

20<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parent / Guardian,

### Introduction of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) – January 2024

As I am sure you will have seen from the news, nationally school attendance has still not returned to pre-pandemic levels. This is also a serious concern for us as a school as educational research tells us that **'the pupils with the highest attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.'** The school target for attendance is 97% or above. Currently, our data shows:

Year group	Overall attendance since September	Year group	Overall attendance since September
7	94.8%	11	93.4%
8	93.2%	12	
9	92.8%	13	
10	92.2%		

Consequently, from the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 2024, the College will issue fixed penalty notices in exceptional cases of poor attendance and punctuality. Section 444 of the Education Act states there are only a few reasons that schools can accept for a child being taken out of school:

- **The time off has been agreed upon by the Principal.**
- **Your child has been sick** - We may ask for proof of their illness.
- **As part of your religious practices** - your child took time off from school on religious holidays (agreed by the Principal)
- **Your child should get free transport to take them to school** - but the local authority was not able to provide this for some reason.

Any absence that is **not covered by these scenarios** could result in you being sent a **fixed penalty notice**.

### Why is a FPN for School Absence Issued?

A fixed penalty notice will be issued typically when the College notices a pattern of poor attendance. Even if parents were not aware of this, they are still responsible to ensure their child attends school every day. Reasons you may be sent a Fixed Penalty Notice include:

- Your child missed **at least 5 days** from school in the current term, without due cause or authorisation.



A Church of England academy governed, led and managed by the United Learning Trust in partnership with the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education.

Bacon's College is part of United Learning. United Learning comprises: UCST (Registered in England No: 2780748. Charity No. 1016538) and ULT (Registered in England No. 4439859. An Exempt Charity). Companies limited by guarantee. VAT number 834 8515 12. Registered address: United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB.



Bacon's College  
Timber Pond Road  
Rotherhithe  
London  
SE16 6AT  
t: 020 7237 1928  
f: 020 7237 4501  
e: schooloffice@baconcollege.co.uk

- Your child has been late for school **more than 10 times** in a school term.
- You have **failed to reply to questions/enquiries** from the school about the attendance of your child.
- You took your child out of school for a **holiday**, without seeking authorisation from the Principal.
- Your child is absent from school for some reason, and has come **under the eyes of the police** during school hours.
- **Persistent absence in the Spring Term for year 11 pupils** - where at least 40 sessions/20 school days have been lost to unauthorised absence during a school term or consecutively across two terms.

The **penalty for non-attendance is £60**. The fine jumps to **£120** if not paid within 21 days of the fine being issued. If it remains unpaid after 28 days, the parent/carer will be invited to an interview under caution and may be taken to Magistrates' Court under the Education Act 1996. If found guilty they could end up with a criminal record and face a fine of up to £1,000 including court costs. They are formally issued by the school but responsibility for recovery of the funds lies with the Local Authority who directly collect the monies paid.

We clearly do not want to take these steps with any student/family, and for the majority of parents this will not be an issue as most students have excellent attendance and punctuality. However, if you have received a negative attendance or punctuality letter from us, please take this seriously and ensure that your child's attendance and punctuality improved (97% and above) every week from January to avoid possibly incurring the penalty.

You can find further details on our attendance policy which is published on our school website. If you have any queries or would like support with your child's attendance and punctuality, please email: [studentabsence@baconcollege.co.uk](mailto:studentabsence@baconcollege.co.uk).

Kind regards



Mrs Anum  
Associate Vice Principal