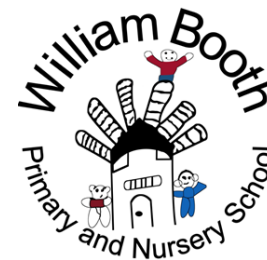

WILLIAM BOOTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Head Teacher: Mrs Claire Paparozzi BA (Hons)



2nd July 2024

Important Information About School Absences and DfE changes (as of 19th of August 2024) to the issuing of penalty notices and legal action to address school attendance

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will be aware, DfE guidance already states that pupils should not be taken out of school during term time for holidays or other avoidable absences, and that where this happens cases will be referred to the Education Welfare Service, and Penalty Notices potentially issued to parents or carers.

This summer - on 19th August 2024 - new legislation from the Department for Education will come into place regarding attendance. These changes will apply from September 2024 and mean that the cost of penalty notices will be increasing, and that in certain circumstances further legal action will become more likely. The main changes you need to be aware of are that:

- Initial penalty notices will be increasing from £60 to £80, for each child and to each parent. For example, for a family with two children and two parents, the penalty notices will now total £320.
- If the same children were to be taken out of school for a second time in a 3 year period the penalty notice will then increase to £160 per parent per child. For example, for the same family with two children and two parents, the penalty notices would then total £640.
- The above amounts are payable within 28 days of the penalty notice being issued: after that they increase further.
- **Please be aware that these changes have been made by the government and effect all schools.** Penalty notices will continue to be issued and collected by the Education Welfare Service of the Local Authority, and the money does not go to William Booth School.
- Only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent or carer in respect of the same child or children in a 3 year period. Any further absences after that may instead proceed for prosecution in the Magistrate Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Our rules and policies around absences will otherwise stay the same:

- You must submit an application for Leave of Absence to the school office - at the first opportunity - any time that you decide to take your child out of school for any duration, regardless of the reason
- If the school suspects that a family have taken a holiday, the onus will be on the parent or carer to produce evidence to the contrary
- Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence, or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable or for family holidays/absences (unless granted under 'exceptional' circumstances)
- Any trips overseas – including to visit relatives - that the school considers could have been taken during the school holidays will continue to be unauthorised
- More details can be found on the school's website, or you can speak to the school office if you have further questions

Yours sincerely,

Claire Paparozzi

Headteacher

Seth James

Senior Safeguarding Lead

Tom Buckmaster

Attendance Officer