



ATTENDANCE NEWSLETTER

Spring Term 2026

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

At Our Lady and St Benedict Catholic Academy, we strive to help all of our pupils arrive at school on time every day. We have an extremely well-planned and progressive curriculum that children can only benefit from if they are in school.

Making punctuality a promise

Through regular attendance, pupils can:

- Develop strong friendships with other pupils
- Build a rapport with teachers
- Gain knowledge and life skills
- Establish a routine and develop discipline
- Engage in extracurricular activities



Section 8 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their children receive efficient full-time education if they are of compulsory school age. If a pupil takes two or more leaves of absence in under five days during the academic year, this will automatically be referred to the Education Welfare Service which could result in a fine.

School Times

Nursery - 8:40am - 3:10pm

Reception - 8:40am - 3:10pm

Key Stage One (Years 1 & 2) -
8:45am - 3:15pm

Key Stage Two (Year 3, Year 4,
Year 5 & Year 6) - 8:45am - 3:20pm



Attendance awards

Every week we award the class with the best attendance in our celebration assembly with a trophy and each member of the winning class also receives a sticker.

Each term we also award children with 100% attendance with a certificate, badge and prize.

Term 1 – Bronze badge, certificate and small prize

Term 2 – Silver badge, certificate and small prize

Term 3 – Gold badge, certificate and attendance on a trip to Alton Towers

Research shows that excellent school attendance will support children's learning and progress. It is for this reason that we want all of our students to aim for 100% attendance at school. 100% attendance is rewarded in the summer term with a 100% attendance trip. The children are busy voting on where they would like to go on the 100% attendance trip in the Summer of 2025. We understand that children can become ill at times and so expect 97% as a minimum target ". Whilst we want pupils to strive for 100% attendance, we do understand that there are rare occasions when a child cannot be present in school. That's why, if a child is absent due to illness they still have the chance to win the class attendance award.

Well done to 62 of our children who have achieved 100% attendance in the Autumn Term. They were all awarded their Bronze attendance award and certificate. This is Fantastic ! Please keep up these efforts during the Spring Term. We look forward to taking all children with 100% attendance for the year to Gulliver's Kingdom in the Summer.

Thank you for all of your support in ensuring your children attended school each and every day throughout December. The children really enjoyed colouring Santa's hat each day and eagerly awaited the announcement of prize winners on Fridays. Attendance is crucial to your child's educational success. Being in school every day allows pupils to access our outstanding curriculum and the remarkable opportunities we provide. On the final day of the Autumn Term, many children achieved 100% attendance for the month of December— having coloured every box and so they reached the green star. These children were given a wrapped gift from underneath our Christmas tree. We understand that inevitably there are times when children are unwell and unable to attend school. While they may be disappointed, we will continue to run this tracker and prize-giving at other points throughout the year so that every child has the chance to win a prize next time.



Government Rules

The Government recently changed its rules and is increasing fines for children missing school without permission. If a child misses 5 days (10 sessions) without permission, there will be a fine. Unauthorised absences include holidays, being late, and any other absences not approved by the Principals. As part of the new procedures, the school may carry out a home visit if a child is absent for any reason. Please do not be upset if we visit your house. We are doing this to check on your child's wellbeing, following Government guidelines. Please understand that it is not the school or the CMAT that issues the fines; this is done by the Local Authority. The money from these fines goes directly to the Local Authority. Whilst we are reluctant to issue fines, we must follow Government rules and want to support you in building good habits and giving your children the best chance to do well in school. I have attached a poster to this letter listing the fines, but simply put, the new fines will be as follows:

- For a first offence of 5 unauthorised days of absence, the fine will be £80 per parent, per child (if paid within 21 days).
- * For a second offence of 5 unauthorised days of absence within 3 years of the previous fine, the fine will be £160 per parent, per child.
- * For a third offence of 5 unauthorised days of absence within a 3-year period, parents will be taken to Magistrates' Court. Prosecution can lead to a criminal record and fines of up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Term Dates

Academic Year 2025/2026	
AUTUMN TERM – 2025	
Inset Day (school closed to pupils)	Monday 1st September
Inset Day (school closed to pupils)	Tuesday 2nd September
School opens to pupils	Wednesday 3rd September
Half Term	Monday 27th October- Friday 31st October
INSET Day (School closed to pupils)	Monday 3rd November
School opens to pupils	Tuesday 4 th November
School closes	Friday 19th December
SPRING TERM - 2026	
INSET DAY (School closed to pupils)	Monday 5th January 2026
School opens to pupils	Tuesday 6th January 2026
Half Term	Monday 16 th February -Friday 20th February
School opens to all	Monday 23rd February
School closes	Friday 27th March
SUMMER TERM – 2026	
School opens to all	Monday 13 th April
May Day – school closed	Monday 4 th May
Half Term	Monday 25 th May to Friday 29th May
School opens to all	Monday 1st June
School closes	Friday 17 th July

Term Dates for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 can be found on our school website:
<https://www.ourladyandstbenedict.co.uk/page/?title=Term+Dates&pid=94>

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Important Information

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines **issued after 19th August 2024**.

School attendance is important. Regular attendance links directly to pupil outcomes, which is why our academies work with families to ensure that all our pupils are supported to attend school regularly. Academies will focus on a *support first* model, by ensuring penalty notices are only considered where support is not engaged with, not working or not appropriate.



Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued to each parent for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

5 Consecutive days of term time leave

The National Threshold for Penalty Notice Fines for term time leave will be for 5 or more consecutive days.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence (equivalent to 5 school days) in a 10-week period

The National Threshold for Penalty Notice Fines is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of any combination of any type of unauthorised absence. This could, for example, include 6 sessions of holiday taken, 2 sessions of unauthorised absence and 2 of arriving late after registration has closed.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave, or for unauthorised absence, the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence

within 3 years

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave, or unauthorised absence, the amount will be:

- £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence

and any further offences within 3 years

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave, or unauthorised absence a Penalty Notice will NOT be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Prosecution can result in criminal records and fines up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.