



15th September 2025

Dear Parents & Carers,

We would like to take this opportunity to emphasise the importance of good attendance in enabling your child to reach their full potential and benefit fully from the educational opportunities at The Bourne Academy. Regular, uninterrupted attendance is one of the most important factors in supporting student progress and achievement.

As an Academy, we expect a minimum attendance of 96%. Attendance will remain a key priority throughout the 2025/26 academic year. Student attendance will be closely monitored, and where it falls below this level, follow-up action will be taken. In line with government guidance, any student whose attendance drops below 90% will be classified as persistently absent. In such cases, we ask to be fully informed of the reasons behind the absence and, where necessary, will work with parents/carers to agree a plan of support.

Please note that the Academy can only authorise absences in exceptional circumstances, such as genuine illness or situations approved by the Principal. Holidays during term time are not considered exceptional. The decision as to whether an absence is authorised rests solely with the Principal. Any requests for leave of absence must be submitted in writing to our Principal, Mr Avoth.

Every school day matters, and absences can add up quickly. Research shows that students with good attendance not only achieve more academically but also enjoy greater wellbeing.

If an absence request is not deemed exceptional, you will be notified, and the Local Authority may be asked to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent/carer for each child concerned. The fine is currently £80 if paid within 21 days, rising to £160 thereafter.

If you have any concerns about circumstances that may affect your child's attendance, please contact the Attendance Team in the first instance.

Thank you for your continued support in helping your child to attend regularly and make the most of their time at The Bourne Academy.

Yours sincerely,

The Bourne Academy

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Principal: Mr Mark Avoth

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How much could I be fined if my child misses school?

In the majority of cases, schools and local authorities will try and provide support to help you improve your child's attendance first, but if this isn't effective or the absence is for unauthorised term time holiday, parents may face paying a fine.

Currently, it's the responsibility of the local authority to decide when to issue fines to parents, meaning the process varies from council to council.

However, under the new national framework, all schools will be required to consider a fine when a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 days) for unauthorised reasons.

From August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country will be **£80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.**

This rate is in line with inflation and is the first increase since 2012.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

We have attached a diagram to this letter to better explain this.

Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

How can you be sure parent fines are fair?

Fines are a last resort, and parents will be offered support to help improve their child's attendance first. The vast majority of fines for unauthorised absence (89%) are issued for term time holidays.

If your child is facing barriers to school attendance due to special education needs or disabilities (SEND), schools, local authorities and wider services are required to work together to provide the right support in the first place.

What if my child needs to miss school?

Your child must attend every day that the school is open, unless:

- Your child is too ill to attend that day.
- You have asked in advance and been given permission by the school for your child to be absent on that day due to exceptional circumstances.
- Your child cannot attend school on that day because it is a day you are taking part in religious observance.
- Your local authority is responsible for arranging your child's transport to school and it is not available on that day or has not been provided yet.
- You are a gypsy/traveller family with no fixed abode, and you are required to travel for work that day meaning your child cannot attend their usual school.

What happens if my child misses school without a good reason? If your child is absent and you haven't received advance permission from the headteacher to take your child out of school, the school and local council may take action.

Before that, your child's school and your local council are expected to support you to improve the child's attendance before any measures are put in place.

These measures can include:

- **Issue a fixed penalty notice, otherwise known as a 'fine'** – your local council can give each parent a fine. If you do not pay the fine after 28 days you may be prosecuted for your child's absence from school.
- **Seek an Education Supervision Order from the family court** – if the council thinks you need support getting your child to go to school but you're not co-operating, they can apply to a court for an Education Supervision Order. A supervisor will be appointed to help you get your child into education. The local council can do this instead of, or as well as, prosecuting you.

- **Prosecute you** – this means you have to go to court. You could get a fine, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court could also give you a Parenting Order.

Why is attendance important?

For most pupils, the best place to be during term-time is school, surrounded by the support of their friends and teachers.

This is important not just for your child's learning, but also for their overall wellbeing, wider development and their mental health.

If you want to find out more, you may find these links helpful

[Fines for parents for taking children out of school: What you need to know - The Education Hub \(blog.gov.uk\)](#)

[DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

If you do have any concerns about your child's attendance, please contact the school directly to discuss this.

Yours faithfully

BCP School Attendance Team

Inclusion Service, Education & Skills
Children's Services



Helping parents to understand the changes to fines for term time holidays

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued for unauthorised holidays recorded by schools **after 19th August 2024**.

Who may be fined?

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent who allows their child to be absent from school.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent who allowed the holiday receiving 3 separate fines.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

For example: a 5 day holiday would meet the national threshold.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for an unauthorised term time holiday the fine amount will be:

£80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Increasing to £160 if paid between days 22-28.

Second Offence

(within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child, payable within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and local authorities will need to consider other available measures to address the absence concerns. This may mean that cases are presented before a Magistrate's Court. If convicted, sanctions can include a fine of up to £2,500 and a prison sentence of up to 3 months, and you will have a criminal record.

Cases found guilty in the Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.