



'Let all that you do be done in Love' 1 Corinthians 16:14  
The example of Jesus Christ and the Good news that  
He rings inspire St George's to be a place of hope and a caring  
and inclusive community in which we all



Love to learn and Learn to Love.

## St George's CE Primary and Nursery School

### Attendance Policy

<b><u>Date agreed:</u></b>	June 2024
<b><u>Review Date:</u></b>	June 2026

We believe that good attendance is essential if children are to take full advantage of school and gain the educational, emotional and social skills, which will equip them for life.

St George's aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents and Education Welfare officers (EWOs) can work in partnership. We will monitor attendance and work quickly to resolve any identified problems.

School staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with families and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance is seen as an achievement in its own right and is rewarded.

It is important to remember that only the school can approve absence - within the constraints of the law - not the parents. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

Parents/carers of pupils registered at this school are reminded that they hold legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

As cited in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, school needs to be curious about absence and question repeated or prolonged spells away from school.

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- Ø Shopping
- Ø Having to stay at home due to an unwell sibling or parent.
- Ø Day trips
- Ø Birthdays
- Ø Holidays
- Ø Rest day after a bad sleep

## **School Day**

### **8:00am - Breakfast Club**

Children can join our Breakfast Club daily. We use this club not only to provide wrap around childcare for families, but also to target children that may need a slower start to the day or would benefit from arriving at school a little earlier. Places are limited so speak to the school office. Charges are £1.50 daily with siblings charged at £1.

### **8.35am - Main school gates open for Reception - Year 6**

Children and parents can arrive on the playground ready for classrooms to open.

8.40am - The morning register is taken. All children are expected to be in class ready for the register to be taken. Children arriving after 8:50am should enter school through the main office as the school gates are then locked. Children who come to school after this time will receive a 'late mark', which stays on their attendance record. Registration is an important time when children are welcomed by the class teacher and news and information is shared. Learning tasks begin as soon as the children enter the classroom. Children who arrive late miss out on this crucial time.

### **9.10am - The morning register closes.**

Children arriving to school after this time will be recorded with an unauthorised absence which will remain on their attendance record.

### **1pm - Afternoon registers are taken**

### **3:10pm - End of the school day for Reception - Year 6**

Children should be collected from their classroom doors which exit into their playgrounds.

After school clubs run from 3.10pm until 4pm. Parents/carers collect their children from the school hall at 4pm.

## **Requests for leave of absence**

### **Overseas visits and holidays**

School requests that visits to relatives are done within the school holidays. In cases where a family member overseas is ill, we suggest that families make arrangements between themselves to ensure children can be left in the care of a close relative whilst a parent makes that journey. This is to avoid taking children out of school and is something that families can plan for.

Following a change in the law from 1st September 2013 Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. School will not authorise any holidays in term time. Other leave of absence requests will be considered on an individual basis and only in exceptional circumstances.

The Headteacher is willing to discuss with families how to limit absence from school but this needs to be done well in advance and **before** flights are booked. Any requests should always be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Any absences taken without the authorisation of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract a penalty notice.

### Funerals

School understands that children may need and want to go to a funeral. These will be unauthorised, but travelling days on either side, if going overseas, will not be counted in to sessions missed. Please discuss any arrangements for funerals with the Headteacher.

### Penalty Notices

Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in a 10-week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents may receive a Penalty Notice. Following the implementation of DfE legislation on 19th August 2024, there is a new national framework for Penalty Notices for school absence.

For the first offence committed under the new legislation, the rate of a penalty notice is now £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

For the second offence committed under the new legislation, the rate of a penalty notice is now £160 with no option for the second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

There is now a limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period. If there is a third offence committed within this timeframe, another tool will be considered such as prosecution to answer an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996: failure to ensure regular attendance. Conviction of an offence under section 444(1) may result in a fine of £1000. Under section 444(1A), convictions may result in a fine of £2,500, a community order, electronic tagging or a custodial sentence and a criminal conviction recorded.

The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the Notice being served. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution as detailed above. Please note the issuing of a Penalty Notice is an alternative to issuing proceedings at court.

Please note that a separate Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent/carer for each child as each parent/carer holds responsibility to ensure regular school attendance.

### Guidelines

#### **FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Please ensure your child attends regularly.

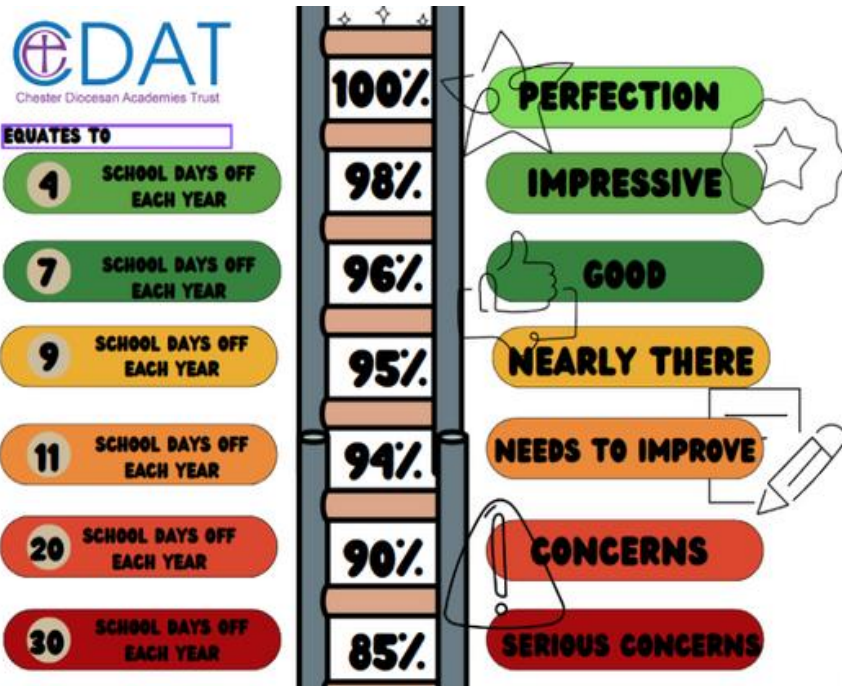
Please ensure that your child arrives in time for registration at 8:40am and help your child understand the importance of being on time.

