



CATHOLIC AND  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

## **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY**

*I have come that they may have life and have it to the full  
(John 10:10)*

<b>Policy Overview Info</b>	
Policy	Attendance and punctuality
Author	School Leadership and staff
Approval at	Governing Body
Date of approval	January 2026
Review period	Annually
Signed on behalf of governors	

## RATIONALE

Good attendance and punctuality is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills to equip them for life. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. It is also important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The school aims to ensure good attendance and punctuality by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Attendance and Children out of Schools Team can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and punctuality and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and punctuality and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

## LEGISLATION

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## WHY ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL AND PUNCTUALITY IS IMPORTANT

- 98% attendance means that your child has missed 4 days in the school year
- 95% attendance means that your child has missed 10 days in the school year
- 90% attendance means that your child has missed 19 days in the school year
- 80% attendance means that your child has missed 38 days in the school year
- 5 minutes late each day means three whole days lost each year
- 17 days missed from school each year equates to a whole GCSE grade
- Attendance affects learning, future earning, wellbeing and a sense of belonging

## THRESHOLDS FOR ABSENCE

		Threshold	Additional Information
	Excellent	97-100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is excellent.</li> <li>Parents/carers/pupils achieving this level of attendance should be congratulated.</li> </ul>
	Concern	93-96.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at this level is a concern.</li> </ul>
	Serious Concern	90-92.9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance at this level is a serious concern.</li> <li>A pupil whose attendance is at this level is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee (PA).</li> </ul>
	Persistent Absence	Less than 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pupil whose attendance is at this level is identified as a <b>Persistent Absence (PA)</b>.</li> </ul>

### Action to Support Parents/Carers

Schools have a duty of care to support parents/carers to achieve excellent attendance for their child. As a result, parents/carers will receive communication from school staff (Class Teacher/Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)/Headteacher) to highlight any concerns regarding the impact that attendance/punctuality is having on their child's outcomes. They will look for ways to support parents/carers to ensure their child's attendance/punctuality improves. The school's Family Support Worker (FSW) is also available to offer support where needed.

## AIMS

- To support children to achieve 100% attendance.
- To create a culture in which excellent attendance and punctuality is 'normality'.
- To have ALL children attending regularly and punctually to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for each child.
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carer(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and punctuality.
- To be consistent in implementation.
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive.

## OBJECTIVES

- To involve the children more in their school attendance and punctuality.
- To improve communication with parent(s)/carer(s) about regular school attendance and punctuality.
- All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children's attendance and punctuality.
- To recognise the important role of class teacher in promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure time and organisation within the school to enable the AIMS and OBJECTIVES to be met.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **The Headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **The Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)**

The school's Educational Welfare Officer is responsible for:

- *Advising headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices*

Advising headteacher when threshold is met to refer to the Local Authority for fixed penalty notices.

- *Provide evidence needed to issue fixed penalty notices*

Provide the local authority with the relevant evidence/ documents needed to support the fixed penalty notices.

The attendance officer is Natalie McNulty and can be contacted via the school office (01625 877688) or by email [n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk) .

### **The Class Teacher**

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submit this information onto Arbor, the school information system
- Regularly reminding their class of the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Each teacher will find relevant ways to promote good attendance in their class.

## **The School Office Staff**

The school office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents/carers about absence and recording it on the school attendance system Arbor
- Ensure parents/carers record a reason for lateness
- Noticing patterns of concerning absence or lateness and notifying the Headteacher in a timely manner.

## **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers are responsible for:

- Making sure their child attends every day, on time
- Making contact with the school to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the first day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Providing the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensuring that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

## **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

## **INFORMING STAKEHOLDERS**

### **Parent(s)/carer(s) will be advised of our policy on attendance:**

- When their children first start at our school
- Home school agreement
- Through newsletters
- At parent(s)/carer(s) evenings
- On the school website

### **Children will be advised of our policy on attendance:**

- In assemblies
- In the classroom
- During appropriate areas of the curriculum.

## **RECORDING ATTENDANCE**

### **Completing the Register**

- The twice-daily legal requirement to register pupils is also an opportunity for the school to receive pupils formally from home, and serve as an introduction to the session.
- The marking of registers will be given high importance at all times within each classroom.

- Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school.
- Registers are marked electronically on the school information system, Arbor.
- If manual registers are required, they are to be marked in ink. Any alterations should be visible and explained. Correcting fluid products may not be used.
- The register should be marked using the symbols advised by DfE and Cheshire East Council.

