

# **Attendance Policy**

## **Stoke Park School**

### **September 2021**



**Date of Last Review: June 2021 (Covid Appendix)**

**Reviewed by: AMS/GDU**

**Agreed by Governors: June 2021**

**Frequency of Review: Annually**

**Date of Next Review: July 2022**

## **Aim**

The aim of this policy is to encourage students to attend school every day (190 days per year) and to be able to take full advantage of the opportunities available. Regular and punctual attendance at school is a legal requirement and it is also essential for pupils to maximise their chances of success. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all students. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed in a timely manner.

There is clear evidence showing strong links between excellent exam results and excellent school attendance. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our students.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable: students who consistently arrive late for the school day disrupt learning and miss out on valuable teaching time.

Parents and Carers are responsible for their child's attendance and punctuality. We recognise that parents and carers have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance and punctuality.

## **Government expectations**

Our school will:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and
- act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents will:

- perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

All students will:

- be punctual to their lessons.
- be encouraged to achieve full attendance and punctuality.
- record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence.
- acknowledge and accept rewards for a successful record of attendance.

### **In addition, the school will:**

- Work towards ensuring that all students feel supported and valued as a member of our school community.
- Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in ensuring and promoting their child's attendance.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance and take the registers accurately and timely.
- Regularly share attendance and punctuality information with parents and students.
- Ensure regular monitoring evaluation of the attendance policy and procedures by the school Leadership Team and the School Governors.
- Include attendance and punctuality in the School Improvement Plan
- The school is responsible for recording student attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made on the attendance register for all students who are on the school's admission roll. In addition, lesson registers are taken each lesson.

### **Procedures**

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

- Present;
- Attending an approved educational activity;
- Absent; or,
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school should follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and,
- Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census.

Registration occurs each morning and begins at 8.40am and ends at 9am. Students not in their tutor rooms at 8.40am in the morning receive a late mark and a late detention with their tutor.

Subject teachers are responsible for ensuring an accurate register is taken during every lesson in the first 10 minutes of a lesson. Where SIMS registers are unavailable paper registers must be taken and sent to reception for recording.

Students will be reminded about the importance of punctuality and lateness will result in sanctions being set.

First day contact between parents and school will be made via text by the attendance clerk and followed up with a phone call from the Pastoral Leader where necessary.

Staff are supplied with clear guidance on what is authorised and unauthorised absence following DfE guidelines. (see Appendix 1)

Any emerging attendance concern/problem within a Year Group will be discussed and action planned within the weekly Tutor Group meetings and the 'Overcoming Barriers to Learning' (OB2L) meeting. Here further action is decided upon involving both internal support and involvement of external agencies.

### **Persistent Absenteeism**

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance falls **below 90%** at any time during their school life. Absence at this level is detrimental to a child's education.

All students whose attendance have fallen to 85% or are at risk of moving towards the PA will be monitored rigorously through the pastoral systems.

Support and action towards all PA students are automatically reviewed daily in Tutor group meetings and on at least a weekly basis with Student Support.

Daily contact with parents / carers will be made to encourage attendance and to review possible barriers to attendance.

### **Supporting and re-integrating students on long term absence**

Pastoral Leaders will advise Heads of Department about students with long term absence and medical conditions and will co-ordinate requests for work to be set for completion at home. Heads of Department will respond promptly to these requests, organise setting work, leaving it for collection and the marking of returned work.

Students who have been absent long term and who need to catch up on school work will spend a negotiated amount of time working with Student Support doing work set by Heads of Department. This time and re-integration support will be managed by the Pastoral Leader in liaison with the Head of Student Support. Some students returning after long term absence will be considered for an alternative curriculum involving fewer subjects and some study time in the support centre until they are able to integrate fully into the mainstream curriculum. Students who are school phobic or who have undergone recent crisis will be supported by Student Support where appropriate.

### **Leave of Absence**

The Government have issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory school age receives a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

**Headteachers shall not grant any Leave of Absence during term time** unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

**Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time.** Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

The Headteacher will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

Applications for Leave of Absence must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised.

Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Coventry City Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

The school may issue 'Penalty Notices' in respect of unauthorised absence in accordance with guidelines set out by Coventry City Council. A Penalty Notice will be issued if a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in any 5-week period.

