

Keys Meadow Primary School



To **work together** to ensure that **all our children** are
inspired to '**lift off and soar**'

Attendance and Punctuality Policy November 2021

Monitoring and Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher. At every review, it will be approved by the full Governing Board.

Date for next review: **November 2023**

We believe that children can reach their full potential only by receiving full-time education, through regular and structured attendance. Keys Meadow Primary School expects all pupils to arrive and leave school punctually and we emphasise this to parents.

All staff are concerned for the children's welfare and happiness and everyone plays a part in promoting regular attendance among the pupils. However, children should not attend school if they are unwell.

Aims

- To foster a climate where regular attendance and punctuality are valued by the school community – teachers, parents and pupils.
- To provide a framework, with agreed roles and responsibilities.
- To provide support and guidance for parents and pupils.
- To develop positive and consistent communication between home and school, including set procedures for attendance information.
- To develop a systematic approach for gathering and analysing data.
- To improve the overall attendance of pupils at school and reduce unauthorised absence.
- To implement a system for rewards and sanctions.
- To promote effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service and other agencies.

Responsibilities

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. Education Act 1996

Parents and carers:

- Should bring their child to school every day and on time;
- Should ensure their children are collected at the end of the day;
- Should observe the school's code of conduct;
- Should work in partnership with school to resolve issues which may lead to poor attendance;
- Should notify the school regarding absence on the first day of absence with a valid reason;
- Should ensure that dental or doctor appointments are made outside of the school day. Hospital appointments will be authorised if a copy of the letter is received;
- Should not take holidays during term time;
- Should apply for exceptional leave in writing, giving the reason for the request.

Class Teachers:

- Should keep an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/or unusual explanations for attendance offered.
- Should inform the Headteacher or Attendance Officer where there are concerns and act upon them.
- Should provide background information to support referrals.
- Should emphasise, with their class, the importance of good attendance and promptness.
- Discuss attendance issues at Learning Review evenings.
- Should set an exemplary example by being punctual and having good attendance themselves.

Headteacher:

- Implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy;
- Overall monitoring of school attendance;
- Promotion of attendance at all times;
- Informing Governors and LGB of attendance data and how school is addressing issues;
- Ensure that Attendance Officer checks the on-line registers have been completed and submitted by class teachers on a twice daily basis to ensure that the 'fire list' is printed for use in emergencies.

The Attendance Officer (working with Senior Leaders and Pastoral Lead) has the responsibility to:

- Support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils;
- Will follow up specific requests from the Headteacher for information about individuals.
- Should contact families where concerns are raised about absence.
- Will be sensitive to the needs of the individual child and parent and recognising that some parents and carers have difficulty in understanding written communication.
- Should respond promptly to issues which may lead to non-attendance.
- Will monitor individual attendance on a daily basis where concerns have been raised.
- Will include information about attendance trends and class percentages in the newsletter.
- Will ensure prompt follow-up on unexplained absences (first day calling).
- Will ensure registers are accurate.
- Will collate attendance percentages.
- Will process and follow up leave of absence forms.
- Will monitor trends in authorised and unauthorised absence.
- Will act as a point of contact for teaching and non-teaching staff where concerns need to be raised or advice sought.
- Will liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.
- Will generate warning letters to parents.
- Will make referrals to Education Welfare Service (EWS) as appropriate.
- Should ensure that the attendance policy is followed and that the actions from EWS meetings are carried out.
- Should notify (in consultation with the Headteacher) the EWS of the need for a Fixed Penalty Notice and providing support with prosecution.
- Should ensure procedures for class and individual rewards for good attendance are followed.
- Should regularly report to the Headteacher and Deputy Head on attendance issues.

The School Office has the responsibility to:

- Maintain and update admission and attendance registers;
- Ensure registers record whether each pupil is present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity.

The Local Governing Board has the responsibility to:

- Scrutinise the implementation of the Attendance and Punctuality Policy;
- Scrutinise overall school attendance and trends in order to hold the Headteacher to account.

