

Stanborough Primary School & Nursery

Attendance Policy



Approved by:	Stanborough Primary School Governing Body	Date:
Last reviewed on:	August 2024	
Next review due by:	August 2026	

Attendance Policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance](#) (applies from 19 August 2024), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

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

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
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- 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 headteacher

The headteacher 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, and/or authorising the School Business Manager to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND.

3.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead & Headteacher

The Designated Safeguarding Lead & Headteacher are 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
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

3.4 Class teachers

- Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office via Arbor between 8:45am and 8:55am and 1pm-1:10pm

3.5 School admin staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers and pupils to the Headteacher of Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.6 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Responsible for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have.
- Make sure their child attends every day on time 8:45am -3:30pm (EYFS/Key stage 1) 3:35pm (Key Stage 2), appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- Instil in their children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- Ensure that they are aware of the attendance policy
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 10:00am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Avoid booking holidays during term time
- Understand that it is the school, not the parents, who authorise absence.

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time and be ready for learning.

4. Responsibilities – School

The school is responsible for supporting the attendance of the pupils and for addressing any problems that may lead to non-attendance.

All staff, including ancillary and administrative staff must see attendance as part of their responsibility by acting as role models and working hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school.

The school calls an attendance register at the start of the morning and again at the start of the afternoon session, to record whether pupils are present or absent.

For pupils of compulsory school age, the school is required to differentiate in the register between absence that is authorised and absence that is unauthorised.

The school should

- work actively to maximise attendance rates, both in relation to individual pupils and for the pupil body as a whole
- have clear procedures in place to address persistent absence
- support parents in ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of pupils and promptly respond to any issue which may lead to non-attendance
- have clear attendance procedures which are consistently applied and clearly communicated to all parents, pupils and staff.

5. School Attendance Procedures

- The Headteacher will assume overall responsibility for attendance.
- The Headteacher will work closely with Admin staff and Teachers to apply the policy.
- Parents will notify the school if their child is absent. This should be done as soon as possible, preferably by 10am, on the first day of absence. They should also provide an explanation for the absence. The explanation should be confirmed, in writing, when the child returns to school.
- Pupil attendance is tracked by Class Teachers, the Headteacher and the office via Scholarpack.
- The Headteacher informs parents of the data via the newsletter and sets whole-school/class targets.
- The procedure for addressing concerns regarding attendance are as follows:
 - The Class Teacher shares the attendance data with relevant parents at parents' evening and discusses the effects and implications on learning.
 - If attendance doesn't improve or continues to deteriorate, the Headteacher writes to parents informing them of the concerns (Appendix 1).
 - If following the letter there is no improvement in attendance, the Headteacher invites parents in to discuss the matter and set up a parenting contract (Appendix 2), to include systems for rewarding good and improved attendance. All schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts to address poor attendance.
 - Governors are informed of the concerns and advise the Headteacher regarding next steps. This will include discussions regarding referral to the County Council's ISL (Integrated Services for Learning) Attendance Team.
 - The school will keep all absence notes for at least one term and where a pupil's absence is a cause for concern, will retain the notes until there is no longer a concern.

- Parents will complete an Absence Request form to request leave, clearly stating the dates and reason for absence.
 - Requests must be made as far in advance as possible.
 - Absences can only be authorised by the Headteacher.
 - Reasons such as family bereavement or taking part in a religious event are acceptable for short absences.
 - Birthdays and shopping days are unacceptable reasons and will be unauthorised.
 - The Headteacher will consider each application individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and context.
 - Only in exceptional circumstances will leave be granted.
 - The Headteacher will take into account the record of attendance which should not fall below 96% per academic year.
 - The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

5. Registers

Registers are completed by teachers between 8.45 and 8.55 am, and again after the lunch break. These registers will remain accessible through the school office until 9.15 am. If a child arrives after this register's closing time, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence, unless a valid reason is provided and approved by the Headteacher. Pupils arriving late (after 08.50am) need to check in at the school office with an accompanying adult. Pupils arriving after 9.15 am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence, unless there's an acceptable explanation like an early morning medical appointment.

The absence and attendance codes used are taken from the DfE's School Attendance – September 2022.

5.1 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Parents to sign in children who arrive after 8:50 via the iPad at the front desk.

5.2 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

5 Reporting to parents/carers

- The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels [for example, via half-termly written reports].
- A letter will be sent out to all parents where a child's absence drops below 90% with an invitation to speak to the Headteacher and a breakdown of learning time lost.
- At Parent Consultation evenings.

6. Children Missing in Education

In line with our duty to safeguard the welfare of our pupils, we will carry out reasonable enquiries to track the whereabouts of a pupil whose absence is not authorised and when it has not been possible to contact the family and/or any explanation they have provided is not reasonable or satisfactory.

A reasonable enquiry may be carried out when:

- A pupil on roll ceases to attend and the destination school and/or forwarding address is not yet known.
- Pupils for whom parents have accepted the offer of a place for their child at this school, who do not arrive on the expected start date.
- Pupils who have not returned after a school/term-time holiday.
- A pupils who has been absent for more than 3 school days without a reasonable/satisfactory explanation.