Penalty Notices may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed term period or permanent exclusion.

Penalty Notices are fines of £60/£120 imposed on parents. The Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent liable for the attendance offence or offences (DfE Nov, 13)

Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

## **Leadership and Management of the Policy**

### **The role of the Headteacher/Governors**

Ensure the attendance policy is implemented.

Complete attendance figures for the Local Authority and the DfE.

Advise on and implement whole school strategies for improving attendance.

Provide and monitor attendance data, analyse data to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice.

Liaise with Key Stage Directors.

Monitor whole school attendance schemes and rewards.

Present attendance figures to the School Leadership Team and Governors.

Ensure that all relevant staff are fully trained in procedures that relate to attendance.

Monitor progress towards targets and complete a regular evaluation of both the impact of the Attendance Policy and planned work identified in the School Improvement Plan

### **Key Stage Directors**

Monitor attendance data, analyse data to identify patterns, set targets, support and inform policy and practice through regular Behavioural RAP meetings.

Liaise with the Year Leaders to co-ordinate attendance target groups.

Monitor whole school attendance schemes and rewards.

Ensure early intervention is in place to support.

Meet with Year Leaders on a weekly basis to discuss attendance and punctuality issues.

Monitor year group attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good attendance.

Monitor the progress of individuals, identified groups and year groups towards targets.

Support the Year team with late detentions and have learning conversations with students struggling with punctuality issues.

### **Year Leaders**

Work with form tutors to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.

Ensure that all registers are up to date and complete

Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns.

Work with Pastoral Leaders and Parents/ Carers to ensure that early intervention is in place to support.

Liaise with Director of Key Stage and PM on a weekly basis to discuss attendance issues.

Identify target groups and individuals for form tutors and Pastoral Leaders to intervene with around attendance and punctuality issues.

Monitor Year group attendance and support with strategies to improve poor attendance and celebrate good attendance.

Co-ordinate the letters to parents regarding attendance issues on a weekly basis with the reception team

Monitor the progress of individuals, identified groups and year groups towards targets.

Co-ordinate interventions for students whose attendance is causing concern with a particular focus on students whose attendance has dropped or is likely to drop between 90-95% and with a focus on identified OB2L students

Promote good school attendance by setting targets and awarding 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.

To co-ordinate the late detentions with the Year team with late detentions and have learning conversations with students struggling with punctuality issues.

## **Pastoral Leaders**

Work with form tutors and HOY to identify and take action if there is an individual attendance concern: all unexplained absences to be followed up.

Ensure that all registers are up to date and complete and to chase up attendance records that are incomplete.

Meet with parents if there are attendance concerns.

Co-ordinate interventions for students whose attendance is causing concern with a focus on students whose attendance has dropped or is likely to drop below 90% (persistent absentees)

Investigate causes of absence and plan strategies with tutors, parents, CFFW and outside agencies.

Promote good school attendance by setting targets and award 'good/improved attendance' certificates as appropriate.

Ensure that students who are absent for an extended period of time will have appropriate work sent home and co-ordinate re-integration back in to school upon their return with Student Support.

Ensure that 'CAFs' are opened as necessary to support children in attending school regularly and on time.

Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead as necessary around Children Missing Education

Support the Year team with late detentions and have learning conversations with students struggling with punctuality issues.

### **Role of the Form Tutor**

Be the first point of contact with students; tutors are crucial in promoting good attendance and punctuality.

Form tutors and all teachers take registers using SIMS lesson monitor in the first 10 minutes of the session / lesson.

Identify patterns in a student's attendance/punctuality, investigate all absences.

Display attendance data and attendance information on notice board in tutor room.

Discuss attendance data with tutees on a weekly basis and promote full attendance

Ensure that pupils update their personal attendance in their Student Planner and work with individual students to set personal attendance targets on a weekly basis.

All lateness to be monitored and discussed with individual students and sanctions set.

Report to the Pastoral Leader and Year Leader all students whose attendance/punctuality is raising cause for concern.

Co-ordinate interventions for students whose attendance is causing concern with a particular focus on students whose attendance has dropped or is likely to drop below 96%

To support the Year team with late detentions and have learning conversations with students struggling with punctuality issues.

