



September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

School Attendance

Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust is committed to developing a culture of academic excellence for all our schools. We recognise that a high level of school attendance is a significant factor in raising standards and ensuring pupils fulfil their potential. Absence from school, for whatever reason, inhibits a child's learning.

In the past year, the Trust has reviewed attendance across our 26 schools. A direct consequence of our review has been the creation of our Attendance Strategy. This strategy engages a unified approach to pupil attendance which will maximise educational opportunities for every pupil. NPCAT must ensure there is consistency in attendance practice to keep our children safe and meet their welfare needs in accordance with safeguarding practice. Our strategy considers pupil attendance from ages 3 to 19 years. Central to success is the need to establish the good habit of attending school. By being school ready, our children will be able to make consistent progress, whilst building a resilience to take them into adulthood.

Every child must have an excellent attendance level to make good progress in their learning. Failure with this regard may relegate our children to having low aspirations and self-belief. The overall aim is that pupils attend school every day. The minimum expectation is that every child has no more than 5 days' absence from school. All the factors that can influence a child attending school are considered in the strategy. Early intervention enables barriers to be identified and the appropriate support to be put in place immediately.

The Trust attendance team will monitor pupil absence in collaboration with the school. In all matters, there will be discussion with the school before any action is taken. Parents will be informed in a timely manner if a child's attendance has fallen below the threshold. An intervention may be by letter or a meeting in school, depending on the seriousness of the circumstances.

Underpinning the strategy is the safeguarding and welfare of pupils. Processes will, therefore, be robustly applied. Working alongside schools, the attendance team will scrutinise reasons for absence, questioning and making challenges to absence and undertaking home visits, as deemed appropriate.

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As our schools are situated across four local authorities, there will be a variation in the penalties imposed where leave of absence in term time is taken and has not been granted. The process for issuing fines is regulated in different ways by each local authority, links for which can be found on our website under the attendance table at www.npcat.org.uk.

Your appreciation of the attendance strategy is pivotal to the education outcomes for your child. It is important in the best interests of every child that there is a collective approach to working together where attendance is raised as a concern.

For further reading, you will find the Attendance Strategy on the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust website and your child's school website. Each school will also have an Attendance Policy.

If you have any queries or concerns on attendance matters, please do not hesitate to contact the Trust Attendance Team on 01642 298100.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Benson
Head of Attendance & Welfare

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