



Managing Attendance Guidance for Parents 2023-2024



This guidance provides parents and carers with information about how St Louis responds to school absences and late arrival in school. We work in partnership with the Suffolk County Council School Attendance Team to manage school attendance.

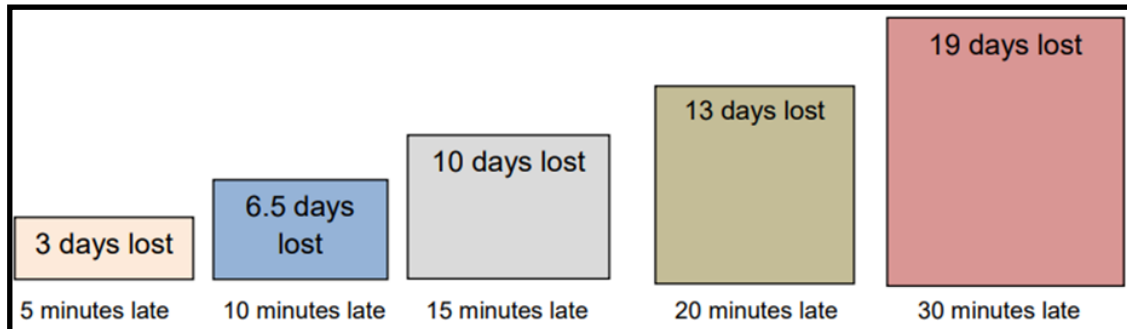
School absence

Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in their learning. The table shows how children's percentage attendance equates to the amount of school time missed.

| Attendance | Days of learning lost |
|------------|-----------------------|
| 95% | 9 days |
| 90% | 19 days |
| 80% | 29 days |
| 75% | 48 days |
| 70% | 57 days |
| 65% | 67 days |

Late arrival

It is also important to arrive at school on time. If a child arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time over one academic year.



Unauthorised Absence

Please note that unauthorised absence of six or more sessions (3 or more days) may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by Suffolk County Council.

Arrival time

8.40am to 8.50am Your child is on time and is recorded as present on the school register.

8.50am to 9am Your child is recorded as late on the school register.

After 9am Your child's absence is recorded as unauthorised on the school register.

What happens if your child does not arrive in school?

We check at 9am to see who is not in school. Our admin team will contact you to check where your child is. If we cannot contact you, we'll contact other relatives and friends that you have told us are on your emergency contact list. If we cannot make contact this way, we'll visit your home to establish that your child is safe. If you have left a message on the school answerphone or sent us an email, we will still call you to speak to you personally, establish the reason for the absence and provide support.

We prioritise calls to home for those children in Years 5 & 6 who have permission to walk to school alone. If we cannot speak to you or your emergency contacts to establish where your child is, we will contact the **emergency services** to help us to locate your child and ensure that they are safe. **For sickness absence immediately before or after a school holiday, we will make a home visit on the first day of absence to confirm that you are not on holiday or that the child is missing.**

Medical appointments

Please try to make these in the school holidays or outside the school day. Where this is not possible, reasonable travel time will be authorised, however, extended time off will not be given and we do expect your child to be in school before and after the appointment. We require evidence of the time of your appointment and its purpose. We do not authorise overseas medical appointments except in exceptional circumstances.

What happens when your child is sick?

We understand that children become unwell from time to time. However, we are keen to welcome children into school with minor ailments and are happy to administer GP/ Nurse Practitioner prescribed medication and over the counter remedies including Calpol and other similar products that can be used to treat many conditions including headaches, toothache, earache, teething, sore throats, colds, aches and pains. We ask that GP prescribed medicine is in the bottle dispensed by your pharmacist and for over the counter remedies, please provide it in sealed packets or bottles. We have a fridge in the Office Reception where we keep clearly labelled medication alongside a consent form that we ask you to complete.

Following the advice of the Suffolk Attendance Service, we DO NOT require 48 hours absence following a stomach upset and they can return the following day if they appear well. If your child is prone to asthma and/or allergy related sickness absence, we can make a referral to the School Nurse Service to support you and your child to help them to attend school regularly.

What happens when your child is sick for longer than one day?

On each day that your child is absent you should phone the school; we do need to speak to you in person. On the second or third day, depending upon the reason for the absence, the class teacher will speak to you and your child to offer reassurance, ensure that your child is with you and begin to plan for their return. Where their illness is longer term, we will request medical evidence of their illness and evidence that they have seen a medical practitioner. We will continue to maintain contact in this way throughout their absence. For children with a poor history of attendance, we may call to speak to your child on day 1 of the absence and/or visit as part of our support to keep your child in school.

How can we help if you are struggling to get your child to school?

Our Safeguarding Team is:

- Mrs Blakeley Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL),
- Mrs White Deputy DSL
- Mrs Smith Support DSL

You can speak to any of them to help you. We may be able to help with pick up and drop off, provide wraparound services, counselling or signpost you to other services that are available. We are always happy to help you work through any difficulties.

Of course, you can also speak to the Class Teacher or Admin Team too.

How will we keep you informed about attendance?

Each term we write to all parents and carers to confirm each child's attendance in a letter.

As soon as a child's attendance becomes a concern to us, we will request a meeting with you together with one of the Safeguarding Team and the Class Teacher. In the meeting, we will develop a plan to improve attendance going forward.

Where attendance fails to improve, we ask for the support of the Suffolk School Attendance Officer to work with you and the school to make changes. This is a supportive act that usually helps to improve attendance. We meet with you regularly over a number of weeks to monitor progress against an agreed Attendance Improvement Plan.

Who can collect my child at the end of the school day?

We will only return children to named adults on the school records that we hold. We require the collecting adult to approach the member of school staff to allow us to ensure safe handover. Please notify the admin team if there are any changes to the named adults collecting your child. If there is a known safeguarding issue around the collection of your child, please contact the Safeguarding Team immediately.

Children in Years 5 & 6 are permitted to walk home once we have obtained a written consent form from their parent or carer.

We will not usually permit siblings under the age of 14 years of age to collect a child. We will consider granting consent on a case by case basis with you taking into account the safety of the children involved.

The St Louis Attendance Policy and Procedure is available in full on the school website: <https://www.stlouisacademy.co.uk/policies>