



Be The Best You Can

15th September 2022

Dear Parent/ Carer,

Update on school attendance guidance for return to school September 2022

As we return to school, I would like to take the opportunity to welcome all our learners back and to update you with regards to the latest attendance information from Welsh Government.

Full attendance at school is important if learners are to benefit fully from the educational experience and we are looking to work with you to ensure that your child accesses their full entitlement.

For any period of absence, we would ask you to ensure that you contact the school to advise of the reason for this in line with the school policy. As of the 1st September, bespoke Covid 19 absence marks have been removed as a legitimate category from school registers. Children who are ill with Covid will now be coded using the absence mark for illness. Schools may contact you asking for further evidence to record absences as authorised for periods of frequent or extended absence due to illness. Parents/carers who are struggling to get their child to school should contact the school in the first instance to see what support may be available.

For periods of unauthorised absence, the Welsh Government has once again sanctioned the use of Fixed Penalty Notices as one response to address this in schools and Flintshire County Council will apply the guidance to ensure that learners are attending school on a regular basis should all other means prove ineffective.

From September 2022, Fixed Penalty Notices will be reintroduced as part of a range of options to improve attendance at school. A Fixed Penalty Notice can be issued when a Headteacher does not receive substantive evidence that may allow them to authorise school absences in line with published WG School Attendance Coding Guidance.

<https://gov.wales/school-attendance-codes-guidance>

A Fixed Penalty Notice will only be issued if the request by the Headteacher meets the criteria stated in the Flintshire County Council FPN Code of Conduct.

<https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Schools/Education-Fixed-Penalty-Notices.aspx>

Any unpaid fines may result in legal action by the Local Authority if the unauthorised absence remains a feature of the school attendance record and meets the LA threshold for this action. Legal

action is only taken when all efforts to engage parents and bring about a positive improvement in attendance have been applied without success.

We therefore request that all parents and carers work with schools from the earliest opportunity to share any difficulties and issues that may be impacting on their child attending school regularly.

For more information visit on the WG statement visit <https://gov.wales/oral-statement-school-attendance>

Further advice on school attendance can be sought directly from your child's school or from the Local Authority Education Welfare Service at Inclusion@Flintshire.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Mr P Oliver