

Dear Parent/Carer

Good attendance at school is the single most important factor in ensuring that your child will maximise their learning opportunities. By attending school every day your child takes an important step in reaching their full potential. Research completed by the Department for Education found that every day missed was associated with a lower attainment outcome at both KS2 and KS4. The more time your child spends around other children, the more chance they have of making friends and feeling included, boosting their social skills, confidence and self-esteem. Promoting positive school attendance is therefore everyone's responsibility.

You may be aware that school absence in Doncaster is one of the highest in England and schools have been working with Doncaster Council to look at how we can ensure all children attend school as much as possible. Castle Hills Primary School wants your child to have the education and skills they need to live a happy and fulfilling life. With this in mind Doncaster Council has made two major changes in how it will respond to requests from schools when schools are considering enforcing poor attendance.

Unauthorised Leave (Holidays in term time)

You will be aware that no leave of absence from school for a holiday in term time can be taken without the authorisation of the Headteacher and should you take your child out of school for a holiday you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. From September 2018 Doncaster Council will continue to issue Education Penalty Notices to each parent for each child they take out of school for a holiday.

Irregular Attendance at School

The school may write to you to advise there are concerns with your child's irregular attendance at school. It is very important that you work closely with the school to ensure your child is able to attend school every day wherever possible. If your child's attendance is not at the expected level (96% or above) the school will offer support to you and your child to ensure an improvement in attendance is made. However, should the support not have the required improvement in attendance we may send you a penalty notice warning letter. If there are any further unauthorised absences in the following 15 school days the school may request Doncaster Council to issue you with an Education Penalty Notice. The penalty notice is a fine of £120 but reduced to £60 if you pay it within 21 days. Doncaster Council will decide if a penalty notice can be issued but may decide to prosecute you instead. Where Doncaster Council decide a prosecution should take place, they will write to you offering you to attend a meeting with an Enforcement Court Officer. Following this meeting the Enforcement Court Officer will decide if a prosecution will take place and a summons will be requested from Doncaster Magistrates Court.

If you are experiencing any difficulty with your child's attendance, please contact us immediately so we can work together to ensure improvements are made.

Yours faithfully

Headteacher
Mrs S McBride

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