



Chatsworth Infant School

&

Burnt Oak Junior School

Burnt Oak Lane, Sidcup, Kent

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Thursday 4th July 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

PENALTY NOTICE CHANGES

Over the past academic year, there have been an overwhelming number of term time absence requests. This is also being seen as an issue nationally. With this in mind we wanted to advise you of the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following will come into force for absences that start after 19th August 2024. These changes are nationwide and across borders if you move school or house.

Term time leave is only authorised in exceptional circumstances, which must be communicated in advance with evidence provided, as soon as possible to the Headteacher.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time absence or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence

Within 3 years of the first offence. The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time absence or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. No reduction for early payment.

Third Offence onwards

Within 3 years of the first offence. The third time an offence is committed for unauthorised term time absence or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Fines can be around £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found to be guilty in Magistrates' Court can show as a criminal record and also on the parent's future DBS certificates due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

I must reiterate, term time absence is only allowed in exceptional circumstances. This can be communicated to the Headteacher by completing a Term Time Absence Request form which you can collect from the school office and must be returned at least 7 days prior to the first day of absence.

CEO: Mr L Mason-Ellis Executive Head Teacher: Mr I McManus

The Pioneer Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our pupils and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Please be aware that any 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period will then be considered for a Penalty Notice as well as 5 consecutive days of term time absence.

We are duty bound to follow these new rules as are all schools in England and Wales. Attendance and how it is dealt with form part of the Ofsted inspection framework and we are held accountable for it. We do not seek to issue fines and we certainly don't want to see our families reach the point of facing prosecution. We ask that you please work with us and do not book holidays during term time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'I. McManus', written in a cursive style.

Mr Ian McManus
Executive Headteacher