



# Attendance Policy

Policy owner Katie Shires

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## Contents

1	Statement of intent	2
2	Legislation and guidance	2
3	Roles and responsibilities	3
4	Procedures	5
5	Authorised and unauthorised absence	7
6	Promoting good attendance	8
7	Attendance monitoring	8
	Appendices	10
	Change log	19

## 1. Statement of intent

Stantonbury School is committed to transforming educational achievement and to providing the students with the best possible care and learning environment. Stantonbury School believes good attendance and punctuality is vital to successful learning. Attendance is the essential foundation to positive outcomes for all pupils and therefore is seen as everyone's responsibility in the school.

To achieve this Stantonbury School, working in partnership with families, commits to:

- Promoting good attendance, setting all students a minimum target of 95%
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

Good attendance is a learned behaviour and we recognise the importance of developing good patterns of behaviour from the outset.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 The Local Governing Body LGB**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Associate Principal to account for the implementation of this policy

### **3.2 The Associate Principal**

The Associate Principal is responsible for leading the work of the Vice Principal (pastoral and designated senior leader for attendance) in:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Taking a range of attendance enforcement procedures, where necessary

### **3.3 The Vice Principal (pastoral)**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

### **3.4 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with the student services team and year teams to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Associate Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.5 Head of Year/SSL**

The Head of Year and Student Support Leader is responsible for:

- Monitoring the attendance and punctuality of their year group.
- Ensuring tutors are completing their attendance responsibilities
- Identifying groups of students with poor attendance and provide intervention to raise attendance.
- Communicating attendance concerns with parents.
- Conducting parental meetings to address poor attendance.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties.
- Working with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.

### **3.6 Teachers**

Teaching staff must:

- keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through GO4Schools taking a formal register within 10 minutes of the start of each lesson
- ensure students respond to the register with Yes Sir/Miss and put up their hand so tutors can identify them
- To ensure quality first teaching every day with lessons that are well planned and resourced so that they challenge, inspire and meet their learners' needs

### **3.7 Form tutors**

Form tutors must

- keep accurate and up-to-date daily records of pupil attendance through GO4Schools taking a formal register at 8.45am and 3.10pm each day
- ensure students respond to the register with Yes Sir/Miss and put up their hand so tutors can identify them
- regularly remind children and parents about the importance of good attendance
- provide a welcoming and safe environment, which encourages attendance and promotes the best performance from children
- establish good and effective communication links with parents/carers and work collaboratively in meeting the child's needs

- work with students and their families where attendance is a concern, identifying barriers to good attendance and working to overcome these
- Promptly inform the Head of Year of students who persist with poor attendance
- Provide regular feedback to parents about student attendance and punctuality
- Use directed time and pm registration to deal with attendance and punctuality issues. For example keeping students back if they have been late that day.

### **3.8 Parents**

Parents must

- Ensure their child attends school and arrives on time every day.
- Promote a good attitude to learning by ensuring their children attend school in the correct uniform and with the basic equipment required for lessons.
- Not arrange medical and dental appointments in school time wherever possible.
- Telephone to inform the school on the first day of absence for their child by 9am.
- Provide a written/verbal explanation of absence, including dates of absence as soon as their child returns to school.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies in the best interests of their child; this includes informing the school about significant influences and changes in the child's life, which may impact on learning.

Information for parents about attendance can be found in appendix 4

### **3.9 Students**

Students are expected to attend every timetabled session on time

Information for students about attendance can be found in appendix 3

## **4. Procedures**

### **4.1 Attendance Register**

- Stantonbury School is required to record attendance marks in the attendance register at the beginning of the morning session and once in the afternoon for each student. The marks will be either:
  - Present
  - Absent
  - engaged in an approved supervised educational activity offsite
  - unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes

- Students must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day

- The register for the morning session will be taken at 8.45am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 2.10pm and will be kept open until 2.30pm

