



Sir John Cass's Foundation and Red Coat Church of England Secondary School

Headteacher: H. Evans MA, MSc, CBE

STEPNEY WAY LONDON E1 0RH

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11th November 2015

Dear Parent/Carer,

Regular attendance and punctuality at school is essential if the pupil's are to achieve to their full potential. In partnership with Tower Hamlets Local Authority (LA), this school will be implementing the Penalty Notice Scheme as required under statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE,2013) in order to improve attendance and punctuality.

A Penalty Notice may only be issued in cases of unauthorised absence or lateness or where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school.

Penalty Notices apply on an individual child per parent basis. Therefore a parent with 3 children who meet the criteria may receive 3 Penalty Notices. In a family with 2 parents/carers with three children who meet the criteria, each parent/carer may receive 3 Penalty Notices – meaning that a total of 6 Penalty Notices may be received.

The issue of a Penalty Notice may be considered appropriate in any of the following circumstances:

- **In instances of a pupil having 6 sessions (3 days) of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time. A session is a half-day and unauthorised means without the consent/authorisation of the school.**
- **Where parents/carers fail to attend without reasonable cause LA led In-School Attendance Panels, to which they have been invited to discuss their child's unauthorised absences and/or leaves.**
- **In cases of pupils identified as having Persistent Absence (where the attendance of pupils falls below 85% in a period of a school term they are designated as having Persistent Absence) with 20 or more sessions of unauthorised absence (not authorised by the school) and with substantial evidence of failure on the part of the parent/carer to work in cooperation and partnership to address and improve the situation.**
- **In cases of frequent late arrival at school (10 minutes after the register has closed) with 20 or more avoidable late marks occurring over a period of a school term. The journey involved and particular issues such as adverse weather conditions and disruptions to transport will be taken into account as necessary.**
- **Where there is a combination of unauthorised absence and avoidable lateness amounting to 20 sessions or more over the period of a school term.**
- **In cases where a pupil has been stopped by the truancy patrol on more than one occasion within the period of a school term, with no valid reason for not being in school. This would include pupils accompanied by parents/carers, guardians, or other adults.**



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- **Where parents/carers fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification.**

The school will refer pupils where there is cause for concern about unauthorised absence and/or lateness to the Attendance & Welfare Service. In most circumstances each liable parent/carer shall receive a formal warning of the possibility of a Penalty Notice being issued.

If following the issuing of the warning notice the pupil has further unauthorised absence or avoidable late marks, the parents/guardians of the pupil may each receive a Penalty Notice for £60 which must be paid within 21 days or it will increase to £120 each which must be paid within a further 7 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will lead to prosecution in the Magistrates Court for the original non-attendance and a possible criminal conviction.

In those specific circumstances related to;

- (i) the taking of 6 sessions (3 days) or more of unauthorised leave/holidays in term time where it can be clearly demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not/would not be given**
- (ii) where parents fail to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first five days of exclusion from school without reasonable justification**

the pupil will be referred immediately to the Attendance & Welfare Service for issue of the Penalty Notice.

The school and Tower Hamlets Attendance & Welfare Service will be working closely together on this as it is essential that pupils attend regularly and punctually at school to obtain the full benefit of their education. Please therefore ensure that your child attends school regularly, prepared and on time. If you are experiencing any difficulties regarding your child's attendance or punctuality, please inform your child's tutor, so that the school may work with you in assisting you in whatever ways possible.

Thank you for your support and co-operation.

Yours Sincerely,

Headteacher