



Surlingham Primary School
Walnut Hill,
Norwich NR14 7DQ,
Tel: 01508 538214

Head Teacher: Hannah Boag
Email: office@sps.set.education

Web: <https://www.rockland-surlingham-schools.co.uk/>

12th September 2025

Dear Parents/Guardian

Regular School Attendance and Parent's/Guardian's Legal Responsibilities

At Surlingham Primary School our aim is to work with and support parents/guardians to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential. This letter is to remind all parents/guardians about the law that requires them to ensure that their child(ren) attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take appropriate steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The Legalities of Attendance

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil with at least 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period meets the criteria for a Penalty Notice. Any pupil at Surlingham Primary School who meets these criteria will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered. If issued, the penalty notice is £160 when paid within the 28 days & £80 if paid within 21 days. When penalty notices are issued, each parent/guardian will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent/guardian could receive multiple notices if they have more than one child who has been absent. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. Furthermore, any second penalty notice issued to the same parent/guardian for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be charged at a higher rate of £160, with a limit of 2 per parent for the same child over this period. There is no right of appeal against a fixed penalty notice.

Requests for Leave of Absence

The DfE 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 the 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 during term time as they would not typically be seen as an exceptional circumstance. If the school does not receive a leave of absence form, we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances, and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

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If parent(s)/guardian(s) choose to take their child(ren) out of school for an unauthorised holiday, they may be subject to a Fixed Penalty Notice if they meet the criteria listed above.

Please note that our process has changed when requesting holiday, whereby we will no longer accept the paper holiday request forms. Our new procedure is that parents/guardians must request a meeting with myself as Head Teacher during which your request will be considered.

As Nursery children are under statutory school age, the above legislation is for information purposes only. However, we would like to instil the above values to all children within the school from the earliest opportunity to encourage them to maintain good attendance as they progress through their educational journey.

I hope we can count on your support in promoting high attendance across the school. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Boag

Mrs Hannah Boag

Executive Head Teacher

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