

# St. Philip's Catholic Primary School

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1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

Dear Parents

## Attendance Policy

As you will know, schools are under increasing pressure to ensure attendance of all pupils is good and demonstrate that they are not authorising holidays during term time; helping to ensure that children are in school and are receiving their entitlement to a primary or secondary education.

Last year, our school attendance records were lower than those nationally and, as such, this places us in a vulnerable position in terms of external advisors and bodies.

In West Sussex, schools are encouraged to refer the parents of pupils who have 5 days 'unauthorised absence' over a period of 10 weeks, to the Pupil Entitlement Investigation Team, WSSC for consideration of intervention. This might be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice whereby each parent receives a fine, currently £60 per parent, per child (if paid within 21 days, but increases to £120 after 21 days but within 28 days of receiving the penalty) or through presenting the matter to court. (This means parents may receive a larger fine, community penalty or a prison sentence).

Schools have a duty to follow the guidelines of Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 which states that - if a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, their parent is guilty of an offence.

After consultation with our Locality schools and with governors, we have agreed to ensure this policy is implemented from October 2018. I attach the agreed Locality attendance guidelines for your reference.

We will continue to ensure that any requests for permission to take children out of school during term time are considered in a fair and consistent way and will meet with parents if a fixed penalty notice is being considered.

**Therefore, please take into account that from October 2018, unauthorised holidays of 10 sessions (5 days) or more during term time will result in a referral to Pupil Entitlement Investigation, who will either issue a fixed penalty notice fine of £120 per parent, per child (£60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days), or legal action resulting in prosecution of each parent. This action will also be considered if there is an accumulation of 10 or more late arrivals at school after the register has closed, or for sporadic unauthorised absence.**

If you would like further information about this, please ask the office for a leaflet about fixed penalty notices.

Yours in partnership

*At Home*

Lucy Horne  
Headteacher

*John Bell*

John Bell  
Chair of Governors