

Fixed Penalty Notices

From September 2018

Authorised Absences

- Sickness/urgent medical/therapy appointments are authorised
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. extreme weather conditions resulting in school closure
- Family bereavement (1 day)
- Religious observance (1 day)
- Child has been temporarily excluded (e.g. 1 day)
- Any other **exceptional reasons** – appointment must be made with the HT in advance

Unauthorised Absences

- **Holidays and trips are not authorised**
- Child is absent without prior notification and no explanation is given
- Explanation is unsatisfactory – e.g. birthday, sibling was ill, woke up late
- School has reason to doubt the validity of the explanation
- Leave taken during term time which is not deemed exceptional
- **If a child is absent from school for more than 20 days, their name may be taken off the school roll and their place be offered to another child.**

School's procedures to improve attendance

- Joint Attendance Policy and Procedures across both schools - Family Support Worker tracks attendance – tracking system in place
- Writing to parents to remind them of their legal responsibilities
- Meeting with parents
- First-day response to any absence
- Children who are identified as Persistent Absentees (PA - below 90%) must be referred to the Local Authority (Education Welfare Officer) on a half termly basis
- Involvement of other agencies or services
- School works with the family to improve attendance – e.g. Attendance Agreements put in place, support with bedtime routines, clearer expectations, offer of breakfast club to some families
- Rewards and incentives – Be There Bear, Attendance data in newsletters, assemblies, Attendance Certificates

Fixed Penalty Notices – communication to parents

- Communication - Letter (from both schools) went out by email and has been translated into 3 home languages – Urdu, Tamil, Korean – official letter
- 1 term's notice
- School's Attendance Policy (website, newsletter)
- Achieving for Children's 'FPN Code of Conduct for Schools' (on behalf of the LA) – link is in the letter and was also in newsletters

When FPNs may be considered:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost due to unauthorized absence during any 5 week period
- Parentally condoned absence
- **Holidays and trips** (unauthorised term time leave) – of 10 sessions (5 days) or more
- Persistent late arrival (after register has closed) equivalent to 10 occasions in any 5 week period (even when attendance is above 90%)
- ‘Sickness’ on either side of a holiday/trip during term time or a delayed return
- School will consult the EWO, the governors and where appropriate, the junior school

Requests for leave during term

- Request leave for a holiday or a trip during term time
- meet with the HT and Attendance Governor at least 1 month in advance
- Letter issued to notify parents of the level of attendance if they are absent which can bring their child into the 'Persistent Absentee' bracket.
- **Formal written warning** that a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if they take unauthorised leave – trips or holidays which result in at least 10 sessions (5 days) lost in any 5 week period

What happens when a FPN has been issued?

- Improvement period of 15 school days set – must have 0 absence during this period
- Issue FPN by post at the end of the 15 days if absence continues e.g. if the holiday or trip is taken
- The Local Authority take over at this point – chase the fine
- £60 per child per parent

Finally...

- Genuine **sickness is authorised** – no danger of fining children who are sickly or have a condition which results in frequent absence
- **Holidays** of 5 days or more will result in a FPN
- **Income received** from the fines go to the **Local Authority** – to cover administration – the school does not receive it
- **Questions?**