



Attendance Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body in:	November 2023
Review Date:	November 2024
Review Schedule:	Annually
Person(s) Responsible:	Michael Smith

Attendance Policy

Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation concerning school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting 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

Legislation and guidance

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that Parents / Carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

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](#)
- Section 7 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.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body and Attendance Governor (Dr Maria Ratnarajah)

The Governing Body 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

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

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance (Mrs Price and Mr Smith)

The designated senior leaders are responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings (and visits where necessary) with Parents / Carers to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Escalating concerns regarding attendance to the Absence team
- Ensure that the regulations and other relevant legislation are complied with, that staff understand the attendance register is a legal document and that attendance and absence are coded correctly in accordance with DfE guidance Working together to improve school attendance

Class Teachers

Class teachers will:

- Record and submit attendance to the school office twice daily in a timely manner
- Refer any concerns regarding attendance to the senior leaders responsible for attendance
- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their Parents / Carers
- Form positive relationships with pupils and Parents / Carers
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the regulations and other relevant legislation
- Contribute to the evaluation of school strategies and interventions.
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families

School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls and respond to emails from Parents / Carers about absence on a day-to-day basis
- Record reasons for absence on the school system
- Transfer calls from Parents / Carers to the Headteacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Follow up with Parents / Carers about unauthorised absences and report any concerns to the Headteacher of any situations of absences with which an explanation cannot be attained

Parents / Carers

Parents / Carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call and / or email the school to report their child's absence before 9:15am 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
- Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home environment
- Avoid unnecessary absences - for example, by making medical and dental appointments for outside of school hours and not taking term time holidays
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties with any aspect of their schoolwork or home and family life
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the school by becoming involved in their child's education, forming a positive relationship with school, and acknowledging the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home
- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance
- Attend all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once at the beginning of the afternoon session. The office will then collate this information and assign the relevant code to show if the child is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorized, or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 9am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm and will be kept open until 1:10pm for the juniors, and 1:25pm for the infants (due to the infants having a 15 minute longer lunchtime).

Types of Absence

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parents /carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:15am or as soon as practically possible by emailing the school office staff (office@spprimary.org.uk).

If your child has experienced vomiting and diarrhoea, we ask that they remain absent until they have completed 48 hours without either symptom being displayed.

In the majority of cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for Parents / Carers to supply medical evidence unnecessarily. In line with Department for Education guidance, if we do have a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, we may ask the parent to provide medical evidence, such as a prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where a child has an emerging a pattern of non-attendance, we will discuss the reasons for absence with the child's parent. We will invite Parents / Carers to attend a school-led Attendance Support meeting as an appropriate early intervention strategy. As part of this support, we may seek consent from Parents / Carers and the pupil as appropriate to liaise with the child's healthcare professional.

Where a pupil has a verified and chronic health condition, we will aim to work with Parents / Carers to ensure children have access to education and provide appropriate support in line with Supporting pupils

with medical conditions at school and local authority policy [illness-and-your-child.pdf \(trafford.gov.uk\)](https://www.trafford.gov.uk)
We will also consider whether an Individual Healthcare Plan is required.

Stamford Park Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will authorise the pupil absence only for the actual day of the celebration / festival. Additional days either side will not be authorised. Parents / Carers are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised, as long as the pupil's parent / carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. This can be done by contacting the school office and advising the nature of the absence, duration and reason.

However, we encourage parents / carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent / carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive on time for school in the morning and for every lesson during the day. Your child is late to school if they do not arrive by 9:10am.

The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment. I hope we can count on your support in this matter.

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

Following up unexplained absence

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

- Call or email 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 relevant safeguarding bodies and the police, if appropriate.
- 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 of the absence if it continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Trafford Absence Team.

Reporting to Parents / Carers

The school will regularly inform Parents / Carers about their child's attendance and absence levels during their school reports. This information can also be requested if required from the school office.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances.' The school firmly believes that all children should attend school each day, unless there are exceptional circumstances which cannot be avoided. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a sudden and unavoidable circumstance, with evidence to support such a circumstance.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible from the office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical / dental appointments
- Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's Parents / Carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the Parents / Carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveler pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travelers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travelers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveler 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
- Exclusion from school
- Educational visit
- Approved sporting activity
- Exams (such as the 11+)
- Exceptional family circumstances - such as bereavements

Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine Parents / Carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age. The payment must be made directly to the local authority and does not benefit the school.

Penalty notices can be issued by the local authority absence team. 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 is not made, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Reduced timetables

All schools have a statutory duty to provide full-time education for all pupils and we are committed to every child's right to a suitable, full-time education offer. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, reduced timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

A reduced timetable will not be treated as a long-term solution and will have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. We will never put a reduced timetable in place without written agreement from Parents / Carers and / or other professionals working with the family as appropriate. This intervention will only be used as part of a comprehensive package of support for the pupil; it will be reviewed regularly in partnership with the child, parent and any other relevant professionals working with the family.

Pupils absent from school and receiving remote education still need to be marked as absent in the register.

Attendance Monitoring

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, and review this 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
- Put strategies and support in place if a child's attendance drops below a certain percentage (Appendix 2)

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

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

Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to staff, 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

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is deemed to be when a pupil who misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will take the following steps in conjunction with Appendix 2:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the Parents / Carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Appendix 1: 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
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

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

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil 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 pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: School steps for low attendance percentages

The following steps will be taken if a child's attendance hits a certain threshold.

Attendance level	Action	Frequency of monitoring
96% and above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No action needed. 	
Below 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance is monitored internally during a weekly attendance review meeting held by members of SMT. Review the notes attached to absences in SIMS. 	Weekly
Below 92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School will send an initial attendance letter to Parents / Carers to advise of attendance and offer initial support. Attendance is monitored and reviewed on a weekly basis. 	Weekly
Below 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School will send an additional letter to Parents / Carers informing them of their child's low attendance. A meeting will be offered to discuss attendance and offer further support. 'Pupil absence team' will be contacted for support and strategies. Daily monitoring to be undertaken by SMT in the form of telephone calls, home visits, etc. Local authority / external agencies may be contacted if there is a safeguarding concern. 	Daily