

LEARNING TOGETHER TRUST

Chief Executive Officer:

Mr. Stuart Colothan

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🌐 www.learningtogethertrust.org

Monday 14th September

Learning Together Trust Attendance Update – 2026-27

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance across our family of schools within Learning Together Trust remains a high priority as we work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend school as regularly as possible. Put simply, the more regularly children attend school, the greater their opportunities to learn, progress and achieve.

Schools are required by law to inform parents and carers about Education Penalty Notices (EPNs), so that everyone is aware of the potential consequences when children do not attend school regularly or are taken out of school for a holiday during term time. Further guidance is provided on the following page. If you have any questions or require clarification, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school.

We understand the pressures that families can face when booking holidays, particularly when travel companies charge significantly higher prices during school holiday periods. We also recognise that holidays can provide children with valuable experiences and opportunities to spend quality time with their families.

Headteachers follow Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance when making decisions about term time holidays requests and will only approve requests in exceptional and rare circumstances. If you choose to take your child out of school for an unauthorised term-time holiday, the absence may be referred to the Local Authority, which may result in an Education Penalty Notice and a financial penalty.

We appreciate that the vast majority of parents and carers continue to complete a 'Leave of Absence' request form when seeking permission for their child to be absent during term time. We strongly encourage all families to be open and honest with school when requesting a leave of absence, particularly where the reason is a family holiday. Where a term-time holiday is not disclosed, or an alternative or inaccurate reason for absence is provided and it is subsequently found to be a holiday, the school may record the absence as unauthorised. Where the relevant thresholds are met, this may result in an Education Penalty Notice being issued.

We also want to avoid situations where children return to school and are placed in an uncomfortable position because the reason for their absence has not been accurately shared. Children are often excited to return and talk to their friends and staff about their experiences, and we believe that an open and honest approach between families and schools is always in the best interests of the child.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us to promote and maintain excellent attendance across all our schools within Learning Together Trust. By working together, we can ensure that every child has the best possible opportunity to benefit from their education.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. M. Rigby
Head of System Leadership
The Learning Together Trust

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Education Penalty Notice Guidance

Dear Parents/Carers

Attendance at school has been identified as a national priority by both the Department for Education (DFE) and OFSTED. Research in 2022 by the DFE found that pupils with higher attainment in end of Key Stage assessments had lower levels of absence than those with lower attainment.

Schools that are part of The Learning Together Trust family provide a wide range of support to ensure that children attend school as often as possible and work with families to help address difficulties and challenges they may face.

In some circumstances, Local Authorities may issue parent/s with an Education Penalty Notice (EPN) if a child's absence record does not improve. New guidance for local authorities came in to effect from August 2024. The summary of the guidance is included below:

1. There is a national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered. *(This mean you will no longer be able to take your child out of school for one week's holiday without a penalty notice being issued.)*
2. The first Education Penalty Notice (EPN) is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine is not paid within the first 21 days, the amount payable is £160 if paid within 28 days of the notice being issued.
3. If a second EPN is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.
4. If a parent then commits a third offence and receives an EPN in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority will need to consider other enforcement options available to them.

Penalty Notices are issued on a per-parent, per-child basis. Therefore, where appropriate, each parent/carer may receive a separate Penalty Notice for each child who has incurred the relevant unauthorised absence.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

Kind Regards

Mr. M. Rigby
Head of System Leadership
The Learning Together Trust