Admissions and Attendance Registers

Under The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 schools are required to keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session pupils are marked present or absent. Attendance registers are legal documents which may be required as evidence in court cases. In the case of a pupil of compulsory school age who is absent the register must also indicate whether the absence has been authorised by the school. A child's name may not be deleted from the attendance register unless it has also been deleted from the admissions register.

Grounds for deleting a pupil from the school admission register:

- In the case of a pupil who has been continuously absent from school for a period of not less than four weeks and both the school and the EWS have failed, after reasonable enquiry, to locate the pupil.
- Notification has been given that the child is receiving education otherwise than at school.
- If the child has been registered at another school.

It is important to also note that:

- In the case of a pupil of compulsory school age who is absent, the register must also indicate whether the absence has been authorised by the school;
- When calling the register, the appropriate mark and/symbol should be selected against each pupil's name.
- The law requires all schools including independent schools to have an admission register and an attendance register;
- All pupils are recorded on both registers;
- The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school along with the date of admission or re-admission, information regarding parents/carers and details of the school last attended;
- In completing registers, staff need to select the appropriate button on Scholar Pack: present, absent or late;
- When a child leaves the school at any point other than the completion of year 6, the school will notify the Local Authority (Enfield) when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed;
- Where the parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live, (b) the new address, and (c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address;
- Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the name of the other school, and (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school;
- On receipt of written notification to home educate, the school will inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register;
- Registers will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made;
- See Appendix 1 for the meaning of register codes

Punctuality

Parents and carers must ensure that their children arrive at school on time and are collected promptly at the end of the school day. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and into the wider world.

- Morning Nursery sessions start at 8.45am and finish at 11.45am.
- Afternoon Nursery sessions start at 12.30pm and finish at 3.30pm.
- For all other children, school opens at 8:30 with registers taken at 8.50am and ends at 3.10pm.
- Registers must be completed by 9.00 am; children arriving after this time are late. Children will be marked late if they arrive at school after the registers have been taken but before 9.30am.
- Lateness after this time is recorded as an unauthorised absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.

- Time of arrival is recorded in the register.

Promoting good attendance and punctuality.

We strive to promote consistent and high attendance and punctuality through:

- Developing positive and supportive relationships with those families who struggle, for whatever reason, to get their children to school regularly and on time;
- Celebration of those children who have 100% attendance half-termly and termly; yearly awards of wrist bands
- Certificates for classes with no late arrivals each half term
- Offering class rewards to those classes who achieve 96%+ attendance from a choice menu of exciting activities.
- Early Bird rewards to promote good punctuality.
- Reviewing attendance and punctuality weekly in assemblies;
- Sending positive texts home;
- Reporting to parents and carers on their child's attendance;
- First day absence calls;
- Early intervention letters to alert parents to attendance rates;
- Offering support should parents seek help in trying to get their children to school, i.e. referral to Pastoral Team or Early Intervention Services;
- Offering clinics with Educational Welfare Officer;
- Meetings with school staff prior to starting school to clarify expectations;
- Home visits made.
- Letters of concern are sent to parents and carers regarding lateness at three stages – 5 lates (request to improve via text to parents), 10 lates (AHT to meet with parents regarding lateness) and at 15 lates (letter to parents). If there is no improvement, the Deputy Headteacher/Headteacher will meet with child's parents/carers.
- In KS2 being late to school on 5 occasions will result in the Attendance Officer meeting with the parent. If there is no improvement, then SLT will meet with the parents.

Procedures should punctuality and attendance become a concern.

