



Stanstead Flying High Academy

Attendance Policy

STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Stanstead, we know that education is crucial to provide children with the best possible life chances and consequently attendance at school is paramount to achieve this. Research shows that there is a clear link between academic achievement and attendance at school. DFE report, “the higher a pupil’s attendance, the more they are likely to learn, and the better they are to achieve.” If children do not have good attendance, this then dramatically impacts on the quality of their education and their life chances.

As a school, we are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by parents/carers.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure good attendance.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

Attendance Expectations

- 100% attendance is an expectation of all pupils, including nursery children
- Children are to attend daily and arrive to school on time
- Parents/carers to inform school on each day of any absence
- Proof of medical appointments are to be shown to staff
- Any planned absences are discussed with school beforehand

Rewards and Incentives

- Class weekly Attendance Trophy
- £5 Voucher raffle for 100% attendance
- Termly 100% attendance prizes

Attendance Support Team

- The office team, Headteacher and our school ELSA will work together to support children and families at Stanstead with attendance issues
- First day calling, parents meetings and home visits are carried out and all key staff are available to support and signposting for all families in regards to attendance.
- Attendance contracts are created to support families who struggle getting children into school.
- School liase with our Education Welfare Officer, Dawn O Hara, to improve attendance when required.

Attendance – Legal Requirements

By law, all children become compulsory school age at the beginning of the first term following their 5th birthday. Once a child is of compulsory school age, they must receive a suitable full-time education. For most parents, this means registering their child at a school. However, some choose to make other arrangements to provide a suitable, full-time education.

Once a child is registered at a school, it is their parent/carers legal responsible for making sure they attend regularly. If a child fails to attend regularly, the parent/carer risks getting a penalty notice or being prosecuted in court.

Punctuality

- Doors open and school starts at 8.45am each day
- The register is taken twice a day: at 8.45am and 1.00pm
- Morning registration closes at 8.55am. If a child arrives after the registration closes they will be marked as L (late). If they arrive at school after 9:05, they will be marked in as a U (late unauthorised).
- Afternoon registration closes at 1.20pm.
- Children who arrive and leave school with a parent/carer outside of the normal hours are signed in or out from the office.
- We ask all parents/carers to ensure their child arrives on time for the start of their school day so they can go into school with their class and start the day in a positive way. Coming in late can be distressing for children and also disrupts learning for others.
- Lateness is monitored by the class teacher and the attendance team.
- A letter will be sent to parents of children who are persistently late.
- If a child arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer as they will miss the main input of lessons. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



Absence Procedures

Reporting an Absence

- Contact the school office via telephone
- A message can be left on the school's answer machine leaving the reason for absence
- If a valid reason is secured, the absence will be authorised
- If a parent/carer has not contacted school to inform of an absence, school will ring to find out why the child is not in that day

Unknown Absence

- If a child has not arrived at school and the parent has not made contact by 9:15, the school office will phone the parent/carer on the morning of the first day of absence. If there is no answer, the parent/carer will be sent a text to ask that school is contacted. If no reason is provided, the absence will be classed as unauthorised.
- If there continues to be no contact made by the parent/carer, school will make a call. If there is no response, the school office will attempt to call all contacts registered on the child's file to establish the reason for the child's absence.
- If the school have not had any notification by 11.00am, they will look to conduct a home visit. This home visit may be made earlier due to safeguarding concerns.
- A letter will be left at the home address if no one is at the home.
- If there continues to be no contact, referrals could be made to outside agencies, such as education welfare, children and families direct or children and welfare to conduct a safe and well check.
- If a child is off for longer than a week, we will ask to either speak to them over the phone or conduct a home visit so that contact is made.

DEFINITIONS

Authorised Absence –

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification in advance, from a parent or guardian. Legitimate reasons include illness, medical appointments (only where they cannot be made outside the school day) and some family circumstances. Only the school can make an absence authorised. The school may choose not to authorise in some of these circumstances where the child's education may be adversely affected by ongoing absenteeism.

Unauthorised Absence –

Absence from school is likely to be recorded as unauthorised absence when:

- there is no parental explanation
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation for a legitimate absence

In either of these situations you could face prosecution.

Head Teachers are no longer permitted to agree a Leave of Absence during term time unless in exceptional circumstances. This includes where parents decide to take their children out of school for a family holiday during term time. If a parent intends to take their child out of school for a leave of absence during term time, they must have requested this in advance and had their request agreed by the Head Teacher. Failure to do this could result in a fine or prosecution.

In Nottingham City, you could be fined if your child has either:

- 10% unauthorised absence over a rolling 10 school week period.
- Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence (including unauthorised holidays) with 5 continuous school days of unauthorised absence sessions. If there are other unauthorised absences besides the dates of the unauthorised leave, then these may also be taken into consideration

ILLNESS AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

- When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.
- The school office should be informed by 9am on the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, for the duration of the absence.
- Depending on the reasons for absence, the Head Teacher will decide whether the absence can be authorised or not.
- If no medical evidence has been provided the school will look to conduct a safe and well visit on day 4 of absence / illness.
- Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. Appointments like dentists and eye appointments can generally be made outside of school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for appointments, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment. For all appointments, a letter/appointment card or official appointment text should be provided to the school office of the appointment prior or straight after to ensure this can be marked as an appointment.

