



Stanion C of E (Aided) Primary School

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our Vision - Love, Inspire, Flourish, Embrace – LIFE

The root of the ethos of Stanion Church of England Primary School is based on the two commandments in Saint Matthew's Gospel.

'Love the lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'

'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Aims

- Stanion C of E (Aided) Primary School aims to encourage and assist all pupils to achieve the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality
- Stanion C of E (Aided) Primary School sees regular school attendance as essential for all pupils if they are to be successful and aims to work in partnership with parents/carers to ensure the highest possible levels
- Stanion C of E (Aided) Primary School aims to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality to enable all pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them

Rights and Responsibilities

Improving and maintaining a high level of attendance at Stanion C of E (Aided) Primary School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community, i.e. pupils, parents/carers, governors and all staff. There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at school or by education otherwise than at school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. 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.

The government expects all schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- and act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents are expected to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.

In accordance with the Education Act 1996, we will work with parents and carers and the Local Authority to ensure that parents are supported to secure education for children of compulsory school age. Where required, we will formalise support and where necessary, work with the LA to use legal measures.

A “Parent” is defined as:

- Any natural parent, whether married or not
- Any parent who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility as defined in the Children Act (1989) for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

Parents /Carers

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age attend on a regular and full-time basis.
- Parents should ensure that, if their child is to be absent from school for any unavoidable reason such as illness, they should contact the school as soon as possible, on the first morning of absence. This is to be done by phone or in person. Verbal messages from relatives, friends, a child minder or children, e.g. siblings, will not be accepted and the school will always follow this up by contacting the parent/carer.
- Only the school can authorise absence on the basis of the explanation provided by the parents. Should parents fail to provide a satisfactory reason; the school will record such absences as unauthorised. In some cases, this may be retrospective and authorisation may be withdrawn should circumstances arise leading the school to decide that the reason given was not truthful. If this occurs, this will be discussed with the parent.
- Parents should ensure that their child arrives on time for the start of registration (8:50am.). Children arriving after this time should report to the school office so they can be entered onto the register as late.
- Parents should avoid booking family holidays during term-time as such holidays will not be authorised.
- Parents should avoid making medical/dental appointments during school hours.

School responsibilities:

- The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child’s educational progress and personal wellbeing.
- Registers will be taken twice daily (at 8:50am and 1.30pm). Any child arriving after the close of the registration period will be recorded as “late” for that session. If a pupil

arrives after 9:10am they will be registered as an unauthorised absence unless an appropriate explanation is received.

- Teachers will complete registers in accordance with guidance given by the Headteacher. The Headteacher will inspect registers weekly in order to ensure that they are being satisfactorily maintained and to identify any potential attendance problems at an early stage.
- Should a class teacher have any concerns about a child's attendance and punctuality, the Headteacher must be informed.
- Should a child be absent, the class teacher will enter the appropriate code in the register. Should no explanation have been received, the class teacher will inform staff in the office or the Headteacher, who will endeavour to make contact with the parent.
- All absence notes from parents should be dated and initialled by the class teacher and returned to the office, where they will be stored. Only notes regarding absences where there are concerns need be brought to the attention of the Headteacher, who may then choose to speak to the parents.
- Stanion CE Primary School will employ a number of strategies to promote regular attendance, including: publishing clear attendance information in the school's prospectus; appropriate personal encouragement for particular children; the publication of attendance data in the fortnightly newsletter; termly and annual certificates.

What are the school's responsibilities when a child is absent?

If a pupil is absent, all schools have a responsibility to contact the parent or carer **on the first day of absence** and continue to make every effort to locate the pupil. When the school have identified the child is not in school, they will follow the procedure below.

Day 1 - Phone call

A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.

Day 2 - Follow up phone call

A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or preferably a mobile phone.

Day 3 – Write/email parents

The school will write to or email the parent in plain English, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. Parents/carers will be given 3 working days to make contact. If the school is aware that English may not be the parent's first language, they will copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.

Day 5/6 - Home visit

The school will arrange a visit to the home address ensuring that risk assessments are in place

Once the school have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier)

If the child has not been seen and the parents or carers have not made contact with either, schools must report the child as missing from education.

Governors' Responsibilities

- It is the Governors' legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate attendance at the school. Attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

Absences During Term Time

Any absence during term time should be avoided as this can have a damaging effect on a pupil's education and overall achievement. There are two main categories of absences:

- Authorised absence – when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.
- Unauthorised absence – when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a pupil's absence from school after a request for leave of absence.

It is recognised that there may be exceptional reasons that may justify authorisation of absence by the Headteacher.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are **exceptional circumstances** relating to the application.

Parents, guardians and carers must make an application in advance on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence during term time.' These are available from the school office. Leave of absence will only be granted where the headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances' and parents or carers will be informed of the decision within 7 days.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Entitlement Service at North Northamptonshire Council. This could lead to prosecution proceedings or a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Absence, Expectations and Follow-up

The school reviews attendance every half term. If a child's attendance for the term falls below 90% a letter will be sent to parents. Where high levels or patterns of absence are the result of recurring and frequent illness, the school reserves the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter. Parents will also be asked to meet with the Headteacher to discuss the level of absence.