Should the strategies outlined above fail to improve attendance and punctuality, then formal procedures will be applied. These can include the following:

- Meeting held with parent Attendance Officer and member of Senior Leadership Team/Pastoral Lead to discuss a way forward;
- Meeting with Educational Welfare Officer;
- Referral to Educational Welfare Services;
- Referral to Children Missing Education Co-Ordinator
- Welfare calls to the Police;
- Home visit with Police Officer;
- Referral to Children's and Families Services in the case of Safeguarding concerns;
- Penalty Notices issued, in line with Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. Penalty Notice is currently a £60 fine per child, if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per child if over 21 days.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence

Applications for special circumstances must be made to the Headteacher in advance. Depending on the reason for the request, the Headteacher will consider to authorise or unauthorise the absence. Holidays will not be authorised during term time and families who take children out of school may be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Reasons for Absence

Holidays and extended periods of absence for travel overseas

- Holidays and extended periods of absence for travel overseas will not be authorised under any circumstances. The absence will be marked as unauthorised on the register;
- Requests for holiday during term time must still be put in writing to the Headteacher giving the reasons why the holiday cannot be taken during the normal school holidays. Evidence will be required to support the request. The Headteacher will liaise with the Attendance Officer and look at each case individually before reaching a decision;
- The Headteacher is the only person who can authorise term time leave;
- Only the school, not parents, decides on how to classify any absence;
- Parents who take their children on term time holiday or overseas for an extended time without permission from the Headteacher or who take unauthorised term time holiday are at risk of a Penalty Notice being issued.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Medical Appointments should be kept outside of school time unless it is very urgent. Medical evidence should be provided e.g. appointment cards/letters, prescriptions, prescribed medicine containers, GP notes. We expect that the child will only be absent from school during the time of their appointment and not for the full day.

Bereavement/Exceptional Circumstances

- Special consideration will be given by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher will liaise with the Attendance Officer and look at each case individually before reaching a decision.

The following reasons are deemed unacceptable for absence from school:

- Minor symptoms of illness such as: mild cold, cough, runny nose, a bit of a headache, tummy ache as the school will always contact parents/carers if this develops into anything more;
- Tiredness;
- Birthdays;
- Shopping;
- family days out;
- meeting relatives;
- car breakdowns;
- bad weather;
- waiting for a delivery person.
- If a sibling, parent or carer is unwell, arrangements need to be made so that a well-child is not prevented from attending school.

Promoting Regular Attendance

It is vital to remember that the vast majority of children at Keys Meadow arrive on time and every day. An important part of our attendance policy is that this good practice is commended and applauded publicly. A summary of this can be seen in Appendix 5.

In order to do this:

- Attendance Representatives for each class raise the profile of attendance and punctuality in the school. They attend regular meetings with the Attendance Officer and Deputy Headteacher to discuss concerns, share ideas and report key messages and plans back to their classes.
- Weekly celebration of good attendance and punctuality is held in assembly. The absence of pupils with serious medical or SEND needs, or for those with necessary hospital appointments, will be taken into account when calculating the overall attendance for the week;
- Classes who meet the school's attendance expectations of 96.5 and above are awarded with Keys Coins. Once they achieve a certain amount of these, they are awarded with a treat from the choice menu.
- Early Bird Activities to promote good attendance and punctuality.
- Children are awarded individually for 100% and Improved attendance half termly and termly;
- Children with 100% attendance with no lates are recognised in assembly at the end of the year with a wrist band, certificate and reward afternoon;
- Publish weekly class attendance in the school newsletter and classroom entrances;
- Report to parents and carers termly on their child's attendance;
- Call parents/carers on the first day of absence to ascertain a reason for absence;
- Send letters of concern to parents and carers when attendance drops below 96%; and 90%, following which a member of the Senior Leadership Team will meet with the child's parents/carers;
- Identify barriers to regular school attendance by working with parents and carers;
- Ask for support from the Educational Welfare Service when attendance or lateness continues to be a concern despite intervention by school;
- Track the attendance of children with whom meetings have been held to look for improvements;
- Ensure attendance is a key focus for any parent meetings including EYFS induction meetings, Learning Review meetings and parent information sessions;
- Ensure our adult education classes and workshops/coffee mornings include a focus on education and importance of attendance;
- Use Attendance Reward Charts for key children with targets over short periods of time with rewards for those who achieve them;
- Collate data on attendance half termly and look at key groups for trends including: boys/girls, key stages, SEND, Pupil Premium, Ethnic/national groups. These are reported to SLT and interventions/actions are decided based on the needs of groups.
- The Attendance Officer, in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team will authorise absences where applicable.
- Special request for absences should be made in writing and decision solely lies with the Headteacher.
- Every effort should be made to obtain a note from the parent if there has not been a phone message;
- Reasons for absence will be checked. If a child is absent on a regular basis, with no real explanation given, the Educational Welfare Officer should be alerted;

