



ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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1. Aims

St George's attendance and punctuality policy aims to ensure that all our pupils are safe and have every opportunity to learn and progress in all aspects of their development. They will have developed routines which mean they are well prepared, both for the next stage of their education and for life.

Therefore, we expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day and strive for 100% school attendance. Every day counts!
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day

When a child only attends for 90% of the time, they miss the equivalent of half a day a week. Over a year this adds up to 4 weeks of learning. Over 7 years (reception to Year 6) it adds up to over 70% of a year.

It is therefore important that parents and carers:

- ensure regular school attendance.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school **daily** about absence, whenever their child is unable to attend school. If possible, (e.g. if you child has a hospital appointment), please let us know in advance.
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

2. The Legal Situation

The law states that children who are on roll of maintained schools and academies should attend every school day. Absence from school can be authorised by the Headteacher in the following circumstances: -

Situation	What parents/carers must do
The child is ill	Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am, to provide the reason for the absence, and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. Office staff will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given by 9.30am. Where absence is being monitored and is below 90%, parents/carers will be required to bring in proof of attendance to see a doctor for illnesses, unless there is a medical care plan in place.
The child has a hospital or dental appointment	Written confirmation (e.g. appointment card) must be provided in advance. Where possible, parents are asked to make medical/dental appointments out of school hours.
A near relative has died	Contact the school by 9.00am on each day of absence.
In the case of religious observances	Provide written confirmation in advance.

Examples of absences which will be unauthorised include:

- Shopping/day trip/visit to a theme park;
- A birthday treat;
- Oversleeping due to a late night;
- Looking after other children / other family member;
- Appointments for other family members

3. Term Time Holidays

Family holidays should be taken during the school holiday dates, which are published a year in advance. Please be mindful that absence due to a holiday is not, and never has been, a parent's entitlement. By law, the Headteacher is unable to authorise any holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Examples of exceptional circumstance would be

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where there is evidence that the individual will not have any leave in the near future coinciding with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health profession as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.

The Headteacher must be notified in advance and evidence must be provided.

Absence from school at the following times will not be authorised, in the child's interest:

1. The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils);
2. Year six transition day (for pupils in year six);
3. Examination periods: SAT's week (for pupils in year six), Multiplication Check weeks (Year 4) and Phonics screening weeks (Year one and two).

4. Penalty Notices and Fines

If a registered pupil is absent without authorisation from school or alternative provision, then the parent is guilty under Section 444 (I) of the Education Act 1996 of an offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil.

If the parent knows that their child is failing to attend regularly at school and fails to cause them to do so, then they are similarly guilty of an offence under Section 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

Where there is concern about a child's attendance, school may request that a Penalty Notice through the Education Attendance Service is issued to a parent/carer. This will only be used when parents/carers have been informed of our concerns and offered support, but improved attendance is not achieved/sustained.

Penalty Notices will be requested for the following reasons:

1. Persistent late arrival at school after 9.30am
2. Unauthorised absences when no reasons have been provided by the parent/carer
3. Unauthorised holidays during term time

5. Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school they inform EC St George's CE Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- Transfer form completed;
- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next school;
- The address of the new school and contact from the new school that the child has started;
- A new home address if appropriate

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school.

In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Local Authority and a 'Child Missing in Education' investigation will be instigated by the LA.

6. Punctuality

Punctuality – being on time – is a really important routine to learn. It means that the day starts in an orderly way, children are settled, they know what they are doing, and they can enjoy their learning.

6.1 Our Policy:

- 8.45am Children should enter via their classroom assigned door.
- Register is taken at 8.55am.
- Any child arriving after 8.55am must report to the office and will be signed in as late unless a valid reason is given, e.g. a doctor's appointment with the appointment card. A member of the office staff will record that they have arrived in school.
- Once registers are closed, a member of the office team will check absent children in every class before making contact with home.
- Unauthorised lateness will affect the child's attendance record.
- Any Child arriving after 9.30am will be marked as unauthorised late
- Parents/carers must contact the school before 9.30am to provide a reason for lateness.
- The School will phone parents/carers on a daily basis by 11.00am when the reason for absence is unknown.
- Children are to be collected at 3.15pm via their classroom assigned door.

6.2 How we report to parents and carers

All absences authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the Parent/Carer in an ongoing conversation regarding their child's attendance. During the year parents will be given regular updates. They will receive a printout of their child's attendance in an annual report and requested to check that the information provided is accurate.

Where there is cause for concern about a child's attendance, school will follow the below stages:

- **Stage 1** If poor attendance is identified, a letter will be sent to parents explaining the impact of poor attendance (Appendix A). The children will be encouraged to attend school and the school's attendance reward systems will be followed. There will be a two-week monitoring period. Where the percentage of attendance is increasing the Attendance Lead will continue to monitor. However, if no improvement has been made monitoring will progress to STAGE 2.
- **Stage 2** If there is no improvement in the child's attendance, parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Attendance Lead. Parents/carers will be asked to agree to an 'Attendance Action Plan' (Appendix B). If the family needs additional agencies to support due to more complex needs, school will offer to assist and lead with this. If the child/children have medical issues school will call a medical planning meeting, which parents will be invited to attend. Where appropriate, the child/children will be invited in for part of the meeting. The school attendance reward system will continue to be applied to encourage attendance. There will be a four-week monitoring period. Where the percentage of attendance is increasing the Attendance Lead will continue to monitor. However, if no improvement has been made monitoring will progress to STAGE 3.
- **Stage 3** If after close monitoring no improvement has been made, the Attendance Lead, following discussion with the Headteacher, will contact the Education Attendance Service for further support. This may lead to a Penalty Notice and proceedings for prosecution will be made by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and Oldham Council's attendance representatives. This may result in a criminal conviction for parents if found guilty at the Magistrates' Court.

