**STANWICK PRIMARY ACADEMY**

**Policy Document Name:** **Attendance Procedure**

**Person(s) Responsible for Document:** **Mrs Chloe Neild**

**Date Document Discussed and Agreed with:**

**(a) Relevant Staff: 1st February 2023**

**Signed: Mrs Chloe Neild Principal**

**Date Document to be reviewed: February 2025**

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## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance 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 local committee

The local committee has an oversight for attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis.

At a local level, the link committee member for attendance will meet three times throughout the academic year with the Principal to review the data relating to attendance of the whole school, and specific groupings, to provide feedback to the rest of the committee.

### 3.2 The principal

The principal is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the local committee
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### 3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information on Arbor.

### 3.5 School administrator

The school administrator will to take contact from parents about absence and record it on Arbor.

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 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 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
- Late (including time of arrival)

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.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:40am and will be kept open until 8:50am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00pm.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents or carers must notify by calling and speaking to the school office, or leaving a message on the answer machine if before 8:45am.

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 and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### 4.3 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.

Parents or carers can notify the school office through attending the office in person, a phone call, voicemail or email at bursar@stanwick.northants-ecl.gov.uk.

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. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise. Other types of term-time absence should be requested through completing the 'Leave of Absence' form that can be found in the school office. This can also be emailed on request, or downloaded from the school website.

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- After the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After 9am will be marked as absent, using appropriate codes when they arrive to school

Lateness will be monitored daily and any pupil that receives three or more late or absent (due to lateness) marks in a half term will receive a letter.

Continued lateness, involving 5 or more late or absent (due to lateness) marks in a half term will be asked to attend a meeting with the principal.

### 4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phoning the first contact on Arbor, followed by the second contact if there is no response from the first. If no contact is made with either phone calls, an email will be sent. If no contact is made by 9:40am, a home visit will be made.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

### 4.6 Reporting to parents

Parents or carers can see their child's attendance daily through Arbor. To find this, parents need to log in, click on the attendance section at the top of the page and then follow down the left-hand side to find the attendance for their child.

Parents or carers will receive a full attendance summary at the end of the academic year alongside their child's end of year school report.

## 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The principal will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the principal's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event that could not have been foreseen, or
The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

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 pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller 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.
- Close family member's wedding, where only one day for the day of the wedding will be granted.
- Any other exceptional circumstances deemed acceptable in line with the above definition, at the discretion of the principal.

### 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

Persistent absence can have a significant effect on a child's learning and there is an expectation that a child's attendance does not drop below 95%.

Stage 1
Any pupil with the attendance 90% or below will receive a letter in the first instance, detailing their child's attendance and a request in their support to attend school. Prior to the letter being sent, consideration will be given to the reason for absences, and any absence such as a long-term sickness (supported by a visit to a medical practitioner), and a decision made as to whether a letter is needed in this case.

Stage 2
Continued persistent absence without improvement following stage 1 intervention will be asked to attend a meeting with the principal to identify reasoning behind absence and a plan devised to support the attendance of the pupil going forward.

### 5.3 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 principal, 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

Each week we hold the attendance cup in our assembly across the school to celebrate the class that has collectively gained the highest percentage of attendance for the week.

Pupils will also receive attendance certificates at the end of each term if they have remained at full attendance.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

Parent/carers should continue to call the school on each day of their child's absence.

If a pupil's absence extends past 3 days, a further phone call from the principal will be made as a welfare check. Where relevant, a medical visit will be expected for illnesses beyond this period of time, unless agreed otherwise with the principal.
The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
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 local committee members.

Data on attendance will be stored on Arbor in line with the Nene Education Trust GDPR expectations.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the principal. At every review, the policy will be approved by the local committee.

**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 |
| **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 |

| 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 |
| **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 or there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency |
| **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 |