

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Policy & Guidelines for Attendance and Punctuality 2017

Introduction

- Excellent attendance and punctuality is important if children are to benefit from everything school has to offer.
- There is a clear link between attendance, punctuality and achievement.
- We encourage all parents to give a high priority to regular school attendance, we work with and support parents and carers, together with a number of outside agencies, to ensure positive attitudes towards attendance and education is supported.
- Excellent attendance is important if children are to be encouraged to be valuable members of society.
- There is a clear link between non-attendance and social exclusion; this can lead to involvement in crime and antisocial behaviours.
- Attendance related information, advice and guidance is always available from school staff.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with guidelines on exclusion, behaviour, anti bullying and other documentation referring to social inclusion.

Aims

- To have a manageable whole school approach to attendance procedures.
- To promote excellent attendance and punctuality in order to ensure continuity of education and maximise children's academic potential.
- To ensure that parents are aware of their responsibilities regarding attendance and to work with parents if difficulties arise.
- To work alongside other agencies, including the Education Welfare Service Legal Intervention Team, if difficulties arise so that effective action can be put into place.
- To ensure children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality by rewarding children who achieve it.
- To monitor attendance and punctuality effectively so difficulties are quickly highlighted.
- To make everyone, including pupils, families, school staff and governors, aware of the detrimental effect of absences and lateness on the education of our children.

Inclusion

We are committed to providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils and apply the three principles for inclusion to planning and teaching. Suitable learning challenges will be set for all pupils with the aim of maximizing achievement for all pupils at an appropriate level for each individual. Teachers will respond appropriately to pupils' diverse learning needs and be aware of the needs of differing genders, special educational needs, disability, as well as different cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds. We are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and this will be reflected in the curriculum offered to pupils and in the conduct of staff and pupils.

Absence

Absence is categorised as authorised or unauthorised. An authorised absence is when the school has given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent, or has accepted an explanation afterwards as a satisfactory reason for the absence. Only the Head Teacher, not parents, can authorise an absence - absences are not automatically authorised.

Authorised Absence:

- Genuine illness – although, if the length of illness is considered to be unreasonable this will be referred to the Legal Intervention Team.
- Medical and dental appointments - where possible that they take place outside of school time. (appointment cards should always be seen).
- Family Bereavements - for an agreed period of time.
- Days of religious observance - advance notice should be given in this case.
- Fixed term exclusion - as a result of a specific action by the Head Teacher.

- Permanent exclusion - while the appeal process is ongoing.
- Attendance at a Pupil Referral Unit - where attendance is dual registered.
- Late arrival before registers close (indicated by an L on the register).

Unauthorised Absence:

- Late arrival after registers close (indicated by a U on the register).
- Unexplained absences - the administration assistant sends a letter to the parents/carers, in the first instance, if no explanation is provided.
- Holidays in term time.
- Unacceptable reasons for absences include: staying off school for haircuts, staying off school to buy party clothes and staying off school to buy shoes.

Procedures for Teachers

- Registers must be taken at 8.55am, 12.40pm (afternoon nursery) and 1:00pm.
- The list of attendance codes (Appendix 1) must be strictly followed.
- **All** children should be marked either present or absent.
- Registers close at 9.30am and at 1:10pm.

Absences

- **Notes** explaining absence should be placed in the plastic pocket and the absence report filled in appropriately. Reasons should be detailed on SIMS and CPOMS.
- **Verbal** explanations should also be recorded on the class register and the absence report as appropriate. Reasons should be detailed on SIMS and CPOMS
- **No explanations** - at the end of the week the admin assistant will ensure that a letter (containing an explanation slip for return) is given to parents (Appendix 2). If the explanation slip is not returned and there is still no explanation, the absence should be marked unauthorised and detailed on SIMS and CPOMS.

Concerns about Absence and lateness

The Family Support Worker monitors attendance weekly and works in partnership with the Education Welfare Service - Legal Intervention Team. Attendance below 96% is scrutinised and acted upon on a weekly basis.

Procedures for Dealing with Absence and Lateness

- On the first day of absence parents must inform the school of the reason for their child's absence.
- This reason must be recorded on SIMS and CPOMS.
- If no message is received, a member of the administration team will telephone the parents/carers of all unexplained absentees from 9:30am onwards and record explanations on SIMS and CPOMS. The administration team will send a text message to the parent / carer if contact cannot be made by telephone.
- If no response is forthcoming this should be recorded on SIMS and CPOMS.
- The late book will be used to record the names of all children who are late and who must report to the school office.
- Trends in absences are scrutinised by the Family Support Worker.

