Our reference:

EWS/HT January 2019



Children & Family Services Civic Centre Glebe Street Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1HH

Louise Rees Director

Dear Parent / Guardian.

# **Changes to Penalty Notices for Absence from School**

The City Council has, as one of its top priorities, the raising of pupils' levels of attainment in all of our schools and it is clear that improving attendance and reducing levels of persistent absence are the most important factors in achieving this goal. This cannot be achieved without your co-operation and whilst we would like to thank you for the work you have already done we must ask for further support in this crucial area.

As a result, we have reviewed the Code of Conduct and have made a few changes to previous guidance to schools, parents and carers regarding absence from school. The new guidance will come into force from 1 January 2019 and is detailed below:

#### Penalty Notice for Leave of Absence in term time

From 1 January 2019 any period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. Your Head Teacher will continue to be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any leave taken which is recorded as unauthorised absence by the school may be referred by your Head Teacher into the Local Authority and the following actions may be applied:

- A Penalty Notice payable of a £60 or £120 fine.
- Prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000.

# Period of time used to measure persistent absence and lateness

If your child has had 6 days unauthorised absence or is late 12 times over a twelve week period, you may receive a penalty warning notice and also potentially a fine.

These changes have been agreed with local Head Teachers and have been implemented to help promote and support good attendance to school. Further details and a copy of the revised Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices can be obtained from the council's website www.stoke.gov.uk/education.

Please tell us if you need this letter in an alternative format

contacting the council:

Email: Enquiries@stoke.gov.uk

The vast majority of children and young people in Stoke-on-Trent have an excellent record of school attendance, and we recognise the efforts of so many parents to ensure their children attend school regularly.

The Local Authority will continue to take appropriate action for absences during term time when we are notified by Head Teachers, both to support them in their role and to ensure local children can continue to achieve the best possible outcomes from attending local schools.

Your child's education is important; together we can ensure that they achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely Veneral Harras

Jen Lomas

Assistant Director - Learning Services

Jen.Lomas@stoke.gov.uk

On behalf of Head teachers and Governing Bodies

Ine Local Authority strongly discourages parents/carers from applying for leave of absence during term-time and encourages schools NOT to authorise such applications save in exceptional circumstances

## STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

# APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN TERM TIME

# The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

### Name of School:

This form should be completed, in advance of the proposed period of absence, by the parent with whom the child normally resides. In line with Government and local Authority guidance, all leave requests will be dealt with at the discretion of the Governing Body and the child's period of attendance will be taken into account.

>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>
I wish to apply for leave of absence from school for my child:
Name of Child
First day of leave requestedLast day
Number of school days involved:
Exceptional circumstances leading to request:
Signed (Parent) Date
The above leave is authorised/not authorised (delete as applicable), in accordance
with the school's procedures.
Signed
(Headteacher on behalf of Chair of Governors)
Date
Comment by Head teacher/Chair of Governors, including number of unauthorised half-days missed/% attendance over previous two years (if applicable).

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