Educational Welfare Service

The Attendance Officer meets regularly with the EWS to discuss any concerns and follow up the progress of individuals. Prior to the meeting the following information is collected:

- Attendance record for any child with less than 90% attendance;
- Attendance record for any child whose absence shows particular trends;
- Attendance record for any child who has been frequently arriving at school late;
- Class percentage totals.

Information is shared about previous cases and decisions taken about the next stages of intervention where this is appropriate. Decisions taken are recorded on the attendance monitoring sheet. Following the meeting with the EWS, class teachers are notified of the outcome and agreed actions are discussed with the Attendance Officer and followed up as appropriate.

Penalty Notices

- Keys Meadow Primary School uses Penalty Notices to improve school attendance;
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 gives schools the power to issue Penalty Notices in cases of non-school attendance. This is an alternative to prosecution;
- Prior to a Penalty Notice being issued, a formal warning letter will be sent to parents/carers advising that there will be a 15-day monitoring period for attendance to improve and for them to contact the Headteacher to discuss the school's concerns.

Currently the Penalty Notice is:

- A fine of £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per parent/carer per child if paid after 21 days but within 28 days;
- If the fine is not paid parents/carers may be prosecuted under the Education Act 1996 for the original offence of failing to ensure their child attends school.

A warning that a Penalty Notice may be issued will be sent to either parents or carers (where applicable) for any of the following reasons:

- Their child has an unauthorised absence;
- Their child is taken on holiday during term-time and without permission;
- Parentally condoned absences;
- Truancy;
- Persistent lateness after registers have closed;

If a child continues to be absent without authorisation for 20 sessions or more (10 school days) during a three-month period, the school will apply to the Education Welfare Service for a Penalty Notice to be issued. Where there are two parents or carers with parental responsibility, it is likely both will receive a Fixed Penalty Fine.

Appendix 1 – Marking of Attendance Registers – guide to symbols

/am \pm Present

O Absent – see symbol 'C'

L Late during registration period

U (inside O) late after registration period – indicate in notes box the time of arrival and reason given (note required from home)

Symbols for authorised absence:

B Educated off-site (not dual registration)

C Other authorised circumstances (not covered by any other code)

D Dual registered (i.e. present at another school)

E Exclusion

F Agreed extended family holiday

H Agreed family holiday

I Illness

J Interview

M Medical or dental appointment

P Approved sporting activity

R Day set aside exclusively for religious observance

S Study leave

T Traveller absence

V Educational visit or trip

W Work experience (not work based training)

X Un-timetabled sessions for non-compulsory schooling

Y Partial and forced closure

Z Pupil not on roll yet

School closed to all pupils

Symbols for unauthorised absence:

G Family holiday (not agreed or sessions in excess of authorised holiday)

N No reason for the absence provided yet

O Other unauthorised absence (not covered by other codes)

Appendix 2

Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 Advice to Parents and Carers

From the 27 February 2004 Penalty Notices were introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. This means that for pupils with unauthorised absence from school (i.e. any absence that the school has not given permission for) then their parents/carers may be subject to a prompt fine. The Penalty Notice fine cost is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days (this includes weekends) £120 per child if paid within 28 days (this includes the count of 21 days). The Penalty Notice invoice will state the final date for payment.

Keys Meadow Primary School took the decision to issue Penalty Notices as of the start of the academic year 2007/08.

