



# Spalding Parish Church of England Day School

31<sup>st</sup> May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

## Reminder Warning Notice to Parents/Carers

**From March 2020 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued in many cases where a pupil has an unacceptable level of unauthorised absence and/or unauthorised holiday during term time.**

As a whole school community, we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. Research shows that high attainment requires good attendance. Recently, there has been a substantial increase in families taking their children out of school for holidays during term time.

We have also been made aware that some parents have advised the school that their child is unwell whilst they are in fact away on holiday – we do encourage and appreciate honesty and we may challenge parents if we have reason to believe a child is on holiday.

Amendments (2013) to previous regulations (2006) removed references to family holidays and extended leave. Holidays during term time are not allowed and, in each case, there must be a written application made to the Head Teacher. The regulations also make it clear that parents do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term time holiday.

The amendments also make it clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are *exceptional circumstances*.

Requesting the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address issues around attendance of children attending their school under the following legal framework:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £60.00 or if this is not paid with 21 days, the amount rises to £120.00**
- **if not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may prosecute under section 444(1)**



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Follow us on Twitter: @SPCEDS

Head Teacher: Diane Mulley

We understand the pressures put on all families at this time but can no longer allow such levels of absence to continue, unchallenged.

Please be advised that in line with central and local government and with the support of our Academy Committee, we will continue to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for holidays during term time that are not deemed *exceptional circumstances*.

### **Medical, Dental and Hospital Appointments**

Where possible, we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt your child's education; every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. Whilst we appreciate that medical appointments are unavoidable and the times not always flexible, such absences usually only take up part of a day so children should come to school before and after the appointment. School should be informed of such absences in advance - we also require proof i.e. copy of appointment letter/text message reminder.

### **Absence Due to Illness**

Where a pupil is absent due to sickness and is genuinely unable to attend school, then the school, after being informed, may authorise a child's absence.

It is important to keep the school office informed every day if your child is going to be absent at the start of the day. Schools will monitor and engage with parents as soon as a pattern of absence becomes apparent. If your child is frequently absent due to illness the school may request permission to contact your GP for confirmation that they are too ill to attend school. Any absence where no reason has been provided will automatically be recorded as unauthorised.

The decision to authorise an absence can only be taken by the Head Teacher, or the person designated by the Head Teacher to take this decision (The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995 as amended). If the school decides that the reason given is not valid and your child does not attend school, the absence will be unauthorised.

Where a child has high levels of unauthorised absence further legal action by the local authority could be considered. This letter should be considered as a warning that school may request a Fixed Penalty Notice be issued if the unauthorised absence % meets the criteria as set out under Lincolnshire County Council FPN Code of Conduct and in line with DFE guidance.

If you require any further information regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Yours faithfully



Diane Mulley  
Head Teacher

Please see below from the government: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Our Attendance Policy can be found here: [download.asp \(spaldingparish.lincs.sch.uk\)](download.asp (spaldingparish.lincs.sch.uk))



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