



# Our Lady Queen of Peace

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Dear Parents and Carers,

## Attendance Matters – Important Changes to Holiday Request Forms

At Our Lady Queen of Peace, we are committed to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Excellent attendance is fundamental to academic success, personal development, and wellbeing.

### Holiday Request Forms

Following an external attendance review conducted by a team from RISE (Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence) in May 2026, the school has been advised to withdraw its Holiday Request Form process. As a result, **Holiday Request Forms will no longer be issued or accepted**. Parents and carers should be aware that holidays taken during term time will not be authorised by the Headteacher except in the most exceptional circumstances as defined by national attendance guidance.

This change reflects the importance of maximising learning time and ensuring that all students benefit from regular attendance at school. We appreciate the support of parents and carers in helping us maintain high expectations for attendance and punctuality.

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to the Department for Education's national guidelines on penalty notices for unauthorised absence, which came into effect two years ago.

### Penalty Notices

For unauthorised term-time holidays in England during summer 2026, the national penalty notice rates remain:

- **First penalty notice:** £160 per parent, per child.
  - Reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.
- **Second penalty notice** for the same parent and child within a rolling three-year period:
  - **£160**, payable within 28 days.
  - No reduced payment option.
- **Third offence** within the rolling three-year period:
  - A penalty notice cannot be issued, and the local authority may consider alternative legal action, including prosecution.



### **In Christ We Grow**

*'As a learning community, we live out our Mission Statement striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving'.*

For example, if two parents take one child on an unauthorised holiday during term time and a penalty notice is issued, the total cost would be:

- £160 × 2 parents = **£320** (or £160 total if both pay within 21 days under the first-notice discount).

The school will issue a penalty notice when a pupil accumulates **10 unauthorised sessions (5 school days)** within a rolling 10-school-week period, which can include unauthorised holidays and persistent lateness after registers close.

It is worth noting that these are national rates set by the Department for Education and apply throughout the academic years 2025–26 and 2026–27 academic years unless further government changes are announced. This money from the penalty notice goes directly to the local authority not the school.

### **Why Attendance Matters**

Every day in school counts. Missing just one week of school means a child loses approximately **25 hours of learning**. Lost learning time can create gaps in knowledge, make it more difficult for students to keep pace with their peers, and impact both academic progress and future opportunities.

While we understand that family time is important, we strongly encourage parents and carers to arrange holidays and family trips during the published school holiday periods. Term-time absences disrupt learning and can be particularly challenging for students when key concepts, assessments, or examination preparation are missed.

### **Working Together**

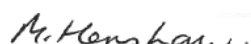
We know that the vast majority of our families share our commitment to ensuring that students attend school every day and arrive on time, ready to learn. Our aim is always to work positively with families to support good attendance and remove any barriers that may prevent students from attending regularly.

If your child is experiencing difficulties that may affect their attendance, please contact the school as early as possible so that we can offer appropriate support.

Absences from school must be reported on the **first day of absence** in the usual way.

Thank you for your continued support in promoting excellent attendance and helping every student make the most of the opportunities available to them.

Yours faithfully



Mrs M. Henshaw  
Headteacher