

Guidance for Headteacher's

Unauthorised Holiday in Term-time FPN's

Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service

September 2015

Guidance for completing the Headteachers Certificate

A Headteachers Certificate of Attendance must be completed in relation to each Parent/Carer and each child.

E.g. where there are 2 parents and 2 children, 4 Headteachers Certificates are required.

Evidential Period

The evidential period is the one on the FPN Referral Form; this is the Monday of Week 1 to the Friday of Week 6 (week commencing).

You must ensure the holiday must be included in the evidential period and do not use any half-terms as evidential weeks. You should use the weeks surrounding the holiday period.

Attendance figures should be recorded in the box that looks like below for the 6 week evidential period and should reflect the attendance register; this will be used as evidence in court.

Week Beginning							Total
Possible Attendance							
Actual Attendance							

The percentage level of attendance must be calculated for the 6 weeks evidential period you are using not the academic year. This is the actual attendance as a percentage.

Percentage Level of Attendance:	
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Total Number of Absences:	
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This is the total number of absences during the 6 week evidential period.

Medical Reason		Days of Religious Observance	
Other Reasons		Agreed Leave for Parental Holiday	

Again with this you need to look at the 6 week evidential period only and fill in as appropriate, if there aren't any for this period you still need to put 0 in the box. This should include only absences during this period that have been authorised.

Guidance for completing the Witness Statement

One Witness Statement should be completed for each individual pupil. If you are requesting a Penalty Notice for parents that live at different addresses a separate Witness statement is required for each parent, however if parents live together at the same address only one is required but it must clearly reflect the actions taken for each Parent.

You must ensure when writing about Parents you use full names rather than referring to them as Mum/Dad. The witness statement must include any correspondence you have had with Parent/s and any actions taken.

In the witness statement where it says:

'I decided not to authorise this leave for the following reason/s'

You need to expand this section and give all the reasons as to why you did not authorise the holiday request in line with the change to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended September 2013).

Next where it says:

On _____ I received an application for leave of absence for _____ from _____, the parent of _____.
The application was for the period _____ to _____ inclusive.

You need to input the information as requested, however if a leave of absence form wasn't submitted but you became aware that a holiday was taken you must replace this sentence with how it was established that a holiday had been taken.

Where it says:

'On _____ I wrote to _____ to inform them of my decision, and the reasons for that decision.'

In order to complete this section you need to ensure you have sent the 'holiday declined' letter to all parent/s for whom an FPN is to be issued. If a leave of absence form wasn't submitted and a letter wasn't sent you should amend to include how you informed Parent the holiday would be marked as unauthorised and referred to the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service to issue an FPN.

These are a few example sentences you could use:

'On _____ I met with _____ at _____ to inform them of my decision, and the reasons for that decision.'

'On _____ I telephoned _____ at _____ to inform them of my decision, and the reasons for that decision.'

Frequently Asked Question's

How do I work out the evidential period?

You need to firstly look at the week the holiday was taken and include the surrounding weeks using 6 weeks in total. You must not include any week which is a half-term.

How many day's absence does there need to be before a Fine can be issued?

We will only issue Fines with 4 sessions or more of absence (2 days), unless this is agreed by the Service Manager prior to the documentation being submitted.

How soon do I need to wait to send the application for an FPN request in?

You can submit your paperwork as soon as the child has returned from holiday (unless the holiday falls at the end of the summer term). Once the child has returned you need to send this in to the Attendance & Pupil Welfare Service no later than **1 month** after the holiday. The evidence for court is only valid for **6 months** from the end of the evidential period.

What do I do if I am unsure an FPN should be issued?

You should firstly refer to the Code of Conduct and ensure the holiday does not fall within the exceptional circumstances. If you are still unsure you can contact the Attendance and Pupil Welfare Service for further clarification.

At what age does the pupil have to be for an FPN to be issued?

We can only issue a penalty notice from the first term after a child has turned 5.

Who do I request the Fine to be issued to?

A penalty notice can only be issued to Parent's with parental responsibility or day-to-day care of the child.

Where should I send the FPN Referral?

The FPN referral can either be emailed to welfare.service@doncaster.gov.uk or posted in to APWS, Floor 3, Civic Building, Waterdale, Doncaster DN1 3BU.

Common Errors

Sometimes when we receive FPN requests and they are placed on hold under query due to errors. This is a list below with some of the most common reasons:

Incorrect Register marks used on register printout

The absences for unauthorised holiday must be marked as 'G' in order for us to be able to issue a penalty notice for this period of absence.

Missing Documentation

A penalty notice will not be issued unless all documentation is submitted.

Pupil not of compulsory school age

The pupil must be of compulsory school age during the evidence period. This is the first term after the child has turned 5.

Letter declining the holiday submitted doesn't match the FPN Referral Form and other documentation

The letters submitted must be addressed to and have been sent to all parents included on the penalty notice Referral Form. All documentation must replicate the information on the penalty notice Referral Form.

Letter declining the holiday is incorrect

The letters you use must be based on the template supplied in the FPN Referral pack. The letter must state the holiday has been declined in line with the government change to legislation. The penalty amounts are £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. This charge is per parent per child.

1 day absence

We will only issue Fines with 4 sessions or more of absence (2 days), unless this is agreed by the Service Manager prior to the documentation being submitted.

Incorrect Evidential Period used on FPN Referral

This should be a full 6 weeks and not just the holiday time. This is from Monday of week 1 to Friday of week 6.

Most Common Errors on Headteachers Certificate of Attendance and Witness Statement

Pupils Name and date of birth added to Name of Parent box on Headteachers Certificate of Attendance

This should show the Parents Name and date of birth not the Pupil's.

Unauthorised Holiday absence added under Number of Absences covered by

This section should only include absences that have been authorised not the unauthorised absences.

% Attendance level incorrect on Headteachers Certificate of Attendance

The attendance level should be for the 6 weeks evidential period only.

Total number of absences incorrect

The absences should be for the 6 weeks evidential period only.

Missing Information in the sentence on the Head Certificate

The sentence at the top of the Head Certificate should read I certify that pupil name (date of birth) is a registered pupil at school name in year group and that the following table shows correctly, for the named period, the pattern of this pupil's attendance at this school.

Witness Statement not signed by the Headteacher

This is used as evidence at court and therefore needs signing. In relation to the Witness Statement a witness signature is also required.