Penalty Notices will be used as a deterrent to prevent a pattern of unauthorised absence developing. They will be issued by post to a pupil's home after just one warning. Cases of absence without acceptable cause will also include pupils caught on truancy sweeps, holidays in school term time and persistent late arrival after the Register has closed. These Notices add to the Authority's existing legal powers to enforce attendance and cases of persistent unauthorised absence will also remain subject to action under the wider powers of the 1996 Education Act, which include prosecution and a criminal record if convicted.

What is the Anti-Social Act 2003?

Section 23 of the Act gives powers to the Local Authority and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered capable of but unwilling to secure an improvement in their child's school attendance. The powers came into force on the 27th February 2004.

Why has it been introduced?

Reducing absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others and can leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Above all, missing school seriously affects children's longer-term life opportunities.

What is a Penalty Notice?

Under existing legislation, parent/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend regularly and the absences are classed as unauthorised (those for which the school cannot or has not given permission). Depending on circumstances such cases may result in prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court whilst still securing an improvement in a pupil's attendance. Payment of a Penalty Notice enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction.

What are the costs?

The Penalty Notice fine cost is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days (this includes weekends) £120 per child if paid within 28 days (this includes the count of 21 days). The Penalty Notice invoice will state the final date for payment.

How are they issued?

By post to your home.

When are they used?

Enfield considers that regular attendance at school is of such importance that Penalty Notices may be used in a range of situations where unauthorised absence occurs:

- Over truancy (including pupils found during truancy sweeps);
- Holidays in term time or delayed return after a school holiday;
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed);
- In every case a pupil will have had a minimum of 20 school sessions (i.e. 10 school days) lost to unauthorised absence before a Penalty Notice is considered.

The Authority never takes such actions lightly and would far rather work with parents/carers to improve attendance without having to resort to any enforcement action. However, the Authority will use the powers if this is the only way of securing a child's schooling.

Is a warning given?

Yes you will receive a written warning of the possibility of a Notice being issued, which will tell you the extent of your child's absences and give you 15 school days in which to effect an improvement. In that time your child must have no unauthorised absences from school. There is no limit to the number of times formal warning of possible Penalty Notice issue may be made in any particular case.

Is there an appeal process?

There is no statutory right of appeal once a Notice has been issued, but on receipt of a warning you can make representation should you wish.

How do I pay?

Details of payment arrangements will be included on the Penalty Notice. You need to be aware that **payment in part or by instalment is not an option with Penalty Notices.**

What happens if I do not pay?

You have up to 28 days from stamped date receipt to pay the Penalty Notice in full, after which the Authority is required under the Act to commence proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the original offence of poor attendance by your child. If proven, this can attract a range of fines up to £2,500 and/or a range of disposals such as Parenting Orders or Community Sentences depending upon circumstances.

Can I be prosecuted if I pay the Penalty Notice but my child is still missing school?

Not for the period included in the Penalty Notice – payment discharges your liability in this respect. However, it may be the case that a prosecution might be considered for further periods of poor attendance and not covered by the Notice, depending upon the circumstances. If this is an issue, it is vital that you work closely with your child's school and support agencies such as Education Welfare.

Can I get help if my child is not attending regularly?

Yes, the Local Authority and your child's school will give you advice and support if you need help to secure an improvement in your child's attendance. It is very important that you speak with the school in

the first instance or with the Education Welfare Service at the earliest opportunity if you have any worries at all about securing your child's attendance.

Useful contacts

Education Welfare Services
London Borough of Enfield
Civic Centre
Silver Street
Enfield
EN1 3XQ
Tel: 020 8379 3745

This leaflet has been produced by the Local Education Welfare Service. Support and guidance is available and if you have any questions about this or if you need any help to achieve an improvement with your child's attendance then please contact the Education Welfare Service or your child's school to discuss this matter further.

Appendix 3 - Sample warning letter

Dear

PENALTY NOTICE WARNING

NAME OF CHILD:

DOB:

Year Group/Class

This letter is a **Penalty Notice Warning** and is being sent to you because your child is displaying concerning patterns of absence, the majority of which are currently unauthorised.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 is an additional sanction to address the problem of low level non-school attendance. This sanction allows schools to apply to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice and entitles schools to write a warning letter to you regarding your child's absence from school.

