



St George's Catholic Primary Voluntary Academy



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Dear Parents

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

One of the most important things your child can do to achieve academic success is also one of the most basic; going to school every day. Research has proven that good attendance has a positive effect on a child's academic and social skills. At St George's we monitor attendance closely and we have been better than the national average three times in the last three academic years for overall absence. Our whole school target is **97%** for attendance and **100%** for punctuality, allowing for the occasional sickness etc. Each term we send home colour coded letters for any child whose attendance is under 93%. A red warning letter means that the child has missed at least **16 days** off school, which relates to three full school weeks. This has an adverse effect on your child's progress. An Education Penalty Notice will be issued by the local authority where a child has attendance **below 90% and at least 5% of absences** are unauthorised.

START OF DAY AND LATENESS

At St George's we have a staggered start to the beginning of the school day so children can come into school in their year group. Any child arriving to school after the year group allocated time is marked late.

It is an important life skill to assist our children to arrive at school on time. If they are late, this means that they miss the beginning of the school day, instructions for the start of a lesson and assemblies. If they are marked as having unauthorised lates, this will go on their attendance record and any statistical records/data we have to submit to Harrow or the Department of Education will read as unauthorised lateness. If a child has more than **12 lates in 8 weeks**, the parents can be issued with a Penalty Notice by the local authority. At primary age, it is the responsibility of all parents to ensure their child arrives in time for school.

MEDICAL/DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

The school requires proof of a child's medical or dental appointment. Please bring appointment cards to the school office prior to an appointment. If you do not have an appointment card, please pick up a form from the school office and ask the surgery or dental practice to stamp the form and bring back to the school, or show us a copy of prescription. If we do not receive official proof of a medical/dental appointment, this will be marked as an unauthorised absence.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

The Governors do **NOT** authorise any holiday leave during term time as advised by the Department of Education. The School Term dates are sent **well in advance** so parents are well aware of when the half term and holiday breaks are. Headteachers can only authorise a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances (such as severe illness or death in the family) and parents need to make an appointment and come in and discuss this. Each term, a few families have gone on holiday early without asking for permission from the school or filling in a leave of absence form. These have been marked on the attendance register as unauthorised and an Educational Penalty Notice can be issued as advised by the Local Authority. The charge is £60.00 per parent for each child. Any child who absent for two days or more, **immediately before or after any half term** must produce a medical certificate or note from the doctor to prove that they have been ill, or the absence will be treated as unauthorised holiday. Recently some families have been extending their holidays to make travel cheaper, however, this is not acceptable as school staff are here ready to teach the children.

ABSENCES

Parents should contact us on the first day of absence and leave a message on the answer phone, stating the date, child's name/class and reason for not being at school. This should then be followed up with a letter on their return.

As a school, we would ask all parents to help us and their child to achieve the set attendance targets. If you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance or lateness, please contact the office and make an appointment to see me.

I fully appreciate that this letter contains a huge amount of information. However it is our duty to clearly state the regulations surrounding attendance and punctuality. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the huge number of families who ensure their children arrive at school on time, dressed in full uniform and ready for learning with excellent attendance. Your support is invaluable to your child, and to us as a school.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Monaghan'.

MRS D MONAGHAN
(Headteacher)