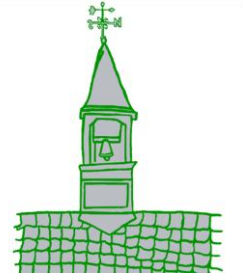




"Together we can"

Fakenham Primary Federation



Be the best YOU can be

Federation Headteacher: Adam Mason
Email: head@fakenhamjunior.org.uk
Federation Deputy Headteacher: Sarah Gallichan

09/09/26

Attendance Matters.... Attendance Matters.... Attendance Matters....

2026/2027

At Fakenham Primary Federation our aim is to collaborate with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

If your child is absent, we ask you to contact your child's school (FJS or FINS) before 9am. Messages can be left on the answer machine. If your child is sick, you will need to contact the school for every day that your child is absent. Please state the illness affecting your child and please be specific, as just "unwell" is not enough information for our records. Additionally, we require advance notification and appointment letters for all hospital, dentist or other medical appointments. As far as possible, all appointments should be made after school hours.

If your child needs medication in school, please complete a signed permission form to accompany any medication. The medication request form can be found on the school website or from the school office. Only prescribed medication can be administered to your child. Any other medication may be given by yourselves by arrangement through the office staff.

Consistent lateness will be monitored, as arriving after the bell not only affects your child but causes disruption for the whole class.

IMPORTANT: - Arriving very late without valid reason, not notifying the school of absence and unauthorised holidays are all counted as unauthorised absence.

We realise that children are sometimes ill, but we need to stress the importance of high levels of attendance and punctuality.

We want your child to feel happy and supported in school. Let us work together to ensure that your child gets the best out of their time in school in order to make the most of their full potential.

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

Adam Mason, Federation Headteacher

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

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

100% Excellent	99% - 96% Good	95% - 91% Below Expectations	90% and under Persistent Absentee
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Regular school attendance and parent's legal responsibilities

At Fakenham Primary Federation, we work closely with parents and carers to ensure that all pupils receive the best possible education and achieve their full potential.

Good school attendance is essential for children's learning, wellbeing and future opportunities. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly when they are registered at a school.

The Government is clear that children should only miss school in exceptional circumstances, Schools and local authorities are expected to work with families to promote good attendance and reduce avoidable absence.

When could a Penalty Notice be issued?

Under the national framework for school attendance, a Penalty Notice may be considered when a child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.

What does this mean?

- A school day consists of two sessions – a morning session and an afternoon session
- 10 sessions are usually equivalent to 5 school days
- The unauthorised absences do not need to happen on consecutive days
- The 10-school-week period can span different terms or school years

Examples of unauthorised absence may include:

- Holidays taken during term time without authorisation
- Keeping a child away from school without an accepted reason
- Persistent late arrival after the close of registration

Can a Penalty Notice be issued before the threshold is reached?

Yes. In some circumstances, the Local Authority may decide to issue a Penalty Notice before the threshold is reached. For example, this could apply where there have been several unauthorised term-time holidays. The Local Authority may also consider alternative legal action where appropriate.

How many Penalty Notices can be issued?

A maximum of two Penalty Notices per parent, per child can be issued within a rolling three-year period. The three-year period begins on the date the first Penalty Notice is issued. If the national threshold is met for a third time within three years and two Penalty Notices have already been issued to the parent(s), the Local Authority may consider prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

A successful prosecution could result in:

- A criminal conviction
- A fine of up to £2,500
- Any other penalties available to the court

Who can receive a Penalty Notice?

For the purposes of school attendance law, a parent includes:

- A child's natural parent
- Any person who has parental responsibility for the child
- Any person who has day-to-day care of the child

Penalty Notices will usually be issued to parent(s) responsible for the child's attendance or who allowed the absence to occur. This may apply regardless of which parent submitted a request for leave of absence.

How much is a Penalty Notice?

First Penalty Notice	Second Penalty Notice
The first Penalty Notice issued to a parent for a child will be: • £160, payable within 28 days; or • £80, if paid within 21 days.	If a second Penalty Notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within three years of the first Penalty Notice: • The charge will be £160 • Payment must be made within 28 days • No reduced payment option is available.
Important information about payment • Penalty Notices must be paid in full. • Part-payments are not accepted. • Payment plans are not available. • There is no right of appeal against a Penalty Notice. • Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child. This means that where two parents are liable for a child's absence, each parent may receive a separate Penalty Notice and will be responsible for paying their own fine.	

Requests for leave of absence during term time

Government guidance states that schools should only grant leave of absence during term time in **exceptional circumstances**. Each request will be considered individually, taking account of the specific circumstances presented. Although we recognise the value of family time together, requests for family holidays during term time will not normally be authorised. Government guidance states that a need or desire for a holiday or other leisure activity is not considered an exceptional circumstance. If leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time authorised.

How to request leave of absence

Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance of the planned absence. Making a request in advance allows the school to consider the circumstances before a decision is made. Where leave has not been requested in advance, the school may be unable to consider individual circumstances, and the absence is likely to be recorded as unauthorised. The school reserves the right to request evidence in support of absences reported immediately before or after a holiday period.

Support with school attendance

We understand that children and families can sometimes face challenges that affect attendance. If you are experiencing difficulties or require support to help your child attend school regularly, please contact:

Marie Denny, Pastoral Support/Attendance
mdenny@fakenhamjunior.org.uk

We will work with you to understand any barriers to attendance and discuss the support available.