Procedures with Registers

- All attendance information is input into SIMS and CPOMS on a daily basis.

Monitoring Procedures

- First day response calls are made in the first instance by the school admin team.
- First day text messages are sent in the second instance by the school admin team.
- Persistent Absence is monitored by the Family Support Worker. Persistent lateness is monitored by the administration staff. A copy of the week's lateness is passed to the Head Teacher each Friday.

- Weekly checks are made on any children whose attendance is below 96%. In this case the following procedures are followed:
 1. Attendance letter 1 from school posted to both parents (Appendix 3). This letter is the first warning attendance letter alerting parent/carers that attendance is not at a satisfactory level and an offer to discuss reasons further with the Family Support Worker. Information is detailed on SIMS and CPOMS.
 2. Monitor attendance.
 3. If absence continues to be a concern a phone call is made to invite into school to discuss issues with the Family Support Worker. Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.
 4. Monitor attendance.
 5. Attendance letter 2 from school posted to both parents (Appendix 4). This letter is the second warning attendance letter alerting parents/carers that attendance is still not at a satisfactory level and there is an expectation to see an improvement. Parents are expected to contact school so that issues can be discussed further. Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.
 6. Monitor attendance.
 7. Invitation into school to discuss issues with the Governors' Working Party if necessary.
 8. Monitor attendance
 9. Referral letter to the Legal Intervention Team from school posted to both parents (Appendix 5). This letter advises parents/carers that a referral is being made to the Education Welfare Service Legal Intervention Team for a Penalty Notice.
 10. Monitor attendance. Family Support Worker works in partnership with Education Welfare Service – Legal Intervention Team.
 11. Formal proceedings taken by the Education Welfare Service Legal Intervention Team - fast-tracking non-attendance procedures. Ultimately, parents may be issued with a £60 Penalty Notice, or legal proceedings may be taken against parents in either the Magistrates Court, where the maximum fine is £2500, or in the Family Proceedings Court, by an application for an Education Supervision Order.

Attendance Rewards

- Every child that has 100% attendance for a whole term receives a certificate at the end of term. Their name goes into a draw for a prize.
- Every child that has 100% attendance for the whole school year receives a certificate and a reward on the last day of the summer term.
- The class with the best attendance each week receives the attendance trophy in Monday's assembly.
- At the end of each term the class with the best attendance can decide on their reward.

Holidays during Term Time

- Holidays **may not** be taken in term time. Legislation makes it clear that from 1 September 2013, Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Leave of Absence during term Time

Parents must complete a 'request for leave of absence in term time' form (Appendix 6) and return it to the Administration team. Information is detailed on SIMS and CPOMS.

Amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force in September 2013 and make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant a leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

The amendment was made following the recommendation in Charlie Taylors (Government Expert Advisor) report which stated that 'if children are taken away for a two week holiday every year and have an average number of days off for sickness and appointments, then by the time they leave at sixteen they will have missed a year of school.' He also reported 'a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement.'

A letter will be posted to both parents/carers authorising leave of absence under exceptional circumstances (Appendix 7). Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.

A letter will be posted to both parents/carers if a request for a leave of absence is not authorised (Appendix 8). Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.

A letter will be posted to both parents/carers if a request for a leave of absence is not made by the parent and informing them that the matter will be referred to the Local Authority to request a Penalty Notice (Appendix 9). Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.

Sanctions

Penalty Notices can be issued to parents /carers when the Head Teacher has refused to authorise absence and the parent / carer has wilfully removed a child from school for a holiday.

A letter will be posted to both parents/carers informing them that the matter will be referred to the Local Authority to request a Penalty Notice (Appendix 10). Information is detailed onto SIMS and CPOMS.

Liaison with Parents/Carers

Attendance and punctuality are mentioned in monthly newsletter and school website to parents/carers, in parents/carers consultations and school meetings . Posters showing the effects of attendance and lateness are on display throughout the school.

RRSA

At Fell Dyke Community Primary school, we are committed to promoting a rights respecting ethos based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child in all aspects of school life and the best interests of the child is at the heart of our policy and practice. The articles set out in the CRC are known to all children and adults in the school and we encourage rights respecting language and behaviour at all times. The children are taught that we all have rights and responsibilities in our school community, locally and globally and the difference between wants and needs. We recognise that children have the right to say what they think about matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously and we encourage them to play an active role in their own learning and to speak out and act for the rights of all to be respected locally and globally.

Role of Governors

Governors determine support and review school policies. They support the aims of this policy by making resources available wherever possible. They receive termly reports concerning attendance, which they use for monitoring purposes. Governors meet with parents/carers at Governors' Attendance Working Parties when required.

