



St Clement's Catholic Primary School

Newsletter 1 – from Mrs Hodgkins

September 2024 – Edition 1

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been wonderful to welcome back all our children with a special welcome to our new reception class who have made a great start. When I stand on the gate and see you drop your children off into our care, I am reminded of the absolute privilege and responsibility it is to care for your child, sharing your hopes and aspirations for them. We are all very excited to be working with you and your children in this new academic year and I look forward to seeing your children flourish as they develop together in love and faith. Please continue to talk to us whenever your child or you are worried about anything – nothing is too much trouble; we are always here.

DIARY DATES - Autumn Term

3 rd September	Children return (Y1-6)
4 th September	Reception Children Start
17 th September	Y6 Parent's Lunch (11.30am)
23 rd September	Parent/Staff Coffee Morning
24 th September	Y3 Collective Worship with parents (9am)
2 nd October	Y2 Parent Lunch (11.30am)
9 th October	Y5 Parent Lunch (11.30am)
16 th October	Harvest Festival – YR parents (9.00am)
25 th October	Finish for Half Term at 2.30pm
4 th November	INSET DAY 2 – staff only
5 th November	Children return to school
8 th November	School Photograph Day
11 th November	Y1 Parent Lunch (11.30am)
19 th November	Y5 Collective Worship with parents (9.00am)
26 th November	YR Parent Lunch (11.30am)
5 th December	Y4 Parent Lunch (11.30am)
16 th December	Y3 Parent Lunch (11.30am)
20 th December	Finish for Christmas Break at 2.30pm

COFFEE MORNING – 23rd September 8.45am – *all welcome*. We love to hear from you and would like to work together with you for the good of the school.

Christmas at St. Clements

29 th November (3.30-5pm)	Christmas Fair
6 th December (am)	PANTO TRIP
9 th December (time&venue TBC)	Y4/5/6 Carol Service
10 th December (1.30pm YR/Y1) (5.30pm Y2/Y3)	Christmas Production at school
11 th December (1.30pm YR/Y1) (5.30pm Y2/Y3)	Christmas Production at school
13 th December	Christmas Jumper and Lunch
18 th December (4-5pm YR/1/2:5.30-6.30pm KS2)	DISCO TIME

School Attendance

The Department for Education has issued new statutory guidance for attendance called *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*. This came into effect on the 19th August 2024. It details what schools, parents and Local Authorities should do to improve pupils' attendance at school.

There are some important changes to attendance management from the 19th August 2024 which affect the support parents and pupils receive from schools, and the legal sanctions that are used in certain circumstances.

The changes are summarised on page 2 for your information and our new 'Attendance Policy' is available on our school website.

**MOMENTS
MATTER.
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**



School Attendance: The Law has Changed

From 19th August 2024

*The **Government** has introduced a new National Framework for Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance*

5 Days of Unauthorised Absence

Penalty Notice fines may be issued for any term-time absences that are unauthorised (for example, a 5-day term-time holiday) - whether these absences are taken consecutively or cumulatively over a rolling period of 10 school weeks

10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in any 10-Week Period

Penalty Notice fines will also be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any rolling period of 10 school weeks

A school day has 2 sessions: 1 morning and 1 afternoon session per day

A **school week** means any week in which there is at least one school session. The threshold can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 6 sessions of holiday plus 4 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

What is a Penalty Notice?

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from August 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate. Any further offences will result in criminal prosecution.

The law will be clear that where a Penalty Notice threshold met – in each individual case, the school must consider if a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance, the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days)
Reduced to: **£80** per parent, per child if paid within 21 days

Second Offence (in a 3-year rolling period)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance to the same parent for the same child the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child (if paid within 28 days)
There is no reduction in the amount

Third Offence or Any Further Offences (in a 3-year rolling period)

The third time an offence is committed for a Term-Time Leave of Absence or irregular attendance by the **same parent** for the **same child** (including those by other Local Authorities) a Penalty Notice will NOT be issued but will be referred to Halton Borough Council's Education Welfare service for **Prosecution** which may result in fines of up to **£2,500** per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in a Magistrate's Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate.

Halton Borough Council have the discretion to issue Penalty Notice fines before the above threshold is met in cases where parents are deliberately avoiding the national threshold by taking several term time holidays below the threshold, or for repeated absences for birthdays or other family events.

Unchanged

Penalty Notice fines are issued **Per Parent, Per child**. This means that fines are issued to each parent, for each child who is absent. For example: If 2 siblings are absent for a term-time holiday this will result in each parent receiving 2 separate fines.

Absence Request Forms must be completed at least 4 weeks prior to the request dates.

