

EXPLORE

Attendance

**PROMOTING GOOD  
ATTENDANCE AT  
ST BEGA'S**



*In conjunction with  
Clennell.*

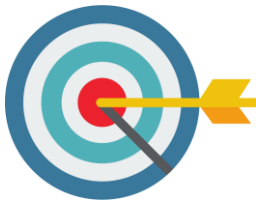
*Attendance Matters  
because You Matter!*



Excellent attendance at school is important to allow your child to fulfil their potential and for them to have the best possible start in life.

Although we aim for 100%, each year we set a target for attendance and this is used to compare us to other schools nationally.

Our current attendance target is **95% or higher!**




Below are just some of the reasons why it is so important children attend school:

- To learn
- To have fun and make new friends
- To understand responsibility
- To experience new things and opportunities
- To develop awareness of other cultures, religions, ethnicity and differences
- To achieve
- To gain qualifications
- To develop new skills
- To build confidence and self-esteem
- To grow as individuals



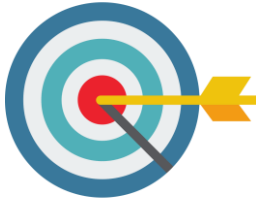
Please help us to help your child by encouraging regular school attendance.

Regular attendance helps children to develop confidence and to make lasting friendships.



Children who regularly miss school without good reason are more likely to become isolated from their friends, underachieve and/or become involved in anti-social behavior.

Remember, our target is to achieve at least **95% or higher!**



If your child has 90% attendance, they will have the equivalent of:

- ½ day off per week
- 19 days off per year
- 247 days off over their school career of 13 academic years, the equivalent to over 1 year of lost education!

If your child attendance falls below 95% their attendance will be closely monitored by school as they will be classed as **At Risk** of becoming **Persistently Absent**. At St Bega's we will always offer support to our families to ensure that all children have access to all of the opportunities open to children whilst journeying through our school. Please do not hesitate to ask for advice/support if you need it.

Consider what this means for attendance lower than 90%.

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT PUPILS WHO ATTEND SCHOOL REGULARLY ARE MORE LIKELY TO DO WELL IN THE FUTURE.

IF YOU TAKE YOUR CHILD ON A 2 WEEK HOLIDAY IN TERM TIME, ATTENDANCE FOR THE YEAR IMMEDIATELY DROPS TO 95%.

**ATTEND today....  
ACHIEVE tomorrow!**

# Holidays and Sporting Events

## PLEASE THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE TAKING YOUR CHILD OUT OF SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

In law, you must ask for permission for your children to miss school. The Department for Education issued new statutory guidance for attendance on 19.08.24. [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance) Holidays in term time will not be authorised unless the Head Teacher feels there are exceptional circumstances. The Government, '*Does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.*'

Any absences for external Sporting / Performance Events which are held during the school day, but not as part of school's curriculum, will be recorded as an unauthorised absence.

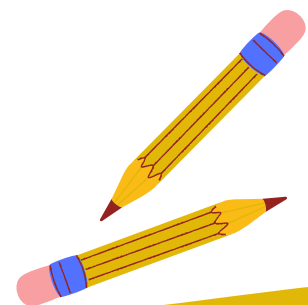


THERE ARE 190 STATUTORY SCHOOL DAYS IN ONE YEAR. THAT MEANS THERE ARE 175 DAYS (WEEKENDS AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS) AVAILABLE TO USE FOR HOLIDAYS.

A 2 WEEK HOLIDAY IN SCHOOL TIME MEANS YOUR CHILD HAS APPROXIMATELY 50 HOURS OF MISSED WORK TO CATCH UP ON!

ANY PERIOD TAKEN WITHOUT AGREEMENT FROM THE SCHOOL WILL BE CLASSED AS UNAUTHORISED AND MAY ATTRACT A PENALTY NOTICE.

THERE IS NO AUTOMATIC ENTITLEMENT IN LAW TO TAKE TIME OFF SCHOOL TO GO AWAY ON HOLIDAY.



# Reducing Illness Days

If your child is saying they do not feel well and you are unsure about whether it warrants a day off, please send them to school. If they are truly ill, we will ring you.

Use common sense when deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is my child well enough to do the activities of the school day?
- Does my child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff?
- Would I take the day off work if I had this condition?

Please ensure that your child does not miss unnecessary time from school for low level illness (e.g. coughs / colds) or headache (treatment can be completed during the evening and then the child can be in school the next day).

