

*The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School*  
*Attendance Guidance*

2023 - 2024



*The Holy Spirit Primary School*  
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*'Together in the spirit of love and forgiveness our family learns to grow with hope and joy.'*

# A message from the Headteacher

We hope you will find this booklet useful. It explains how important regular school attendance is, and describes how you can ensure that your child makes the most of the educational opportunities at school.

Please remember these important points:

- School begins promptly at 8.55am and children should not arrive more than 10 minutes early.
- If your child is ever late, please send him/her into school as soon as possible. If it is after 9.00am, they will need to use the main entrance.
- Please contact the school on the first day of any absence, either by phone, in person or by note.
- Absence is very disruptive to your child. Please try to avoid taking him/her out of school at any time.

Thank you

Mrs L Connolly

Headteacher

EDUCATION IS TOO GOOD  
TO MISS...



Why do we go to school?

To be  
happy with  
friends

To learn  
about  
everything

To have fun  
making and  
doing things

To find out  
about the  
world

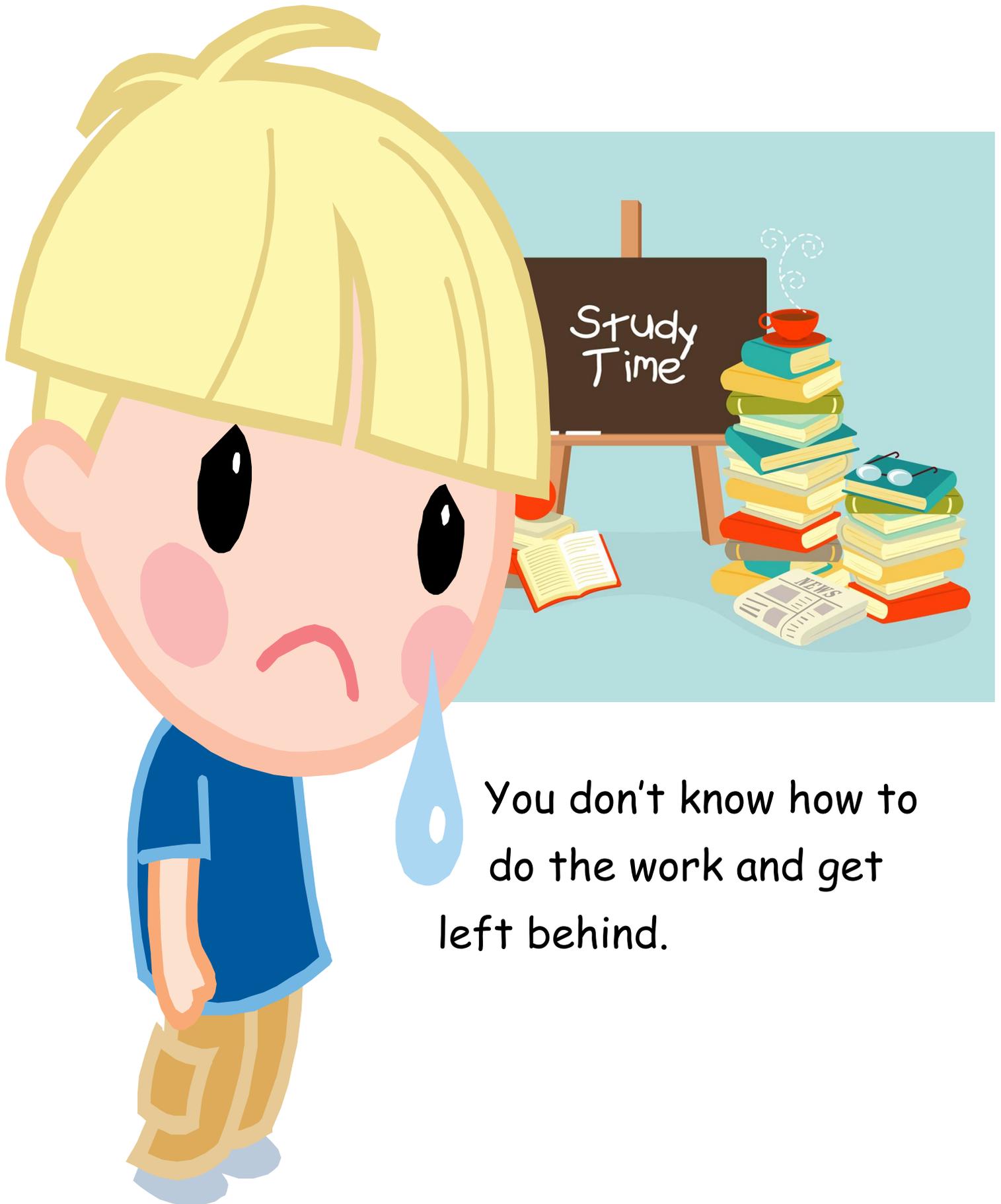
To work  
together  
with  
everyone



Stephanie says she goes to  
school to....



What happens when you are  
off school?

