



**St. Matthew's C.E. Primary School**  
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Headteacher: Mrs Rosalind Stamper

**IMPORTANT UPDATE ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CHANGES, PENALTY NOTICES & TIMINGS TO THE SCHOOL DAY.**

4 September 2024

Dear Parents/Guardians

The government, local authority and school are working hard to improve school attendance and punctuality. Parents and guardians are key to working with schools to value the education provided and ensure that children attend every day.

You may be aware that the Department for Education has recently announced changes to penalty notices issued for unauthorised absences during term time. These changes came into effect on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

Penalty notices will be charged at the new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be reduced to £80 for payment within 21 days.

The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is now set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 week period. This can include absences as a result of a child arriving late after school registers have closed. The 10 weeks can span terms and school years.

A maximum of 2 penalty notices issued to a parent for the same child within a 3 year period before another course of action (prosecution) must be considered.

The government have also put into place a minimum time for the school week which is set at 32.5 hours per week. This means that we need to extend our day to ensure we are compliant.

From **Monday 9th September** the start of the school day for every year group will be **8.40 am**. A late mark will be given after 8.50 am and an absence mark given once registers close at 9.10 am.

Key stage 2 children can still access classes from 8.30 am.

I apologise for the short notice change and will be flexible with late marks until the end of September when the legislation comes into effect.

As always we want to ensure that all children feel happy and confident coming into school so please do get in touch if you require support to enable your child to be in school on time.

Yours faithfully

Mrs R Stamper  
Headteacher

*Respect, Faith, Friendship, Achievement*