



Deeping St Nicholas Primary School

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FIXED PENALTY NOTICES SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Parent /Carer,

We write to remind you of important changes to legislation with regards to children's absences from school.

All absences from our school have to be classified by the Head Teacher, as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why the reason for absence is always required. Government guidelines prevent Head Teachers from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday during term time does not fall into the category of "exceptional circumstances" and instead falls into the category of unauthorised absence.

New legislation means that from September 6th 2017 we have been adhering to the change in law that requires us to report any term time unauthorised absences that cover 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days in a six week period). In the event that this is the case, the school has to report to Lincolnshire Local Authority who may issue a fixed penalty notice.

What is a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)?

A FPN is an alternative to prosecution and requires the parent(s) to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's irregular attendance at school. It is issued per parent, per child.

Who issues them?

In Lincolnshire the Local Authority issues them.

When are they used?

When a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a six week period; a school day is two sessions (morning or afternoon).

This includes:

- Any absence marked in the register as unauthorised.
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has been closed and recorded as an unauthorised absence.

- An absence in term time which has not been authorised by the head teacher.

How much is a penalty notice?

Currently, a Fixed Penalty Notice is £120 per parent/adult for each student to be paid within 28 days, decreasing to £60 if paid within 21 days.

If the Fixed Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, or if a child receives 2 penalty notices throughout their school career, the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

We hope parents and carers understand that the school has no choice but to operate within the guidelines that are demanded of us. Our school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, children and parents/carers work in partnership. We monitor attendance and punctuality, working to solve quickly any identified problems so that absences are kept to a minimum.

As part of this process, if your child is absent from school because they are ill and we have concerns around their attendance we may ask that medical evidence is provided. Please remember school staff would much rather work with parents/carers to resolve irregular attendance than resort to referring enforcement actions like Penalty Notices or Court.

Thank-you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter

Yours Sincerely



Mrs Anita Bandey