### **Role of the Parent /Carer**

Section 444(1) of the EDUCATION ACT 1996 states that 'IF a child of compulsory school age who is registered student at a school fails to attend school regularly at the school the parent is guilty of an offence'.

Parent/ Carer with parental responsibility has a legal responsibility for ensuring that their child attends the school regularly and on time.

Parents/ Carers should support the school by avoiding non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school time.

Parents **DO NOT** have an automatic right to take their child out of the school for a holiday or any other period of extended leave during term time. (see Leave of Absence)

Parents/ Carers should contact the school on the first day of absence by telephone and if possible, indicate day of return. Parents/ Carers should respond promptly to absence texts received as this is a safeguarding concern.

Parents/Carers may be asked to provide medical evidence to allow the school to authorise absence where appropriate. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription etc.

Medical/Dental Appointments Parents/Carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students must attend school for part of the day. Parents/Carers must show the appointment card to school.

Other Authorised Circumstances This relates to where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. serious family illness or bereavement.

Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The school will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

All unexplained absences will be investigated by the pastoral team and Parents/ Carers will be kept informed about any attendance concerns.

Parents/ Carers should attend meetings about their child's attendance and support the school in responding to concerns regarding attendance.

Parents/ Carers who fail to fulfil their responsibility can expect legal action: this may include Penalty Notices/Fast Track to Prosecution/Parenting Orders.

## **Students**

All students are expected to be on the school site by 8.35am appropriately prepared for the day. School gates will be locked at 8.35am.

At 8.40am students should be in their registration room or at their assembly in the Hall.

Students who arrive after 8.40am must report to student reception: their time of arrival at school will be recorded by the member of staff on duty and this information will be passed to SLT, Year Leaders and Tutors.

All students late without a valid reason will be expected to attend a 15 minute detention with their form tutor or Year Leader in their absence. Repeat offenders will receive longer detentions after the learning day finishes to be held in the pastoral base.

Students are expected to remain in the school all day and will not be allowed to leave the school site without permission. All students leaving the school site must have had permission granted by the Director on production of evidence for reason for absence. Students must collect a student pass from student reception at the time of exit.

Truancy from the school is taken very seriously and parents will be informed at the earliest opportunity. Students who truant from lessons will be expected to make up the time they have missed and usually on the same day.

The school will cooperate fully with the West Midlands Police. The DSL meets weekly with the Community Police and will inform the Police of training days or other days when the school needs to close in term time.

## Monitoring attendance:

- Student attendance will be closely monitored by Form Tutors, Year Leaders, Pastoral Leaders and Directors of Key Stage.
- Action will be taken when a student's attendance drops below 96% (school target for 2021-22 96%) in accordance with the table below:

Stage	Issue	Action	Monitoring	Impact and action		Who
Stage 0		Tutor monitors the attendance of their tutor group daily	Daily/ weekly	100% attendance	Regular praise through texts, post cards home, celebration assemblies, achievement points for 100% attendance a week, attendance rewards	Tutors
		(YLS monitor year patterns)				
		DKS monitors whole school patterns)	Weekly Monthly	Any days absence	Return to school meeting with tutors	
Stage 1	Concern about attendance – drops below 96%	Send letter one home	Daily/ Weekly for 4 weeks	Improving attendance	Positive phone call home, texts home, praise postcards	Tutors
		Tutor meeting with student and target set for next 4 weeks	Monitoring log completed monthly	Decline or not improving	Return to school meeting with tutors Phone calls home (FT)	
				Drops to under 95%	Move to stage 2	
Stage 2	Attendance drops below 95%	Send letter two home inviting parents to a parents/carer meeting (with YL/tutor)	Daily/ weekly for 4 weeks	Improving	Positive phone call home, texts home, praise postcards, pastoral rewards	YL
		YL meeting with student	Monitoring log completed monthly	Targets not met, attendance still falling	Return to school meeting with YL, address learning issues, support from Student Support Phone calls home (YL)	
		Targets set for next 4 weeks		Drops below 90%	Move to stage 3	
Stage 3	Attendance drops below 90%	Send letter three home inviting parents to a parents/carers contract meeting (with YL/DKS)	Daily/ weekly for 4 weeks Monitoring log	Improving	Positive phone call home, texts home, praise postcards, Pastoral rewards New targets set and continue to monitor	PL

