



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

7th May 2024

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: New penalty notice regime coming into effect from August 2024

I am writing to you to update you about new rules concerning Education Penalty Notice fines which the government has introduced. The aim of the new rules is to reduce the number of days missed by children due to unauthorised absence, especially for unauthorised term time holidays.

These rules come into force on 19/8/2024 and will therefore take effect from the start of the 2024-25 school year. They will apply only to offences taking place (and fines issued) from then onwards.

The new rules are:

- For the first fine issued for after the start of the 24-25 school year, the fine will increase to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.
- If a second fine is then issued to the same parent for the same child within three years of the first fine it will be for £160.
- Subsequent offences - no further fines can then be issued if two have already been issued to the same parent for the same child within the previous three years (starting with the date of the first fine); instead the parent will be prosecuted by the Local Authority in the Magistrates' Court.

Education Penalty Notices are mainly issued to parents who take their children out of school for term time holidays, weddings, family visits and other purposes. Parents are reminded that schools are only able to authorise leave of absence if satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. This will rarely be the case for family holidays, given that 13 weeks of school holidays are available to families each year.

We would therefore ask parents to ensure that all holidays are arranged to take place in the school holidays.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Mrs C Pickles
Senior Deputy Headteacher