



Snettisham Primary School
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4th September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Snettisham Primary our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

1. 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time (for absences from 1 September 2017); or
2. 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday. The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

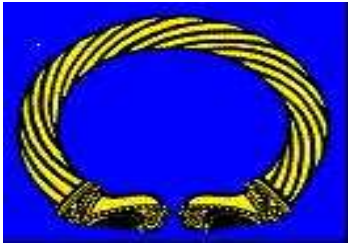
Any pupil at Snettisham Primary who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. If unpaid, a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued; both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28 days. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



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ATTENDANCE - A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. What happens if my child is late?

Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office. A series of unauthorised late marks may lead to the issuing of a fixed penalty notice and referral to the Local Authority.

2. Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence, then each day if the absence continues. We will telephone you if your child has not arrived in school by 9:30 a.m. On return to school, a letter explaining the absence is expected. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence. If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality, we will contact you to discuss the best way forward. An accumulation of unauthorised absences will lead to a referral to the Local Authority.

3. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

- Illness
- Emergency dental/medical appointment (Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays)
- Day of religious observance (for a limited period)
- Family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

4. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absences other than those in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays, day trips, shopping or birthdays are not classed as exceptional.

5. Can we take family holidays during term-time?

No. Family holidays should be taken during school holidays.

6. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas trip to visit relatives. What should I do?

The school recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family, particularly for minority ethnic families. Contact your child's teacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit. The school would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Head teacher then approves the visit, the school will set work for your child to complete while away. As far as possible we will ensure the work set reinforces the educational value of such a visit.

7. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his / her education.

8. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.