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Dear Parents

Requests for Absence from School in Exceptional Circumstances and Penalty Notices

At the start of this new term we wish to remind all parents of our attendance policy. Reducing absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally. Missing school may damage a child's attainment levels, disrupt school routines and the learning of others and could possibly leave a pupil vulnerable to anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Above all, missing school can affect a child's life opportunities.

You are required under the Education Act (1996) to ensure your child attends school regularly. If your child accrues 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence you may be liable for a penalty notice (one days absence equals two sessions and a five day absence is equal to 10 sessions). An unauthorised absence is any absence that the Head Teacher has not given permission for or where an explanation has not been provided by parents.

Parents must complete a request for absence from school in exceptional circumstances form and submit this to the school, allowing for sufficient time to enable the school to consider the request and inform parents of the decision. Please be aware that a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

Where parents do not follow the school's procedures of submitting a request and simply remove their child without seeking prior approval, a warning may not be given and you may be liable for a penalty notice.

If your request is declined or you do not follow the correct procedure and you still take your child out of school each parent within your household may be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid you may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why your child has unauthorised school absences and you may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Head Teachers are only able to consider authorisation of absence in exceptional circumstances, these are outlined in the 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' guidance which can be found on the East Riding of Yorkshire Council website. The Bempton School Attendance policy and further guidelines for attendance and punctuality can be found on the Bempton School website. Should you require further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Dorothy Price
Co Chairs of Governors

Mrs Anne Watkinson

