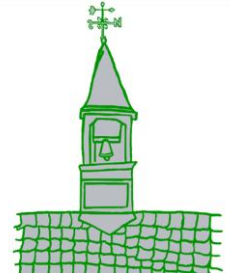




"Together we can"

# Fakenham Primary Federation

Email: [head@fakenhamjunior.org.uk](mailto:head@fakenhamjunior.org.uk)  
Executive Headteacher: Adam Mason



Be the best YOU can be

30/09/24

**Attendance Matters.... Attendance Matters.... Attendance Matters.... Attendance Matters.....**

**2024/2025**

At Fakenham Junior School 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 the school our child's school between 8.30am and 9.30am. 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 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**, Executive 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%	99% - 96%	95% - 91%	90% and under
Excellent	Good	Below Expectations	Persistent Absentee

### **The important legal information – New from August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The Government have introduced a single national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This threshold is **10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period**. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years.

In line with national guidance, the Local Authority (LA) retains the discretion to issue a penalty notice before the threshold is met. This might apply for example, where parents have taken several term time holidays below the national threshold. The LA also retains the discretion to consider going straight to prosecution where appropriate.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices per parent, per child can be issued within a rolling 3-year period. This period will start from the issue of the 1<sup>st</sup> penalty notice. The national framework also sets out the escalation process which applies to such penalty notices. If the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within 3 years, another tool should be used. In Norfolk, where a pupil's attendance has met the national threshold for a third time within 3 years and the parent/s have already been issued with 2 penalty notices within that period, consideration will be given to prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, which can result in a criminal conviction and fine of up to £2,500.

A parent includes any person who is not a natural parent but who has parental responsibility for the child **or** who has care of the child, as set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Penalty notices will usually be issued to the parent/s with day-to-day responsibility for the child's attendance or the parent/s who have allowed the absence (regardless of which parent has applied for a leave of absence).

The first penalty notice issued to a parent for a child will be charged at £160 to be paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second penalty notice, the second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first offence, is charged at a flat rate of £160 and is payable within 28 days. **There is no reduced sum available in this instance.**

Part payments or payment plans are not acceptable, and fines must be paid in full within 21 or 28 days, at the rate specified within the penalty notice. There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice.

## **Requests for leave of absence.**

[Working together to improve school attendance](#) advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the headteacher to determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school. Although we recognise the value and benefits of family holidays, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday as the Government ‘does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.’

Requests for leave must be made in advance, otherwise schools will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Headteachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

## **Support with ensuring regular school attendance.**

If you require any support with ensuring your child’s attendance, please contact [Mrs Marie Denny – [mdenny@fakenhamjunior.org.uk](mailto:mdenny@fakenhamjunior.org.uk)]