



Thameside Primary School

Abingdon Oxfordshire OX14 5NL

Telephone: 01235-527600

e-mail: office.2598@thameside.vale-academy.org

Headteacher: Laura Youngman

"Every Child Every Chance Every Day"

Wednesday 3rd September

School Attendance 2024-2025

Dear Parent/Carer

Thameside Primary School is committed to ensuring that your child receives the best possible education to best prepare them for the next stage of their life. Each school day is carefully planned, and each lesson informs a wider programme of learning. Therefore, every lesson really does count. Your child is a valued member of our school community and every day missed is a day lost without them.

In line with guidance, it is the policy of our school not to authorise absence for holidays during term-time. While advance permission can be given in exceptional circumstances, this is rare and can only be granted by me in my capacity as Head Teacher. Any such request should be addressed to me in writing before the holiday is taken and you should not assume that permission will be granted.

If a term-time holiday is taken without permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a referral will be made to the County Attendance Team. This could result in the issue of an Education Penalty Notice under section 444A Education Act 1996 in respect of each absent child, to each parent/carer. Penalty notices are intended as an alternative to prosecution and can be issued after 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised holiday within a 10-week cycle.

Additionally, the statutory guidance on attendance makes allowance for fixed penalty notices to be issued for other unauthorised absences over 10 sessions (5 days) in a 10-week cycle, this includes persistent late arrival to school after the register closes. Parents will receive a notice to improve and a penalty notice may be issued if no improvement is made within the specified review period.

With effect from 19th August 2024, statutory changes regarding unauthorised attendance come into effect. Should a fixed penalty notice be issued for non-attendance during a 3-year period (including transition from a primary provider to a secondary provider) then it will automatically escalate i.e. a fixed penalty issued in Year 6, will count as the first penalty, and should there be a fixed penalty issued 12 months later in Year 7, it will automatically be the second fixed penalty notice. For clarity, the following applies



The first Penalty Notice is a charge of £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £160 if paid between day 21 and day 28. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within 28 days, the usual consequence is a Magistrates' Court prosecution for the underlying section 444(1) Education Act 1996 offence of failure to secure regular school attendance. A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first notice, and so in cases where the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time another action will be taken instead, which may include the local authority considering prosecution. Under the new statutory guidance, which can be accessed through the link below, there is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

[Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Yours faithfully,

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

Laura Youngman

