



ST. CATHERINE'S
COLLEGE
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Attendance Policy

Date approved: 09/09/2017

Date to be reviewed: 08/09/2020

Attendance to college every day is essential for success

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their children of school age receive a suitable full time education. The college have a legal responsibility to keep an accurate attendance register that reflects a child's attendance to college in both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late and there is a clear correlation between academic success and school attendance of over 97%. Children should be present, on time, every day the college is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the college (not by the parents) as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised'. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

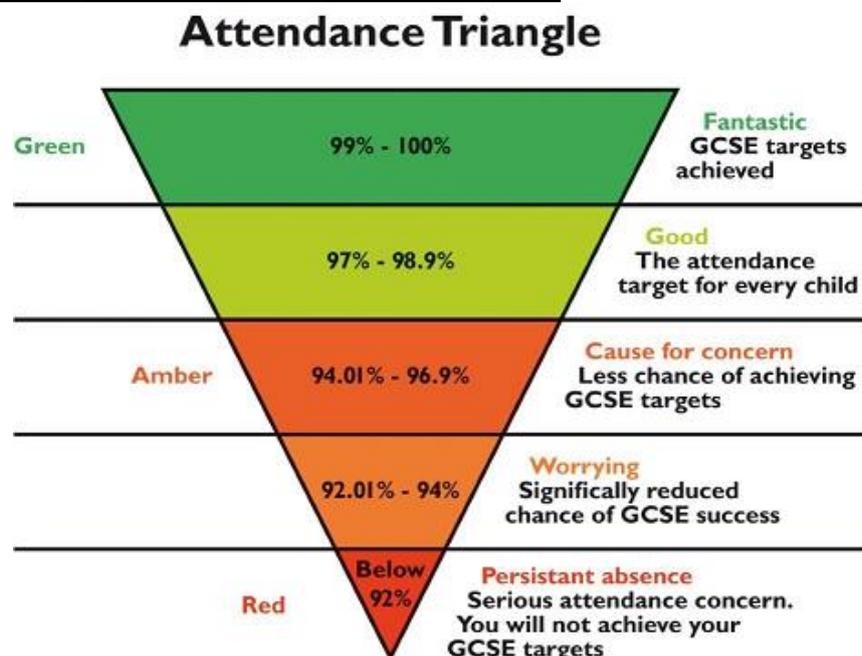
'Authorised' absences are mornings or afternoons away from college for unavoidable reason such as genuine illness.

'Unauthorised' absences are those which the college does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. These include:

- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been reported by parents or properly explained
- children who arrive to college after the register has closed (9.00am)
- extended term time absence such as holidays
- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily

The table below shows how important regular attendance to college is and the negative impact each day's absence can have on a child's college attendance record.

Why is attendance important – what impact does it have?



What if your child is genuinely ill?

As a caring Christian college we understand your child may be ill on occasions and when this is the case we accept that they should be kept at home and away from college. The following advice from the local health authority is a good guide for parents regarding whether your child should still attend college:

RED: STAY AT HOME – raised temperature rashes, vomiting or diarrhoea.

AMBER: TAKE ADVICE – headaches, a child with a minor headache does not usually need to stay off from college but if there are other symptoms then a doctor should be consulted.

GREEN: COME TO SCHOOL – mild cough, mild cold, sore throat or any other mild symptoms if the above does not accompany them.

Procedure for parents if your child is too unwell to attend college

1. A parent or carer must notify the College's Attendance Officer of any absence, in advance if known, or as soon as possible on the day, and on every day of absence.
2. If the College does not receive notification of absence by 10.00am, the Attendance Officer will send parental contacts a text advising of the absence and asking for the reason. Parents/carers must respond to this text on the day the text is sent.
3. If no reply is received by the College that day, a letter will be sent home asking for the reason for absence. Parents are required to contact the College on receipt of the letter to explain the child's absence.
4. If, after five days, the College has not had a response from the parent/carers, the absence will be declared 'unauthorised'.

This procedure is to be followed for each and every day of a child's absence.

Students whose attendance is below 90% or have irregular attendance patterns must provide medical evidence for each absence.

NB: It is not appropriate for the College to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips, etc.

We kindly request that medical appointments are made outside of college hours when at all possible. If not possible, please endeavour to make medical appointments either first thing in the morning or later in the afternoon so that there is minimum disruption to your child's education.

Leave of absence

The College actively discourages parents/carers from taking their child out of school during term dates. The Headteacher will not authorise term time absence unless there are extremely exceptional circumstances and requests for such absence must be put in writing at least 14 days prior to the planned absence. In the case of an unauthorised leave of absence the College will notify ESBAS and a penalty notice will be issued which will be payable to the local educational authority.

Late arrival

Late arrival is recorded for all students regardless of the reason and sanctions will be given. If a student arrives after 9.30am without a good reason, this will count as one whole session of unauthorised absence (i.e. half a day). Late arrival can be authorised in cases of known delay of public transport or known appointments and parents must provide the College with the appropriate information.

If you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child to college

Please contact your child's tutor by email if your child is finding it difficult to get to college. The tutor is the person in school who will usually know your child the best and will be able to suggest strategies and will advise attendance staff if the problem persists.

Procedures for attendance officer:

The College applies the following procedures in dealing with individual absences:

1. The Attendance Officer will check messages left on the attendance line and update registers.
2. The Attendance Officer will send an absence text to parents/carers of those children with unexplained absence. The registers will be amended when we hear from the parent/carer.
3. If no response to the text is received from a parent/carer that day, a letter will be sent asking for the reason of absence.
4. If no response to the letter is received within five days, the attendance register will classify the absence as 'unauthorised'.
5. Absence is continually monitored by the College's attendance officer. If a child's attendance falls below 95%, a member of the attendance team should meet with the child and speak with the parent/carer to discuss the issue. An attendance plan will routinely be written as a supportive measure to improve a child's attendance.
6. If absence continues to be an issue, a home visit should be arranged.
7. If absence falls below 90%, the college will contact the Education Support, Behaviour and Attendance Service (ESBAS) for their advice and possible involvement. A Penalty Notice may also be issued to the parent/carer.
8. College will provide the local authority and DFE with the correct attendance statistics each term including each student with attendance below 90% for that term.

Procedures for other college staff

- keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all students, at least twice daily
- encourage and reward good attendance
- provide a safe learning environment, which gives a sympathetic response to any students concerns
- form tutors will monitor the attendance of their tutees and refer any concerns to the appropriate year and attendance teams
- promote a positive attitude to attendance and punctuality through their own behaviour

Encouraging high attendance

The College rewards students for high attendance by:

- awarding achievement points for 100% attendance in a term
- providing students with achievement certificates for 100% attendance
- displaying tutor attendance in a weekly college attendance Champion's League table
- making attendance part of every formal college report sent home to parents and carers