



The Huntspill's Primary School Academies Attendance and Absence Procedure 2025-26

Under the Education Act 1996, it is a parent or carer's responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at school. This means that children must be in attendance every time the school is open, unless he/she/ they are prevented from doing so by reason of illness or any unavoidable cause.

Absence reporting

Any absences need to be reported daily to the school office.

This can be done through a number of different ways:

1. Ring the school office and select absence line to record a voicemail message
2. Ring the school office and speak directly to the office staff (during school hours only)
3. Report through Weduc by selecting your child and click on 'report an absence'
4. Email the school

If we have not received a message regarding a child's absence by 9:00am we will call parents directly, starting with primary carers. These calls will take place by 9:30am. If we are unable to get through to parents by this time we will continue to call contacts in priority order.

If by 10:30am we have still not had any communication regarding a child's absence and have been unable to speak to anyone on their contacts list we will make a final request to have confirmation of their absence. If we have still not received a reply by 11:30am we will consider conducting a welfare visit, which may involve the police.

Reporting Holiday/ absence request

Any requests for term time leave must be submitted to the school on the holiday request form in advance of the absence.

The school will not authorise any holiday in term time unless they meet the exceptional circumstances listed below.

If a request does not meet the exceptional circumstances guidelines it will be refused and if the unauthorised holiday is for 10 or more sessions (i.e. 5 or more full days) it will incur a penalty notice. Further information listed below.

Monitoring of attendance

The school will regularly review pupil attendance throughout the school year.

Any attendance under 96% will be investigated and parents may receive a letter or meeting request to discuss our concerns.

We will continue to monitor a pupil's attendance and with the support of the family implement any necessary steps to help improve attendance.

The Department for Education's attendance guidance states:

Guidance

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 has been amended (as of 1 September 2013) to prohibit the proprietor (head teacher) 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 of the Local Authority is that term time holidays should not be planned or booked as a matter of course as they are likely to be **unauthorised** and will lead to the issuing of a penalty notice (fine).

Exceptional circumstances

Are defined as:

- Forces Personnel on leave from a foreign posting
- **Exceptional significant** family events or circumstances – these will be considered on an individual basis with you.

The Head teacher will consider every above 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 that have different half term holidays and may include refusal to attend family weddings and visits to see family abroad.

Authorised officers have the discretion to issue a penalty notice without warning where the parent has chosen to take the child on leave during term time without authorisation or evidence is subsequently found to suggest a child was away from school with the knowledge of the parent and does not meet the statutory defences mentioned below.

Penalty Notices

Through section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996, it has become possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices require **each parent** of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a penalty, currently £80.00 if paid within 21 days or £160.00 if paid within 28 days. In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

If you do not pay the Penalty Notice, such cases you will be automatically summonsed to appear in Court for an offence under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 and 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 £1000. The only statutory defences to the offence

under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons
- The LEA 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

Holidays which are taken for the following reasons, cannot be authorised:

- parental work commitments;
- family gatherings;
- relatives visiting;
- cheaper holidays in England and abroad;
- avoiding traffic on Fridays;
- family day trips;
- visiting friends/family that have different half terms or holidays;
- because a child has good attendance;
- employment restrictions during the summer holiday.

Penalty Notices

Any requests we receive for term time holidays, for 5 days or more, will result in penalty notices being applied for, as stated on the TPLT Attendance Policy.

Other unauthorised absences amounting to 10 or more sessions (5 days) within a 6-month period will also result in the request for a Penalty Notice, as outlined in the Local Authority Penalty Notice Code of Conduct. The absences do not have to be consecutive.

If a child has been absent and the reason has been reported as illness but the school has reason to believe this is not to be the case and the child/ren are actually attending a family holiday, evidence of illness may be required. If illness cannot be proved, schools may take action by way of a penalty notice.

A pupil's unauthorised absence from school could result in one of the following:

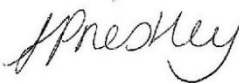

1. Penalty Notice. The penalty is £80 payable within 21 days, rising to £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. (Failure to pay will result in prosecution.) Fines are issued by and payable to the Local Authority.

2. Prosecution could lead to fines up to £2500 and /or 3 months imprisonment. (See DfE's statutory guidance on School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures for more information).

Penalty notices and prosecution proceedings are issued to each parent with responsibility for the child and are issued for each child with irregular attendance. For example, in the case of penalty notices, if two siblings had irregular school attendance, and there were two parents with responsibility for the children, four penalty notices would be issued amounting to £320.

Policy last reviewed: September 2025

Next renewal date: September 2026

Name	Position	Signature	date
Abby Priestley	Operations manager		1/9/2025
Emma Barker	Headteacher	 Emma Barker	1/09/2025