## **AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

### **Absence Procedures**

- Children are expected to attend school for the full **190 days** of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
  - **Authorised** (where the school approves pupil absence)
  - **Unauthorised** (where the school will not approve absence)
- It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) will provide an explanation by 9.15 a.m. if their child is absent, on the first day the absence occurs, and each day of absence thereafter, stating the reason. This can be by telephone, in person at the school office or via email.
- If contact, explaining the child's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s), then the school office team will contact the home by telephone on the initial day. Where reasonably possible, the school office team will work through the emergency contact list number for an absent pupil. This is good practice to give school additional options to make contact with a responsible adult.
- If the absence continues without explanation or contact, a home visit will be made by the school Attendance Officer to ensure the child's wellbeing. The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. This contact is recorded on CPOMs where appropriate.
- The school office and/or Attendance Officer will keep in regular contact with parents/carers during an absence until their child's return to school. This helps us to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure a positive return to school can be made at the earliest opportunity.

### **Lateness & Punctuality**

- The school gates open at 8.45 am and close at 8.55am. All pupils are expected to be in school for this time.
- Registration will begin at 9.00 am and close at 9.25 am. Up until this time pupils are given a late code (L). Register is open for no longer than 30 minutes following the DfE *Working together to improve attendance* Guidelines (September 2022).
- Arrivals after close of register at 9.25 am, are given an unauthorised code (U) = 1 unauthorised session.
- Persistent lateness after close of register may be referred to the Local Authority for possible legal action.
- Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.
- When a pupil is late parents/carers will be required to give details explaining the reasons for the lateness. These will be monitored on a half termly basis and discussed by the Headteacher and Attendance Officer to see if any support or advice can be offered to families. In the first instance, the class teacher will discuss the issue of lateness with the parent/carer in person or via phone call. Where appropriate a meeting may be arranged to discuss lateness with the Headteacher/Attendance Officer. When a pupil is collected significantly late at the end of the school day (i.e. after 3.40pm) on more than one occasion within a short period of time (a week/fortnight), then parents will be asked to attend a meeting with the headteacher to discuss in order to improve the situation. We will also record significantly late collection of children.

## Absence due to illness

- Parents and carers are expected to provide a full explanation for any absence due to illness or a medical condition on the first day of absence.
- Any absence due to illness will be marked with an (I) code which is an authorised absence from school.
- If the school has cause for concern about the veracity of the illness and a child is absent for more than 5 days, school will request that medical evidence of illness such as a doctor's appointment card, hospital letter or a copy of prescription details for any further absences. Evidence of medical appointments may be requested.
- If requested, failure to produce medical evidence to support an absence will mean the absence will automatically be unauthorised.
- Where illness or a medical conditions is impacting on school attendance, parents and carers will be invited to a meeting with the Headteacher/Attendance Officer, to discuss how the school can help to improve the child's attendance levels. The purpose of the meeting will be to:
  - ❖ explore ways that absence due to illness can be reduced;
  - ❖ discuss any support needs for the child or family and if any other agencies need to be involved to offer help and support;
  - ❖ reassure the school the reasons for absence are authentic;
  - ❖ agree a plan to reduce the impact of illness on education and school life.
- Where a parent is unsure whether a child should attend, they should contact the school for further advice. The school follows the Health Protection Agency's guidance on infectious diseases in schools and the recommended periods for which children should be kept away from school.

## Authorised Term-time Leave of Absence

- Following the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, **the Headteacher cannot grant any leave of absence during term time.** (Other exceptional circumstances may apply.)

*Examples of 'Exceptional Circumstances' are if a parent/carer works for the Police or Armed Forces and provides written evidence from their employer stating that holidays cannot be taken out of term time for a particular reason. The Head Teacher and the Governing Body will determine what constitutes an exceptional circumstance on an individual basis.*

- **No holidays will be authorised during term time.** Absence due to holiday will be recorded in the register as unauthorised. (Other exceptional circumstances may apply.)
- Parent(s)/carer(s) will be advised not to book holidays during term time.
- In considering whether or not to authorise leave of absence, the school will consider each case individually taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.
- The school will not authorise leave of absence during any examination periods.

## Leave of Absence Procedure

- A request must be made at least **four weeks prior** to the first day of absence being requested. Some exceptional circumstances may not allow for this and this will be taken into consideration.
- Leave of absence requests must be made in writing to the school office [admin@christtheking.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:admin@christtheking.cheshire.sch.uk) for the attention of the Headteacher.
- Parents/carers are required to attend a meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer to explain their exceptional circumstances and present evidence of the circumstances.

