



Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Revised December 2022

Overview

Stanley Grove School recognises that school attendance is closely linked to attainment and achievement.

The importance of punctuality and attendance is stressed to parents at the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year. The children are also made aware of the importance of regular and attendance and being on time in assemblies.

School Procedures

Attendance and lateness are monitored on a monthly basis and any concerns addressed quickly and then monitored for improvement. Monthly meetings are held with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and children with punctuality issues, unauthorised absence or have attendance of 90% or less (Government classification of persistently absent) are discussed and addressed. Any serious cases are referred to Child Missing in Education Officer on 01924 307449, for children missing in education. (see children missing in Education policy)

A letter recognising improvements i.e. moving out of the persistently absent category (<90% attendance) is also sent to parents if appropriate. (Appendix 1)

Electronic registers are used to record absences and lateness and the reasons for these. This allows for improved monitoring.

Parents receive attendance reports termly with their child's school report which shows their child's attendance expressed as a percentage and the dates of when a child is absent or late. However if a child's attendance is below the required level or lateness is at an unacceptable level, they would have been informed of any concerns prior to this report (see Appendices 2 & 3) via letters from school sent after the monthly meetings.

Term Time Holidays

Since 2009, Governors have agreed not to authorise any holidays taken in term time. From September 2012, any parent who takes a child out of school for holidays or is late with no authorised reason, will receive a fixed penalty notice once 5 days (10 sessions) have been recorded as unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. The school has adopted the LA policy for this and exceptional circumstances only include holidays for armed forces service children and critical illness – final holiday with a terminally ill immediate family member. The school will work closely with the Education Welfare Service to enforce this policy.

Any medical appointments or illness attached to a 4 ½ days or less holiday will require a medical appointment card/letter or in the case of illness a telephone call to confirm the address where the child is during the illness absence. This is to allow for an EWO visit to authorise the absence. Failure to do this will mean that the absence is recorded as unauthorised.

The policy is in line with Wakefield Council Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices and falls under section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 set the framework for the operation of the Penalty Notice scheme. The Code of Conduct states that a Penalty Notice will be issued where there are at least 10 sessions (half days) recorded as unauthorised absence due to a holiday, irregular attendance or lateness in term-time.

Payment of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, increasing to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt of the notice. If the Penalty Notice is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the LA must either prosecute under section 444 of the Education Act 1996 or withdraw the notice. Penalty Notices will be issued for each individual child and to each individual parent or those with parental responsibility.

The definition of a “parent” in section 576 of the education Act 1996 includes:

- all natural parents, whether married or not;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person and
- any person who, although neither a natural parent nor a person with parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person has “care” of a child if that person lives with and looks after the child, irrespective of their relationship to the child. Such a person is considered to be a “parent” for the purposes of the Education Act 1996, even though that person may not necessarily have parental responsibility for the child.

What is 'authorised' absence?

This is when:

- Your child is ill and this is supported by a letter or telephone call from yourself. If they are ill for more than two days, a further phone call every two days with an update re your child's condition is required.
- Your child has a 'medical' appointment that cannot otherwise be taken outside of school hours
- Your child is involved in activities in another school for example an exam
- Any request for 'leave of absence' (see below) has been sanctioned by the school

What is 'unauthorised' absence?

This is when a child does not attend school and:

- No explanation is given for the absence (note or telephone message)
- This school has not 'authorised' an absence. e.g. term time holiday
- If a child arrives after the register is closed (8:45 a.m.) and there is no acceptable reason to support this i.e. medical appointment, accident, etc, then this session is recorded as unauthorised.
- The circumstances of which seem to have been avoidable e.g. tired after a late night, a birthday treat, family/friends visiting, etc.
- A routine appointment which could have been taken outside school hours e.g. 6 month dental check-up, opticians appointment, asthma review

Withdrawal from school events

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from school premises due to exemption from a school event, this must be done with prior arrangement with the headteacher and the child must be in school for the attendance mark before being withdrawn or the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Information for parents

School sessions start at 8:30 and children should be in lessons before this so lessons start promptly. Gates close at 8:35 and any child arriving after this time will need to be signed in at reception by an adult, with the reason for the lateness and will receive a late mark in the register. Any child arriving after 8:50, will be classed as being absent for the full session and this will be unauthorised unless there is an authorised reason for the lateness, e.g. medical appointment.

