

19 July 2024



Smestow Academy
www.smestowacademy.co.uk

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of my first full year as Headteacher at Smestow, I am extremely proud of what we have achieved together so far. Smestow academy is fast becoming a great place to learn with calm and purposeful classrooms, and engaging opportunities through our extracurricular activities and wider curriculum. The recent 60th anniversary event was testament to the spirit and 'welcoming and caring environment' we are creating at Smestow, and the Discovery days and Sports day this term have been great opportunities for our children to develop into **successful, confident and resilient individuals**.

We sign out of this very successful year by sharing the important information for next academic year ahead.

Start of Term Arrangements

The first week back arrangements are as follows:

Tuesday

- Year 7 and Year 11 prefects are to arrive to school for a 8:30am start. Their school day will finish at 3pm.
- Year 12 enrolment will take place between 9:30am-11:30am.

Wednesday

- Year 7, 8 and 9 will be in school from 08:30am.
- Year 10 and 11 to arrive to school for 09:15am.
- Year 12 and 13 students to arrive for 10:15am.
- All pupils to finish for 3pm.

Thursday (normal school days)

- All year groups will be in school 08:30am-15:00pm.
- Pupils should arrive from 8:25am as always expected.

It is essential that all pupils return to school on their Autumn 2024-2025 start date as we will be sharing important updates and key information in assemblies during these first days.

ClassCharts

As we continue to use Class Charts to record your child's school day please can we remind you to download the Class Charts parent app if you haven't already. This will allow you to see positive and negative behaviours happening in real time for your child so we can continue to work together to get the best from all pupils. If you require any support with this and getting your child's code please email postbox@smestowacademy.co.uk



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Academy Trust
EDUCATION WITHOUT EXCEPTION

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Equipment

In order to be fully prepared for learning we ask that pupils bring to school each day 2 black pens (one spare), green pen, pencil, ruler, scientific calculator and their pupil planner which will be distributed on return in September.

Medical Conditions

If your child has a medical healthcare plan that has been written by a medical professional, please bring a signed copy of this in to school. Additionally, please contact school reception on Tuesday 4 September to arrange for you to bring in the required medication and to complete the relevant paperwork with one of our First Aiders. We are unable to administer medication prior to written consent being obtained from parents/carers.

Attendance

As part of the Department for Education strategy around working together to improve school attendance, a new National Framework relating to Penalty Notices for school absence will come into effect from 19th August 2024.

These reforms are the next phase in the Government's plan to improve school attendance following the pandemic which has seen a worldwide rise in absence and persistent absence driven by broken habits of attendance, and new and exacerbated barriers like mental ill health.

Penalty Notice Fines for unauthorised absences will be brought under a National Framework to help tackle inconsistencies in their use. A Penalty Notice Fine to parents and carers must be considered if a child misses 10 sessions of unauthorised absence from school in a 10-week rolling period. Alongside this, Penalty Notice Fines will go up to £160 (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days for the first Penalty Notice issued) and £160 if paid within 28 days. Any second Penalty Notice issued within three years to the same parent for the same child will be at a flat rate of £160. If absences continue within a three-year period of the first Penalty Notice being issued, alternative enforcement will be imposed. Penalty Notices may be issued if the criteria are met of 10 unauthorised sessions of absence within a 10-week period as set out in the National Framework.

The new legislation applies from Monday 19th August 2024. You can read more about the new legislation in the Department for Education's Working together to improve school attendance statutory guidance found here: Working together to improve school attendance – GOV.UK <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

We would like to draw your attention to section 190 of the document which states changes to Penalty Notices. A Penalty Notice can be issued to parents by the Local Authority when parents request time off school for pupils during term time and for 10 sessions (i.e. 10 half days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent for a leave of absence. This means that if four siblings take leave of absence during term time, this would result in each parent receiving four separate fines. The first time a Penalty Notice for leave of absence, or for irregular attendance, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. The second time a Penalty Notice for leave of absence, or for irregular attendance is given, the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child within 28 days. The third time an offence is committed for term time leave of absence or irregular attendance a Penalty

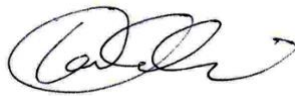


Notice will not be issued – the case will proceed straight to the Magistrates’ Court. Fines will be up to £2500 per parent, per child. If found guilty in a Magistrates’ Court, this can show on a parents’ future DBS certificate as “failure to safeguard a child’s education”.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

All staff and pupils would like to thank parents for their great support this year. Wishing you a fantastic Summer break and look forward to seeing everyone for another exciting school year in September.

Yours faithfully



Mr I Chamberlain
Headteacher



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