



THE STONEHENGE SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Review Frequency	3 Years or on DFE update
Approving Authority	FGB
Published On School Website	Yes

ACTION	DATE	COMMENT
Last Approved	July 2023	
Next Due Review	July 2026	Unless DfE amend guidance

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Attendance Policy

1. Aims

At the Stonehenge School, we acknowledge that regular attendance and punctuality are imperative to nurturing student wellbeing as well as securing academic success. We are therefore committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance. This includes:

- 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

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. Governors will make sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, and will regularly monitor attendance figures for the whole school. Furthermore, they will challenge attendance data and hold the Headteacher to account.

The Governing Board have a named Governor whose role is to link with the Deputy Head responsible for Attendance, have oversight of the policy, and review staff training on attendance.

3.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for the implementation of this attendance policy and will support staff to fulfil their roles in relation the attendance policy. The Headteacher will monitor the impact of attendance strategies through regular scrutiny of school-level absence data. It is the Headteacher's responsibility to report on attendance to the Governing Body. Where necessary the Headteacher will issue fixed penalty notices.

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The Deputy Headteacher in charge of Behaviour and Attendance leads on attendance across the school. This includes:

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Fiona Staker and can be contacted via stakerf@stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The school attendance officer ensures that all attendance data is recorded accurately and in line with the school's legal responsibility. The attendance officer will provide tutors with attendance data for their tutees on a weekly basis. They will also provide a whole school attendance report to the senior leadership team on a weekly basis. In collaboration with the education welfare service, the attendance officer will work towards reducing persistent absence and advise the Headteacher when to issue fixed penalty notices.

3.5 Form Tutors/Class Teachers

Form Tutors and Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by the end of each registration period. Tutors and Cass teachers also have a responsibility to record any periods of lateness and follow these up in line with the behavior policy.

3.6 School Admin staff

The Stonehenge school admin staff will take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system. They will remind parents about the correct procedures to follow to report absences. They may also transfer calls from parents to the progress leader in charge of the year group in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/Carers are expected to support the school with implementing the attendance policy.

They should do this by:

- Ensuring their child attends every day on time
- Calling the school to report their child's absence before 8.35 on the day of the absence (and each subsequent day of absence), and advise when they are expected to return
- Providing the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensuring that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.8 Students

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time
- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

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

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised 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.

Students must arrive in school by 8.30 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.30 and will be kept open until 8.50.

The register for the second session will be taken in afternoon tutor.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The student's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.30 or as soon as practically possible.

Parents/Carers can either call **01980 676650**, email [**absence@stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk**](mailto:absence@stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk) or use **classcharts**

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents should notify school in advance by email [**admin@stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk**](mailto:admin@stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk), for the attention of the attendance officer.

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

The student's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A student 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

Lateness to school and/or lessons will automatically accrue minus points that are recorded in Class Charts. In exceptional circumstances these can be removed by the Progress Leader. In line with our behaviour policy, lateness may result in a detention.

4.5 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.
- 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
- Fill in a CME form after 10 days of unexplained absence and involve the relevant authorities.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

Parents have daily access to attendance data through Class Charts. Furthermore, the school will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through termly progress reports. School concerns will be raised as they arise through the pastoral system.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a student during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via <https://www.stonehenge.wilts.sch.uk/app/uploads/2022/08/Leave-of-Absence-Guidance.pdf>

The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' 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, barges (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

- If a parent is service personnel and is returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- If the family have recently experienced a trauma or crisis
- The death and funeral of a close relative.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement. Documentary evidence of this event will be required.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

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 has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

The Stonehenge School has a comprehensive strategy in place reflecting the fact that attendance is a whole school priority. **For a full breakdown of this strategy please refer to Appendix 2.**

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

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

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.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The School will also:

- 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/form tutors, 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

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
- 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 attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Further details can be found in the attendance strategy in Appendix 2.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Deputy Headteacher in charge of attendance. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Children with health needs who cannot attend school policy

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 traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller 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

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: Attendance Strategy

Action Plan for the Improvement of Attendance and the reduction of Persistent Absence at the Stonehenge School

Headteacher:	Carole Dean
School Attendance Lead:	Fiona Staker
EWO:	Karen Mawson
Attendance Officer:	Deborah Bush

Philosophy

At the Stonehenge School we recognise that good attendance is key not only to unlocking a student's potential, but is also essential in safeguarding a student and preparing them for the demands of life beyond secondary school. Students need to attend regularly if they are to enjoy the educational benefits provided within the school. Furthermore as a school we are committed to upholding the statutory requirements regarding attendance. This action plan sets out ways and means we endeavour to work with all stakeholders to improve the attendance of all our students.

DFE

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

Intent	Time Scale	Action	Person responsible
Attendance to be key priority on all levels	Annually/Ongoing	The leadership team will give high priority to supporting the improvement of attendance and reduction of persistent absences by incorporating attendance within the SIP	SMT
	Weekly	The leadership team will give high priority to supporting the improvement of attendance and reduction of persistent absences by having attendance as a weekly agenda item	SMT
	Ongoing	The leadership team will give high priority to supporting the improvement of attendance and reduction of persistent absences by having an up to date Attendance Policy is in place and put on the school's website.	FKS
	Termly	Attendance to feature in Headteacher report at each FGB	CAD
	Ongoing	Attendance to feature in fortnightly pastoral line management agenda	FKS
	Weekly	Weekly attendance report to be sent to all staff with an update on progress and areas requiring improvement	FKS
Attendance to be	Ongoing	The teacher has a statutory obligation to mark the register	Teaching Staff

