

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING FROM 19 AUGUST 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by the Department for Education (DfE), the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notices in respect of school attendance and unauthorised leave of absence after 19 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 or more) 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 – code G; O or U. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. It is for a Headteacher / Principal to consider any requests for exceptional leave of absence, prior to the absence being taken. Should this be declined, the school will consider a referral to Education Inclusion for consideration of either a penalty notice or prosecution process.

The Council fully supports schools in securing school attendance and will not overturn the decision of a Headteacher / Principal for the issuing of a penalty notice for unauthorised leave of absence (eg family holiday). Parents should request in advance of booking any holiday and provide evidence of exceptional circumstance at the point of request. Evidence after the event is unlikely to be considered by the school.

Penalty Notices are used to act as a deterrent and to change parental behaviours. North Lincolnshire Council reserve the right to consider a move direct to a prosecution process; to issue a penalty notice (in line with our code of conduct); or alternative action.

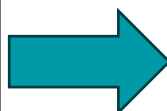
Schools will endeavour to work with parents where attendance is a concern and will evidence their support and intervention in their request for a penalty notice or other legal considerations. Parents are strongly advised to work with their school to access support to remove any barriers to their child's attendance.

FIRST OFFENCE

The **FIRST** time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised leave of absence, or general school unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid



SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 ROLLING 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
(there is no reduction for early payment)



THIRD OFFENCE

A penalty notice will not be issued for a third offence and North Lincolnshire Council will consider if the case will move to a court process directly. Parent should be aware that prosecution can result in fines up to £2,500 and a criminal record.

Per Parent* - Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines 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

Definition of a parent – section 576 Education Act 1996 defines “parent” as 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.

Parents are reminded that penalty notices issued from the beginning of the new academic year for any unauthorised leave of absence taken from the start of the autumn term will be charged at the new rates regardless of when the request for absence was presented to the school.