Dear parents/carers

All schools in Rotherham have been issued with new guidance on the process of referrals for Fixed Penalty Notices for absence, including holidays taken in term time.

The following information is taken directly from the guidance we have been sent and will hopefully ensure there is clarity in the circumstances where school may refer to the local authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

3. Circumstances where a fixed penalty notice may be issued

3.1 The issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice is considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

a) In cases of absence from school when the pupil has been taken on holiday during term time, the absence has not been authorised by the school, and the child has attendance below the combined National average (95.6%) for both primary and secondary schools for the previous 12 months, including the holiday absence period.

There must be at least 10 consecutive sessions (5 school days) lost due to unauthorised.

b) The deliberate taking of a holiday/leave of absence in term time without the school's permission (where the school have made the parent aware of their policies in relation to leave of absence through publicity materials, general correspondence, policies etc) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence of at least 10 sessions (5 school days).

c) For those parents of pupils where notification of unsatisfactory attendance has been issued and unsatisfactory attendance remains a concern.

d) Where the Local Authority School Attendance Panel or Fixed Penalty Notice Panel believe that a Fixed Penalty Notice is the most appropriate way to deal with non-school attendance.

e) Where a child has not returned to school on an expected date and no satisfactory explanation has been given for the absence. There must be at least 10 consecutive sessions (5 school days) lost due to unauthorised leave of absence during term time.

f) Where an excluded pupil is present in a public place during the school hours of the school where the pupil is on roll.
3.2 In each of the above cases, each parent will receive a separate Fixed Penalty Notice for each child taken out of school.

3.3 No one parent will receive more than three separate Fixed Penalty Notices resulting from the unauthorised absence of an individual child in any 12 month period, however, there will be no restriction on the number of times a parent/carer may receive a formal warning of a possible issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

This information is also on our school website: www.stthomas-kilnhurst.co.uk/
If you have any questions or queries about this please come and see me.
Yours sincerely

Mrs V Sherwood
Head of School