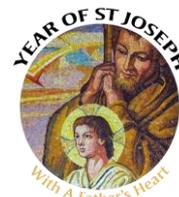




St Joseph's Catholic Primary School
Diocese of Clifton



Inspiring everyone to REACH through
Faith, Hope, Love

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Acting Headteacher: Mrs Clare Howells

6th May 2021

Dear parent/carer

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we strive to give our children the very best opportunities to be the best they can be and to make the most of their learning time during the day. We can only achieve this in partnership with parents and carers through your support in ensuring your children attend regularly.

One of the duties of the governing board is to monitor attendance and support our Senior Leaders in ensuring compliance with the law relating to attendance and the Local Authority's '*Guidance for Schools: Securing Regular and Punctual Attendance*' including their '*Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices*'.

I was pleased to learn that school attendance is currently 97.6%, an improvement on 2018/19 attendance at this point in the year. Although the school aims for 100% attendance, governors and school leaders appreciate that there are always going to be times when a child is not going to be able to be in school, such as, illness, hospital appointments or exceptional circumstances.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Government Guidance on attendance has been subject to change and I would like to bring you up to date with the latest DfE Attendance Guidance (updated 5th May 2021) which states:

Attendance expectations

Attendance will be mandatory from 8th March 2021 and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with Local Authorities' codes of conduct

During a recent visit, some areas for concern were raised by Senior Leaders including that, as we are coming out of lockdown and in anticipation of the Government lifting travel restrictions on 17th May, we are receiving requests from parents to take their child/ren out of school during term time for a family holiday or 'treat' days.

Whilst we acknowledge that these last 12 months have been very challenging for everyone and we are all in need of some time away, I wanted to clarify that these absences cannot be approved by Mrs Howells. Your child/ren's non-attendance will be recorded as 'Unauthorised' in the school attendance register and the school has a statutory responsibility to share attendance information with the Local Authority. Following the reinstatement of the attendance expectations already mentioned, you need to be aware that parents may be subject to the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice to each parent, for each child whose absence is recorded as unauthorised. For

further clarification, please refer to the school's Attendance Policy available on our website [Attendance Policy 2019 - Final.pdf](#) or the Guidelines mentioned above.

Parental response to supporting their children with remote learning during the pandemic has been tremendous. This has enabled pupils to continue with their education, but we appreciate that the best way for your child/ren to progress is in the classroom environment. The school continues to support pupils to aim to REACH in all that they do through our recovery curriculum and our staff and governors feel that it is really important for all our pupils to fully participate, meaning they should be in school every day that they can. Any day of lost learning has the potential to have a negative impact on future learning.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support for your child/ren's learning and carefully consider deferring any family holidays/treat days until the scheduled school holidays.

Yours sincerely

Gabriella Tiley

Link Governor for Attendance



The Little Way Partnership

Supporting our Catholic Schools in Gloucestershire

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