



Attendance Policy

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1. Policy Statement

Stantonbury School is committed to transforming educational achievement and to providing the students with the best possible care and learning environment. Stantonbury School believes regular attendance and punctuality is vital to successful learning.

To achieve this Stantonbury School 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

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 governing board AIB

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 headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Associate Principal

The Associate Principal is responsible for:

- 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
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

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 education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Associate Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.5 Head of Year/SSL

- To monitor the attendance and punctuality of their year group.
- Ensure tutors are completing their attendance responsibilities
- Identify groups of students with poor attendance and provide intervention to raise attendance.
- Communicate attendance concerns with parents.
- Conduct parental meetings to address poor attendance.
- If required, to work collaboratively with other agencies to assist them in fulfilling their statutory duties.
- Work with the teachers, to plan for the reintegration of pupils after long-term absence.
- Meet with the Heads of Year to inform and discuss Year group attendance.

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 13.55 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

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.

3.9 Students

Students are expected to attend every timetabled session on time

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 08.55 on each school day
- The register for the morning session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.55pm and will be kept open until 2.15pm

4.2 Late Attendance

- The class register will close after a maximum of 10 minutes after school begins. If a student arrives after this point, this will be counted as a late and coded with an L.

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 vulnerable 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 Lateness and Punctuality

- A student who arrives late 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

4.6 Following up absence

On each day of absence, Stantonbury School will:

- Send out an absence text using Go4Schools
- Prioritise the absence of vulnerable students on special 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

4.7 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 parental 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 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. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Students are encouraged to attend school and all their classes regularly by the setting of a minimum 95% attendance target and adherence to the schools rewards and consequences procedures.
- 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.
- Heads of Year will meet with the Attendance Officer on a monthly basis to discuss specific students and rewarding 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.

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.

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, meeting with the Head of Year and Attendance Officer at an Attendance Panel, and attendance will be monitored for up to two weeks.

Attendance falls below 85%

Attendance letter 4 (Appendix 2) will be sent home and referral will be made to the Vice Principal and Attendance Officer, and a formal legal attendance interview will be convened, if appropriate.

Attendance does not improve

Attendance letter 5 (Appendix 2) will be sent home to commence the prosecution process. This will involve the Attendance Officer (Legal Interventions)

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a student's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the student will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Student-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average and share this with the Academic Improvement Board.

Stantonbury School collects attendance information using Go4Schools. This data is live and available for parents to access online at any time. Go4Schools will show all attendance information, including individual lessons.

Attendance 2 (appendix 2) letter requesting medical evidence for any future absence can be sent out at any point in this process.

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
Authorised absence		
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
Unauthorised absence		
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

Code	Definition	Scenario
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

Dear

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, _____ attendance is currently XX% which equates to XX amount of days and as a result attendance will be monitored over a period of 2 weeks.

In two weeks' time the 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.

Some useful resources about promoting good attendance are enclosed

- Graph
- Impact on results
- Praise and rewards

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

Attendance letter two - Medical evidence request

16 November 2021

«salutation»

«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «forename» «surname» «year» - «reg» - Absences due to sickness

I am writing to express our serious concern about «forename»'s absences from school this year. At present this is recorded as authorised absences. All future absences will not be authorised without medical evidence, i.e. appointment cards or letters from the doctor.

I enclose a copy of «forename»'s registration certificate so that you can see how these absences have been recorded on the school registration system.

If you would like to discuss this further, we could arrange a meeting with the Head of Year. It is important that we know about any issues affecting attendance so we can work together to help «forename»'s attendance.

Please note that failure to ensure regular attendance can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice of £60 or prosecution in the local magistrates' court. This could result in a fine of up to £1000 per parent, and a criminal record.

Some useful resources about promoting good attendance are enclosed

- Graph
- Impact on results
- Praise and rewards

Yours sincerely,

Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

Attendance letter three - Head of Year and Attendance Officer Panel

Dear

As stated in a previous letter there is a very strong correlation between student achievement and student attendance. Consequently, Stantonbury School takes student absence very seriously.

Unfortunately, _____ attendance has continued to fall and is now XX% this equates to XX days. This means that there has been, on average, one day of absence for every ten school days.

You are therefore invited to attend a meeting with the Head of Year and Attendance Officer to discuss this concern. The Head of Year will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time to come into school.

If a student is genuinely ill it is understandable that they remain at home. The school must be contacted on the first day and every subsequent day of absence and when the student returns to school a note should be sent with them.

Due to your child's low attendance, we are now seeking GP or other medical evidence every time your child is off sick – if we do not receive this evidence the absence will be unauthorised.

Some useful resources about promoting good attendance are enclosed

- Graph
- Impact on results
- Praise and rewards

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

Attendance letter four – Attendance Officer and Assistant Principal Panel

Dear

I have written to you on two previous occasions to discuss the attendance of XXX, and a meeting with the Head of Year and Attendance Officer was held with you to discuss this concern. Unfortunately attendance has not improved and is now XXXX% this equates to XX days. There is an expectation that children should attend school regularly, therefore you are required to attend an Attendance Panel meeting to discuss XXXXX attendance at Stantonbury School. An appointment has been made at on 2022.

The meeting will be chaired by the school's Attendance Officer with a member of the senior team.

Failure to attend the panel could lead to further involvement of the Attendance Officer
(Legal
Interventions)

Yours

Appendix 2 – Attendance letters

Attendance letter five – School warning letter

Dear «salutation»

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE WARNING LETTER

NAME:«chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

DOB: «date_of_birth»

YEAR:«year»

Stantonbury School

I write to advise you that you could face a legal sanction if you fail to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually.

During the period.....to..... the school was open for sessions and «chosen_forename» attended on occasions and/or was late after the register on..... occasions. Your child's overall attendance is «percentage_attendance» %.

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. This could mean, under the terms of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act, 2003, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued to you and a fine of £60 will become payable in 21 days or £120 will be payable after 21 days but within 28 days. A Notice could be issued three weeks after the date of this letter, if there is no improvement in your child's attendance or punctuality. This warning is in place for 12 (twelve) schools weeks as set out in the Milton Keynes Code of Conduct for their issue.

Alternatively, the Local Authority will write to you to invite you to an Attendance Interview at your child's school. If there is no improvement after the interview, legal sanctions will commence and you will be invited to a formal caution interview as required by the PACE Act* which will lead to a prosecution in the magistrates' court under Section 444 (1) or Section 444 (1a) Education Act, 1996: if convicted you will receive a fine of up to £2,500 and/or 3 months imprisonment for an "aggravated" offence or a fine of up to £1000 and a criminal record for a Level 3 offence.

Yours sincerely,