

18th July 2024

Dear parents/carers,

Updated National Attendance Guidance: Department for Education

At The East Manchester Academy, we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our pupils. We share the Department for Education's (DfE) ambitions to improve school attendance. In this letter we have highlighted some of the support on offer from The East Manchester Academy. However, we also want to describe the important nationwide changes that come into force on 19th August 2024 in relation to the issuing of fines.

Why regular attendance matters

Consistent school attendance allows your child to:

- Fully engage in learning and make academic progress
- Develop critical social skills by interacting with their friends and teachers
- Grow in confidence in a supportive and nurturing school environment
- Build a sense of routine and responsibility, essential for future success

Support First

We understand that some pupils may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's attendance team is here to provide support and guidance to pupils and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to attendance@temac.co.uk

What happens if my child has a period of unauthorised absence?

One of the main changes from the Department for Education is how **sanctions for unauthorised absence are used**.

If you take an unauthorised holiday in term time or have other periods of unauthorised absence the headteacher may request that Manchester City Council issue a fine (known as a fixed-penalty notice). If issued with one, you'll need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

The decision whether to issue a fine will take into account whether a national threshold has been met – this is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – as well as other factors.

If there was a second period of unauthorised absence within a three-year period then a second penalty notice could be issued, and this would be at the higher rate of £160.

Further periods of absence within three years, could mean that you are taken to court with no option of a penalty notice.

These rules are coming into force across the country on 19th August 2024 as part of the Department for Education's drive to improve school attendance.

Term-time holidays are generally not permitted during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning and lead to missed opportunities in the classroom.

However, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances and in such rare cases, please submit a formal request to the headteacher well in advance. The headteacher will carefully consider each request on an individual basis.

Thank you for your co-operation and commitment in ensuring your child is in school every day.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Bamber', is positioned above the printed name.

Helen Bamber
Associate Assistant Head

Statutory Action Escalation Pathway

**BE IN THE
RIGHT PLACE
AT THE
RIGHT TIME**



1 Support First	2 Notice to Improve	3 First Action (£80)	4 Second Action (£160)	5 Final Action
<p>Manchester adopts a 'support first' based approach.</p> <p>All families should be offered support to break down in-school and out-of-school barriers to attendance in line with Manchester's Graduated Approach.</p> <p>At The East Manchester Academy this offer will include our Transforming Attendance Family Guide, Attendance Letters, telephone calls, home visits, Year team meetings, & Attendance Team Meetings, Early Help, Parenting Contracts and other interventions as appropriate.</p> <p>If your child has been experiencing any problems that may be affecting their attendance or punctuality, then please contact the school on 0161 230 8039 to discuss the support that can be provided in partnership with you so that we can work together to improve attendance.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period. Families are offered a 6-week period to improve their attendance and engage with support.</p> <p>A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued where support is not appropriate or where parents are deliberately avoiding the above threshold being met.</p> <p>Where it is clear that improvement is not being made, it may be appropriate to issue a penalty notice before the improvement period has ended.</p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Not used for unauthorised holidays taken in term time.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence over a 10-week period.</p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Issued for a first unauthorised holiday taken in term time.</p> <p>PENALTY: £80 per pupil, per parent if paid within 21 days. £160 up to 28 days.</p> <p>If unpaid within 28 days, it will proceed to court.</p>	<p><u>Sporadic Absence:</u> Issued for second period of 10 sessions missed over a 10-week period within a 3-year rolling time frame.</p> <p><u>Holidays</u> Issued for a second unauthorised holiday taken in term time over a 3- year period.</p> <p>PENALTY: £160 per pupil, per parent.</p> <p>If unpaid within 28 days will proceed to court.</p>	<p>A weekly panel will meet to decide appropriate next steps for pupils who reach this stage of the escalation pathway.</p> <p>Options include: PACE Face to Face PACE by Post Direct Prosecution Section1 Direct Prosecution Section 1a Formal Caution No Further Action</p> <p>Pupils coming into this stage of the pathway for a second or multiple times will be taken to multi-agency panels such as Early Help Allocations or Advice & Guidance</p>

