



St Elphege's Catholic Schools

Mollison Drive, Wallington, SM6 9HY | Tel: 020 8669 6306 | www.stelphesrcschools.org.uk

Executive Head Teacher: Mr M Jones

Head Teacher: Mr L Hawkes

Deputy Head Teachers: Mrs R Duffy & Mrs N Hawkes

Monday, 10 November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Regular School Attendance

St Elphege's is committed to ensuring every pupil receives the full-time education they are entitled to. Regular attendance is essential for your child's academic progress, wellbeing, emotional development, friendships and wider life chances. It is also a legal responsibility for parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.

The Importance of Attendance and Legal Responsibilities

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. When you register your child at school, you take on the legal duty to ensure they attend every day the school is open, unless they are unwell and in very small number of highly exceptional circumstances which can only be authorised by the school.

Research shows that pupils with higher attendance rates achieve better outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 and, later in high school, at Key Stage 4.

Whilst 100% attendance is the goal, we understand occasional illness happens. We encourage aiming for 96% or above as a realistic target for every child at St Elphege's.

Aside from illness, please do not take leave during term time.

Attendance Facts

- Attendance is recorded at both morning and afternoon registration. If your child arrives after the register closes or leaves before afternoon registration, this counts as a half-day absence.
- Aiming for **96% attendance** means your child would miss nearly **8 school days per year**, which over their time in education equates to **over half a year of missed learning**.
- Even a **1% improvement in attendance** can lead to a **5-6% improvement in attainment outcomes**.

What does the NHS say about school attendance?

The NHS provide a useful guide for parents about when you should keep your child off school. The guide lists many common childhood illnesses and provides advice on whether your child can continue to attend school, or how long they should stay off.

For example, if your child has mild cough, cold or sore throat, they can usually attend school providing they do not have a temperature. Whereas if your child is experiencing sickness or diarrhoea, they should stay off school for 48 hours after their last episode.

You can view the guide by clicking [this link](#).

If you are ever in any doubt whether you should send your child to school, we will always be happy to talk things through with you on the phone. Please just give the school office a call in the morning.

Our Approach to Supporting Attendance

To promote strong school attendance, our attendance policy includes the following:

- Clear expectations for attendance and punctuality, including start and end times and register closing times.
- Procedures for parents to **inform us promptly of absences** and reasons.
- First-day contact if no reason is provided, and **follow-up welfare calls throughout periods of absence**.
- Regular updates to parents about their child's attendance, explained in terms of **time missed and learning impact**.
- Meetings with parents of pupils who are persistently or severely absent to discuss support and engagement.
- Working closely with local authorities and wider partners when needed to remove barriers to attendance.
- A strategy to promote and incentivise good attendance across the school community.

Our attendance policy is available on our [website](#).

How You Can Help

- Please ensure your child arrives on time every day and attends all sessions unless unwell.
- If you are in any doubt whether your child is well enough to attend school, please call and speak to the school office.
- **Please trust that we will always call you during the school day if we think that your child is too unwell for school and needs to go home.**
- If you have concerns about your child's attendance or need support, please contact the school office and we will put you in touch with our pastoral service or a member of the leadership team. **We are here to help.**
- Contact the school office as soon as possible on the first day of any absence to inform us of the reason.
- **Aside from illness, please do not take leave during term time.**

St Elphege's has always enjoyed close partnerships with parents and carers because we really do want the best for your children, just the same as you do.

If you have any questions about school attendance, all staff at St Elphege's would be happy to discuss this with you, including your child's class teacher or teaching assistant, the pastoral team, the school office or the leadership team.

As always, thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Jones
Executive Head Teacher