#### **4.2 Lateness and punctuality**

- The class register will close after a maximum of 10 minutes after the start of the lesson. If a student arrives after this point, this will be counted as a late and coded with an L.
- A student who arrives late to school but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked, using the appropriate code – U
- Form tutors and heads of year monitor punctuality and when lateness to lessons is repeated and deliberate we follow our behaviour policy to deal with this as defiance

#### **4.3 Unplanned Absence**

- Parents/Guardians must notify the school by 9am on the first day of any unplanned absence and each day thereafter for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health. Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the School has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.
- If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, Stantonbury School may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription or appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. Stantonbury will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.
- If Stantonbury School is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.
- A "special register" list of historic poor attendance students and students considered to be susceptible will be monitored by Student Services. Where a student on this list is absent, Student Services or the Attendance Team will contact home as a matter of urgency on the first day of absence.

#### **4.4 Medical or dental appointments**

- Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Advanced notice is required for authorising these absences. Parents should make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible the student should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

#### **4.5 Following up absence**

On each day of absence, Stantonbury School will:

- Send out an absence text using Go4Schools

- Prioritise the absence of susceptible students on bespoke registers
- Make first day absence response phone calls for each student with an absence without a reason provided.
- Ensure safeguarding actions are taken if a student is reported missing
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it onto the school's electronic register

#### **4.6 Reporting attendance to parents**

- Students' attendance will be formally reported to parents via the academic report 3 times per year.
- Parents can view their child's live attendance via the Go4Schools app. This will show a student's overall attendance and also attendance to each individual lesson.

### **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for term time absence**

- The Associate Principal will only grant a leave of absence to students during term time if they consider there to be "exceptional circumstances". A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion
- We define "exceptional circumstances" as one-off events which are unavoidable, rare, significant and out of the control of the student or parent.
- Stantonbury School considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.4 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English, Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boats dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.
- Family bereavement

#### **5.2 Reducing persistent absence**

- Tutors and Heads of Year will provide targeted intervention for students who have an attendance below 90%
- Tutors will monitor tutee attendance and contact parents to discuss any concerns they have.
- All unauthorised absences will be chased by the attendance team to determine reasons behind any student absence.
- Students with an attendance figure below 90% may be asked to attend a meeting with the Head of Year and the attendance officer to raise attendance.
- If poor attendance continues further meetings will be held between parents, SLT and the Attendance officer. Failure to improve attendance can also result in prosecution via the Local Authority.

### **5.3. Legal Sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## **6. Promoting good attendance**

The school employs a number of strategies to promote good attendance

- Form Tutors will discuss attendance regularly with tutees during tutor time. Attendance monitoring forms a core daily role of the Form Tutor. Using Go4Schools Form Tutors discuss attendance with both students and parents addressing attendance concern and praising good and improving attendance.
- Through the rewards system students are encouraged to attend school and all their classes regularly so that they achieve the minimum 95% attendance target



- Heads of Year meet with the Attendance Officer on a regular basis to discuss specific students and to reward students for good attendance as appropriate.
- Subject staff will set a good example for attendance and punctuality by being in the classroom waiting for students to arrive, allowing for a warm welcome and a quick and orderly start to lessons.
- Heads of Year will reinforce the importance of attendance through assemblies rewarding good or improving attendance.
- The school works with the student and family to ensure that there are no barriers to attending school. If barriers are identified then staff will work hard to remove them.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors student absence on a daily basis

Parents are expected to call the school prior to 9am if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.3)

**Parents are expected to call the school absence line for each day of absence on 01908 324411 by 9am each day. Alternatively email [absence@stantonbury-tove.org.uk](mailto:absence@stantonbury-tove.org.uk)**

### Attendance falls below 95%

Parents will be contacted to discuss the reasons for this. Attendance letter 1, (Appendix 2) will be sent home unless there is a genuine reason for absence and attendance will be monitored for up to two weeks. Improved attendance will lead to a praise phone call home from the Form Tutor. If attendance does not improve the attendance process will be followed.

### Attendance falls below 90%

Attendance letter 3 (Appendix 2) will be sent home, with an invitation to attend a meeting (PCM) to discuss the reasons for absence and set agreed targets. The attendance will be monitored for 4 weeks.

