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Headteacher: Mrs L. M. Wells

Head of School: Mrs J. Cutbush

Deputy Headteacher: Mrs R. Winter



2 February 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians

As of January 2018, Outwoods Primary will be following the new Local Authority's code of conduct in relation to all leave requests during term-time. A copy of the changes to the code of conduct is overleaf and I recommend that you read it fully so you are aware of the new procedures that the school must now follow.

Summary of new code

- All leave requests must be received in writing at least 5 days before the first day of absence
- All holiday requests will be unauthorised. Any holidays that are subsequently taken and unauthorised totals exceed 5 days will result in a referral to the Local Authority for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice
- Leave requests that meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria will be granted and authorised as such
- All unauthorised absences over the previous 12 school weeks will be taken into account when considering a referral for a Fixed Penalty Notice
- Any requests for holiday resulting in a pupil's unauthorised absences totalling or exceeding 6 days, will be referred for a Fixed Penalty Notice

Example 1: October 2017

1 day unauthorised absence taken for trip to Alton Towers in July.

Leave request received for a 5 day family holiday in October. Request denied and unauthorised. Total of unauthorised absences total 6 days (5 for holiday and 1 previous for Alton Towers)

School to consider a referral to the Local Authority for Fixed Penalty Notice

Example 2: March 2018

Leave request received for a family holiday requiring 6 days absence from school. Request denied and unauthorised. Totals 6 days. School to consider a referral to the Local Authority for Fixed Penalty Notice.

Should the school decide not to grant leave of absence and parents still take their child out of school, the absence will be unauthorised, which may result in a fixed penalty notice of £60 per parent per child being issued. This fine increases to £120 if not paid within 21 days. I would ask that parents/carers consider very carefully before booking any holiday about the impact that taking term-time leave has on your child's education and social development.

Yours sincerely

Lesley Wells
Headteacher

Families First
Staffordshire County Council 2 Staffordshire Place
Tipping Street
Stafford
ST16 2DH
Email: paul.senior@staffordshire.gov.uk
Please ask for: Paul Senior
Date: 21st September 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

Changes to Penalty Notices for Absence from School

Ensuring your child has access to a good education is very important to us.

A key part of this is for all children and young people to regularly attend school, as this gives each learner the best chance to achieve their full potential. In light of the recent Isle of Wight court case and the subsequent Supreme Court ruling on school absences, we wanted to clarify our position for parents where there may be the potential for any ambiguity and to also ensure we are fully compliant with legal requirements.

As a result, we have made a few changes to our previous guidance to schools, parents and carers regarding absence from school. The new guidance will come into force from

1 January 2018 and is detailed below:

Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time

From 1 January 2018 **any** period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. Your head teacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by your head teacher to the local authority.

Penalty Notice for persistent lateness

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning could be issued. **This has now changed to 10 marks**, and late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued. You are therefore encouraged where possible to ensure your child attends school on time. However, if your child is late you must inform the school of the reason(s) why, as they may be able to offer you some form of advice or support.

Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness

If your child has had 10 days unauthorised absence or is late 10 times over a twelve week period, you may receive a penalty warning notice and also potentially a fine.

These changes have been agreed with local head teachers and have been implemented to help promote and support good attendance to school. Further details and a copy of the revised Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices can be obtained from the council's website www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education.

The vast majority of children and young people in Staffordshire have an excellent record of school attendance, and we recognise the efforts of so many parents to ensure their children attend school regularly. The Local Authority will continue to take appropriate action for absences during term time when we are notified by head teachers, both to support them in their role and to ensure local children can continue to achieve the best possible outcomes from attending local schools.

Yours faithfully

Paul Senior

