



## Milford Primary School

*Care, Share, Respect, Learn!*

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16 September 2024

### **Important Update: changes to penalty notices for unauthorised absence from school and poor attendance**

Dear parents/carers

I am writing to inform you about the changes that have been put in to place this August by the government, with regard to pupils' absence from school, either due to unauthorised absence in term-time or for poor attendance.

In September 2013 the government introduced new regulations making it clear that Headteachers must not give approval for any leave of absence during term time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Our school policy is that any requests for term time leave should be made on a **Leave of Absence Request Form** available from the school office (or website) and handed in **2 school weeks** before the first date of the requested absence. You must have received written authorisation from myself before your child can be absent from school.

From this term, September 2024, we will be following Derbyshire County Council's policy, which is summarised below:

Parent/carers may be issued with a penalty notice fine or prosecution should:

- leave of **5 days or more** be taken which is not authorised by the Headteacher, or;
- where **repeated incidents** of leave in term time **for less than 5 days** occur or;
- where the unauthorised absence contributes to wider **poor attendance that meets the legal threshold** (10 sessions within 10 weeks-1 session is a morning or an afternoon).

Absence deemed for the reason of unauthorised leave in term time will be marked in the register with the Attendance code G. You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

**Please also be aware of the following significant changes to national policy – which Derbyshire County Council follow:**

- There has been an increase in the penalty notice fine. It is now £160 per child, per parent (this reduces to £80 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days).
- If you receive a 2nd penalty notice fine (within a rolling 3-year period) there is a flat rate of £160 per child, per parent (there isn't an option of a reduction).
- If the national threshold is met for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time within 3 years, you may be prosecuted.

Kind regards

Emma Roberts  
Headteacher