



# St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

## 'Doing our best for God'

Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

On behalf of the Governing body, I am writing to advise you on the Penalty Notices which come into effect from the 19 August 2024, following publication of the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance document. I have taken the key points from the leaflet attached:

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at a new rate of **£160 per parent per child**. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period (a school week is any week in which a school meets at least once). This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution).
- Only penalty notices issued for absences taking place after 19 August 2024 will count towards the above thresholds.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

I wish to stress that the changes are being applied to all schools across the country and are in no way the result of any decisions made by St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School Governing body. Schools having to follow the Government directive, will **not benefit financially when penalty notices are issued**.



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Head Teacher: Mrs Alexis Satterthwaite

As you are aware, we are not allowed to approve any absences throughout the school year, unless exemptional circumstances (please [click here](#) to see attendance policy). This also includes appointments unless we have seen the evidence –i.e. hospital letter, appointment card, screen shots of the appointment. If you child has been seen the GP or other medical professional a copy of the prescription will be accepted.

If you would like to complete an absence form, please call in at the office to collect one.

I appreciate this is new for St Bernadette's (although many Blackpool primary schools and high schools already issue penalty notices) and we are here to support you to navigate the strategy requirements.

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

Yours faithfully,

*Alexis Satterthwaite*

**Head Teacher**