

St Day and Carharrack
Self-belief, Determination and Courage



30th September 2019

Dear Parents

Attendance Policy Update – Unauthorised Absence and Penalty Notices

At St Day and Carharrack School, we are committed to ensuring your children are given the greatest opportunity to achieve their very best every single day. This can only be achieved when children are in school and supported by high quality teaching and learning opportunities. Unfortunately, our school attendance is below the National expectations of 96% with authorised and unauthorised absences too high. As a Governing Body we reviewed our school Attendance Policy in July to ensure a greater level of consistency is put in place and communicated to you for this school year.

We recognise that there are occasions when it is appropriate to authorise an absence, such as when a pupil is genuinely ill, has an emergency medical appointment that cannot be made outside of school hours or a request for absence has been granted in “exceptional circumstances”.

However, the Government does not support parents taking children out of school for such things as holidays, birthdays or shopping. Any request for ‘exceptional circumstances’ absence should be made in writing, two weeks in advance, to the Headteacher using the school’s absence request form (available in the office/on the school website).

It is the school’s duty to notify the Local Authority Education Welfare Service of any unauthorised absence which is taken from school if your child has ongoing attendance issues such as persistent absence or lateness. As a result of this, the Education Welfare Service may issue a penalty notice. Each situation will be scrutinised carefully by school leaders before making this difficult decision, and any mitigating circumstances will be considered.

If the Education Welfare Service issues a penalty notice this carries a fine of £60 if paid within 21 days, increasing to £120 if paid within 28 days. The penalty notices are issued to each parent/carer for each child. If the fines are not paid, then this may result in legal action being taken against you. The Council may also apply for the costs incurred in taking the matter to Court.

The Department for Education states that penalty notices are one way of deterring pupils from being out of school without permission. Fines are issued and collected by local authorities, and any money gleaned must be reinvested in education. All new absence requests received after 28th October 2019 will be subject to consideration of a penalty notice by the Local Authority.

The School gates will be locked promptly at **8.55am**. If your child is late to school, even by five minutes- they will have to enter school through the office and the late time will be logged every day. Punctuality is crucial for the start of our day as it is during this time that we are teaching your children to read for fluency – the most important life skill to support all learning. All staff have taken part in extensive ‘Read Write, Inc’ Phonics training with daily taught sessions starting promptly at 9.00am. It is crucial that these groups start on time without any disruptions.

You are welcome to contact the school to discuss any concerns you may have regarding this letter or if you feel you would like more advice and support in helping your child attend more regularly. We are committed to working with you to ensure all our children achieve their maximum potential.

Yours sincerely

Susannah Storey
Headteacher