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19 July 2017

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **Attendance at school and legal intervention**

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows that there are clear links between absence rates and levels of pupil attainment. The research has shown that children often do not catch up on work missed. This can have serious consequences for their learning and progress. The Government is very clear that all schools must aim to have the highest attendance levels possible if their pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. At Acle Primary our aim is to work closely with parents in all matters, including attendance, to enable this to happen.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers regarding the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. **The school, therefore, will not authorise term time holidays unless there are exceptional circumstances.** Other absences, due to illness (where the school has received timely notification) are unavoidable and therefore classed as authorised in practically all cases.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:

- 1 10 consecutive sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term time (for absences from 1 September 2017); or
- 2 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday

This legal intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any pupil at Acle Primary, who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

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If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued by the Local Authority there will be a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment within 21 days. If unpaid, a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued; both individual invoices would then have to be paid, making a total payment of £120, in 28 days. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in further legal action being taken.

Our Attendance Policy and Absence of Leave request form have both been amended to take into account the Local Authority's current position on term time holidays.

I hope we can count on your support in this important matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. .

Yours sincerely



Paul Henery  
Headteacher