Evaluation and Review

Next review: Autumn 2020

APPENDIX 1

Absence codes to use in SIMS

Code	School Meaning	Statistical Meaning	Physical Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site (not Dual reg)	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual Registration	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
E	Excluded (No alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family Holiday (not agreed or days in excess)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness (not medical/dental appointments)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical/Dental	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised Abs (not covered by any other code)	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Y	Enforced closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session
#	School closed to pupils & staff	Attendance not required	Out for whole session

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Head Teacher Ms K Savage
Springwell Road
Gateshead
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Email: felldykecommunityprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk
Website: www.felldykeprimary.org

**APPENDIX 2
NO REASON PROVIDED FOR ABSENCE TEMPLATE**

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Student: NAME – Year INSERT

We noticed that from our records that **Child's first name** was absent from school on **insert details of absence** and that no reason for the absence has been provided.

Please let us know the reason for the absence by completing and returning the tear off slip to Mrs Crabtree in the school office. It would also be useful if that you provide medical evidence for this absence so that the information can be put on **Child's first name** records.

It would help us if you could let us know the reason for any future absences on the first day **Child's first name** is absent and again it would be useful for you to provide medical evidence for this absence.

Please rest assured that we only want the very best for your child. If children are absent we cannot teach them, their education suffers and they could fall behind academically and from the rest of the children in their class.

Yours sincerely

Ms K Savage
Head Teacher

Child's full name:.....

Date/s of absence:.....

Reason for absence:.....

.....

.....

Signature of parent or carer:.....

Date:.....

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APPENDIX 3 ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER 1 TEMPLATE

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Student: NAME – Year INSERT

Dear PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

As the school's Family Support Worker, part of my role is to monitor attendance as the school works very closely with the Education Welfare Service to monitor every child's attendance.

The Government guidelines advise that every child of school age should be achieving a minimum of 96% attendance and **INSERT PUPILS NAME** current attendance is **INSERT ATTENDANCE %** this academic year which is concerning. When attendance drops below 90% it may be referred to the Legal Intervention Team.

I will be monitoring **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance. When there is an absence of 5 days in this half term this may be classed as a persistent absence.

It is understood that the absences may be due to ill health but persistent or regular absence is concerning. You may be asked to provide medical evidence, for example an appointment letter or prescription for future absences.

If there is not an improvement in **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance then you will be requested to attend a meeting in school to discuss this matter further.

It is hoped that with your continuous support an improvement can be made to enable **INSERT PUPILS NAME** to reach his full potential.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in school should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Turnbull

Michelle Turnbull
Family Support Worker

Telephone 0191 433 4111

My working days are Monday to Thursday

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Head Teacher Ms K Savage
Springwell Road
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APPENDIX 4 ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER 2 TEMPLATE

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Student: INSERT PUPILS NAME ~ Year INSERT

Dear **PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)**

As the school's Family Support Worker, part of my role is to monitor attendance as the school works very closely with the Education Welfare Service to monitor every child's attendance. We posted to you the first attendance warning letter on **INSERT DATE** raising a concern with **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance. At the time **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance was at **INSERT %**

The Government guidelines advise that every child of school age should be achieving a minimum of 96% attendance and **INSERT PUPILS NAME** current attendance is **INSERT ATTENDNACE %** this academic year which is concerning. When attendance drops below 90% it may be referred to the Legal Intervention Team.

We would like to see an improvement in **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance and would like to offer you support to enable **HIM/HER** to reach **HIS/HER** full potential. Would you please contact me on the number above to arrange a meeting to discuss matters further. This is very much appreciated, we are here to help.

We will continue to monitor **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance. When there is an absence of 5 days in this half term this may be classed as a persistent absence. It is understood that the absences may be due to ill health but persistent or regular absence is concerning. You have be asked to provide medical evidence, for example an appointment letter or prescription for absences however, this has not been received.

It is hoped that with your continuous support an improvement can be made to enable **INSERT PUPILS NAME** to reach **HIS/HER** full potential and do well academically by attending school every day and on time.

I look forward in hearing from you so that we can discuss further.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Turnbull

Michelle Turnbull
Family Support Worker

Telephone 0191 433 4111

My days of work are Monday to Thursday

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APPENDIX 5

REFERRAL LETTER TO THE LEGAL INTERVENTION TEAM FOR PENALTY NOTICE TEMPLATE

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Student: INSERT PUPILS NAME, Year INSERT

Dear **PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)**

Unfortunately, despite several attempts by school to support you in improving **INSERT PUPILS NAME** attendance it is at an unsatisfactory level and is currently **INSERT ATTENDANCE %**.

