St Denys Primary School



School Absence Penalty Notices 2025/2026- A Parent's Guide

With the introduction of the new Department of Education National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into effect for all Penalty Notices issued due to unauthorised absence that has taken place after 19th August 2024.

When will Penalty Notices be issued?

- Penalty Notices can be issued when a statutory school-aged child has had 10 sessions (5 school days) or more of unauthorised absence within a 10 school week period.
- Only two penalty notices will be issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3 year period. Also see below.

Who will Penalty Notice be issued to?

- A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each absent child.
- For example, for a family of four, the mother would receive 2 penalty notices (1 for each child) and the father would receive 2 penalty notices (1 for each child), totalling 4 penalty notices.

How will Penalty Notices be issued?

- All schools in Southampton City Council's area can request the Council to issue penalty notices. If the school's request meets the criteria for issue, the penalty notice/s will be issued with a accompanying letter.
- The penalty notices and accompanying letters are sent via first class post to the recorded home address of each parent.

First Offence/ First Penalty Notice

- The First Offence/ First Penalty Notice issued for 10 or more sessions for unauthorised absence within 10 school week period will be payable within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is paid on or before the 21st day of payment, the amount due is £80 per parent per child.
- If the Penalty Notice is paid between the 21st day and the 28th day of payment, the amount due is £160 per parent per child.

Second Offence/ Final Penalty Notice within 3 years

- The Second Offence/ Final Penalty Notice issued for 10 or more sessions for unauthorised absence within 10 school week period for the same child and same parent will be payable within 28 days.
- The amount payable is £160 per parent per child.
- There is no option to pay this Penalty Notice earlier at a reduced rate.

Third

- The Third Offence of 10 or more sessions for unauthorised absence within 10 school week period for the same child and same parent will instigate Court Proceedings via the Single Justice Procedure.
- The Council can use its discretion to instigate other alternative actions such as an Education Welfare Officer becomg involved.

Further information can be found on the school website (https://www.cantell.co.uk) and on Southampton City Council's website, under School attendance and support (southampton.gov.uk).