

Stanley Primary School

Attendance Policy

Version Number	1.1	
Scope of Document	Attendance of pupils	
Objective	To ensure children attend school regularly and on time.	
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All members of the school community are treated with the respect and sensitivity implicit within the practice of a code of equal opportunities and inclusion. Equality of treatment and opportunity operate regardless of background, ability, gender, religion, disability or ethnicity.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend regularly, and on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important, therefore, that you make sure that children attend regularly and this policy sets out how, together, we will achieve this.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents and carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance and punctuality termly;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying class achievements;
- Reward good attendance by rewarding an Attendance Trophy/Prize/Wilf each week to the class with the best attendance;
- Reward good or improving attendance through certificates and prizes;
- Publish class attendance figures each week on the newsletter
- Links to Early Help agencies will be available on the school website.
- Be available to discuss and support families with attendance issues or questions.

Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably with evidence.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for good reason, such as illness, medical/dental appointments (which unavoidably fall in school time), emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

If your child falls below 95% attendance, or has more than 3 broken weeks, medical evidence will be requested to enable us to authorise absence.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, when permission has not been given or no contact has been made. These types of absence may lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Absences which have never been properly explained;
- Children who arrive at school after registers have closed at 9.30am

- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays;
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed;
- Parent/carers not supplying reason for absence within 5 days of pupil's return.
- Taking a full day off for a local, standard medical appointment (inc. dental)

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent, you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.

If your child is absent we will:

- Send a text on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you by 9.30am;
- No contact by Day 3 will lead to referral to the Pupil Welfare Service on Safeguarding grounds
- Unexplained absences prior to school holidays and/or following a school holiday will trigger a safeguarding check.
- Parents will be informed if their child's attendance falls below the expected level of 95%
- Invite you in to discuss or inform you by letter of our concerns. We will offer support and signpost you to Early Help agencies within the authority.
- If absences persist, we will refer the matter to the Pupil Welfare Service.

Pupil Welfare Service

Parents/carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Pupil Welfare Service in order to resolve the situation by agreement. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from school or the Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Pupil Welfare Service themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of school and will give advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Lateness

Being late is not acceptable. Late arriving pupils disrupt lessons and it can be embarrassing for the child and may also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

- Doors will be opened at 8.50 am.
- Registers are marked by 9.00 am and your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- At 9.30 am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be at school, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.
- Persistent lateness will be monitored and you may be invited in to discuss it. You can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence

and we expect parents/carers to help us by not taking children away in school time.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. Any holidays taken in school time will be classified as unauthorised. An absence from school may only be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. For any absence, other than medical, an Absence Request Form should be completed and handed in to the school office before the absence begins. This will ensure the child's absence is entered in the register under the correct code.

***Failure to complete a holiday form will trigger a Pupil Welfare referral, as a safeguarding concern.**

We expect Year 2 and Year 6 to be especially mindful of attendance, particularly during SATs week.

***Penalty Notices are currently under review, pending further clarification from the Local Authority and Dept. of Education.**

School Targets, Projects and Special Incentives

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. We strive each year to beat our targets.

Through the school year, we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our weekly newsletter and on the website. We ask for your full support.