



THE GRANGE SCHOOL

Mr V Murray – Headteacher

4 October 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Attendance Expectations – please take note of how fines are issued

As noted in the end of the Summer Term Bulletin and in the National media, from 19 August 2024, there was a clear directive from the Department of Education that parents and carers should ensure students attend school on time and every day possible.

As a school, we pride ourselves on maintaining high standards of punctuality and attendance – if your child is not here, we can't teach them! Attendance remains a school priority, but with the Department for Education's stance around penalty notice fines, I felt a month into the new term was an appropriate time to remind parents and carers of the expectations that are now in place, as we are seeing some children with a high absence rate reaching the levels fines are issued.

For clarity, students are expected to be on site at 8.20am and in registration rooms from 8.25am to 8.55am. Arrival after 8.25am but before 8.55am is considered 'late'. Arriving after 8.55am, after registration has closed, is 'unauthorised absence' for that session (unless we have an acceptable, valid reason provided by the parent / carer)

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

The following statements are taken from this framework:

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 child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence – (within 3 years) £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third (and any further) Offences within 3 years - A Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court where 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.'

10 sessions in 10 weeks – (A session is a morning or afternoon registration period) Penalty notices will be considered for any 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks; therefore 5 consecutive days of term time absence can trigger a penalty notice.

Per parent, per child – Penalty notices are issued per parent, per child. This could mean two siblings absent would result in each parent receiving 2 fines. This could amount to £640.

I have also attached the Buckinghamshire Council guidance to this communication.

With this new framework, it is essential that parents / carers communicate with the school, as well as doing all you can to ensure your child regularly attends school.

Can I please ask all parents and carers to keep us informed **on day one** of any absence, by contacting the attendance office on 01296 390959 or email attendance@grange.bucks.sch.uk If you are finding it difficult to get your child in to school, please contact the attendance office for advice and guidance.

I trust you understand my need to remind all parents and carers of the expectations. I am keen to avoid any unnecessary conflict with either students or parents for non-compliance with the Department for Education guidance.

If you have any questions about this letter, or any other comments you wish to make, please email me directly at ngolding@grange.bucks.sch.uk

Yours faithfully



Nick Golding
Deputy Head Teacher

