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## ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

Directors: Mrs R Smith and Mrs J Gardiner  
Headteacher: Ms S Dangerfield



# Norfolk County Council

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## Norfolk County Council: Legal Intervention regarding school absence for Independent Settings - Guidance for parents

### Regular school attendance and parent's legal responsibilities

At All Saints School, our aim is to collaborate with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This guidance is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

### The important legal information

The Government have introduced a single national threshold of **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period**. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of **unauthorised** absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

As your child attends an independent setting, please be aware that when addressing unauthorised absence from school a penalty notice **will not** be issued. However, in line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to prosecute parents under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child **or** who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

### Requests for leave of absence

[Working together to improve school attendance](#) advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis.

If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government 'does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.'

Requests for leave must be made in advance, otherwise schools will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obliged to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

### **Support with ensuring regular school attendance**

If you require any support with ensuring your child's attendance, please contact Ms Sam Dangerfield or Mrs Karen Berryman on 01692 582083.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Dangerfield".

Sam Dangerfield

Headteacher