

15th May 2024

Dear parents/carers

National changes relating to school attendance

At Broad Horizons Education Trust our ambition is simply to offer the best education and experience so that every child is supported to achieve their full potential. Our philosophy is that “time matters”. School years are precious for every child and young person. We believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. We value the attendance of all pupils.

We are writing to inform you of some national changes relating to school attendance. A new national framework comes into force on 19th August 2024.

In particular, it is important that parents/carers understand the changes to Penalty Notice Fines in relation to unauthorised school absence. Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly.

Please see overleaf for details from Norfolk County Council with regards to the thresholds and fines which come into effect for those issued after 19th August 2024.

The Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance [‘Working Together to Improve School Attendance’](#) has been updated and outlines the changes which will come into force on 19th August 2024, which all schools must have regard to.

Yours sincerely

Sally Bailey

Safeguarding and Attendance Advisor

Broad Horizons Education Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales. Broad Horizons Education Trust, Sewell Park Academy, St Clements Hill, Norwich, NR3 4BX.

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Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued **after 19th August 2024**.

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.

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) 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. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence 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 unauthorised absence the amount will be:
- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

- The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines of up to £2,500.
- Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.