



ST. ANDREW'S CE (VA) INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOLS

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Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to inform you of changes the Department of Education has made to fixed penalty notices (FPNs) for children who regularly miss school. These changes came into effect from 19th August 2024. The changes form part of a wider initiative which aims to improve school attendance and bring consistent application of fines and court action across all local authorities in England. You may have heard about this on the news or social media, and we thought it was important that parents/carers were given factual information.

All schools are under a legal obligation to report children who regularly miss school to their local authority, for this purpose 'regularly' is defined as missing ten sessions or more in a ten week period.

In addition, where the school has been informed or believes a child is absent from school for holiday or leisure purpose for ten sessions or more the school is also expected to report the circumstances to the local authority.

The local authority is responsible for issuing and administering fines to the parents/carers of children whose children miss school for either of these reasons. School do not benefit financially from these fines.

Head teachers are only allowed to authorise absence from school in exceptional circumstances; holidays are rarely considered 'exceptional circumstances.'

When a FPN may be issued:

1. Any unauthorised term time leave of 10 sessions or more.
2. Irregular attendance; defined as accumulating 10 unauthorised missed sessions of school over a ten week period.

NB: one school day is two sessions broken down to 'am' and 'pm.'

How much the FPN is likely to be and what could happen:

First Occasion:

The first time an FPN is issued for either term time holiday or irregular attendance the fine will be £160, per parent, per child. Fines are required to be paid within 28 days, if the fine is paid within 21 days the fine is reduced to £80, per parent, per child.

Second Occasion:

If there is a second occasion of unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more within the three year period of the first occasion, the fine will be £160 per parent, per child. There will be no reduction for early payment.



Third Occasion:

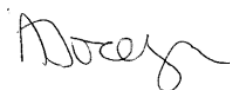
If there is a third occasion of unauthorised absence of 10 sessions or more within a rolling three year period, the local authority may decide to prosecute and refer the matter to the magistrate's court. The magistrates court can impose a fine of up to £1000 if found guilty of the offence of 'Failure to Protect a Child's Right to Education.' This conviction would also appear on a DBS (disclosure and barring service) certificate should the parent/carer ever need to apply for one. A higher fine/imprisonment is possible for aggravated offences.

These measure are designed to encourage better attendance at school, and we ask all parents and carers to plan holidays outside of term time. If your child is struggling to attend school for any other reason, we will always look to work with families to support improvement. If there are genuine reasons for your child not attending school and we can demonstrate that every effort is being made to support your child's attendance in school, school would not advocate issuing an FPN.

Please find attached to this letter an information flyer that Calderdale Local Authority have produced that provides further information and examples.

We appreciate your ongoing support to achieve the very best education for your child.

Kind regards



Amanda Jocelyn

Executive Head Teacher

