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Cleves School
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Friday 13th December 2024

Important Notice: New Government Attendance Changes

Dear Parents and Carers

We are writing to inform you about the new attendance regulations introduced by the UK government, which took effect from 19 August 2024.

In response to the changes, we have been working closely with Manby Lodge and Oatlands to ensure that our Attendance policies are aligned and updated to include all of the key statutory guidance. We aim to publish the revised policy in January but ahead of publication we want to draw your attention to some of the key changes and expectations. Please ensure you read the following information and particularly review any holiday plans during term time you may have as a family.

Rationale:

The Department for Education (DFE) has revised its attendance framework to ensure that all pupils can benefit fully from their education and get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

Increased Monitoring and reporting

Schools are now required to monitor attendance more closely and report any absences to local authorities more frequently. This will involve more regular checks and communications regarding your child's attendance record. If we have any concerns about your child's attendance or punctuality you will be notified in accordance with our new policy.

Requests for Leave of Absence:

As before, parents must request permission in advance for leave of absence for any reason. Head Teachers **cannot** grant leave during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. These are now listed in the new policy to provide clarity as to what will and will not be authorised. **No holidays** will be authorised and if you choose to take your child out of school without permission this may lead to a penalty notice issued by the Local Authority or prosecution.

Penalties for unauthorised absence

There are now penalties for unauthorised absences, which are triggered once a child has had 10 unauthorised sessions (5 days) within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

The threshold of 10 sessions (5 days) can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence, for example, 8 sessions (4 days) of unauthorised holidays in term time and 2 sessions (1 day) for other unauthorised reasons.

The 10-school week period may span different terms or school years, for example: 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Autumn term and a further 8 in the Spring term. These sessions include when a child arrives late to school and after the register has closed at 9:15am. Moving forward, from January children must continue to be in class by 8:45am. Any child arriving after the register closes will receive an absent mark for the morning session.

What will happen if the threshold is met?

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence. The payment must be made directly to the local Authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If a payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.



2020-2023

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The Government published guidance states:

First penalty notice

The parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days

Second penalty notice

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issues of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken.

Your role as Parents and Carers

The DFE guidance states: 'Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school. Exceptional circumstances are listed in the new policy. We ask for your cooperation and support in ensuring your child attends school every day and punctually.

Here are some ways you can help:

- o Ensure your child arrives at school on time and is at the classroom door by 8:45am every day.
- o Schedule appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- o Communicate promptly with the school regarding any absences and provide necessary documentation/medical evidence when requested.

Yours sincerely

Jim Usher
Headteacher



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