Long Term Absence

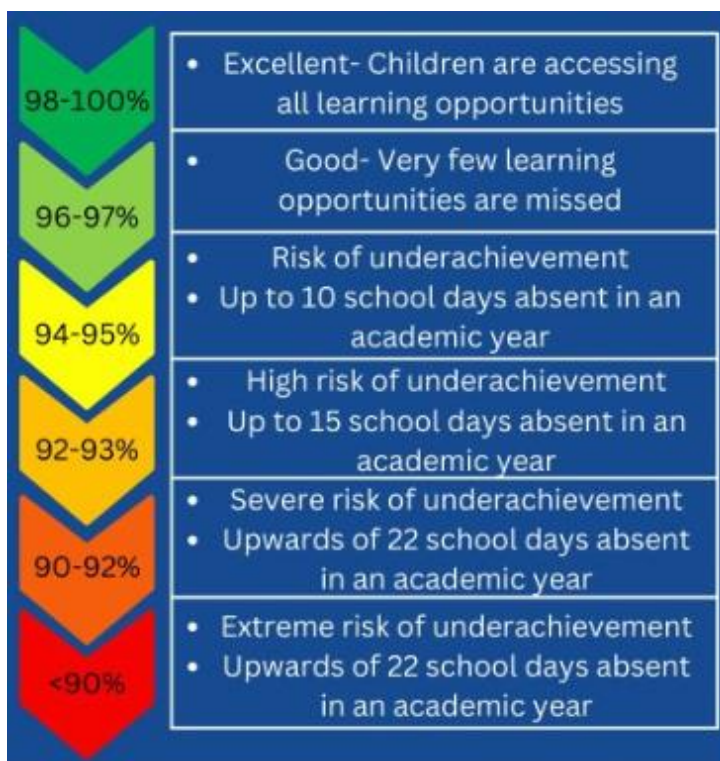
When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up their school work. Parents should inform school staff of any such absence and the school will support them as much as possible.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school may contact the targeted support services.

Persistent Absence

Persistent absence is officially defined as less than 90%. Attendance figures are closely monitored. Every month letters will be sent to those parents where their child's absence is a concern.

- For those where attendance is a concern, the attendance will be monitored closely by the attendance team. Messages will also be sent home to inform parents.
- If attendance continues to fall, a letter will be sent inviting parents/carers to a meeting. An attendance improvement plan will be completed and agreed and signed by both school and parents/carers.
- If attendance declines even further, this will be referred to a targeted support panel.
- Where there is an improvement in attendance following an attendance improvement plan, parents/carers will receive a message of regarding attendance improvement.
- Failing to ensure regular attendance may now result in the issuing of a Penalty Notice or prosecution. Penalty Notices are set at £60 if paid by 21 days and £120 if paid between 22 and 28 days. Any legal proceedings would relate to section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act.



Holidays in term time - Withdrawing children from learning

The Education Regulations state that schools can no longer grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If families choose to take their child out of school during term time for an unauthorised holiday/leave of absence, they will be referred to Education Welfare for a penalty notice to be issued.

- Penalty notices are issued per parent per child. They are £60 if paid within 21 days rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. If the penalty notice remains unpaid then the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings against you under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of this offence you could be fined up to £1000
- A referral will be made for a Penalty Notice to be issued if the school is informed or suspect that a family has been on holiday whilst suggesting to the school another reason of absence. It will be up to the family to prove that they have not taken a family holiday.
- Children/young people taken out of school for a holiday will have their non-attendance recorded as an unauthorised absence 'G' code
- A child or young person who does not return to school at the end of the recorded unauthorised holiday date will initially be subject to enquiries being made by the school.
- If after ten days of the expected return date, the child/young person has still not returned to school, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service for further enquiries to be made.
- Following the above information, if a parent/carer still intends to take their child on holiday during term time, they have a duty to inform the school of this action and give at least 6 weeks' notice of the event.
- Parent/carers must complete a 'Withdrawal from learning form, obtained from the school office

Withdrawal from Learning Form

- Parents and carers requesting to withdraw their children from school for a holiday are asked to complete a 'Withdrawal from Learning Form' (available from the school office). This explains the exceptional circumstances which they feel justify the holiday in term time.
- The school has no authority to grant absences unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances include:

- Religious observance
- Close family bereavement where travel to another part of the country or overseas is unavoidable
- Holiday for parents in the armed forces
- The parent can provide written proof (on company headed paper) that the withdrawal from learning is a result of the holiday being as determined by their employer and that is the only period that they are able to take leave. Please note once school has received this letter we will then confirm this with the employer.

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION (CME)

Any child or young person missing education is at risk of not achieving their educational potential and is placing their safety and welfare at risk. When a child is absent from education it is possible that this is due to other behaviours, associations or activity that places them at risk of harm.

If all the absence procedures have been followed and we are unable to locate a child a referral will be made to the Children Missing Education (CME) Officer.

All information and records should be shared and the Education Welfare Service will work closely with us to try to identify the child's current whereabouts/destination.

After 20 sessions of absence (10 days) and efforts by both Stanstead staff and CME to find the child prove unsuccessful, the CME Officer will consult with us as to when or whether to remove their name from our school roll.

The final decision about removal from a school roll remains with the Head Teacher following consultation with the Local Authority via CME.

The school will create a 'lost pupil' record on the national Lost Pupil's Database School to School (s2s) to assist future schools and Children Missing From Education Officers to identify and locate children.

It is the duty of both the Education Welfare Service and Stanstead school to collaborate in finding the pupil before deleting them from the register.

For further information please contact the CME Officers directly –

cme.educationwelfare@nottinghamcity.gov.uk