



A Family of Schools Working Together



**Our Lady and St Patrick's Roman Catholic Primary
School and Nursery**

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Head Teacher: Mrs Sarah Barreto

26th September 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Important information regarding Attendance

Due to an administration error, the letter which was sent to all parents on 14th September 2018, regarding Attendance, incorrectly detailed the time frame for unauthorised absence and the issuing of Penalty Notices by Devon County Council. We are really grateful to the parents who have brought this to our attention and would wish to clarify the situation.

The "six month time period" for accruing unauthorised absences is no longer applicable. Schools are required to monitor attendance and report an accumulation of 10 or more unauthorised absences (5 days) over any time frame.

All leave of absence from school, can only be agreed by the school in advance so it is important that you apply in writing, as far in advance as possible by using an (L5 form)- Request for Absence. I would take this opportunity to remind you that should you choose to take your child out of school without authorisation from the school and a child accumulates 10 or more unauthorised sessions, the equivalent to 5 school days, **within any time frame**, parents/carers will make themselves liable to receiving a Penalty Notice per parent/carers, per child, or made the subject of court proceedings, under section 444 Education Act 1996.

Schools are required by law to notify the Local Authority if a pupil has a number of unauthorised absences. Unauthorised can be acquired when:-

1. Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and it is taken anyway.
2. Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (eg. family holiday). Only the Head teacher can authorise an absence. It is not the schools responsibility to seek confirmation of reasons of absence, but Parent's responsibility to provide evidence. Where children are reported as sick, but the school later discovers or reasonably believes that the reason given for the absence is not genuine then registration codes may be amended accordingly.
3. A child continually arrives late after the registration period has closed at 9.30am.

I hope this clarifies the situation and apologise for any misunderstanding.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sarah Barreto
Head Teacher