

AC/CLW

26th May 2017

Dear Parents / Guardians

RE: School Absence During Term Time

A number of factors have caused the governors and staff to review Tedder School's attendance policy. These factors include a number of recent requests for absences from school during term time, combined with new direction from Lincolnshire County Council following the Supreme Court's Decision on 6th April 2017. The revised policy is available on the school website; this letter seeks to update you on the revised policy and provide a common understanding of the significant changes. As from the 1st June 2017, any new requests for absence will be processed under the new policy. If you are unable to access the internet a hard copy can be requested.

The most significant change in the policy is that, where there are unauthorised absences in excess of 4.5 days over a 6-week period, the new direction from Lincolnshire County Council reintroduces the possibility of issuing a Fixed Penalty Notification (FPN) or fine. The governors intend that FPN Warning Notices will be issued where we have been notified of planned absences exceeding this threshold. The revised policy also makes clear the pupil, parent/carer, and school responsibilities with respect to attendance and the escalatory responses that will be employed where attendance levels falls below the standard expected.

I hope this will clarify for you our policy in relation to absences. It is designed to support school attendance, which is vitally important for children's progress. Each scheme of work is carefully built on skills to be developed over time and when children miss an important piece of the puzzle as they develop those skills, it can be detrimental to their future understanding. Indeed, the impact is broader, all children in the class are impacted when effort is diverted to fill gaps in knowledge of those who have been absent.

For illness, please contact the school as usual to report it. If there is a need for your child to be absent from school during term time for any other reason, I would request that you email me directly, stating the reason and dates for the absence. I will then be able to judge whether or not the absence falls into the category of an exceptional circumstance, whereby it will be authorised. Please ensure prior to this, that you are familiar with the school's Attendance Policy and note that affordability of family holidays and availability of parental leave are unlikely to meet the threshold of exceptional circumstances. I also note that there has been some concern about the consistent application of this policy. Please be assured that absences have only been authorised in exceptional circumstances. While some children have been removed from school during term time, in almost all cases this has been unauthorised leave. The revised direction and policy now provides the school with the ability to act.

I would just like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank all the dedication to attendance shown by many families of our school community who support us wholeheartedly in our endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Crawshaw
Headteacher