As you can see on the enclosed register there has been a number of unauthorised sessions this academic year.

Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996 parents/carers are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. You have a duty to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually.

I have therefore decided to refer the matter to the Legal Intervention Team for formal action to be taken. Failure to ensure your child's regular attendance can ultimately result in you being issued with a £60 Penalty Notice, or legal proceedings being taken against you in either the Magistrates Court, where the maximum fine is £2,500, or in the Family Proceedings Court, by an application for an Education Supervision Order.

The Legal Intervention Team will contact you to make an appointment to discuss the process and consequences with you.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Turnbull

Michelle Turnbull
Family Support Worker

Telephone: 0191 433 4111

My days at work are Monday to Thursday

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Head Teacher Ms K Savage
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APPENDIX 6 LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM TEMPLATE

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Name of pupil	
Date of birth	
Tutor/year group	
Address	
Contact Numbers	
Sibling Details (or other children living in the household)	

I request permission for my child to be absent from school between: -

First Day of Absence	
Date of Return	
Total School Days	

Please fully explain the **exceptional circumstances** that you would like the Head teacher to consider (continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

Declaration

I have read and understood the information about leave of absence during term time, unauthorised absence, and Penalty Notices. I am aware of the possible consequences should my child take a leave of absence without the prior authorisation of the Head teacher.

Signature.....

Date.....

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APPENDIX 7 REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE AUTHORISED BY THE HEAD TEACHER TEMPLATE

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Dear PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Re: Request for leave of absence during term time

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

I have considered your recent request and leave of absence during term time for **INSERT CHILD'S / CHILDREN'S NAME(S)** and feel it meets the criteria. I therefore confirm that in this instance I have authorised the planned absence from **INSERT DATES....** to **....INSERT DATES**

However, I must point out that the school strongly discourages leave of absence during term time (as outlined in the school attendance policy) due to the impact any absence has on a child's education and social progress.

May I also remind you that future requests for leave of absence may not be authorised, and if leave is taken without prior authorisation, a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'K Savage'.

Ms K. Savage
Head Teacher

Fell Dyke Community Primary School



Head Teacher Ms K Savage
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**APPENDIX 8
REQUEST FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE NOT AUTHORISED TEMPLATE**

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Dear **PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)**

Re: Request for leave of absence during term time

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

I have considered your request for a leave of absence during term time for **INSERT CHILD'S / CHILDREN'S NAME(S)** and feel it does not meet the criteria. I am therefore unable to authorise the absence in this instance.

The school attendance policy clearly states that should a leave of absence be taken without prior authorisation, a penalty Notice may be issues by the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely



Ms K. Savage
Head Teacher

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Head Teacher Ms K Savage
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**APPENDIX 9
REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE NOT MADE TEMPLATE**

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Dear **PARENTS NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)**

Re: Request for leave of absence during term time

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Unfortunately, it has come to my attention that **INSERT CHILD'S / CHILDREN'S NAME/S HAS / HAVE** taken **INSERT NUMBER OF DAYS** leave of absence without the prior request being made to the school.

The school's attendance policy makes it clear that parents must seek permission in writing from the Head Teacher in advance should they wish their child to take a leave of absence during term time.

As you did not request permission for this leave of absence it has not been authorised. Therefore the school will be referring the matter to the Local authority to request a Penalty Notice be issued against you.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

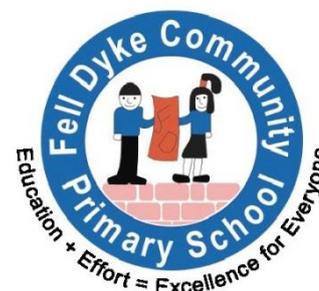
Yours sincerely



Ms K. Savage
Head Teacher

Fell Dyke Community Primary School

Head Teacher Ms K Savage



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**APPENDIX 10
LEAVE OF ABSENCE PENALTY NOTICE REFERRAL TEMPLATE**

DATE

NAME AND ADDRESS (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)

Student: INSERT PUPILS NAME Year INSERT

Dear **NAME (TO BOTH PARENTS SEPERATELY)**

Re: Unauthorised leave of absence during term time

As you may be aware, amendments to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances** and that Head Teachers should determine the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Unfortunately, as your child, **INSERT PUPILS NAME** has taken an unauthorised leave of absence during term time, I am referring the matter to the Local Authority to request a Penalty Notice be issued against you.

The Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Yours sincerely



Ms Kate Savage
Head Teacher