



**ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
MANOR PARK SOUTH, KNUTSFORD, CHESHIRE WA16 8AL

*Believe, Trust and Be Ready*

*“That they may have life, and to the full” John 10:10*

28 June 2024

**Department for Education - Changes to issuing penalty notices for leave in term time**

Dear Parents and Carers,

We need to make you aware of some important changes that could affect you if you choose to take your child out of school during term time. These changes relate to term time leave as well as irregular attendance.

In February 2024, the Department for Education published *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*. Within this document, it lays out the changes to issuing penalty notices that come into effect on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024. We have summarized these changes below.

**Per Parent, Per Child**

Penalty notice fines will now be 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.

**Five consecutive days of term time leave**

Penalty notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

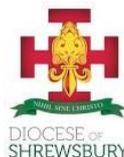
**10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period**

Penalty notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. Please make sure that you make first day of absence contact with us to explain any absences for your child.

**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 paid within 28 days.
- Reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.



### **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 paid within 28 days.
- There will be no offer of a reduction.

### **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.

### **Magistrate's fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child**

Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

### **New two penalty notice limit in a three-year period**

The three-year rolling period starts for parents when the first penalty notice is issued to them after the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### **Punctuality**

Our school day starts at 8.55am. If your child arrives after this time, they will need to enter school via the main office and the accompanying parent/carer must sign them in. It is so important that children arrive on time as at St Vincent's, we make the most of every single minute of our school day. If your child arrives after 8.55am (or 1pm for the afternoon session), they will be recorded as late (L). If they arrive after 9.25am (or 1.25pm for the afternoon session), they are recorded as late after registers (U) which is an unauthorised absence mark, which reduces your child's attendance. This unauthorised absence is counted as irregular attendance and therefore subject to penalty notice fines.

We understand that, financially, times are tough for many families and so we wanted to make you aware of the changes being made by the Government to combat holidays being taken in term time and low attendance generally. As you can see, the fines applied from August of this year will be far more substantial than in recent years.

We attach an information sheet produced by Cheshire East Council. More information can be found at:

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Miss Groarke  
Head teacher