



# TENBURY HIGH

## ORMISTON ACADEMY

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[OAT]  
Ormiston Academies Trust  
AN OAT ACADEMY



A Specialist Science and  
Mathematics College

September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

### NEW STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

From 14th August 2024, new statutory guidance for school attendance - [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) came into effect. I am writing to inform you of the key changes that are most relevant to you as parents/carers.

The first significant change is regarding holiday leave during term time. From the start of this term, all holidays will be recorded as 'unauthorised.' This means that the government no longer recognises holiday leave during school terms as acceptable and advises that children should not be taken out of school for holidays.

If your child misses 5 school days (10 sessions) or more for 'unauthorised' reasons, the school is now required to inform Worcestershire County Council, who may decide that it is appropriate to issue a fine. It is important to note that these fines are issued by the county council, and all monies received through fines go directly to them, not to the school. Therefore, there is no financial gain for the school when fines are issued.

There is a tiered fining system in place:

- On the first occasion, a fine of £160 per child, per parent will be issued. For a family with two children and two parents, this equates to a total fine of £640.
- On the second occasion, the fine is doubled to £320 per child, per parent. For the same family, this would total £1,280.
- If a holiday is taken on a third occasion within a three-year period, a magistrate may impose a fine of up to £2,500 per child, per parent. For two children and two parents, this could lead to a maximum fine of £10,000.

In addition to holiday fines, the government is also keen to address 'unauthorised' absences from school more rigorously. Unauthorised absences include unnecessary or avoidable absences and are monitored over a rolling 10-week period. Each day missed counts as two sessions (morning and afternoon registers). If a child accumulates 10 unauthorised absences during this period, we are required to report this to the county council.

To clarify, authorised absences include illnesses, medical appointments, religious celebrations, and exceptional family circumstances such as bereavements. In rare cases, we may authorise other absences, which are judged on an individual basis. However, absences such as birthday celebrations or shopping trips will be considered unauthorised.



Wherever possible, our office staff will inform you if an absence will be recorded as authorised or unauthorised. Please be assured that our first response to a number of unauthorised absences will always be to communicate with families in a supportive manner, to see if we can help where circumstances have led to poor attendance.

It is also worth noting that very few children recorded 10 unauthorised absences during the last academic year.

I understand that this is a lot of information to take in. Therefore, we will be producing a video of our attendance road map and intervention support to follow this letter. This will provide further clarity.

Please be assured that we remain committed to supporting families with attendance, as excellent attendance benefits children both academically and socially.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A Wilks', written in a cursive style.

Mr A Wilks  
Assistant Principal

**MOMENTS  
MATTER,  
ATTENDANCE  
COUNTS.**