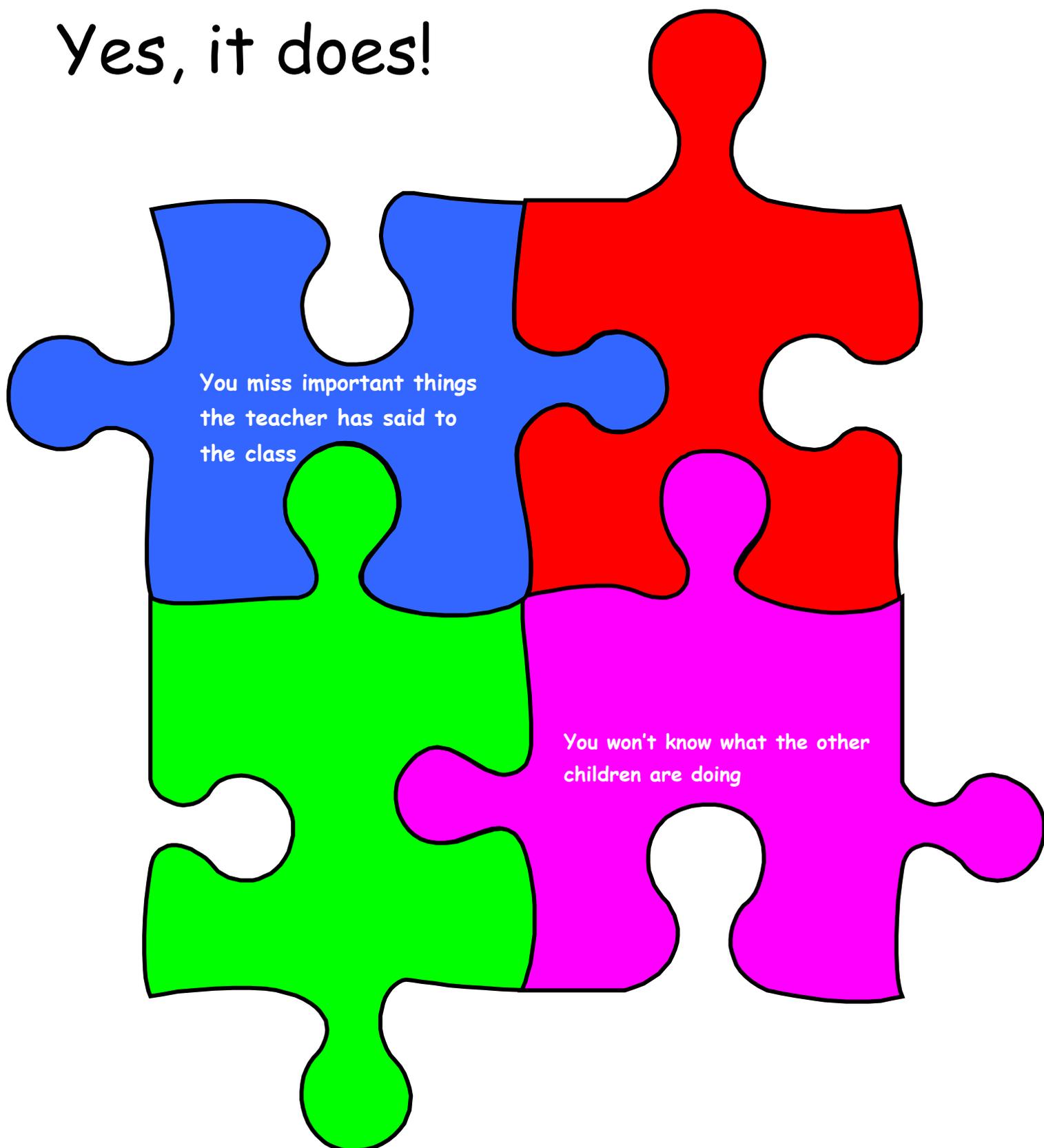


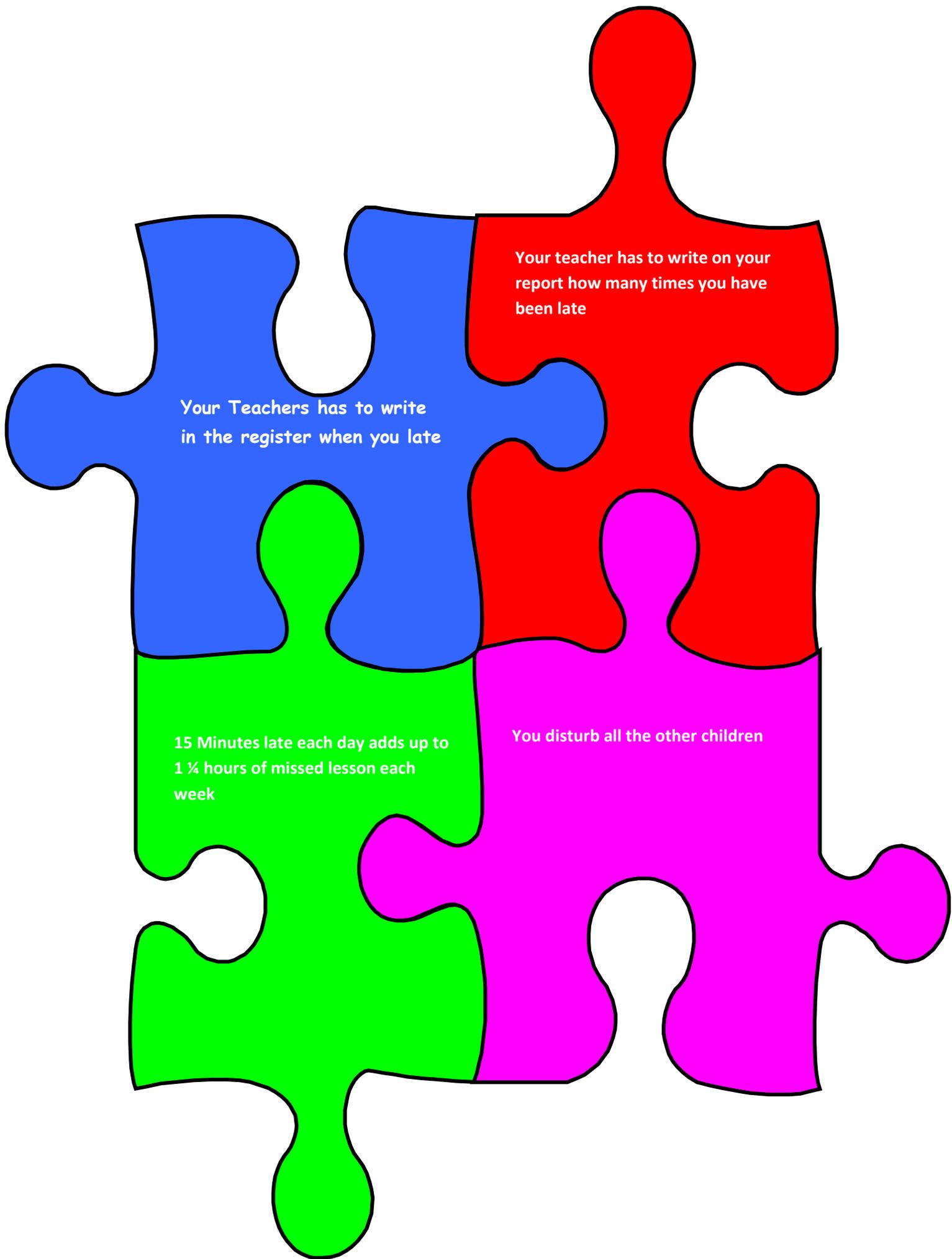
You don't know how to  
do the work and get  
left behind.

