

Dear Parent / Carer,

### **Working Together to Improve School Attendance and Leave of Absence in Term Time**

The attendance guidance issued by the Department for Education in 2024 places responsibilities on schools, Local Authorities and parents. Manchester City Council would like to highlight the expectations on parents in relation to school attendance and encourage you to work in partnership with your child's school.

In the current academic year, in Manchester, approximately 50,000 school days have been missed through a holiday or a leave of absence taken in term time.

Following the changes the government made to the rules in 2024, it is important for parents and carers to understand how attendance statutory action, including penalty notices (or fines), work when children miss school without permission:

- 1) **The fine is now £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid between days 22–28.**
- 2) **If a parent receives a second fine within three years, it will automatically be £160 (a lower rate of £80 will not be offered).**
- 3) **Importantly, a third offence within three years will lead to court action. This could result in:**
  - **a criminal record**
  - **an impact on your DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) barring you from some types of employment**
  - **an impact on your visa status including a travel visa, working visa or student visa**
  - **finances from the courts.**
- 4) **Fines are issued per parent, per child.**

You will find Manchester's Code of Conduct for the Issuing of Penalty Notices here.

[4. Use of penalty notices | Introduction | Manchester City Council](#)

This is the local rules and regulations for statutory action and includes some important criteria:

- A Penalty Notice can be issued when a child has 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within 10 school weeks. These do not need to be consecutive days.

- A penalty notice can be issued if a parent deliberately avoids the national threshold and takes a leave of absence over 4 consecutive days, for example in a week including a bank holiday or INSET day.

Information on your school procedures and who to contact regarding attendance will be available on the school website.

Please continue to work in partnership with your school to minimise unavoidable absences.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Haygarth', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Edward Haygarth  
Lead for Statutory Area Attendance & Exclusions  
Directorate for Children and Families

