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Acting Principal: Kate Crawford

February 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your continued support with attendance at St. Bernard's. We are so proud of the vast majority of our students who have excellent levels of attendance, but as we reach the mid-way point of the year, we thought it would be useful to remind you of our attendance expectations and procedures.

Our Attendance and Family Liaison Officer, Rachel Graham continues to be your point of contact for any attendance queries. The link between attendance and your child's likely success in their studies is well documented. Whilst an attendance figure of 95% might sound acceptable, it means that your child will have missed approximately two weeks in an academic year. This is why we set our attendance target at **97%** - every lesson really does count.

Holidays in term time

This year we have had an increased number of parents taking their children on holidays during term time.

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Whilst you may consider that a holiday will be educational, we are sure you will appreciate that any absence from school can have a detrimental effect on your child.

In the case of an unauthorised holiday or leave of absence the Local Authority will be notified and a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued. Please note that such a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school. A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. Thereafter, if the Penalty remains unpaid this may lead to prosecution through the Magistrate's Court.

Please also note that the Local Authority Code of Conduct for the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices in respect of poor school attendance and unauthorised holidays/leave of absence taken in term time states that a parent will not be issued with more than one Fixed Penalty Notice in respect of an individual child in any two year period.

This means that if any parent/carer who has already received a Fixed Penalty Notice then takes their child out of school in term time for a holiday, which falls within two years of the date of the last day of absence of the previous holiday, a request will be made to the Local Authority and the matter may be referred to the Magistrate's Court. This could result in a prosecution of up to £1000.



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Illness and appointments

We would like to kindly remind you to make any non-urgent medical, dental and optician appointments for your child out of school time. Should your child be ill and then well enough to attend school at any point in the day, please send them in.

Punctuality

Persistent lateness can lead to a significant loss in learning time, as detailed in the table below:

Minutes late per day during the school year	Equals days worth of teaching lost in a year
5 mins	3.4 days
10 mins	6.9 days
15 mins	10.3 days
20 mins	13.8 days
30 mins	20.7 days

We are required to monitor children’s punctuality alongside their attendance. On-going lateness (after the register has been taken in form time at 8:40am) can be classified as an unauthorised absence and this is contrary to The Education Act.

Arriving promptly makes sure that your child doesn’t miss our form time curriculum, year group assemblies and student notices and prevents disruption to the teacher and other pupils.

Please note that continued lateness will result in the implementation of sanctions and potentially a Fixed Penalty Notice.

We will be working hard with students and our families to ensure excellent attendance across the school and know that we can rely on your support by ensuring your son or daughter attends school every day, on time. Should the attendance or punctuality of your son or daughter become a concern to us, school will contact you to offer further help.

Thank you for supporting your child’s attendance and punctuality.

Yours faithfully

M Diskin

Miss M Diskin
Vice Principal



St Bernard's
Lead Partner
of the Sheffield SCITT



Outstanding
2011-2012