

ST RAPHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

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Dear Parents,

Last year there was a change in the law regarding attendance and as such we are required to share this information from Tameside MBC as follows:

Penalty Notices for Non- school attendance - Information Letter

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any term (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice of £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. The penalty notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution.

In law, an offence is committed if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- *Their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once*
- *They go on holiday in term time without school's permission*
- *The child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion*

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued for such an offence.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for help.

At St Raphael's we are aware that children may have specific illnesses that prevent them from attending school and this could have brought your child's attendance level down. Holidays and leave of absence, authorised or not, have the same detrimental effect on your child's education. Any requests for leave of absence need to be made using the form available from the school office and any decision is made by the Governing Body. The Governing Body will make a further review of procedures over this term however as a school we need to report any absences which fit the above criteria to the LA.

All blessings

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Johnson'.

Peter Johnson

"May God's love shine in our lives as we care and share and learn together."