		Targets reset for next 3 weeks  (non-attendance at meeting then confirm in writing letter four)  Involvement of external agencies (as appropriate)	completed monthly	Targets not met	Repeat of stage 3 or move to stage 4  Student support involvement, use of CAF and CFFW teams	
Stage 4	Need for referral for legal action	Write to parents to inform them of the referral  FPN issued  Involvement of outside agencies	Continue to monitor and keep a log			PL / DSL

## Punctuality

- All students are expected to be punctual to school (8.35am) and to lessons.
- Action will be taken when students arrive late to school as identified in the table below:

How late are the students?	Consequences	
Late to registration	1 a day – 15mins DT with Form Tutor  Pattern over time – letter home by YL to arrange meeting with parents / carers  Frequent despite interventions - 1 hour Pastoral DT with YL after school	
Arriving during period 1	Registered by Student reception, detention set for the same day in Pastoral base to make up learning time.  Student reception share information with Pastoral team and text home to parents/carers by reception.  Pattern over time – letter home by YL, meeting arranged with parents, consider curriculum and barriers to learning  Persistence- 1hr Pastoral DT with YL	Students refusing to attend the detention will:  Lose their lunch and break time the following day  Complete the detention the following day.  If students are still refusing parents will be contacted and asked to attend a meeting in school.
Arriving after 10am	Registered by student reception and detention set for the same day (as above)  Email to Attendance Officer/Pastoral Leaders/YL/SLT link.  Text home to parents/carers requesting reason for absence by reception.	All to be arranged by Pastoral team.  Late detentions to be co-ordinated by Head of Year and Pastoral team.

	Pattern over time – letter home by HOY requesting parents/carer meeting.	
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- Students arriving at school after registration should sign in at reception
- Where a student arrives at school after 10am, parents/carers must contact the school. Pastoral Leaders to make follow up telephone calls.

### **Rewards for good attendance and punctuality**

Good attendance and punctuality along with improved attendance and punctuality will be celebrated on a regular basis including:

- Weekly tutor group competitions and celebration boards in Pastoral areas
- Praise – achievement points for 100% attendance a week, certificates, letters, texts, postcards for key milestones in attendance and punctuality
- Celebration assemblies, achievement assemblies
- Use of school pastoral rewards
- Rewards trips

## March 2021 Return Attendance Expectations Addendum

As you are aware, back in January 2021 the Government decided to suspend school attendance enforcement, under the 1996 Education Act, including the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices and/or bringing legal proceedings against parents who failed to ensure their child's regular school attendance. However, the DFE guidance has now been updated stating; **“school attendance will be mandatory again from 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 Spring Term”**, this means from this point, the usual rules on school attendance will apply to ensure:-

- parents' duty to secure that their child attends regularly at school (where the child is a registered pupil at a school) and they are of compulsory school age
- schools' responsibilities to record accurate attendance and follow up absence
- the availability to issue sanctions, including Fixed Penalty Notices in line with Local Authorities' Codes of Conduct

This effectively brings an end to the temporary suspension of the law applied on 6<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Reporting an absence**

If your child is due to be in school and are unable to attend, please report the absence to school in the normal way by ringing reception. Please ensure you specify the reason why they are unable to attend.

### **Shielding**

Government guidance states:

- shielding advice for all adults and children will pause on 31<sup>st</sup> March (this will be reviewed by the government over the coming weeks), subject to a continued decline in the rates of community transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). This means that even the small number of pupils who will remain on the shielded patient list can also return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding.
- some pupils no longer required to shield but who generally remain under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their care with their health professional before returning to school. Where children are not able to attend school as parents are following clinical advice, absence will not be penalised, and school will provide access to remote education.

### **Late to school**

If your child is going to be late to school, you must contact school prior to their arrival. They will need to arrive via the student entrance. This is to ensure we minimise cross contamination and ensure the safety of all students and staff.

### **Contact Details**

Please ensure you have provided school with at least two up to date contact details in case of an emergency.