You have to make friends again and feel a bit left out...

Does it matter if we're late?

Yes, it does!





Your Teachers has to write  
in the register when you late

Your teacher has to write on your  
report how many times you have  
been late

15 Minutes late each day adds up to  
1 ¼ hours of missed lesson each  
week

You disturb all the other children

Gabriel hates being late for school.

He says...

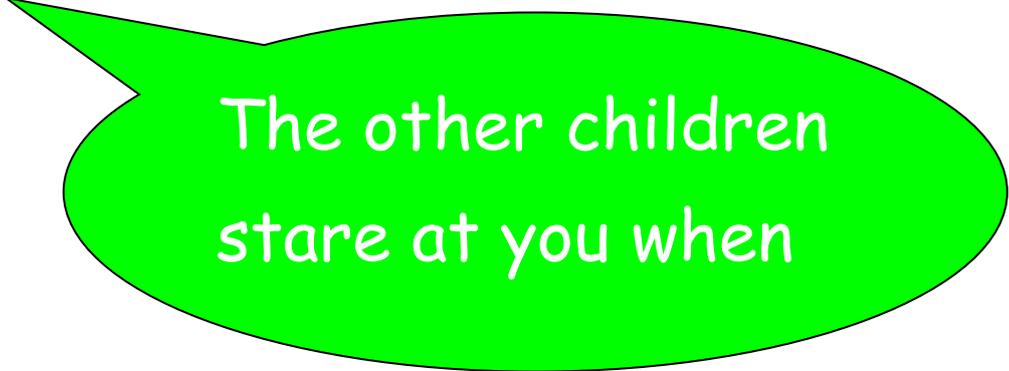


It makes you  
feel  
embarrassed

It gives you a  
scary feeling



It makes you worry



The other children  
stare at you when

Get into a good routine and make a good start to  
each day!

## What are the rules about attendance?

Parents/carers of children aged 5-16 years have to make sure they receive full time education. They must make sure that their child attends school regularly and stays there all day, or provide them with an effective education elsewhere.

# It's the Law

## Section 444 of the Education Act 1996

Parents/carers can be taken to court for breaking the law. The maximum fine is £2500 per parent per child (for you and your partner)



## What about Absences?

It is the parent's responsibility to let the school know the reason for the child's absence.

It is important to get a message to school.

An absence for a justified reason may be acceptable.

An absence for an unjustified reason, or if you have not explained it to school, could be considered by the school as truancy.

Only the Headteacher can decide whether the reason for absence is acceptable or not.

## Reasons for Absence

We know that there are times when your child might need to be absent. The reason may be:

- Genuine Illness
- An urgent Hospital, Doctors or Dentist appointment which cannot be made after school

There may also be exceptional circumstances such as family wedding or bereavement which involve your child. You will need to consult with your Headteacher about these.

## Unacceptable Reasons for Absence

You should not keep your child away from school:

- To look after the house or a member of the family.
- To go shopping
- To visit relatives
- Because it is his/her birthday
- Because it is raining
- Because you got up too late
- Because he/she doesn't want to go
- Because you don't feel like taking him/her
- To help at home

These are unacceptable reasons for absence and will be recorded on your child's annual report.

