



*Creativity, Inspiration and Achievement*  
**WATCHLYTES SCHOOL**  
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 Headteacher: Mr A Farrugia

6<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Dear Parent

### **Update on School Attendance and Punctuality**

Staff at Watchlytes School want our pupils to enjoy school and achieve their potential. We are committed to promoting excellent levels of attendance and punctuality and our aim is for our pupils/students to achieve over 95% attendance.

Over the past few years we have worked hard to improve our attendance with parents to the point where our attendance has improved from 94.9% in February 2009 up to 96.02 in 2015, which is around national average, but we would like it to be well above average!

We would appreciate your support to ensure that all our pupils achieve this, enabling them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Research shows that pupils who attend well at school achieve higher standards at school and therefore improves their future life choices.

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children attend the school at which they are registered, regularly, punctually and ready to learn.

If your child is absent from school, please contact us with the reason on the first day of absence, and confirm this in writing on your child's return. It is the Head Teacher's decision as to whether this absence is authorised or not. In most cases, absence is genuine and marked as authorised on the register.

Registers are taken twice daily at 9.00am in the morning and at 1.00 p.m. (infants) or 1.15 p.m. (juniors) in the afternoon. In the mornings, the registers close at 9.10am. Should your child arrive after the register has been closed, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless you provide a reasonable explanation. The school will follow up lateness, unauthorised absence and pupils with low levels of attendance. Our registers are inspected regularly by the Attendance Improvement Officer to ensure parents fulfil their legal responsibility of making sure their child(ren) attend school regularly and punctually.

Ongoing poor attendance and/or punctuality may result in the school making a request to the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice (explanation attached) or a referral to the Attendance Improvement Officer when court proceedings may be considered.

**P.T.O**

**Re: Leave of Absence**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 state that 'Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances', outlining the conditions under which leave of absence may be granted. Should parents/carers need to request leave of absence during term time for exceptional circumstances, please contact the school office for the relevant form and return it to me no less than 4 weeks before the date you want the period of absence to start. I will inform you of my decision in writing and may request an appointment with you.

May I remind you that the school operates Penalty Notices for unauthorised absence of 21 or more sessions across the current and/or previous term. Leave of absence will be unauthorised:

1. Should a request for leave of absence be declined but the time taken.
2. If a parent/carer takes a child out of school for leave of absence without requesting permission.
3. When a child fails to return to school following authorised leave of absence for exceptional circumstances on the agreed date.

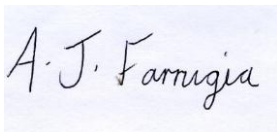
Unauthorised leave of absence exceeding 20 sessions will lead to a Penalty Notice being initiated without warning. Further information can be found in the school's Attendance Policy on our website.

The aim of the school is to work with our pupils and their parents so that the above courses of action are not necessary.

We look forward to working together with you to further improve our school attendance.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



**Mr Farrugia**

### **Penalty Notices**

If a pupil has at least 21 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and/or previous term, including leave of absence where permission has not been requested or requested and denied, the Head Teacher can apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued by the Local Authority. A fine of £60 is issued if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days. Fines can be issued to each parent/carer for each child. Parents can discharge potential liability for conviction by paying the penalty. Failure to pay the fine may result in prosecution for the offence. Should the fine not be paid in full within 28 days, the Local Authority must consider prosecution.