



Sandal Magna is graded as a 'good' school by Ofsted and good schools have good attendance. Currently our attendance levels are not high enough as they reported to you all in December 2022.

"Despite leaders' actions, the attendance of some pupils is not high enough. As a result, these pupils are falling behind in their learning. Leaders should continue to work with these pupils and their parents to improve their attendance and engagement with school."

(Sandal Magna Ofsted Report Dec 2022)

The school target and your child's target for attendance is 96%, last year we had an attendance rate of only 93% which is not good enough. We would like to reiterate the key areas of Sandal Magna's expectations regarding school attendance.

Lateness

Pupils are expected to arrive into school between 8.40 and 8.45am and KS1 gates will open at 8.30am and close at 8.45am. Any children arriving after 8.45am will need to enter school via the main office to explain the reason for their lateness. Arrivals between 8.45am and 9.20am (the time when registers close) will be marked with an L code ('late before registers close') and any arrivals after 9.20am, without a viable reason previously communicated to the school, will be marked using a U code ('unauthorised absence, after registers close'). Both of these codes impact a pupil's individual attendance score. Lateness disrupts teaching and learning, so it is **vital that parents ensure their child arrives at school on time.**

In line with attendance policies and procedures set out by the Department of Education, U codes are classed as unauthorised absence. **Once a pupil has accrued 10 U codes per half term, further action will be taken in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice which is £80 per parent per child.**

Absence

In the case of absence, **PARENT'S MUST CALL SCHOOL BEFORE 9AM.** Please clearly state your child's name, class and reason for absence. This must be done **EVERY DAY** of absence.



Sandal Magna takes safeguarding and the welfare of our pupils very seriously and unexplained absence is the first sign of a potential safeguarding issue. Therefore, when absence is not communicated, school has a **legal responsibility** to carry out **First Day Response**, as follows:

1. **Call will be made to parent/carer** to establish reason for absence.
2. **If we are unable to reach parent**, we will attempt to reach the emergency contacts.
3. **If school is still unaware of a child's whereabouts**, staff will conduct a home visit to ensure there have been no emergencies putting the child at risk.

Home visits

As part of the Trust policy on attendance, schools have a responsibility to conduct home visits when **a child has not been seen on school premises - despite reported illness - for 3 consecutive days**. In such a case, members of staff will visit the child to say 'hello' and offer support if required. Please also take this into account if considering notifying school of an illness when you are taking a family holiday.

Term time holidays

In accordance with Department of Education legislation, schools cannot authorise term-time holidays. Ultimately, it is the decision of the parent whether they wish to take their child out of school for a term-time holiday. However, in such instances, the local authority has a legal obligation to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice when the child returns to school.

1. Applications for a term time holiday must be done in advance and sent via email, or in writing clearly stating dates of absence.
2. Unauthorised term-time holidays are marked on the register with a G code.
3. After 10 sessions of cumulative unauthorised absence (5 days), parents will receive a letter notifying the intent to fine (**this will be added together if the absences are before AND after a school holiday e.g. 2 days before Easter and 3 days after**)
4. Fixed Penalty Notice is issued by the local authority.

There are now new FPN guidelines that are due to start next month - please see the last page



Discussions can take place with the Headteacher if you feel your circumstances are exceptional. However, **please note that these ‘exceptional circumstances’ are very specifically outlined by the government and it is very rare that penalty notice will not be issued.**

- Any unauthorised term time leave **exceeding a cumulative total of 20 days** will very likely result in the **removal of the student from the school roll**.
- Removal from the school roll means the student will no longer be considered a registered student at our school and will lose their place.
- Parents would have to reapply via Wakefield LA for a school place and it would be likely that the new place would not be at Sandal Magna
- The 20-day threshold is in accordance with legal guidelines, is supported by Wakefield LA and reflects our commitment to maintaining high attendance standards.

The school's attendance policy, together with the legislation from Wakefield Council and the Department of Education, is available on our website for you to refer to at any time.

We appreciate your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mr C Elliott
Headteacher



Sandal Magna Community Academy
Belle Vue Road, Wakefield WF1 5NF

Tel. 01924 767080
Email. info@sandalmagna.co.uk
Website. sandalmagna.co.uk

www.wakefield.gov.uk

wakefieldcouncil

Children and Young People

PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ARE CHANGING!

With the introduction of the New National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force on 19th August 2024.

PENALTY NOTICES WILL BE ISSUED FOR

Term time leave: Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period: A Penalty Notice may be considered/issued when a pupil has had 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week* period.

*School Week's

PER PARENT/PER CHILD

Penalty Notice Fines will continue to be issued per parent per child.

For example: 3 Siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

FIRST OFFENCE

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term Time Holiday or Irregular School Attendance the Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days of issue, reducing to £80 if paid within 21 days**.

SECOND OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence)

Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same pupil within 3 years of the first notice, the second Penalty Notice will be charged at:

£160 if paid within 28 days (no reduced fee for paying early).

(**Unpaid Penalty Notice's after 28 days may result in a parental prosecution)

THIRD OFFENCE (within 3 years of the First Offence)

On the third time that an offence is committed for either a Term Time Holiday and/or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, the case may proceed straight to Parental Prosecution under the Single Justice Procedure. If found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to send a child to school' the Magistrates can impose a fine up to £1000.