



Bure Valley School

Part of the Aylsham Learning Federation

Regular School Attendance and Parent's Legal Responsibilities

Dear Parent/Carers,

Good attendance at school is one of the most important factors in ensuring that children and young people have the best opportunities in life. Being in school gives children the best chance to learn, make friends and get the most from their education.

Last academic year, our school achieved a good attendance record overall. Thank you to everyone for helping to make school attendance a priority.

Research commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances.

This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The important legal information

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil with at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) of unauthorised absence within 6 school weeks meets the criteria for legal intervention. The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Bure Valley School who meets that criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If issued, the penalty notice is £60 when paid within the 21 days, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. When penalty notices are issued, each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they have more than one child who has been absent. Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken. There is no right of appeal against a fixed penalty notice.

In some circumstances, the Norfolk County Council Attendance Team may choose not to issue a penalty notice and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444.

What to do if your child is not well enough to attend school?

Please let us know before registration by:

- Using the Studybugs app to report absence

Executive Headteacher: Mr D Spalding B.A. (Hons) M.Ed. (Cantab)

Headteacher: Mr J Olney B.A. (Hons)

Assistant Headteachers: Mrs H Howard B.A. (Hons), Mrs H Pope B.A. (Hons)

Director of Business and Community Strategy: Mrs J Tuttle



- Leaving a message on our answer phone – 01263 7333893
- Emailing the school office - office@burevalley.norfolk.sch.uk

We know that school attendance can, for some families, be a real challenge for a variety of reasons. You can find advice and support on www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/attendance, or speak to a member of our staff team for help.

Requests for leave of absence

The DfE advises all schools that they should only grant a leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances, considering each request on a case-by-case basis. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the head teacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. It is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for a family holiday during term time as they would not typically be seen as an exceptional circumstance.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, we will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Head teachers are not obligated to reconsider authorising leave if an application was not made in advance.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Olney

Head teacher