### Attendance does not improve

Attendance letter 4 (Appendix 2) will be sent home with an invitation to a Pre Pace meeting. This is a meeting to discuss the continued persistent absence and or failure to meet previously set attendance targets. Failure to attend will result in a referral for a formal attendance meeting (PACE) to be held with Milton Keynes City Council Senior Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions)

## Appendix 1 – DfE attendance codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-Site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school.
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school

N	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
X01	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency or student is in custody
Z	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

## Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

Attendance letter 1

«date\_of\_printing»

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «forename» «surname»

Attendance concerns

There is a very strong correlation between student achievement and student attendance. Consequently, Stantonbury School takes student absence very seriously, and any absence below 95% is scrutinised.

Unfortunately, «forename» 's attendance is currently «percentage\_attendance» % and as a result «his\_\_her\_\_their» attendance will be monitored over a period of 2 weeks.

In two weeks' time «forename» 's attendance level will be reviewed and if it has not risen, I will write to you again. If a student is genuinely ill, it is understandable that they remain at home. The school must be contacted on the first day and when the student returns to school a note should be sent with them.

Ultimately it is the school that authorises absences. I enclose some useful information regarding ways to promote good attendance.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Nicki Henman - Attendance Officer

01908 324411

nicola.henman@stantonbury-tove.org.uk

## Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

### Attendance letter two - continued attendance concerns

«date\_of\_printing»

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «forename» «surname» - «reg» -

Continued attendance concerns

I write to advise you that there are serious concerns regarding the attendance of your child.

Unfortunately, «forename» 's attendance has continued to fall and is now at «percentage\_attendance» %, this equates to «total\_unauthorised\_absences» days.

You are therefore invited to attend a meeting to discuss our concerns. This has been arranged for

It is very important for you to attend. Your cooperation is essential. This meeting is an opportunity for you to discuss any matters of concern. Failure to attend this meeting and any further unauthorised absence could result in you being prosecuted in court and/or a fixed penalty fine being issued.

Section 7 of The Education Act, 1996 states that you have a legal duty to ensure your child's regular attendance at school; therefore, if your child's attendance does not improve the matter will be referred to the Local Authority who will commence legal proceedings.

Written evidence must be provided for all medical appointments and illness otherwise the absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Please contact me urgently on the telephone number below if you are unable to attend this meeting

Yours sincerely

Nicki Henman - Attendance Officer

01908 324411

nicola.henman@stantonbury-tove.org.uk

## Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

### Attendance letter three - School Attendance interview

«date\_of\_printing»

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE INTERVIEW

RE: «forename» «surname» - «reg» -

Attendance Concerns - «percentage\_attendance» %

The Local Authority is considering pursuing legal proceedings against you in respect of «forename» 's poor school attendance.

We have previously arranged attendance meetings to offer support and guidance.  
I am writing to invite you to a School Attendance Interview at Stantonbury School on

I will be available to discuss any issues regarding «forename» 's attendance, prior to any future court proceedings. If you are unable to attend this interview, please contact me on the email or telephone number below as soon as possible to arrange an alternative time, as failure to attend this meeting could result in a prosecution.

Rebecca Jennings (Attendance Officer)  
Rebecca.Jennings@stantonbury-tove.org  
01908 324411

## Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

### Attendance letter four - FPN

«date\_of\_printing»

«salutation»

«address\_block»

Dear «salutation»

**Re: «forename» «surname» - «reg» - Term Time Absence**

It is my duty to inform you that where a student has high levels of unauthorised absence this does place parents at risk of receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice.

From the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2004 Penalty Notices were introduced under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as an additional sanction to address the problem of poor school attendance. This means that for pupils with unauthorised absence from school (i.e. any absence where the school has not given permission) then their parents/carers may be subject to a fine of £60 payable in 21 days. This rises to £120 if paid later than 21 days but before 28 days.

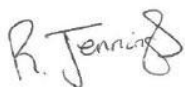
**«Forename» has been recorded as having a Term Time Absence between**

**This has been recorded as an unauthorised absence. A Fixed Penalty Notice will now be issued.**

This Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) will be issued by Milton Keynes Council. All payment details will be included in that letter. The fine is payable once the letter from Milton Keynes Council has been received.

