



31 July 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

IMPORTANT – Changes in attendance policy September 2023.

Bradford council have identified that they have double the rate of absence due to unauthorised leave during term time compared to the national average. In an effort to try and address the issue, the local authority have therefore changed their policy to try and reduce the amount of absences pupils take during term time.

They will now consider legal action through the magistrates court as opposed to a fixed penalty notice in the following situations:

1. A continuous period of unauthorised leave of 20 school days (40 sessions) or more
2. Two or more periods of unauthorised leave totalling 10 school days (20 sessions) or more within a 12 month period.

A period of leave which spans across two half terms will be treated as one period of leave.

This means that parents may be liable to receive a significantly higher fine (up to £2,500 per child, per parent) if found guilty, as well as receive a criminal record, which may be reportable to employers (for example, via a DBS Check). In rare circumstances, magistrates can consider a custodial sentence for up to 3 months.

Requests for leave during term time are never taken lightly, and we will always consider the social, emotional and cultural reasons for the leave. Current and past school attendance will always be taken into account. However, continued absence from school will have a detrimental impact on a child's academic attainment and other aspects of their lives. Therefore, I wish to make you aware that we support the decision of Bradford Council, and it's important that you are informed of this change so you are able to consider the information when deciding whether or not to take your children out of school. Our attendance policy will be altered to reflect this change from September 2023.

The current policy will also remain in place, if a pupil takes 3 or more unauthorised days (6 session) a fixed penalty notice will be issued. The Penalty Notice is issued by Bradford Children's Services to each parent of each child. Each Penalty Notice will be £60 if it is paid within 21 days. It will increase to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

We thank you for your continued support in ensuring all pupils of TSS are given the best opportunities to succeed and thrive, this starts with excellent attendance.

Yours faithfully

Mr P Temple
Deputy Headteacher