



# HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY ACADEMY

ATTENDANCE MATTERS MEETING 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024

## Our School Vision...

*Jesus is the centre of our lives,  
Our learning and friendships.  
In a safe, happy and caring community  
Where all are welcome.*



## The Purpose of the meeting:

- ▶ To explain the school's statutory duty
- ▶ To explain why attendance is important
- ▶ To explain the new guidance around the Notice to Improve and Penalty Notices
- ▶ To explain the duty of parents



## DFE Guidance:

- Build strong relationships between home and school.
- Have a clear school Attendance Policy which all understand.
- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance.
- Accurately complete admissions and attendance registers.
- Robust daily processes.
- Dedicated Senior Leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance-Mrs Kerrell
- Regularly monitor and analyse.
- Share info.
- Mindful of pupil absence due to mental or physical ill health (inc SEND).



## Attendance and the law

- The Education Act (1996) speaks about a duty on the Government to provide certain levels of education.
- Under Section 444 of the Education Act (1996), a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child's regular attendance at a school where the child is registered.
- New Statutory Guidance will come into force from the beginning of September and all schools must follow this guidance.
- The new framework for Penalty Notices will come into force from September 2024 and all schools must follow the framework.
- A Notice to Improve and Attendance contracts will be introduced from September 2024.
- All staff are expected to exhibit professional curiosity about absence and attendance. Attendance like safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff.

# The Notice to Improve and Attendance Contract



## Notice to Improve:

A Notice to Improve will be sent to parents if a period of absence is requested and it is then not authorised. You will be asked to complete and return a slip to let us know if you still intend to take your child out of school for this period of time, even though the attendance has not been agreed.

## Attendance Contract:

### The Contract:

- The contract will outline the requirements of Parent/Carer
- The support school may be able to offer
- The Time period of the contract
- Measures to ensure pupil attends school
- No jargon
- Non compliance - Seek explanation/Further meeting and next steps

# The Penalty Notice

Staff have a statutory duty to show that they are challenging unauthorised attendance and that they have a professional curiosity if they do not believe the reasons given for absence.

Absence will only be agreed by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances and significant, legitimate and tangible evidence must be provided if attendance is to be authorised.

Absence for medical reasons or sickness will not be authorised the consecutive days either side of a holiday request, unless supplemented by proof of a doctor's or hospital appointment or prescribed medicine.

As proof of absence request, we may ask to see details of flights and holidays booked e.g. tickets or a confirmation email.

If we receive a call to say that a flight has been significantly delayed, which will cause a child not to attend school, we will need to see a photograph of the departure board. This must be dated for the day of the delayed flight which clearly shows the significant delay to the flight and the new estimated arrival time.

When we receive an absence request form, each request is looked at by the Headteacher and carefully considered. Evidence for the absence request may be requested to support the case. If the absence is to be unauthorised parents will now receive an Notice to Improve and asked if they still intend to proceed with the unauthorised absence for their child.



- ## The Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice will be issued if there is a period of unauthorised absence of 5 days or more.

**The Penalty Notice is applied to each parent for each child.**

First Penalty Notice £160 if paid within 28 days BUT reduces to £80 if paid with 21 days.

If there is a further 2<sup>nd</sup> period of unauthorised absence, which then takes the total number of days over 5, within a 10 week rolling period (this can include lateness where registers closing are missed) a **2<sup>nd</sup> Penalty Notice £160 if paid within 28 days will be issued.**

This will also be applied if a further (2<sup>nd</sup>) period of absence is taken within 3 years.

If there is a further 3<sup>rd</sup> period of unauthorised absence (5 days or more) within a 3 year period this will result in legal action from the Local Authority and parents may be prosecuted.





## Next steps:

- ▶ New Attendance Policy will be shared with parents and ratified at the next Full Governing Body Meeting.
- ▶ Information will be published on the school website.
- ▶ New measures come into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024

Any Questions?