

What should I do if my child is going to be absent from school?

Please advise the school by email prior to the start of the school day by contacting absent@cspacademy.org.uk (the school office will contact you should we not have heard from you from 9:15am and before 10am) and give detail of the nature of the absence. **This should be followed up, again via email, each following day that your child is absent.** We have a duty of care to check why a child is absent every day they are not in school.

What is an authorised absence?

An absence will be authorised for reasons connected to any of the following:

- Illness (medical evidence may be asked to be provided for prolonged absence)
- Medical appointments (although we do urge parents to ensure that non-emergency appointments are made outside of school hours)
- Other circumstances (due to exceptional, individual circumstances - such as a bereavement)

Other less common authorised absences include visits or entrance exams to a future school.

What is an unauthorised absence?

Absence will be unauthorised if a parent has not given a satisfactory explanation demonstrating the need for the child to be absent from school.

The decision to unauthorise any absence is made by the headteacher and it is at their discretion and in line with the attendance policy.

What happens if my child is late arriving at school?

Registration begins at 8:45am. Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as present but as arriving late. The register closes at 9:15am. Pupils arriving after this time will be recorded as late and will count as an absence for that school session and will be unauthorised without a justifiable cause. If arriving late, pupils should always report to the school office.

What happens if we choose to take a family holiday during term-time?

Parents are very strongly advised not to take their child out of school for the purpose of a holiday. As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances (unexpected, unavoidable and beyond control), it is very highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday. Should you choose to go ahead with the holiday during term-time, you will need to complete an online 'Application for Leave of Absence Form' for the attention of the headteacher.

What is a penalty notice?

The headteacher (or someone authorised by them), the local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school by issuing a penalty notice. Before issuing a penalty notice, each individual case will be considered to see whether the national threshold has been met (10 sessions or 5 days of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks) and whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil.

What if my child requires time absent from school due to the observance of a religious festival or event?

At CSPA , we recognise that the multi-faith nature of our community may sometimes mean that on occasions, religious festivals may fall outside of school holiday periods and weekends. Notice of an absence due to religious observance should be given to the school in advance and will be authorised. Please note that it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any absence in excess of this will be categorised as unauthorised.

When and how will the school take action if my child's attendance causes concern?

Pupil's attendance (both authorised and unauthorised) is carefully monitored on a regular basis. This includes providing the Headteacher with attendance data for each pupil whose attendance falls below 95%. If attendance falls between 90-95%, attendance will be reviewed and monitored. If a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, the following actions will take place:

1. The headteacher will write to parents of children with poor attendance and to those with persistent absenteeism to alert them to the concern and offer support where necessary in order to improve their child's attendance in school.
2. Support systems will be explored and actioned where needed.
3. Where intervention and support systems fail to improve the attendance of a child and persistent absenteeism continues to be a cause for concern, the school will notify and seek the support of the Buckinghamshire Education Welfare Service. As a result, you may be invited to a Parenting Contract Meeting and you may be issued with a formal warning of a Penalty Notice (monetary fine).

The Department for Education dictates that attendance 90% or below is 'persistent absenteeism' and 'severe absence' is where a child misses 50% or more of school.

How does a percentage absence translate to the number of school days missed?

