

10 September 2025

Dear St Dunstan's School Families,

A new academic year is here, and I'm delighted to welcome you and your children back. I hope you have had a wonderful break and are ready for an exciting year of learning and growth. As we begin, I want to take a moment to highlight the immense importance of **school attendance** and **punctuality**.

Our Partnership with You

This year, our approach to monitoring attendance will focus on the number of days and sessions your child is absent, rather than just on a percentage. This means we will be in touch more frequently as absences build up, even if they are for valid reasons. Our goal is to proactively work with you to address any issues early on, before they can significantly impact your child's learning.

We understand that absences are sometimes unavoidable due to illness or other family emergencies. In such cases, please contact the school office on the morning of each day your child is absent. You can reach us via main reception or by emailing secretary@stdunstans.mnsp.org.uk. This helps us ensure your child's safety and allows us to keep accurate attendance records. We also strongly advise against taking holidays during term time, as this can significantly disrupt your child's education and social development.

To help your child, please arrange any routine appointments (e.g., dentist, doctor) for later in the morning or in the afternoon, whenever possible. If an appointment must take place during the school day, your child should attend school before the appointment or return afterward. Getting even one attendance mark is much better than having a full-day absence.

The Impact of Attendance

Being in school on time every day is one of the most critical factors for a child's success. Each school day is filled with valuable lessons, discussions, and activities that

build on one another. When students miss school, they can miss out on key concepts and fall behind their peers.

Beyond academic study, regular attendance is vital for a child's **social and emotional well-being**. School is a place where friendships are formed, social skills are developed and a sense of belonging is fostered. Being present allows students to feel connected to their classmates and teachers, which significantly contributes to their confidence and mental health. Being a community means we want everyone in our community to be included and involved.

What is good attendance?

In order to support you with your child's attendance, it is important that we are clear with our expectations around attendance. The Department for Education specifies that **good attendance is a minimum of 96%**. This means that your child cannot have good attendance if they are absent from school for more than 8 days in an academic year. Anything below this, requires improvement.

At St Dunstan's, we are committed to providing an inspiring and supportive environment for every student. By working together to ensure excellent attendance, we can help your child achieve their full potential and have a truly successful and memorable year.

We look forward to partnering with you throughout this school year.

Yours sincerely,



K Haden

Deputy Headteacher