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Welcomed, Valued, Supported

Thursday 5th November 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

Attendance Update

We are writing to you regarding guidance from the DfE focused around improving school attendance and issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absences. As you are aware, there is a lot of pressure on schools to improve their children's attendance and the DfE have access to our attendance records.
The guidance has changed around the issuing of penalty notices for absences during school time. The updated guidance came into effect from the 19th August 2024 so has applied to all absences from the first day of term since. Many of the changes have been made through the Government and Local Authority and we will continue to follow their guidance as it is updated.

The attendance guidance states:
Penalty notices can be issued by the Local Authority for poor attendance and term time holidays. This applies to five days unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.
• The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
• If a second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil within a three-year period, it will be charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
• A maximum of two penalty notices will be issued per parent, per child, within a three-year rolling period.
In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead.
This will often include considering prosecution via the Magistrate's Court.

Following this guidance, we would once again encourage good school attendance and to not take family holidays in term time. We have seen an increase again recently in the amount of term time holidays being taken – these will not be authorised and penalty notices will be issued.

As you know, we work very closely with yourselves to ensure your child's attendance is as high as possible throughout the year and we are happy to support with any attendance concerns you have.
If there is anything you would like to discuss further, please contact me at school:
nichola.allerston@marketrasen.lincs.sch.uk

Kind regards

Nichola Allerston
Executive Head Teacher