In the case of a pupil being absent without explanation, we will keep a log of all actions taken, e.g. letters, emails, phone calls, decisions. Where it is judged necessary, this information may be passed on to the Children Missing in Education Officer of the pupils' Local Authority.

7. Strategies for promoting attendance

- Attendance figures shared weekly via the Headteacher Blog and monthly whole school newsletter
- Classes rewarded with an additional 5 minutes of play for having the least absence each week
- Certificates awarded at the end of each term for 100% attendance.
- Certificates sent home at the end of each term for 'Most Improved Attendance'
- Letters sent home with learning hours lost to parents where attendance falls below 90%

7.1 Attendance monitoring

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Contact schools where siblings may attend to work together with families where attendance is low.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- The Headteacher and Governing Body will become involved with families where there are trends of persistent and severe absences.

7.5 Authorised and unauthorised absence

Children should be in school during term time. It is not in their interests to take extended holidays when they will miss vital instruction and activities related to their programme of study. Furthermore, it is not reasonable to expect the class teacher to prepare extra work for the child to take with them whilst holidaying, with the resulting marking, or to personally coach that child on return so that they can catch up with their peers.

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The Headteacher **will not** authorise children's absences due to holidays during term time.

- Unauthorised absences for extended or term-time holidays will incur a fine of £50 per day if 10 or more sessions have been missed in a 10 week rolling period.

Amendments to the 2006 Education Act make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. It is clear that parents and carers do not have any right to take a child out of school during term time except in the extenuating circumstances (listed). It is illegal for a child to be withdrawn without permission and we are obliged to report such absences to the local authority. Parents/carers will need to make quite clear the reasons for withdrawal during term times and these **may not** include the following:

1. Availability of cheap holidays
2. Availability of accommodation
3. Better weather
4. Overlap with the beginning or end of term
5. Birthday treats and trips

Acceptable reasons for absence:

1. visiting very ill family members,
2. attending a close family member's funeral, (this should be the funeral of a very close family member, not a distance cousin or other obscure relative).
3. armed forces family member returning from operations,
4. If your child is ill
5. religious observance (If you observe a specific religion and a religious observance or celebration falls during term time, it is highly likely you will be given permission to take your child out of class)
6. Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat 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 pupil is attending educational provision
7. If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a pupil to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

8. Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
9. Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
10. Attending provision arranged by the local authority
11. If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, or biennially. At every review, the full governing board will approve the policy.

9. Links with other policies

- **Child protection and safeguarding policy**

Appendix 1



Stanborough Primary School

Stanborough Primary School

Appletree Walk

Watford

Hertfordshire

WD25 0DQ

Phone: 01923 673291

Email: info@stanboroughprimary.org.uk

Headteacher:

Dear Parent/Carer of [firstname] [surname],

I am writing to you to reinforce the importance of regular and consistent school attendance for [firstname]. As you know, having chosen Stanborough Primary School & Nursery for your child, a good education gives your child the best possible start in life; it helps young people obtain secure employment and develop into mature and responsible citizens.

As a school we are aiming for a minimum attendance of 96%, with outstanding attendance being above 98%. Anything below 94% is considered weak, under 90% is poor and if attendance is below 85% we will have serious concerns (this is also considered persistent absence by the DFE).

Your child's Teacher will have already alerted you that their attendance is below the 96% required and it is important that this improves immediately. Currently your child's attendance rate is **xx%** since the beginning of the academic year. This is made up of **xx absences out of xx possible sessions, xx of which are unauthorised absences**. We will be monitoring your child's attendance closely in the weeks to come and if this does not show clear signs of improvement, I may have to ask you to come into school to discuss strategies to improve your child's attendance.

Kind regards,

Headteacher

Overall Attendance Percentage: **xx%**

Overall Authorised Absence Percentage: **xx%**

Overall Unauthorised Absence Percentage: **xx%**

Appendix 2



Stanborough Primary School

Attendance Contract Template

Date/time of meeting:	
Venue:	

Pupil name:	
Date of birth:	
Address:	
School:	

Present at meeting:	
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Action agreed
EXAMPLES OF ACTION AGREED: • Pupil will arrive at school by 8.30 a.m. every day. • Parent will inform the school on the first day of a sickness absence and provide a note upon pupil's return. • Parent will provide medical evidence for every sickness absence pupil may incur. • Are any issues preventing pupil from attending regularly, school staff will be informed?

Attendance target:	100%
Timescale for improvement:	

Date for review meeting:	
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I confirm that this Attendance Action Plan was agreed by all present.

Signed:

..... Parent/carer

..... Pupil

..... Headteacher

..... Other Agency

Appendix 3: Attendance Codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
Attending a place other than the school		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Pupil is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
Absent – leave of absence		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
C2	Part-time timetable	Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable

C	Exceptional circumstances	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
Absent – other authorised reasons		
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
E	Suspended or excluded	Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
Y1	Transport not available	Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises closed	Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend as they are: • In police detention • Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • Detained under a sentence of detention
Y6	Public health guidance or law	Pupil’s travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health

		guidance or law
Y7	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
Absent – unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school	Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
Administrative codes		
Z	Prospective pupil not on admission register	Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered
#	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays