



St. George's Church of England Primary School *Learning for Life*

Headteacher – Mrs R Keitch

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School Attendance and Punctuality

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you with some reminders and updates about school attendance and our protocols around attendance and punctuality.

I also need to make you aware of the Government's new statutory Attendance Framework which will have a direct impact on all schools, including St George's.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution. Pupils must attend school every day, unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is only the Headteacher, not the parent, who can authorise an absence.

Late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class as well as the child arriving late.

REGISTRATION AND LATENESS **UPDATED FOR SEPTEMBER 2024**

Gates open: 8.30am

Gates close and registers taken: 8.40am

All children arriving after 8.40am must enter via the School Office. Parents must sign the late book, stating the reason for lateness.

Children who arrive after 9.00am will receive a 'U' mark, which is an unauthorised absence.

IF YOUR CHILD IS TOO ILL TO ATTEND SCHOOL

Please refer to the [NHS guidance](#) regarding common childhood illnesses.

Please notify the school on the first day of absence before 9.15am, either by phone call to 01206 230305 or e-mail to admin@st-georges-pri.essex.sch.uk. If the school has not been notified of an absence by 09.30am the school office will telephone home to ensure that the child is safe with a responsible adult.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

Term-time holidays for children of compulsory school age are strongly discouraged and will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Whilst the Headteacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused.

If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, in accordance with the Government's new Attendance Framework (see below).

MONITORING ATTENDANCE

School attendance and punctuality is monitored regularly by the Headteacher. All absences and lateness are carefully recorded. A pupil is deemed to be a Persistent Absentee where their attendance falls below 90%.

Further investigation takes place into any pupil whose attendance dips below 95% and a letter will be sent home to parents. A meeting with the parents and the Headteacher may also be arranged. Ongoing concerns will be referred to the Attendance Specialist Team who will liaise with the school and family to provide support. Please see our Attendance Policy for further details.

NEW NATIONAL ATTENDANCE FRAMEWORK

The Department for Education has introduced a new statutory national Framework, that all schools in England must follow, from August 2024.

- There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. This is 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence, including lateness;
- If a Penalty Notice is issued for an offence of unauthorised absence, the first will attract a fine of up to £160 per pupil (£80 if paid within 21 days);
- A second offence in three years will attract a fine of £160 per pupil;
- Schools cannot issue a third penalty notice in 3 years, and must consider other sanctions, which may include prosecution.

You can find more information about the new framework in [this DfE Education Hub article](#). Please also find attached a useful leaflet outlining the information.

Thank you for your support. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office if you have any queries or concerns.

Yours Sincerely,



Mrs Rebecca Keitch
Headteacher