You may be asked to provide medical evidence if your child's attendance is regularly affected by illness.

If your child is going to be absent, please ensure that you contact our school office no later than 9am as this is an important part of our safeguarding routine.





# Medical Appointments

If your child must have a medical or dental appointment during school time, please do your best to have it after 3:20pm and then your child can have their registration mark for the afternoon before you pick them up. If it needs to be a morning appointment, please ensure, where possible, to bring your child into school first to get their mark and then return them to school after the appointment. Please provide medical evidence for the appointment.

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school as either AUTHORISED UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required and why a whole day of absence **CANNOT** be authorised for most medical appointments.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness (where a child is too ill to attend), medical / dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other unavoidable causes.

The Department for Education guidance states “If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied with the illness's authenticity but should advise parents of their intentions. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, emails, texts etc. rather than a doctor's note.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can contribute to the Local Authority issuing Penalty Notices and/or legal proceedings.

5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence within a 10-week rolling period can trigger the issue of a Penalty Notice by the Local Authority. We want to avoid this wherever possible!



# Policy and Procedures

Pupil attendance is closely monitored at St Bega's. We will check pupil attendance percentages regularly to see if action is required.

Parents / carers must contact the school by **9.00am** on the first day of absence to provide a specific reason and then each subsequent day. First response calls will be made daily if a child does not attend and no explanation is received from parents as part of our safeguarding procedures.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility. Unexplained absences, regular absences, or frequent lateness will trigger contact from our Attendance Officer and/or the Local Authority.

Where children are absent due to illness, you may be asked to provide supporting evidence from a medical professional. With your consent, a referral may be made to the School Nurse to further support you as a family.

Frequent absences / lateness and lengthy absences are a concern, and therefore we will contact you about your child's attendance and discuss what support is required.

Parents / carers will be offered an 'Attendance Contract' when we are concerned about unauthorised absences or persistent absence if school support has had little impact on attendance. This will outline the support available as well as the steps that you will need to take to improve your child's attendance.

Continuous poor attendance (without a valid reason) will be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of further actions, which may include the issue of a Penalty Notice or prosecution.



# Penalty Notices

Failure of a parent to ensure their child's attendance, is an offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. If the reasons given for a child's absence are not satisfactory, then the Local Authority may take legal proceedings against a person for their failure to comply.

## National Threshold for the Issue of a Penalty Notice:

From 19.08.24, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period. The threshold is 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. *It is important to note that the 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks or any other unauthorised absence.* The period of 10 weeks can span different terms or school years.

## Penalty Notices will be issued for:

**Term Time Leave:** (Inc Holidays) If a pupil takes unauthorised term time leave for 10 consecutive sessions or more (5 days) they will be subject to a Penalty Notice.

**Irregular Attendance:** A Penalty Notice Fine will also be issued when a child has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a period of 10 school weeks.





# Penalty Notices

St Bega's recognises and values the importance of good attendance and therefore will always follow the 'support first' approach when working with our families to remove any barriers to good attendance. We understand that each family is unique and therefore we will work closely with you to ensure the correct support is put in place to support your child's attendance.

## First, Second and Third Offences

**The first Penalty Notice** issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure regular school attendance.

**A second Penalty Notice** issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days. (No reduction)

**A third Penalty Notice** cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, the referral will be automatically considered for prosecution in relation to Section 444 Education Act 1996. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on a parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'Failure to safeguard a child's education'.



# Punctuality

Poor punctuality or leaving before the end of the school day is not acceptable.

Missing just 10 minutes of a school day is the same as missing two weeks over the year.

Pupils who arrive late and / or leave early also disrupt lessons which can be embarrassing for the child and can in turn, encourage absence. It is also extremely disruptive for the rest of the class.

- School starts at 8:50am and ends at 3:20pm
- Gates open at 8:40am
- Registers are taken at 8:50am
- Learning starts at 8:50am prompt.

*If you need support, or you are worried about your child's attendance please contact your child's teacher, our school office, our Attendance Officer, Mrs Tester or our Attendance Lead Mrs Duffield.*

*01429 267768*

**Our school gates open at 8:40am...**

**...and close at 8:50am when learning begins!**

**PUNCTUALITY—DID YOU KNOW?**

Missing just 10 minutes of school a day is the same as missing 6 days over the year. 6 days of lost learning and opportunities!

Punctuality is very important, so arriving late or leaving early is not good for your child. School is where we learn good habits for the rest of our lives.

We need your help to support this.  
Many Thanks

