



Our Vision

To inspire a love of learning

St Gilbert's Church of England Primary School

Foundry Road Stamford Lincolnshire PE9 2PP

22 October 2020

To Parents/Guardians

RE: Attendance Matters

At St. Gilbert's, it is important to us that all our pupils are given every opportunity to succeed in every aspect of school life. It is vital therefore, that both parents and school work closely together to ensure all pupils attend school as regularly and punctually as possible. I would like to thank you for your continued support in this respect.

However, I do need to make all parents aware that under The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 which came into force from the 1st September 2013, no child should be absent from school apart from in exceptional circumstances.

Legislation

A Fixed Penalty Notice is a strategy used by schools to address the unacceptable levels of attendance of children at their school under the following legislation:

- **Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places upon parents a duty to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise**
- **Where a child is a registered pupil at a school and the parent fails to ensure that child's regular attendance at school the parent is liable to be prosecuted for a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act**
- **In cases where this duty is not being fulfilled Section 444B of the same Act empowers the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty of either £60.00 or £120.00.**

Please note: A Fixed Penalty Notice can also be issued if your child is seen in a public place within the first 5 days of an exclusion from their school.

Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes it a duty for parents in relation to pupils subject to a fixed period or permanent exclusion to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable justification, during the first five days of any such exclusion. If a child is present in a public place during the first five days of an exclusion during school hours the parent may be guilty of an offence for which they can be prosecuted by the LA before a magistrates' court or issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice for £60.00 or £120.00.



In every force. In every school. For every child.

Headteacher: Miss F Dicker
Company No. 8321824
T: 01780 762400
enquiries@stgilberts.co.uk
www.stgilberts.co.uk

Leave of Absence

If you wish to seek approval for any request of absence for your child(ren) from school, then you must complete a **Leave of Absence Request Form**, at least four weeks in advance of the requested absence. This is available from the Office. You should only then remove your child(ren) if the absence has been authorised, and notified to you in writing by the school. Any exceptional circumstances must be clearly set out in the written request to the Head Teacher who will consider each case upon its merits. While family holidays can be enriching experiences, the school year is designed to give families the opportunity to take these breaks without having to disrupt their child's education. It is for the Headteacher to consider the specific details and relevant context behind each request.

If this process is not followed, and you take term time leave of absence without permission being requested, this letter will constitute a **'warning'** for the purposes of progressing legal action against you in the future.

As a result, a request for leave of absence will not be granted for the purpose of a holiday **unless deemed to be 'exceptional circumstances'**.

If you then choose to take your child out of school during term time and it is **not** deemed to be exceptional circumstances and/or has not been approved by the School, then this will be coded as an unauthorised absence and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued for the period of absence. Failure to pay the Fixed Penalty may result in further legal action being taken against you.

This does not apply to hospital appointments where we understand that these are provided to you, though you will need to provide the school with a copy of the appointment and complete a leave of absence form. We will then advise you in writing of its authorisation.

How St. Gilbert's will work with you.

We work with families using the **'Early help Pathways'** which focuses on ensuring that children and families receive the support they need at the right time. This can involve specialist services to support the removal of barriers that prevent access to education, thus reducing unnecessary absences. Previous Department for Education (DfE) analysis has shown that every extra day missed can be associated with lower attainment in the majority of cases. Legislation supports legal action being taken against parents/carers who fail to ensure their child attends school at a level of 90% or above; this means that if your child has an accumulative overall level of below 90%, or they have that level for a specific period, the school will be duty bound to report the absence to the Local Authority. For example, attendance of 90% overall would equate to 19 days of absence throughout the year and 90% for a 6 week period would equate to 3 days of absence.

How can you prevent legal action and help your child to achieve good attendance?

- Discuss anything that may prevent attendance at school with your child and your child's class teacher as soon as possible
- Please make non-urgent medical appointments outside of school hours and where appointments are urgent or necessary, only remove your child for the period of the appointment rather than the whole day
- Refrain from removing your child from school during term time for the purposes of holidays
- Support your child to live a healthy and active lifestyle to prevent avoidable illness. We recognise that illness is inevitable at times but your child should return as soon as they are well enough

I hope the above information clarifies our position regarding attendance and the regulation we must follow to ensure all pupils receive the education they are entitled to. However, should you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Miss F Dicker
Headteacher

OPERATION ENCOMPASS
In every force. In every school. For every child.



Headteacher: Miss F Dicker
Company No. 8321824
T: 01780 762400
enquiries@stgilberts.co.uk
www.stgilberts.co.uk