An attendance record is enclosed for your information.

Yours sincerely



Rebecca Jennings (Attendance Officer)

[Rebecca.Jenning@stantonbury-tove.org](mailto:Rebecca.Jenning@stantonbury-tove.org)

01908 324411

## **Appendix 3 - Information for students**

### **Attendance - information for students**

Attending school on time every day is important for lots of reasons. Here are just some:

- you will develop new skills and knowledge that will help you gain qualifications which will be needed for your future career
- it is interesting and fun to learn new things
- you will have opportunities to socialise and make friendships.
- the routine of being at school helps with your mental and physical health

#### **Our expectations of you**

- We expect you to arrive before 8.40 every day and attend all lessons on time. We would like you to get involved in clubs and activities that might take place at lunch time or after school too.
- We would like you to be here every day so that you do not miss out on the education that you are entitled to have. We want you to aim for 100% attendance but we understand that sometimes you may be unwell which can mean missing school for a couple of days. The key to success at school is being in all of your lessons and the statistics show that students with high attendance get the best exam results.

#### **What if you feel unwell**

For lots of minor illnesses it is fine to come to school and often you will feel better when you do. So if you have a bit of a cough or a headache or a runny nose and are not feeling 100% it is worth coming into school - you will miss out if you don't. If you have a high temperature and are feeling rotten then that is the time to rest up in bed. If you have had sickness or diarrhoea then you should be off school for 48 hours. So unless you are really ill we want you in school.

#### **What we will do for you**

- We will do our best to make sure that your lessons are valuable and engaging so that you can learn well.
- We will support you if you have barriers to attending school.
- We will reward good and improving attendance

**Be here or miss out!**



## Appendix 4 - information for parents

### Attendance - information for parents

There is a very strong correlation between student achievement and student attendance. Consequently, Stantonbury School takes student absence very seriously and we will work with families to meet our attendance target of 95% or above.

Every school year is a critical phase in your child's educational journey and the lessons in year 7, 8 and 9 lay the foundation for the qualifications they will take in year 10 and 11. Those qualifications will influence the future jobs and further study that your child will be able to achieve. There are many skills that are taught in the first few years of secondary school that will influence the rest of their lives. This is why we don't want any students to miss out. **Good attendance in every year leads to good exam results.**

When students attend all their lessons every day it helps with **Learning Continuity**. When attendance is good, they can more easily build on the learning that takes place from lesson to lesson. If a student misses a day, they will have a learning gap because they will have missed 5 lessons and will need to catch up. By attending school regularly, your child can benefit from **personalised support** from their teachers. Such personalised attention can significantly contribute to your child's progress and confidence.

**Motivation and Discipline:** Attending school regularly develops important life skills, such as discipline, time management, and resilience. These qualities are vital for success not only in exams but also in life. Regular attendance helps foster a strong work ethic and a sense of responsibility in your child. Being at school also helps your child to develop **friendships** that often extend into adult life.

#### Attendance practicalities

Parents can support good attendance by:

- talking to your child about the importance of school and that you don't want them to miss out
- if your child has a mild illness encourage them to attend school - only keep them off if they have a high temperature. If they have had sickness or diarrhoea they should remain off school for 48 hours.
- not taking holiday in term time
- avoid making medical appointments in school time where possible
- working with the school to overcome any barriers to attendance - there are lots of skilled staff who can help get your child into school

Please remember that if your child is going to be absent from school it is your responsibility to contact the school by 9am to provide the reason. Details are on our website.

### Changes log

Date	Changes made	Page
18/09/2023	Section 1 - reworded to make expectations clear	2
	References to AIB changed to LGB throughout	All
	Registration times changed to reflect new school day	Various
	Addition of 2 appendices in 3.8 and 3.9	5 and 18&19
	Section 6 - reworded to reflect practice	8
12/10/2023	Section 4.2 clarification on how repeated lateness is dealt with.	6