7. Recognising and Rewarding Excellent Attendance

St George's celebrates those children who achieve and maintain an excellent attendance record and those who markedly improve their attendance and/or punctuality. Stickers, certificates and reward sessions all form part of the school attendance reward system (Appendix C).

8. How We Track Attendance Across the School

- Attendance data will be collected half termly (six times a year) to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised; and children with attendance below 96%. This data will be discussed with the Senior Leadership Team as part of their regular meetings.
- If concerns are raised by this analysis, parent discussions will occur, either through telephone calls to the parents/carers and/or formal letters stating attendance and regular lateness of the child and informing there is an issue.
- The Attendance Lead will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Headteacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governing body.
- The Governors will set an annual target of attendance and unauthorised absence. This will be reviewed annually.

9. Roles and Responsibilities Within The Cranmer Education Trust

The Cranmer Education Trust is responsible for setting annual attendance targets.

9.1 The Governing Body

Is responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy.

9.2 The Headteacher

Is responsible for

- ensuring that effective systems are in place to promote attendance;
- ensure records are accurate;
- following up with families when the attendance/punctuality of a child is giving cause for concern, in line with safeguarding law;
- considering how the school can support the family to enable the children to attend school.

9.3 Attendance Lead

Is responsible for

- monitoring individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality;
- works in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality becomes a concern;
- contacts and works with parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance;
- arranges meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties;
- monitors attendance data and ensures the Headteacher receives this information every half term;
- monitors and tracks attendance patterns for all children and prepares relevant attendance reports when necessary – monitoring coding in collaboration with office Staff;
- provides attendance "watch" lists to the school office for daily monitoring;
- coordinates daily punctuality checks with late children;
- processes all legal documentation regarding attendance monitoring including penalty notices to the Local Authority.

9.4 Class Teacher

Are responsible for

provides an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class by completing the class register promptly;

- responds promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by the attendance lead/office staff;
- organises work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness;
- records the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate electronic system (SIMS).

9.5 Office Staff

Are responsible for

- records children arriving late or leaving early on a daily basis;
- prepares, manages and co-ordinates the use of the Attendance Manager System (SIMS);
- monitors and tracks attendance patterns for all children and prepares relevant attendance reports when necessary – monitoring coding in collaboration with Attendance Lead;
- contacts any parent/carer who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence by 11am;
- uses the text system/telephone call to request a reason from absence from parents;
- ensures that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week;
- makes a judgment in conjunction with the attendance lead whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised under the guidance of the Headteacher.

9.6 Education Welfare Officer

Is responsible for

- enforces the law regarding school attendance;
- supports the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

Appendix A - Letter to Parents Explaining the Impact of Poor Attendance

Parent/Carer of

Date

Dear Parents / Carers

I am writing to express my concerns over XXXX absences / lateness this term.

We are carefully monitoring attendance and unfortunately, your child's attendance this half term has been brought to my attention. Children's attendance in school should not fall below 96% and your child's attendance has fallen to **XX %**.

We will be monitoring this over the next two weeks, and I hope that this will improve. We will be looking closely to monitor that your child is not late for school and if they are absent, then we will be looking to make sure you have contacted us with a valid reason. We will also ask you to provide evidence such as a doctor's note, medical letter, to see medication, or we can provide a note for your doctor to request evidence from him/her.

If there is anything we can do to help support you further in ensuring your child's attendance improves please do not hesitate to contact me or Mrs Fox, our attendance lead, at school. By working together, I am sure we will be able to support your child. If your child's attendance does not improve over the next two weeks of term, I will be inviting you to an attendance meeting to discuss this further.

Please work with us to help improve your child's attendance. I am on hand to help with advice and support if you need it.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Ross

Head Teacher

Appendix B – Attendance Action Plan

Name of Child: _____

Start of Plan Date: _____

Current Attendance: _____%

Date	Parent Actions	Pupil Actions	School Actions	Signatures	Outcomes

Attendance Rewards

As a school we want to improve our attendance to achieve the best outcomes for your children.

We want to encourage your child to be in school, on time every day!

When your child achieves this, we think it is important to recognise this achievement and so we have designed a system to encourage and reward them.

We recognise that sometimes children are poorly and may not manage 100% attendance.

Therefore, children who achieve 96% or above attendance will be rewarded through stickers, certificates and badges.



Every term that your child achieves 96% or above they will receive a sticker and certificate in recognition of their achievement.

Every term that your child achieves 100% they will receive a badge to wear on their school jumper in recognition of their achievement (examples above). They will also receive a certificate and an ECSTG £1 stamp for the school shop.

We also recognise that some children may have medical conditions which mean they are unable to attend school at times. Due consideration will be given to this when allocating rewards at the discretion of the Head Teacher where absence relates specifically to their medical condition.

Please note that late attendance will be taken into consideration when considering a child's attendance figures, if they have been late then they haven't been in school 100% of the day!

Where a child's attendance is of concern to the school, individual attendance charts, certificates and stickers will be used to encourage improvement.

Class Rewards

In addition to the above rewards, we want to encourage children to work as a class team to raise their attendance. Therefore, if a class achieves **100% attendance for a whole week**, they will be allowed to come to school in non-uniform the following Friday.

The class with the highest attendance each week (above 96%) will be given our attendance bear, George, to look after for the following week.

Arriving at school on time is also very important. Children in school when the register is taken at 9am will receive a Dojo point to start their day.