Parents are asked to telephone the school by 8:40 or speak to a member of staff to report an absence and to keep the school updated of any continuing absence, by contacting the school every other day following the initial day of absence. School will follow up any absent children who we have not been informed about via direct messages on the parent hub or home visits from the EWO. If we have not received notification of the reason for absence or continued absence by close

of school on the due days, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parents are required to inform school of any term time holidays and a letter regarding the penalty will be sent in accordance with this. If the holiday request is for less than 5 days, a letter informing parents that this will be accrued will be sent.

Appendix 1

Head Teacher: Mrs J Frost

**Aberford Road, Stanley, Wakefield WF3 4NT
Telephone: 01924 303805**

Dear ,

We are pleased to see an improvement in ()attendance since the Education Welfare Services letter was sent.

Their current level of attendance is () and if the improvement was to continue to the end of the academic year, he/she would move out of the category of “persistent absentee” and therefore would no longer be monitored by the Education Welfare Service.

We look forward to seeing this improvement continue.

Yours sincerely

J Frost
Headteacher

LATENESS

We are currently monitoring absence and lateness on a monthly basis and your child has been highlighted as having more than 2 instances of lateness in the last month.

Your childhas been recorded as late on the following dates:

.....
.....
.....
.....

This has been brought to your attention as should the pattern continue it would fall into the category which requires intervention from the Education Welfare Officer.

Please make every effort to ensure your child comes to school on time. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

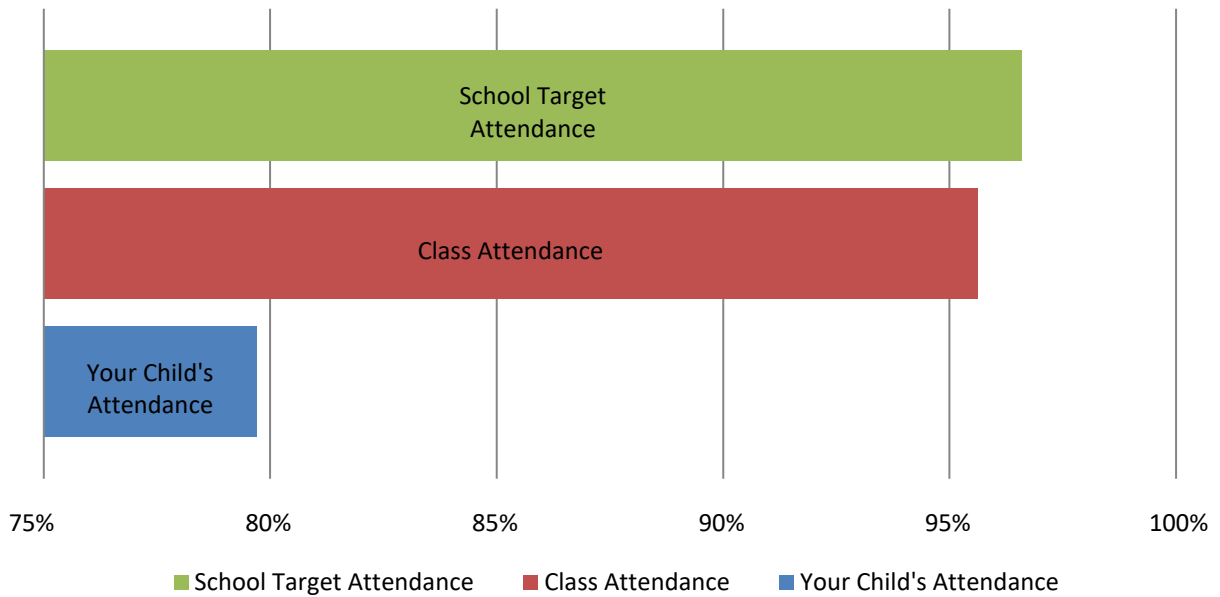
Child's name:

Dear parent,

Following our regular attendance checks, we have identified that your child's attendance is well below that of their peers and your child is classed as being persistently absent from school. In order for this to change, your child's attendance needs to be 90% or more. Children who have low attendance begin to have gaps in their learning and are unable to keep up with their peers and make the progress they are capable of. We want every child to be able to do well at school and your child's attendance needs to improve in order to enable this to happen.



Attendance



If there is not an improvement from the date of this letter, we will involve external services including the welfare service.

No child is capable of reaching their potential with missed learning.