

We love and grow in Christ, we live and learn in partnership, we build and share together

St Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs A E Naylor
Deputy Headteacher: Mrs S Lamph

6th September 2024,

Dear Parents/Carers,

It's been lovely to see you all this week as we welcome everybody back to school – including some new children in our 2 year old room, our Nursery, Years 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 and some new staff too! We are delighted to have you all as part of our happy St Francis of Assisi School family

Reception Class 2024

We would also like to welcome our wonderful Reception children. They are settling in so well and we are all really proud of them. They are a lovely group of children and we look forward to watching them grow and learn throughout the year.

A Prayer for the New School Year

Dear God,
Be with us each day,
Fill our hearts with joy,
Fill our minds with learning,
Fill our classrooms with peace,
Fill our lessons with fun,
Fill our friendships with kindness,
Fill our school with love,
Amen

We have places available for children in Nursery if you know families who may require a place. Direct them to contact the school office on 01695 558560 and we will be happy to assist.

School Communication

There are several ways that you can contact us if you need to. As always, you can use Class Dojo – the children have all been moved on to their current teacher so you can message directly. You can also telephone or speak to us directly, but please be aware that we may be in class teaching or in meetings at certain times of the school day.



We are a very approachable staff and recognise that positive relationships between home and school will always work to the benefit of our children. Like you, we want the very best for them and working together well will ensure that we achieve this.

Attendance and Punctuality

As you are aware from information previously sent out, for the 2024/25 Academic Year, the Department for Education (DfE) has made changes to the attendance codes and guidance schools must refer to.

These policies are set by the Department for Education and school is asked to enforce these along with all other schools nationally.

The changes to be aware of are:

- The code for authorised holidays has been removed entirely and can no longer be used on registers
- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at a new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences because of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd offence another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).

To put this into context, if a parent/carer takes a pupil out of school without authorised leave of absence in term time for 5 days or more from September 2024, then a family with two parents would receive a penalty of £320 per child. This is halved if paid within 21 days for the first instance.

Registers will close at 9am. Regarding late marks, **if a child arrives to school after 9am we are required by the Department for Education to give a U code** ('late after registers close'). If this were to be recorded 10 times within a 10-week period, the guidance would be a statutory fine of £160 per parent (halved if paid within 21 days for the first instance).

We appreciate that these guidelines are significantly more severe than those in the past. As always, we will do everything reasonably possible to work with families to ensure strong attendance and give our children the best possible life chances moving forward.

We publish our attendance data every week in the school newsletter.

Y1 – 92.5%

Y2 – 94.4%

Y3 – 98.6%

Y4 – 96.6%

Y5 – 93.8%

Y6 – 90.4%

Well done to Year 3 for the best attendance this week!

After-School Activities

We are in the process of organising extra-curricular clubs and activities which our staff kindly volunteer to run. Details to follow when these are finalised.

One of our governors, Mr Alan Horridge, will be running a Ukele Club starting this forthcoming Monday from 3.15pm until 4pm. Letters have gone out to Years 5 and 6 regarding this as places are limited.

Places in Reception for September 2025

Lancashire County Council's school admissions for children starting primary school or moving to secondary school in September 2024 opened on Friday 1 September 2023.

Parents can apply online at www.lancashire.gov.uk/schools - it's quick and easy!

The national closing dates for applications are:

- 31 October 2024 for secondary applicants
- 15 January 2025 for primary applicants.

The Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund is now available... Please spread the word and click the link below for further details:

[Household Support Fund - West Lancashire Borough Council \(westlancs.gov.uk\)](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk)

Directory of Support Services

The Financial Inclusion Team at West Lancs Borough Council have generated a directory of resources that's easily accessible for anyone and everyone.

Please click the link below to have a look as it's a great resource to have to hand.

[Directory of Support Services - West Lancashire Borough Council \(westlancs.gov.uk\)](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk)

Have a lovely weekend and thank you all for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Ann Naylor (Headteacher)