

23rd September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance and Punctuality – Working Together to Ensure Every Child Can Be Successful

At St Augustine's CE High School, we believe that every day of learning matters.

Regular attendance is one of the most important things we can do together to support your child's learning, progress, friendships, confidence, wellbeing and preparation for their future. Being in school every day helps pupils to keep up with their learning, maintain positive relationships and feel a strong sense of belonging to our school community.

We recognise that sometimes children are genuinely unwell or that families experience circumstances which make regular attendance difficult. Our approach is therefore to work in partnership with parents and carers, identify barriers early and provide appropriate support. This is also consistent with the Department for Education's current statutory guidance, which places partnership with families and a support-first approach at the heart of improving attendance.

What do we expect?

Our expectation is that every pupil attends school every day and arrives on time, unless there is a genuine reason why they cannot attend.

The DfE defines a pupil as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions. This means that absence can become a significant concern surprisingly quickly.

For example:

90% attendance means a child is missing around one day of school every two weeks.

If your child is absent from school

If your child is genuinely unwell and cannot attend school:

1. Contact the school by 8.30am on the first day of absence.
2. Please provide a clear reason for the absence.
3. Continue to inform us on each subsequent day of absence, in accordance with our school attendance procedures.
4. Please provide accurate information about your child's illness or circumstances.



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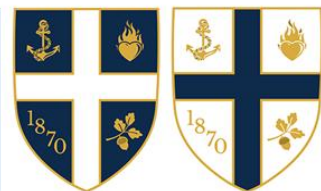
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5. **If your child is well enough to attend school, please send them in.**
6. If your child has an appointment, please inform the school in advance and provide the relevant information. Wherever possible, medical and other appointments should be arranged outside school hours.

If we do not receive an explanation for an absence, or the reason provided does not meet the requirements for authorised absence, the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

Please do not take holidays during term time

Parents and carers should ensure that family holidays are arranged during the school holidays.

There are approximately 175 days each year when children are not required to be in school, providing significant opportunities for families to take holidays without their child missing education.

Leave of absence during term time will only be authorised where the circumstances are considered exceptional. Parents/carers should make a request in advance and should not assume that a request has been approved until they have received confirmation from the school.

Punctuality is an important part of good attendance.

Students should:

- leave home early enough to arrive at school in good time;
- arrive at school by 8.40am;
- go directly to school rather than waiting for friends or visiting shops;
- be ready to learn at the beginning of the school day;
- move promptly between lessons.



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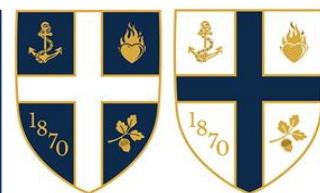
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What happens if attendance becomes a concern?

We want to be clear that an attendance concern is not simply a reason to issue a sanction.

The DfE's statutory guidance expects schools to identify patterns of absence early, understand the reasons behind them, remove barriers and provide appropriate support. Where support is not successful or is not engaged with, schools can move towards more formal measures.

At St Augustine's, this may include:

- monitoring attendance and punctuality;
- contacting parents/carers;
- discussing concerns with the pupil;
- identifying barriers to attendance;
- working with the Pastoral Year Coordinator;
- Attendance Officer involvement; and
- agreeing practical steps to improve attendance;
- attendance meetings;
- attendance pledges or contracts;
- pastoral or inclusion support;
- referrals to appropriate external agencies;
- home visits where appropriate; and
- involvement of the Local Authority where necessary

Important information about penalty notices

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child receives a suitable education and, where registered at school, attends regularly.

Under the National Framework for Penalty Notices, schools and local authorities must consider a penalty notice when a pupil reaches 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. Ten sessions is equivalent to five school days.

Importantly, these sessions do not have to occur consecutively. The threshold can be reached through a combination of unauthorised absences, including term-time holidays and other unauthorised absence.



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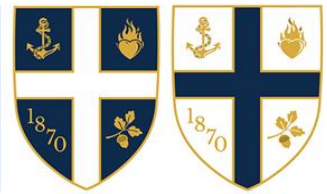
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We are here to help

We want to make it clear that we would much rather work with you early than wait until attendance becomes a serious concern.

If there is something preventing your child from attending regularly – including anxiety, friendship difficulties, SEND-related barriers, medical needs, family circumstances or difficulties with routines – please speak to us.

We are committed to working with you so that your child can be in school, be ready to learn and make the most of every opportunity available to them. Thank you for your continued support in helping us to make excellent attendance a shared priority.

Every day matters. Every lesson matters. Every child matters.

Yours faithfully,

Ms R Kelly

Head of St Augustine's CE High School



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