- Parents/carers will be notified of the school's decision in writing or via email that their request for leave has been accepted or declined, detailing the reasons for the decision.
- The school will consider issuing a fixed penalty notice (FPN) for any leave of absence taken without authorisation from the school.
- If a fixed penalty notice is issued the school will follow the Cheshire East timeline for the penalties.

## LEGAL SANCTIONS

### Cheshire East Penalties for Unauthorised Absence

Parents/carers should be aware that if your child of compulsory school age has **10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 days)** of absence due to holiday in term time this will be referred to Cheshire East and may result in a school absence penalty notice (fine). Please see the information below and link to Cheshire East website for further details:

### School absence notice to improve

You may get a notice to improve if your child is absent for 5 or more days / 10 or more unauthorised sessions (a session is a half day), within a rolling 10-week period which can span over different school terms or school years.

The letter will give you a period of 20 days in which to improve the child's attendance.

### School absence penalty notice (fine)

On the 19 August 2024, the new National Framework for Penalty Notices came into force.

We can send you a penalty notice (PN) in either of the following situations:

- when you have received a notice to improve letter and there is no improvement in attendance, or the improvement has not been sustained.
- you have taken your child out of school in term-time without the Head teacher's permission.

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. Only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

- The first penalty notice issued to a parent/carer in respect of a particular pupil will be charged £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carer in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In this circumstance the Local Authority may refer the matter to court. You could get a criminal record and you may be fined up to £1,000.

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/school-attendance/action-when-children-miss-school.aspx>

## **MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE DATA**

### **To manage and improve attendance effectively, CTK will:**

- Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Have a clear school attendance policy which all staff, pupils and parents/carers understand.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and has effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Monitor attendance and analyse absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern and then develop strategies to address these patterns.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with the local authorities, and other partners when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### **Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

## Identification of Attendance Concerns

- Identification of poor attendance or punctuality is made by the Class Teacher, School Business Manager, School Office Team or Headteacher.
- Concerns are passed to the school's Attendance Officer, who is the persons responsible for contacting parent(s)/carer(s).
- A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter.
- Attendance data is monitored half termly.
- The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- If attendance falls below 90% the attendance monitoring procedure will be followed.

## What can parent(s)/carer(s) do to help?

- Let the school know before 9.15am on the first day of absence, why their child is absent.
- Let the school office daily, throughout the child's absence.
- Try to make appointments outside school time.
- Do not allow their child to have time off school unless it is absolutely necessary.
- **Do not book holidays within school time.**

## If a parent(s)/carer(s) is worried about their child's attendance at school what can they do?

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple.
- Talk to their class teacher; it may be something worrying them.
- Talk to the Headteacher and staff at the school.
- Talk to the school's Attendance Officer.
- Talk to the school's Family Support Worker.
- Talk to the [School Attendance and Children out of Schools Team](#), who will work with them and the school to resolve the situation. Telephone: 01270 375255

**Equal Opportunities** CTK has taken into account the fact that Cheshire is an ethnically diverse community. Our practice safeguards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority in our Strategic School Development Plan.

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

### Policy Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

### Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

## Attendance and Absence Codes – August 2024

<b>Attending the school</b>	
/\	Present at the school / = morning session \ = afternoon session
L	Late arrival before the register is closed
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip
P	Participating in a sporting activity
W	Attending work experience
B	Attending any other approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school
<b>Absent – Leave of absence</b>	
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.
M	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>	
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable causes</b>	
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>	
G	Holiday not granted by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances

U	Arrived in school after registration closed
<b>Administrative Codes</b>	
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register
#	Planned whole school closure

**Appendix 2**  
**Example Attendance Concern Letter**

«Parental\_addressee»

«AddressBlock»

Date

Dear «Parental\_Salutation»

«**Legal\_Forename**» «**Surname**» - «**Reg**»

It is vital that all children and young people attend school regularly to ensure they make progress both academically and socially. School attendance makes such a big difference to children's' futures and evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.' (DFE 2023).

Unfortunately your child's attendance is causing concern as it has fallen below [insert %]. We would be grateful if you could support the school and your child's education by ensuring there is an immediate improvement. If you would like to discuss this further, or alert us to any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the Trust Education Welfare Officer, Natalie McNulty at [n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk).

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

*Natalie McNulty*  
*Education Welfare Officer.*  
*Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Academy Trust*  
[N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk)  
*Mobile : 07842427273*

## Appendix 3

### Example Attendance Concern Meeting

«Parental\_addressee»

«AddressBlock»

Date

Dear «Parental\_Salutation»

«Legal\_Forename» «Surname» - «Reg»

It is vital that all children and young people attend school regularly to ensure they make progress both academically and socially. School attendance makes such a big difference to children's' futures and evidence shows that the students with the highest attendance throughout their time in school gain the best GCSE and A Level results.' (DFE 2023).

