



# SAINT NORBERT'S CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

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Mission Statement: To live, love and learn in the footprints of Jesus.

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16<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Dear Families,

## Leave of Absence in Term Time

In September 2013, the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations were amended to prohibit the Headteacher of a school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where there are exceptional circumstances relating to an application, and where the application has been made well in advance. As a parent or carer, you are required by law to ensure that your child attends school regularly. It is for this reason that I write to you today.

My first priority has to be the safeguarding and education of children attending our setting. Leave of absence during term time interrupts continuity of teaching and learning and therefore the educational progress of individual children. Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government's strategy to raise educational standards. In order for children to reach their full potential and access the learning opportunities available to them, they must attend school regularly.

Schools within the Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave of absence during the school term, without exceptional circumstances, will be refused. If you do need to apply for a planned exceptional leave of absence, and in accordance with government guidelines, the application must be made a minimum of twelve school days in advance by completing a leave of absence request form. The application form is available from individual schools within the academy trust and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave.

Any absences taken without the Headteacher's permission – including those the weekday before or after the confirmed dates of a planned holiday – are recorded as unauthorised in the school register. This information is submitted to the Education Inclusion Service who may issue a Penalty Notice where applicable. Penalty Notices were introduced as an alternative to prosecution but if they fail to act as a future deterrent, prosecution may be considered, rather than a further Penalty.

If paid within 21 days, the Penalty Notice is £80 per parent or carer, per child.

If paid after 21 days, but within 28 days, the Penalty Notice increases to £160 per parent or carer, per child.

If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days, this will result in prosecution.



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I readily acknowledge that - for a variety of reasons - some families encounter difficulties in taking holidays during the usual periods of school closure. However, I can only stress the importance of your child's attendance at school and thank you for your understanding.

### **Punctuality**

Thank you for continuing to support our efforts to start each day promptly and maximise learning time. As you know, children may arrive from 8.20am before the school gates are closed at 8:30am. This allows plenty of time to settle before lessons start at 8:30am.

Obviously, there may be times where circumstances beyond your control mean that you arrive later than expected – we understand. However, arriving late frequently means children miss the first few important minutes of lessons each morning and can often lead them to feel anxious and unsettled. If your child does arrive late, would you please ensure that you accompany them to the office and sign them in.

If your child is unable to attend school due to sickness, please telephone and let us know as soon as possible, and before 9am at the latest. Please give the reason for your child's absence on the absence line when leaving a message. To undertake our duty to safeguard children effectively, we always pursue unreported absences – which I am sure you will understand – and will visit your registered home address if we are unable to contact you or your other emergency contacts.

Please do not email your child's absence through to the school's admin email address as this will not be accepted.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Dawson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

A Dawson