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22nd October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

Penalty notices for term-time holidays

The Batt and St Mary's schools are committed to ensuring that your child receives the best possible education to prepare them for the next stage of their life. Each school day is carefully planned, and each lesson informs a wider programme of learning. Therefore, every lesson really does count. Your child is a valued member of our school community and every day missed is a day lost without them.

It is the policy of this school not to authorise absence for holidays during term-time. While advance permission can be given in exceptional circumstances, this is rare and can only be granted by me in my capacity as Head Teacher. Any such request should be addressed to me in writing before the holiday is taken and you should not assume that permission will be granted.

If a term-time holiday is taken without permission, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and a referral may be made to the County Attendance Team. This may result in the issue of an Education Penalty Notice under section 444A Education Act 1996 in respect of each absent child, to each parent/carer. Penalty notices are intended as an alternative to prosecution.

The first Penalty Notice is a charge of £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £160 if paid between day 21 and day 28. Where it is deemed appropriate to issue a second Penalty Notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first notice, the second notice is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full within 28 days, the usual consequence is a Magistrates' Court prosecution for the underlying section 444(1) Education Act 1996 offence of failure to secure regular school attendance. A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first notice, and so in cases where the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time another action will be taken instead, which may include the local authority considering prosecution.

If further instances of unauthorised absence occur despite a penalty notice having previously been issued, or if the child's attendance is a wider matter of concern, the local authority may consider prosecution in any event.

Kind regards

Mrs L Murrey
Executive Headteacher