

September 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,



City of Norwich School
An Ormiston Academy | Excellence in all

Regular School Attendance and Parent's Legal Responsibilities

At City of Norwich School our aim is to work with & support parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential. This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child(ren) attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take appropriate steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The Legalities of Attendance

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil with at least **10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period** meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice. Any pupil at City of Norwich School who meets this criteria will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If issued, the penalty notice is **£160 when paid within the 28 days & £80 if paid within 21 days**. When penalty notices are issued, each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than one child who has been absent. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. Furthermore, **any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be charged at a higher rate of £160**, with a limit of 2 per parent for the same child over this period. There is no right of appeal against a fixed penalty notice.

Please also be aware that as per our school procedures, **if a student's attendance falls below 95%, we will intervene**. This may take the form of Form Tutor or House Team conversations, parental meetings, **issuing an Attendance Contract or serving a Notice to Improve**. Where a parent fails to engage with the offer of support during the Notice to Improve period or the student fails to make significant improvements in their attendance patterns, a referral for legal intervention can be submitted.

Requests for Leave of Absence

The DfE advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in **exceptional circumstances**, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the Headteacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday during term time as they would not typically be seen as an exceptional circumstance.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

If parent(s) choose to take their child(ren) out of school for an unauthorised holiday, they may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice if they meet the criteria listed above.

I hope we can count on your support in promoting high attendance across the academy. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's House Team if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Ms J Philpott Headteacher

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