



'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

<u>Date agreed:</u>	May 2026
<u>Review Date:</u>	May 2027

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 and enable them to flourish.

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.

"Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual pupils and families. Good attendance begins with school being somewhere pupils want to be and therefore the foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils are keen and ready to learn." Working together to improve school attendance 2024."

As cited in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, 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 and greeted at the classroom door by teachers.

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 as a U code.

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.

How will school encourage good attendance?

Expect **Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.** This will be encouraged by a warm welcome at the classroom door and by the office staff for all pupils and parents. Attendance is being explained in terms of days missed alongside

percentages. Percentages can be misleading as 85% in a test would be considered good but the equivalent of 29 days in the year is not. These figures are explained at parents evenings and attendance is discussed with all parents. Attendance and its impact on Attainment is explained and discussed.

The curriculum is well planned and broad to encourage all children to flourish. Attendance is highlighted at staff meetings and in bulletins so teaching and non-teaching staff are aware.

Attendance data and analysis will be shared with Governors at each meeting.

Monitor- Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched. Children's attendance and absence is monitored and those under 93% are tracked. Data will be analysed in days missed to help target support. Patterns of illness in Reception in the Autumn term can be a pattern but should not generally continue into Spring and Summer terms. Holidays in term time mean some children never get over 90% even by the end of the year and so are discouraged. Children who were Persistently Absent at the end of the school year will be tracked and supported to prevent this becoming an issue into the next year. Successes and improvements will be celebrated.

Listen and understand-When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to and understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them. The Pastoral Lead and Attendance Champion Fiona McKeown (Fiona.mckeown@st-georges-hyde.tameside.sch.uk) will visit and support families where there is an issue around attendance. School will endeavour to build and maintain strong and trusting relationships with our families so that problems can be resolved quickly.

Facilitate support -Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues. The Attendance Champion will work with the family via an Attendance Plan, open an Early Help Assessment led by school or refer for Early Help Support to work with the family. As part of the assessment there may be referrals on to other support to help the family as needs are shared.

Formalise support -Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through an attendance contract or education supervision order. School would work with the Local Authority and issue a Notice to Improve. School will also work with the Education Welfare Officer through Targeting Support Meetings to benchmark attendance against local and national data.

Enforce -Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention: a penalty notice in line with the National Framework or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education. A Penalty Notice will be issued for absences taken in term time which means the child is absent for 5 days or 10 sessions.

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 before flights are booked.

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. See [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

This 10 week period can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

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.

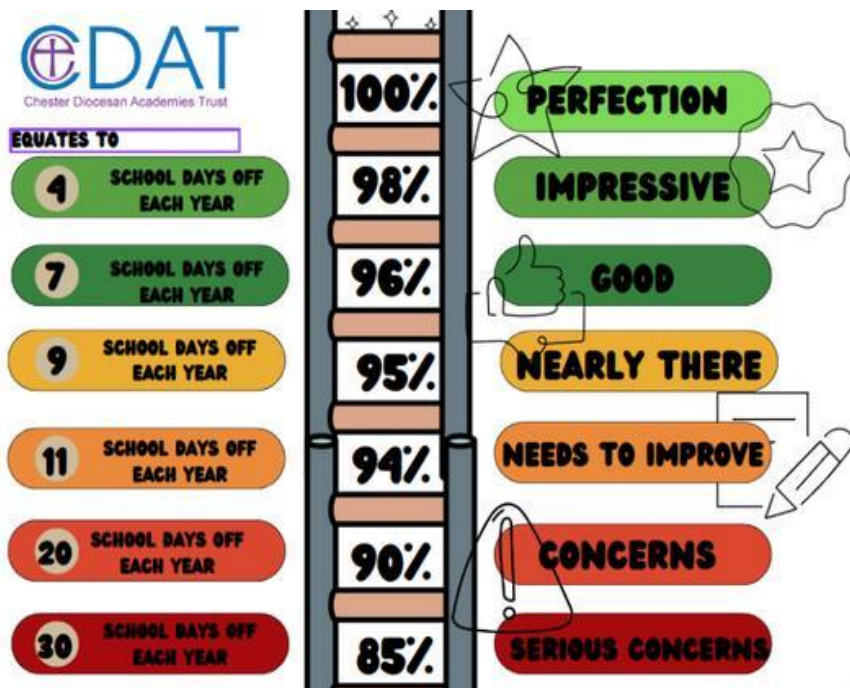
The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the Notice being served. Failure to pay a Penalty Notice may result in prosecution as detailed above. Please note the issuing of a Penalty Notice is an alternative to issuing proceedings at court.

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.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES:

Please ensure your child attends regularly. Good attendance impacts outcomes.

At KS2, pupils not meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths had an overall absence rate of 4.7%, compared to 3.5% among those meeting the expected standard. (Working together to improve school attendance. 2024)



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 0161 368 2848 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 after a morning unwell 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 will ask for any absence to be supported with medical evidence such as a prescription or message from the GP on your phone or appointment card.

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.



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

SCHOOL WILL:

Promote good attendance and inform parents termly of their child's attendance and as part of their school report.

Share the importance of good attendance with new Reception parents when they prepare to join St George's. This is done as part of school readiness via the welcome meetings in the July before children start in September.

Work with Nursery children and their parents to encourage good attendance to set good habits before they start statutory education.

Help every child to reach their maximum potential.

Encourage every child to feel they belong and matter in school and work with those children who struggle with relationships (see Relationships and behaviour Policy)

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.

Have monthly Attendance Challenges to encourage good attendance and build a sense of expectation and fun.

These challenges can be whole school but also focused on cohorts of children who have missed between 9-18 days to prevent them moving into persistent absenteeism.

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 or as part of an Early Help Assessment.

School's office staff 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 and always provide two emergency contacts. 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 work with other parents in the community to find out if children have gone overseas to visit relatives and not informed school. School would ask that parents always inform school if flights are delayed which means children do not return to school after planned school holidays and the child is absent on what should be the first day back of a new term.

School will send out regular reminder letters about the importance of good attendance and share these messages also on Dojo. Letters with key information will be translated into Bengali as done as an audio and shared with parents throughout the year via Dojo.

School will inform Child Missing Education services about any child who is absent from school usually due to moving house and provide a new address and contact details.

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 will take advantage of training through the Local Authority's Education Welfare Service and the Attendance Champion will attend meetings with other schools in the area to share good practice.

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.

Collate information for Penalty Notices.

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 and monitor how absences are dealt with.

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