If late, please accompany your child to the office and sign them in. Arriving after close of registration at 9.10am will result in an unauthorised absence mark. 10 sessions in a 10 week period could lead to a Penalty Notice Warning.

Please contact the office by 9 am if your child is unable to attend school due to illness.

Each day that your child is off, the office would appreciate a telephone call to inform them of this absence.

Parents are requested to return their child to school as soon as possible after an absence. They can return to school if feeling better in the afternoon and should return to school once better even if there is only one day of the school week left.



If your child is frequently absent and attendance is under 90% your child becomes classed as a 'Persistent Absentee.' School may ask for this absence to be supported with medical evidence such as a prescription or message from the GP on your phone or appointment card.

Attendance is recorded daily and monitored weekly. Patterns are quickly picked up and pastoral staff will ring or visit to see how things can be improved.

You may be asked to sign an agreement to begin an Attendance Plan to improve attendance.

Minor ailments such as colds, sore throats, headaches and tummy aches can be managed in school if given paracetamol at home first. Sometimes tummy aches and headaches are a sign of anxiety but not a reason to stay at home. School will work with you to find out the reason for this and support your child to come into school. Staff will always contact home if a child is too unwell to remain in school and will ask for them to be collected.

## Do I need to keep my child off school?

<b>Chicken Pox</b> Until all spots have crusted over	<b>Conjunctivitis</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Diarrhoea &amp; Vomiting</b> 48 hours from last episode	<b>Glandular Fever</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Hand, foot &amp; mouth</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Impetigo</b> Until lesions are crusted & healed or 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Measles or German Measles</b> 4 days from onset of rash	<b>Mumps</b> 5 days from onset of swelling	<b>Scabies</b> Until after first treatment	<b>Scarlet Fever</b> 24 hours after commencing antibiotics	<b>Slapped Cheek</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Whooping Cough</b> 48 Hours after commencing antibiotics
<b>Flu</b> Until recovered	<b>Head Lice</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Threadworms</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed	<b>Tonsillitis</b> No need to stay off but school or nursery should be informed		

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

### SCHOOL WILL:

Promote good attendance and inform parents half termly of their child's attendance.

Help every child to reach their maximum potential unhindered by unnecessary breaks in school life.

Demonstrate that the school values good attendance by giving certificates for children who reach the 96% target and above each half term.

Celebrate 100% attendance each year with a certificate and prize.

Monitor attendance weekly and will visit, send letters and arrange meetings to work with parents to improve attendance if it drops below 90%. This will be managed through an Attendance Plan. This plan uses the Signs of Safety model of focusing on strengths, understanding problems and finding ways to overcome them. These plans will be reviewed after three to four weeks. The meetings will still go ahead if a parent chooses not to attend.

Offers of an Early Help Assessment can be made to support families where extra support is needed.

School will make a phone call by 10am each day if a child is not in school and school has not had a message from a parent/carer. This is a safeguarding strategy. For this reason, it is important that you always keep school up to date with your current contact numbers. If we cannot reach parent/carers on the telephone numbers given, we will try and contact other emergency contact numbers you have provided.

If school cannot contact parents/carers or other emergency contacts for the absent child/ren, the Pastoral Team will visit the home to confirm the reason why children are absent.

School will inform the Local Authority about children who miss up to 15 days of school due to a medical condition and write an Individual Health Care Plan to support their needs.

School works with the Education Welfare Service to promote good attendance.

#### **THE OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:**

Recording attendance codes correctly for both am and pm sessions.

Recording information from letters/telephone calls from parents.

Producing Monthly official registers.

Producing lateness/absence letters when necessary. Producing reports as required.

Recording information from Application for Leave of Absence letters and notifying parents whether leave will be authorised or unauthorised.

#### **CATEGORISING ABSENCE:**

Routine GP, dental and optician appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible and may not be authorised.

Emergency dental or doctor's appointments will be authorised with medical evidence eg prescriptions or the GP appointment on a phone or note. If a medical appointment is unavoidable, your child should attend school before and after the appointment.

If your child has a recurring medical problem, please make sure school is aware of this. Showing medical cards or letters stating appointments will ensure your child's absence is marked as authorised.

Religious observance will be authorised. Clarifying dates with the Headteacher when these days occur in school time, need to be done in advance.

Other cultural reasons for absence will be considered sympathetically.

Sitting external examinations e.g. music exams will be authorised.

Absence off-site for special tuition may be authorised.

Fixed period or permanent exclusions will be authorised.

#### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request this information from the Headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.