

 **Our Lady and St Patrick’s Roman Catholic** **Primary**

 **School and Nursery**

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 A Family of Schools Working Together

 Head Teacher: Mrs Sarah Barreto

18th September 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

**Important information regarding Attendance**

We believe that in order for a pupil to fully benefit from their education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

As of September 2013 an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 came into force and greater clarity was introduced to issue to schools regarding authorising absence requests. These changes reinforced the Government’s view that every minute of every school day is vital and that pupils should **only** be granted authorised absences by the school in “exceptional circumstances”.

**A family holiday is not normally considered by the Government to be an ‘exceptional circumstance’ and therefore will not be authorised by this school.**

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 (S2 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 six month period, parents/carers will make themselves liable to receiving a Penalty Notice per parent/carer, 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.

This school will be notifying the Local Authority in all of the circumstances listed above.

Should a Penalty Notice be issued as a result of unauthorised absence then one notice will be issued to each parent/carer for each child involved. Currently each Penalty Notice is for £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days. If a Penalty Notice goes unpaid after 28 days, then court proceedings will be initiated. Current practice is that only one penalty notice will be issued to a parent relating to the absence of a particular child within a two year period. Should a further period of unauthorised absence be recorded, then the parent(s) will normally be summonsed to appear at a Magistrates Court, unless an Education Supervision Order is considered more appropriate.

I understand the disappointment that the refusal of a leave request may cause, but as you appreciate this policy represents the school’s responsibility and commitment towards ensuring your child’s education and future life opportunities. Therefore, please help to support your child by ensuring that they attend fully and punctually. A copy of the school Attendance Policy is available on the school website. If you wish to receive a paper copy, please request one from the school office.

We really appreciate your support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Sarah Barreto

Head Teacher