

22 October 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

We want to make sure all families fully understand the new national attendance guidance (in effect from August 2024) and how it applies to unauthorised absences, in particular unauthorised holidays taken during term time.

Unauthorised Holidays of 5 School Days or More

If your child takes an unauthorised holiday of 5 school days (10 sessions) or more, a Penalty Notice (fine) will normally be issued immediately. This applies even if it is the first unauthorised holiday.

Note- one school day counts as **two** sessions – morning and afternoon.

Unauthorised Holidays Under 5 School Days

If an unauthorised holiday is shorter than 5 school days, it will not usually result in an immediate fine. However, all unauthorised absences are recorded and count towards the national 10-session threshold within any rolling 10-week period.

This means smaller unauthorised absences, including repeat short holidays, can build overtime to trigger a Penalty Notice (fine).

Penalty Notice Details

- £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days (EG a family with 2 children would be £320)
- £160 per parent per child if paid after 21 days (within 28 days)
- Maximum of 2 penalty notices per parent per child in a 3-year period. After that, the Local Authority will escalate to prosecution rather than another notice.

What This Means for Families

Be aware that even short unauthorised absences are recorded and accumulate.

Contact us if you are experiencing difficulties or need support: our approach is always support first, but we must comply with the law.

At Waverley, we want the very best for every child. We know that regular attendance is key to your child's success, it helps them:

- achieve well
- build strong friendships
- feel they belong
- make the most of every learning opportunity.

When children attend consistently, they are more likely to flourish academically, socially, and emotionally, to secure the best possible outcomes for their future.

We are committed to meeting every child's needs and working closely with families through a Support first approach. If attendance becomes a concern, we will always seek to understand and help first, offering guidance and practical support to remove barriers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Attendance Team.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Leese

Vice Principal