Despite contact from school, your child's attendance is continuing to cause concern and has fallen below [insert %]. As a result we would like to invite you to a meeting with the Trusts Education Welfare Officer, Natalie McNulty, to discuss our attendance concerns and how we can support you to make immediate improvements.

The meeting will take place on [...] at [...].

If you would like to discuss this further, or alert us to any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the Trust Education Welfare Officer, Natalie McNulty at [n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk).

We also want to remind you that the Education Act 1996 section 444, requires you to make sure that your child attends school, on time, every time the school is open.

We look forward to your support.

Yours sincerely

*Natalie McNulty  
Education Welfare Officer.  
Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Academy Trust  
[N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk)  
Mobile : 07842427273*

## Appendix 4

### Template Fixed Penalty Warning Letter

«Parental\_addressee»

«AddressBlock»  
Date

Dear «Parental\_Salutation»

«Legal\_Forename» «Surname» - «Reg»

It has been brought to my attention that your child has not been attending regularly at school. According to the Attendance Register, [Child's name] attendance is currently [insert %], this is below the schools expected attendance.

[Child's name] currently has [insert number] unauthorised sessions, if this reaches 10 unauthorised sessions within 2 half terms then school can apply to issue you with a Penalty Notice warning period, which could result in each parent receiving a £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid between 21 days.

I must remind you that S.444, Education Act 1996 requires you to make sure that your child attends school, on time, every time the school is open. I am writing this letter to give you an opportunity to make sure that from now on and in future, your child attends school regularly.

If your child continues to not attend regularly, a referral will be made to the appropriate body to pursue further action. These interventions may include,

- (A) Issuing you with a Fixed Penalty Notice under S.444A Education Act 1996 which will make you liable to a penalty of up to £160. **(As above)**
- (B) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1000.
- (C) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

To avoid intervention, please ensure your child attends school regularly and on time.

If there are any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, please contact the Trust Education Welfare Officer, Natalie McNulty at [n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:n.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk)

Yours sincerely,

*Natalie McNulty*  
*Education Welfare Officer.*  
*Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Academy Trust*  
[N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk)  
*Mobile : 07842427273*

## Appendix 5

### Template Holiday Absence Letter

«Parental\_addressee»  
«AddressBlock»  
Date

Dear «Parental\_Salutation»

«Legal\_Forename» «Surname» - «Reg»

You are receiving this letter because you have requested permission for a holiday absence during school term time. The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take your child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt important and crucial learning for your child. This is something that we all hold responsibility for.

We understand the difficulties and the cost of holidays in this current climate however, the school aims for at least 97% attendance and your child's learning is the focal point of this. As a school we have a duty to monitor attendance and work with families to achieve the best possible attendance for each child and young person.

In line with school policy Holiday Requests **WILL NOT** be authorised.

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. This is in line with Cheshire East County Councils Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice fine would be: -

- £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days, reducing to £80 per parent, per child if paid between 21 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days, you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996. We must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school. Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, can reach their full potential and gains maximum benefits from their educational experience. I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that holiday leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays.

Attending school is essential for students to make good progress, achieve their academic potential and consequently have better chances in life. Below are examples of how attendance is impacted upon by school absence.

#### **Student attendance over one school year:**

- 98% attendance = approximately 4 days absent from school
- 95% attendance = approximately 10 days absent from school
- 90% attendance = approximately 4 weeks absent from school (1 day of absence every two weeks)

- 85% attendance = approximately 5 ½ weeks absent from school
- 80% attendance = approximately 7 ½ weeks absent from school (1 day of absence every week)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

*Natalie McNulty*  
*Education Welfare Officer.*  
*Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Academy Trust*  
*[N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk](mailto:N.mcnulty@olhoc.org.uk) Mobile : 07842427273*

# PENALTY NOTICE FINES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS CHANGING

## FIRST OFFENCE

1

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days  
Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

2

## SECOND OFFENCE (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child to be paid within 28 days. No reduced rate will be offered.

The following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after **19th August 2024**.

3

## THIRD OFFENCE AND ANY FURTHER OFFENCES (WITHIN 3 YEARS)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on a Parents future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education'.

## 10 SESSIONS (5 DAYS) OF UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE IN A 10-WEEK PERIOD

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period.

Please follow the link for the Publication that will start from 19th August 2024.  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