Punctuality

Children who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of other children. Letters will be sent to parents/carers where children seem to be developing patterns of lateness. If lateness persists, parents /carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem.

Recording Absence and Attendance

When marking our registers, we will apply the national codes as outlined and regulated by the Department of Education guidance to accurately record and report attendance.

Leave of absence

The headteacher can grant a leave of absence when a pupil needs to be absent from school with permission. The headteacher will restrict leaves of absence to the specific circumstance set out in regulation 11 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. These circumstances are:

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

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

*The headteacher will consider a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. This must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. The headteacher will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or leave of absence for the purposes of leisure or recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

All absences associated with a family holiday (without exceptional circumstances) during term time will be marked as unauthorised on the register. Any parents known to have removed their child from school for the sole purpose of a holiday may be referred to the Local Authority by the headteacher and be issued with a fixed penalty notice.

A penalty notice request may be submitted to the Local Authority by the headteacher should: -

The parent fails to submit a leave of absence request in advance of taking the leave.
An application for a leave of absence is not authorised by the headteacher but is still taken.

A longer period is taken more than the agreed number of days.

When absence is granted by the head teacher, the parent will need to agree a date of return. If a pupil fails to return on the expected date and contact is not received from, or made with the parents, school will seek advice from the Local Authority. This could result in a possible children missing from education procedure being instigated.

Medical Appointments and absence due to illness

Parents should try to make appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where appointments during school time are unavoidable, we ask that parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment wherever possible. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. In most circumstances, a child should not miss a whole day at school for an appointment.

In most cases, absences for illness which are reported following the school's absence reporting procedures will be authorised without the need for parents 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.

Pupil Absence for the purposes of Religious Observance

Stanion C.E Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that, on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and is recognised as such by a relevant religious authority. Where this occurs, the school will consider either authorising the pupil absence or making special leave for religious observance. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation, and it is accepted as such by the school. The decision to authorise absences is at the discretion of the headteacher.

Adverse Weather and School Closure

The decision as to whether the school stays open in bad weather is delegated to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will keep the school open during severe weather whenever reasonably practicable. The school will only close when there are serious risks.

The decision whether to authorise pupil absence due to inclement weather rests with the Headteacher but the governing body has made the decision that absence due to bad weather will not be authorised for children living in the immediate vicinity of the school. For children who live further away, each case will be considered individually.

Tailored Support

At Stanion C.E Primary School, we recognise that poor attendance can be an indication of difficulties in a family's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents are encouraged to inform school of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, emerging health concerns. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance. The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance based on the individual needs and circumstances of the child.

To plan the correct support, we will always invite parents and pupils to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns and devise a plan to support the child's regular attendance. Support offered will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and pupils. This may include a referral to Early Help or a Parenting Contract.

Persistent Absence and the use of legal interventions

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when their attendance drops to 90% and below for any reason. Over a full academic year this would be 40 sessions (20 days). Absence at this level is causing considerable damage to a child's educational prospects.

The attendance of all pupils at our school are monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in the section above. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support.

If parents fail to engage with support and their child continues to have unsatisfactory attendance/ punctuality, a request may be made to the Local Authority to pursue legal proceedings either through a penalty notice or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

Parents found guilty in a Magistrates' Court of failing to secure their child's regular attendance at school under the provisions of the Education Act 1996, will receive a criminal record and a maximum penalty of a £1000 fine under a Section 444 (1) offence or a £2500 fine or up to a 3-month prison sentence, under a Section 444 (1a) offence.

Penalty Notices

Penalty notices will be issued by the Head teacher to parents or carers if your children are absent from school. Penalty notices will be issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

The threshold is 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) for any unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years.

The school will prioritise a 'support first' approach offering support to families in cases where it is appropriate. Penalty notices can still be issued where support is not appropriate, such as leave of absence in term time or when support has not been engaged with.

Penalty Notices will be issued by post to your home address to each parent or carer by the local authority at the request of the Headteacher. The Penalty Notice is:

- £80 for each of your children if paid in full within 21 days.
- £160 if paid in full after 21 days but within 28 days.

If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent within a rolling 3-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at the lower rate of £80.

A national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent of the same child within a rolling 3-year period has been set within the National Framework, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) a prosecution will be considered.

Staged Reintegration/Part-time timetables

All children of compulsory school age are entitled to receive a suitable full-time education and the school and local authority have a statutory duty to ensure that all children in the area receive such an education. In very exceptional circumstances, we may decide to implement a temporary, part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs and only where it is safe to do so.

We will not use a part-time timetable to manage a pupil's behaviour. A part-time 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 where applicable. We will never put a part-time timetable in place without written agreement from parent/carer 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. We will notify the Attendance and Children Missing Education Team of all part-time timetables as soon as a plan has been agreed and use the appropriate attendance code to record this within our admission register.

Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- [Working together to improve school attendance \(February 2024\)](#)
- [School attendance parental responsibility measures \(January 2015\)](#)
- [Children missing education \(September 2016\)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education \(September 2023\)](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children \(December 2023\)](#)

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

The governing body agreed this policy on Tuesday, 16th December 2025

Policy Review Date – December 2026

Signed _____

Headteacher

Signed _____

Chair of Governors