Please take notice of the following information and /or action you should take;

- Until your child's attendance improves, their attendance will be monitored and no further absences will be authorised without acceptable evidence.
- You have up to 15 school days from the date of this letter to ensure your child returns to full-time attendance or a justified reason is given to the school for the absences.
- If your child misses 20 sessions from school and these are marked as unauthorised absence this will be the trigger to apply to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice to be issued against you. You will not receive another warning before the fine is imposed.
- If a Penalty Notice is issued against you, you will be required by law to pay the Penalty Notice in full and within the timescale to the Local Authority.
- The Penalty Notice fine cost is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days (this includes weekends) £120 per child if paid within 28 days (this includes the count of 21 days). The Penalty Notice invoice will state the final date for payment.
- If the payment of the fine is not made by the 28th day, the case may result in prosecution under the Education Act 1996, for the original offence of failing to ensure your child attend school.
- Information provided by you for your child's absence cannot be accepted once a Penalty Notice has been issued against you.
- There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice and it may only be withdrawn in the following circumstances.
 1. If you can prove that it is a case of mistaken identity.
 2. If the Penalty Notice contains material errors
 3. Or where evidence from a parent/carer depicts a genuine rationale for the non-payment, i.e. death/or a tragedy.

Please contact **(Insert name and telephone number)** to arrange a meeting to discuss your child's attendance. Advice and support can also be made available through contacting the Education Welfare Services on 020 8379 3745.

Yours sincerely

Name

Headteacher Keys Meadow Primary School

Appendix 4 - Leave of Absence Form

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM

I wish to apply for *(child name)*: _____ Class: _____

To be authorised as being absent from school from: _____ **to** _____ (inclusive dates)

The **exceptional** reason why the absence needs to be taken in term time is: *(continue on separate sheet if necessary)*

Please list below any siblings and schools they attend:

Signature: _____ Print Name *(parent/carer)*: _____ Date: _____

NB: Amendments to the 2006 regulations (2013) make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw pupils from school and, in law, have to apply for permission in advance. The school will always want to discuss this with you personally.

Please complete this form and return it to the school office. You are advised not to make any arrangements until your request has been considered by the school.

This school will not authorise the request for absence from school if your child's attendance is below.....%

Any absence which has not been agreed in advance by the Headteacher is marked as '**Unauthorised Absence**' and may result in a **Penalty Notice** being issued (see back of form for details of this)

SCHOOL USE ONLY

Specify dates unauthorised:	Specify dates authorised:
A personal discussion with you is requested Y/N	Please contact:
Last academic year attendance:	Current school attendance:

Guidance

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (Headteacher) of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. The expectation is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be **unauthorised** and may lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

The Headteacher will consider every request individually but the **following will not meet the criteria:**

- Relatives coming to visit
- Cheaper holidays in England and abroad
- Family day trips
- Visiting family/friends; this may also include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

Should you choose to take your child/children out of school during term-time and the absences are unauthorised we may make a request to the Local Authority to issue you with a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices are issued to **each parent** of **each child**. The penalty is £60.00 if paid within 21 of the date of the notice. Payment after this time, but within 28 days of the date of notice automatically increases to £120.

If you do not pay the Penalty Notice (within the 28-day time limit), the matter will be referred to the Magistrates court for prosecution under the provisions of Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 or Section 103 Education and Inspections Act 2006. Prosecution can result in a criminal conviction recorded against you. Courts have a wider range of sentencing options, which could include a maximum fine of up to £2500.

The only statutory defences to the offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons.
- The Local Authority failed to provide transport when required to do so.
- The absences were due to religious observance.
- You had permission of the school or there was an unavoidable cause.

There is no statutory right of appeal against the issuing of a Penalty Notice.

Legislative Framework for Education Penalty Notices.

Education Act 1996.

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Children Act 1989.

Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Attendance Flow Chart

