



RE: Updated attendance policy: important information re requests for leave of absence and changes to Penalty Notice.

10 July 2015

Dear Parents/Carers

The law around attendance has changed. From September, there is a requirement to reduce the absence levels of persistently absent pupils. Persistently absent (PA) pupils will be those with an attendance level of 90% or below. In the past this was 85%. Also, rules around PENALTY NOTICES have changed. Please read the information below carefully.

The following amendments will be in place from 01 September 2015.

- Where a request for **leave of absence** has been made and the school have sent written notification to parents that the absence will be unauthorised a **penalty notice** will be issued where **the trigger of 10 sessions** of unauthorised absence is met.
- In all other cases of unauthorised absence accrued overtime a **Warning letter** will be issued by the Education Welfare Service prior to a penalty notice. The trigger for a Warning letter will be at **least 10 sessions** of unauthorised absence.
- A penalty notice may be issued, subsequent to a Warning letter, if there are a **further five sessions** or more unauthorised absences.

Please note 1 day equates to 2 sessions.

Attendance is a key whole-school improvement issue: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of students and the standards thereby achieved by the school.