recorded and monitored in line with statutory obligations		regularly and accurately each time the register is opened and submit data to the attendance officer as agreed in the Attendance Policy	
	Daily	The attendance officer will check the absence line and registers for absentees daily both morning and afternoon	Mrs Bush
	Fortnightly	EWS to monitor registers and appropriate use of codes	EWS
	Fortnightly	EWS to meet fortnightly with attendance officer and Deputy Head in charge of attendance	EWS/FKS/Mrs Bush
	Weekly	Progress Leaders and Assistant Headteachers to analyse weekly FFT Aspire 360 report, identifying particular trends surrounding sub groups/ and or patterns attendance	Progress Leaders
	Termly	Progress Leaders to produce attendance analysis to SMT with agreed actions	Progress Leaders
Importance of attendance raised with all stakeholders as well as up to date and accessible information on a student's attendance.	Ongoing	Up to date attendance information is on the school website with term time dates.	Mrs Harker
	Bi- Annually	A school leaflet about the importance of good attendance to be circulated to parents.	Mrs Bush
	Ongoing/weekly	Attendance Diamonds to be displayed in tutor rooms with weekly updates forming part of tutor session	Tutors
	Termly	Attendance flagged up in progress reports, highlighting the impact of good attendance as well as a termly breakdown of a student's attendance.	Mr Webb
	Daily	Class Charts provides all stakeholders up to date attendance data.	Mr Webb
Poor attendance to be challenged in a systematic manner	Day 1 of absence or	The attendance officer will send out First Day Calling Contact	Mrs Bush
	Day 3 of unexplained absence or concerning absence	Pastoral Manager to make a phone call home	Pastoral Managers

	Student dips below 95%	Tutor to have an informal conversation	Tutors
	Student dips below 93%	Progress Leader to have an informal conversation and Pastoral Manager to call home	Progress Leaders
	Student dips Below 90%	SAM 1 with Pastoral Manager SAM 2 with Progress Leader Attendance still remains below 90%- refer to EWS and / or issue penalty notice letter	Pastoral Team
	Ongoing	Pastoral Teams to complete work surrounding issues that are identified as barriers to attendance including referral to outside agencies such as camhs, banardos etc.	Pastoral Team
	Ongoing	Pastoral Teams to consider use of minibus to pick up non attenders	Pastoral Team
	Ongoing	All actions to be recorded on Class Charts as well as on attendance spreadsheet	Pastoral Team
Persistent absence to be challenged in a systematic manner	10 unauthorised sessions	Attendance officer to send fixed penalty notice warning letter	Mrs Bush
	Student persistently below 90%	Should a student remain below 90 despite support generated through SAMs and LAAMS, Deputy Headteacher and EWO will identify students whose attendance may require court action.. EWO to gather evidence and prepare appropriate paperwork	FKS/EWS
Persistent	Daily	Students arriving late to school after the registers close must sign in to reception. To be recorded as U and visible	Admin Team

lateness to be challenged in a systematic manner		to parents via Class Charts.	
	Following 10 U codes	Parents to receive a fixed penalty notice.	Mrs Bush
	Daily	Students arriving late to school before the register closes to report to teacher. To be recorded as L and visible to parents via Classcharts. Tutors to speak directly to students and contact home if this becomes a pattern of behaviour	Teachers/Tutors
	Daily	Repeated lateness generates a -3 and may trigger a detention.	Mr Webb
	Ongoing	Students wishing to seek employment (such as paper a round) must complete the child employment licence application which is available via the Wiltshire Council website: https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/2155/Child-employment-and-performance This must be signed by the Headteacher and only in the instance whereby a student's attendance is at or above 95%. Should the Headteacher sign the appropriate paperwork and attendance dips below 90%, school to contact the employer and revoke permissions previously granted.	CAD
Poor attendance as a potential	Daily	DSL to clear registers with attendance officer every morning	MRF

risk factor for the most vulnerable systematically challenged	10 days of unauthorised student absence (or sooner should there be safeguarding concerns)	DSL and attendance officer to complete CME	MRF/Mrs Bush
	Daily	Absence of LAC children and those under social care to be reported by DSL to Local authority	MRF
	Ongoing	Attendance of more vulnerable subgroups (LAC, EHCP FSM) to be monitored closely by their respected Leads with timely follow up actions should concerns arise.	MRF/HSB
Poor attendance due to term time holidays systematically challenged	Ongoing	Leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis. Parents can make a request due to exceptional circumstances. School letter in line with government guidance.	CAD
		Penalty notices and warning letters for un-authorized leave taken during term time are sent out to parents by the Attendance officer. Checks are made that all letters are addressed giving the name of the parents including ones that reside at different addresses due to being separated.	Mrs Bush
To reduce days lost due to fixed term exclusions	Following an exclusion	Excluded students to receive work during their absence in order for exclusion to meet statutory requirements, but also so it is not perceived as an authorised holiday by students.	Progress Leaders
	On return from exclusion	Excluded students to attend a reintegration meeting with their parents and Progress Leader on their return in order to reflect on behaviours that lead to an exclusion in order to avoid these in future	Progress Leaders
	Ongoing- as an alternative to exclusion	Use of the Redworth Centre as an alternative to exclusion in order to work with students rather than simply exclude from onsite education.	FKS

To reduce days lost due to modified timetable	Ongoing	Reduced timetables to be agreed only on a temporary basis up to a maximum of a six week period in line with statutory guidance. Timetable to be reviewed on a fortnightly basis during this period. Timetables as well as necessary paperwork to be submitted to EWS.	Progress Leader/EWS
Positive and Improved attendance is rewarded and recognised	Termly	Students to be entered into a termly (Full term attendance Raffle with Prize to be drawn)	HSB/Progress Leaders
	Termly	Students to receive attendance certificates and communication home following improved or consistently good attendance	HSB/Progress Leaders
	Ongoing	Attendance to remain an influencing factor when appointing students to student leadership positions.	Progress Leaders