

5th September 2014

Our ref: MLT/AEH 050914

Dear Parent/Guardian

Student attendance in school

As you may already be aware, the Government made some changes of legislation regarding student attendance. In an effort to improve all students' prospects of realising their potential, Glebelands School will be complying with this new legislation. The new procedures, as set down by this legislation, are detailed below. We would urge you to read the procedures in the mutual hope that Glebelands School is never required to issue such Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notices to address poor attendance at school

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carer for their child's **unauthorised absence** from school and will be used by **Surrey County Council** in the following circumstances :-

1. Leave of absence in term time which is unauthorised (5 days or 10 sessions or more).

Please be aware that The Education Regulations 2013 (Pupil Registration), which became law on 1st September 2013, states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

2. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance. This will be considered if the attendance is below 85% and there are 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 6 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the Education Welfare Officer.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice.

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice

The amount payable for a Penalty Notice issued in any of the above circumstances is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued.

Please be aware that each parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents and one child, each parent will receive one Penalty Notice. If there are two parents, and two children incur unauthorised absences, in the circumstances described above, each parent will receive two Penalty Notices – which in this case would amount to £120 each if paid within 21 days.

Advice and support is available from an Education Welfare Officer and can be sought by contacting your local Education Office - Tel: 01483 517179.

We are aware that this letter is only likely to be relevant to a small number of parents as attendance figures for last year are very positive and well above National expectations. Therefore, we would like to thank parents for their continued support in ensuring that their child's attendance is as high as possible. Last year 55 students received a prize at Celebration Evening for 100% attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Hutchinson
Headteacher

Mr S Jones
Assistant Headteacher (KS3)

Mr C Smitheram
Assistant Headteacher (KS4)