

# VAUXHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## Article 29

*'Education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.'*

Tuesday 23rd July, 2024

Dear Parent/Carers

We hope this letter finds you well and you are enjoying the summer!

We would like to inform you of some important changes about school attendance that could affect you if you choose to take your child out of school during term time.

The Department of Education published *Working together to improve school attendance*, In February 2024. This document outlines the changes to issuing penalty notices which will come into effect from the **19th August 2024**. It is therefore crucial that you are aware of the potential consequences before taking leave in term time.

Any attendance penalty notices issued after the 19th August 2024 will be issued in the line with the new regulations. The new penalty notice regulations are:

- Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child that is absent. For example, 2 parents and 2 children would result in each parent receiving 2 separate fines.
- The first penalty notice for leave in term time will be £160 per parent per child but may be reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.
- If a second penalty notice is issued within **three years** of the first penalty notice, then this will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child, with no reduction for early payment.
- The third time an offence occurs within the three year period, this will be presented to Magistrate's court with no penalty notice issued.

If you book a holiday now to take place after the 19th August 2024, the absence will be dealt with when the actual unauthorised leave from school occurs, not the date of the booking/informing the school.

To clarify, in terms of the three year period, all penalty notices issued for unauthorised absences **after** the 19th August 2024 will be counted in the three year period. This will include fines issued for term time leave, as well as irregular attendance. Term time leave



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does not just include holidays. Where a child is absent during term time without a valid reason, schools will be expected to carry out a home visit and see the child on the 3rd school day of absence.

With regards to irregular attendance, where a child has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 school days) or more in any 10 week period, the local authority can issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met if parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below threshold or for repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.

It is therefore important to complete a term time leave form if you are requesting leave for your child and this **MUST** be authorised by the headteacher. You should also notify the school every day that your child is absent due to an illness; providing a reason, and where appropriate evidence of medical appointments or prescribed medication. Here is the NHS guidance <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

We have a duty, in every case, to notify the local authority of all unauthorised leave in term time that meets the threshold of 5 school days. This could be 3 school days and 4 instances of lateness, where a valid reason is not given.

As a school, we understand that many families are currently faced with financial challenges, therefore, it is imperative that you are aware of the changes being made by the government to reduce term time holidays and low attendance.

Thank you for understanding this matter.

More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Kind Regards



Vanessa Henry-Edwards  
Deputy Headteacher