So what do I do if my child needs time off school? Stop and think:



Your children take their lead from you - give them the message

## Attendance Matters

- Establish a routine
- Have a regular bedtime
- Record programmes on TV which are on too late to watch
- Have an alarm clock
- Get up at the same time every day
- Get a friend to call for you in the morning
- Have a special place to keep letters from school
- Check what is needed for the next day and get it ready
- Have a regular time and place to practice reading together or to do homework

## It helps your child if you

- Take an interest in school work
- Find out from school what you can do to help
- Praise your child's efforts

## Sometimes absence can hide problems that we could be sorting out together

Staying off school and not wanting to go to school for a variety of reasons (like tummy ache, feeling sick, dizzy, faint, not wanting to get out of bed, being angry or stubbornly refusing to go to school) may mean that there is something your child would rather hide away from.

## We would like to help

Even small things can be very big worries or concerns for a child



# Don't let a problem get too big or too serious before doing something about it!

You may spot changes in the way your child usually behaves, in their moods or their normal character which are hard to explain. Other things may have started to happen like sleepless nights, bad dreams, bed wetting, pretending to be ill or looking for reasons to stay at home.

Talk about it with your child. Be a good listener.



No one should be left to feel unhappy, guilty or threatened. No one should be left to feel as if they can't do their school work or don't want to do it.

Talking it over with someone often helps.

## What do schools do about attendance?

- Expect notes and explanations from parents for every single absence, even just part of the day.
- Inform you of the times for beginning and ending of morning and afternoon sessions.

- Tell you of any changes or special dates for the term.
- Include details of your child's attendance on their annual report.
- Listen sensitively to your worries and concerns.
- Praise and record good attendance



## What do schools do about attendance?

- Welcome children back after they have been away and find ways of helping them fit back into friendship circles and catch up on missed work
- Work to make sure there is good behaviour, respect and consideration from everyone for everyone
- Be concerned if your child's absence or lateness needs attention and work with you to find a way to improving it.
- Work in partnership with the Education Welfare Service.

**The happiness and welfare of your child are top of the list for everybody!**

# The Education Welfare Officer undertakes many different roles

Advising school on Child Protection

Working with Other agencies

Child employment issues

Attending child protection meetings

Home visits to parents and children

Advising parents on procedure for special educational needs

Working with Other agencies

Organise meetings to discuss school attendance issues

Other advice on school issues

Working with teachers to deal with children's problems

Talking with children in school

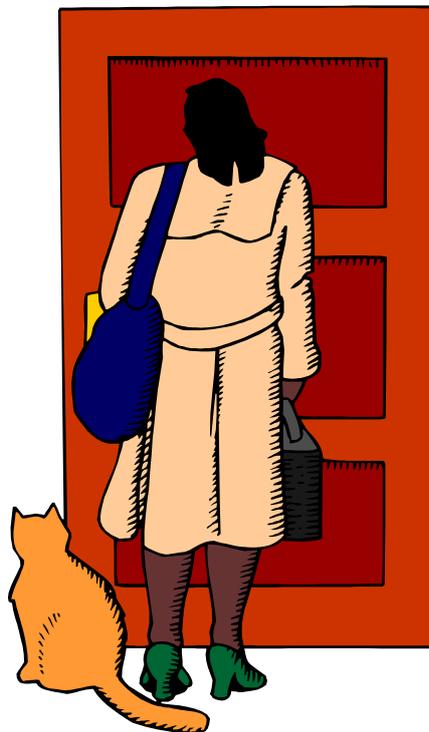
Advice on clothing, meals and welfare benefits

# Every school has an Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

If you want to talk to your child's EWO you can ask the school to contact her/him or you can ring

**0151 511 7264**

The EWO can visit you at home or meet you in school



Please remember to give your child the  
message:

**Attendance is important!**

**Education matters!**

**Your child matters!**

**My name is** .....

**I am** ..... **years old**

**I am going to a school called**

.....

**My Friend is called**

.....

**My Teacher is called**

.....

**And finally:**

It is important that school and home work together in partnership, in the interests of the children.

Parents have a duty and a responsibility to make sure that their children attend school regularly.

School have a duty to look after your children whilst in their care.

**Don't forget!**

If there is ever a problem about your child attending, please contact the school, immediately.

The details you need to know are:

Headteacher: Mrs Dineley

Telephone Number: 01928 563148

The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

Cotterill, Halton Brook, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2NL

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