

Your responsibility...

You have a legal duty to ensure your child receives a regular education at school or otherwise. This will give them the best possible chance of success in life.

At St. Stephen's Junior School we will work with you to address any attendance issues. Be it school refusing, a long term medical condition or a wider family matter, we have a dedicated team here to support you. We are able to make referrals to The School Health Team and Early Help for further assistance should it be needed.

If all avenues have been exhausted and your child's attendance does not improve, we may consult with The Attendance Service. This could result in them taking action against you for each child absent, including:

- ◆ A fine (fixed penalty notice)
- ◆ Prosecution through the Magistrates' Courts which could lead to a fine of up to £1,000 or a parenting order being issued.
- ◆ An Education Supervision Order (ESO) through the Family Courts.

If your child is of compulsory school age and registered at St. Stephen's but absent without good reason, we may choose not to authorise any of these days.

We may apply to Kent County Council to issue a fixed penalty notice to you if:

- ◆ Your child goes on holiday without the Headteacher's permission. We are unable to authorise holidays in term time.
- ◆ Your child is absent regularly or late without a suitable explanation, or none is provided.

Each parent can receive a £160 fine for each child reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If the fine remains unpaid after 28 days you may be prosecuted which could result in a larger fine. (September 2024)

Positive attendance for all...



A guide for Parents and Carers of St. Stephen's Junior School.

Here at St. Stephen's Junior School we are committed to continually raising the achievement of all of our pupils.

We want our children to feel a sense of belonging in school.

To achieve this, regular attendance is critical.

We are here to support children and parents to ensure that all children attend school regularly to achieve their potential.

There are 190 days in a school year, which leaves 175 days to spend on whatever you choose!



190 DAYS

100%

Very best
chance of
success



183 DAYS

96%

Off to a
flying start



179 DAYS

94%

Less chance
of success



175 DAYS

92%

Harder to
make
progress



171 DAYS

Or LESS
Under 90%

Persistent
absence is
not good for
your child

Did you know?

**96% attendance is 37.5 hours of learning lost a year.
90% attendance is 104.5 hours of learning lost a year.**

Attendance matters...

Too ill to attend school?

Children can attend school with minor ailments; a toothache, headache, stomach ache, cold or sore throat. If you are unsure how long your child should be absent with an illness, ask in the school office, your GP surgery or a pharmacist for advice.

Medical appointments.

If possible, routine appointments should be booked outside school hours. If your child is absent for medical reasons, we may ask to see 'medical evidence'; a copy of a prescription, medicine packaging with a label or an appointment card. If you are unable to provide this, we may not authorise the absence.

Absence during term time.

Your child must not be absent from school:

- ◆ For day trips / birthdays / holidays
- ◆ If the weather is bad (Unless we notify you)
- ◆ You are running late
- ◆ To care for other family members
- ◆ Due to the illness of a parent or sibling.

We will only authorise an absence in very exceptional circumstances, such as in the event of a family emergency.

Reporting absences.

It is your responsibility to notify us when your child will be absent from school. This can be done via ParentMail, the absence reporting line or in person at the school office. If you fail to report your child as absent, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

Every day counts

Arriving late to school is unsettling for your child and can be disruptive for their teacher and other children in the class. It is important your child arrives on time. Our school day starts at 8.45am. If your child arrives late, this will be marked in the register. If your child arrives very late, we may record this as an unauthorised absence for the whole morning.

Minutes late per day.	Equals days-worth of teaching lost per year.
5 Minutes	3.4 days
10 minutes	6.9 days
15 minutes	10.3 days
20 minutes	13.8 days

Persistent Absence

Any child with attendance of 90% or below (regardless of the reason for any absences) is considered to be a persistent absentee by the government. This equates to missing ½ a day of school every week. If your child is persistently absent, we may arrange a meeting to find out what could be causing the absences and what is needed to help make things better. This may result in the creation of an attendance contract or referrals to services such as Early Help, School Health or The Emotional Wellbeing Team. They may be able to provide your family with additional support.

*Please refer to our School Attendance Policy for further information.
This can be found at www.ststephensjuniorschool.co.uk*

www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/early-help-support-for-families
www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/school-health/