment.**
- ▶ **Disrupting the learning of others.**
- ▶ **Missing out on social /fun activities.**
- ▶ **Missing out on understanding new routines (particularly when missing the first days in September).**

# Legal Information and Government Guidance



## What the law says ...

As a parent, ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is **your legal responsibility** and permitting absence from school without **good reason** is an offence and may result in referral to the Education Welfare Service, the issue of Penalty Notices and fines and eventually prosecution.

### Who is a "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.

## What the government says ...

New government guidelines state that attendance figures of **90%** or less is classed as '**persistent absence**'.

The government expects that in order to reach a child's full potential, they must attend school for a minimum of 95% of the year.

At South View Primary, we will notify you in writing if we feel that attendance should be improved to prevent further action being taken. This may involve working with Lincolnshire County Council's Education Welfare Service.



# Penalty Notices

## **5 days of unauthorised absence**

Penalty Notice fines may be issued for any term-time absences that are unauthorised (for example, a 5-day term time holiday) - whether these absences are taken consecutively or cumulatively over a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

## **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any 10-week period**

Penalty Notice fines will also be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any rolling period of 10 school weeks

**A school day has 2 sessions:**

**1 morning and 1 afternoon session per day**

A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 6 sessions of holiday plus 4 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

## How Penalty Notices are issued in a three-year rolling period?

<u>First Offence</u>	<u>Second Offence (in a 3-year rolling period)</u>	<u>Third Offence or Any Further Offences (in a 3-year rolling period)</u>
<p>The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £160 per parent, per child</li><li>• Reduced to: £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.</li></ul>	<p>The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £160 per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days) There is no reduction in the amount.</li></ul>	<p>The third time an offence is committed for an unauthorised absence a Penalty Notice will NOT be issued but will be referred to Lincolnshire County Council for consideration of prosecution in a Magistrate Court for prosecution which may result in fines of up to £2,500 per parent, per child.</p> <p>Cases found guilty in a Magistrate's Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education.'</p>

## Illness Guidance ...

Being ill may prevent your child from coming to school, but, if they can get out of bed and play or enjoy TV, they should be in school. Coughs and sneezes are not an excuse to miss school and feeling tired is not an illness.



Looking after your child is very important to us and we will of course contact you if we feel they should be at home.

If your child's attendance falls below 90% due to illness, we will ask that you provide a doctor's certificate to verify absences. If this is not provided, they will be classed as unauthorised.

## Leave of absence ...

The Department for Education made changes regarding leave of absence during term time.

Leave of absence is not permitted during term time unless there are 'exceptional circumstances'.

Taking a leave of absence without prior discussion or consent will result in an unauthorised absence.

Family holidays are not considered as 'exceptional circumstances'.





# Summary of School Attendance Policy



- ▶ At South View, we expect children to attend school every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so.
- ▶ If your child is not well enough to attend school we expect a **parent** ( or someone with parental responsibility) to contact the school office by 8:30am, giving a specific reason for the absence.
- ▶ You need to contact the school on a **daily basis** during your child's absence.

Phone **01733 210361**

Press 1 to report your child's absence.

Please give your child's full name and reason for their absence.

Call on each and every day of the absence (before 8:30 am).