

05 January 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Attendance at St Katherine's School**

Levels of attendance at St. Katherine's School continue to rise. Our overall attendance figure for 2013/2014 was the highest for 14 years. So far this academic year we have improved overall attendance by a further 1%. These are significant improvements and I would like to thank you for your help and support in achieving these figures. We strive to further improve our attendance figures and I continue to value the contribution that parents/carers make to improving school attendance.

At present the main reason for student absence from St Katherine's School is illness. Several parents have asked for clarification about absence from school for illness

When your child is unwell, it can be hard deciding whether to keep them off school. Whether you send your child to school will depend on how severe you think the illness is. The guidance in this letter can help you to make that judgment.

Frequent absence is a serious problem for students as often much of the work they miss is not made up, leaving these students at a significant disadvantage for the remainder of their school career. There is a clear link between poor school attendance and low levels of achievement.

When deciding whether or not your child is too unwell 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 a day off if I had this condition?

Think carefully before keeping your child away from school for medical reasons. If they wake up saying they are unwell, consider whether the symptoms they have mean they need to stay at home. Do not keep your child away from school 'just in case' when they could be in class learning with their friends.

Many common conditions can be treated with paracetamol before your child goes to school. The Student Support Office can also administer paracetamol during the school day. We will always telephone you to ask for your permission before giving your child any medication. If your child becomes unwell at school or their symptoms worsen we will always telephone you.

If your child requires a medical appointment these should be made outside school hours wherever possible. However, if your child has an appointment during school time you should take an appointment card or letter to the Student Support Office so that your child's absence can be authorised.

There is no reason for your child to be absent from school for minor ailments such as:

- Athlete's Foot
- Ringworm
- Cold Sores
- Slapped Cheek
- Conjunctivitis
- Sore Throat
- Head Lice
- Period Pains
- Warts and Verrucae

You should however, seek treatment for the above ailments.

Medical appointments should be kept to a minimum and routine check-ups should be arranged during the holiday periods. However, we are able to authorise absence for medical treatment and orthodontic treatment when supported by a hospital or surgery appointment letter. It is in your child's best interest to minimise the time taken out of school and providing your child is at both AM and PM registration this will not affect their overall attendance percentage.

Thank you for your help and support in securing the very best attendance for your child.

Please contact me at school if you would like to discuss this letter or would like any support in helping to improve your child's attendance.

Yours sincerely

**Hayden Southon**  
**Deputy Headteacher**

# Illness and Attendance at St Katherine's School

**Not every illness needs to keep your child from school. If you keep your child away from school, you must inform the school.**

- Please telephone the school as early as possible before 8.30am on the first morning of your child's absence to give the reason.
- Please contact the Attendance Coordinator: Nicola King (01275 376882) or e-mail: [attendance@stkaths.org.uk](mailto:attendance@stkaths.org.uk)
- You can also inform Main Reception or Student Support (01275 373737)
- Medical evidence may be requested by the Attendance Coordinator upon your child's return to school to support your child's absence (appointment card, medication, prescription etc.)

If your child is ill, it's likely to be due to one of a few minor health conditions. If you are concerned about your child's health, always consult a health professional.

## **Common conditions:**

### **Chicken pox**

Children should be kept at home for 5 days from the onset of the rash.

### **Tonsillitis**

Children can be quite unwell with this at least for the first 48 hours. Seek medical advice.

### **Coughs, colds**

A child with a minor cough or cold may attend school. If the cold is accompanied by a raised temperature, shivers or drowsiness, they should stay at home and you should seek medical advice.

### **Earache**

A child with earache does not normally need to be absent from school. Some earaches are fairly minor and may be part of a general cold virus that can be treated with paracetamol. If the earache is more severe and accompanied by other symptoms, you should seek medical advice.

### **Headache**

A child with a headache does not normally need to be absent from school. If the headache is more severe and accompanied by other symptoms, you should seek medical advice.

### **Rashes**

Rashes can be the first sign of many infectious diseases. If your child has a rash, check with a pharmacist, practice nurse or GP before sending them to school.

### **Toothache**

School attendance should be maintained until your child can be seen by a dentist.

### **Vomiting and/or diarrhoea due to gastroenteritis**

Children with these symptoms should be kept at home for 24 hours after their symptoms have gone. If symptoms persist or reoccur medical advice should be sought.