



STOKES WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance

The school has a major role in monitoring levels of attendance and punctuality and in creating the appropriate climate in the school to foster regular attendance and excellent timekeeping all of which the school believes promotes a basis for each child to achieve their potential.

The school actively promotes good attendance by awarding a weekly trophy for the class with the best attendance. In addition, to motivate parents and children to work together on good attendance, children who have 100% attendance at the end of each term receive a reward. (At present it is a bouncy castle.) All children who have 100% weekly attendance will be entered into an end of term draw for £100 voucher towards a bike or similar. Children will be entered each time they are present all week.

We take our responsibilities seriously and carefully record all absences and lateness.

Parents are asked to notify the school on the first day of any absence, either by personal call, by email, by telephone message or by sending a note with another child. If the school has not been notified of an absence by 9.30 am, the school will telephone or text to be reassured that a child is safe with a responsible adult.

Parents are requested to confirm absences preferably in writing, giving details of reason and date(s). Regulations state that if the school is not informed by parents of visits to the doctor, dentist, illness, holidays etc. then these absences can become unauthorised. It is therefore essential that any reasons for absence (even short absences) be given to the office and preferably in writing.

The school keeps records of all authorised and unauthorised absences.

The Headteacher and all members of staff monitor attendance closely and any irregular attendances or children who are away from school for more than a week through illness or hospital attendance are brought to the attention of the Headteacher and also are discussed with the LA Education Welfare Officer who visits the school monthly or more frequently if required. The school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is a key partner in supporting the school in this area and the regular meetings with the Headteacher enable the school to seek further advice and guidance as required.

Following these discussions, all children who are identified as a concern in terms of attendance are noted by the Headteacher. These are usually children with attendance levels

less than 95% The Headteacher, after further consultation with the relevant member of teaching staff or SMT may make contact with the parents/carers of the child/children concerned to request an informal meeting to see how the school can support the parents/carers in improving attendance.

The school is very aware that issues of attendance are sometimes due to factors beyond the control of parents or carers, such as long term illness or hospitalisation and the school is committed to working with parents to limit the impact of these events on the development of individual children. However, where attendance is due to factors within the control of parents or carers the school will seek to establish an agreed plan of action to improve patterns of attendance. This plan of action will be shared with the school's EWO and the impact of such plan closely monitored.

Should this plan not have the desired impact or if, during discussions with parents or carers, the Headteacher identifies wider issues of concern, then the process will be formalised by either the Headteacher wanting to outline the concerns and the required action needed or by asking the EWO to contact or write to parents. Where it is deemed appropriate to refer a problem to the EWO, a referral form is completed giving details of the nature of the problem, any difficulties and action already taken by the school.

At all times, the school and EWO will seek to work together with parents to respond to the issues identified. In certain circumstances, other agencies such as the school Doctor / Nurse may be called on to support the process.

The school is committed to ensuring that parents and carers are fully involved and informed about every stage of these processes. Organisations concerned with issues of attendance will not contact parents/carers before the school has raised the issue of concern itself, unless there are extreme circumstances and it is judged that this would be in the child's best interest. This approach has been very successful in helping the school and parents to work together to ensure that the welfare and development of all children in our care is supported.

Punctuality and Collection

Parents are requested to ensure their child (ren) arrive on time for school as poor attendance and lateness disrupt the education of the individual and other members of the class. **All pupils arriving in class after 9am and by 9.10am will be given a LATE mark. If children arrive after 9.10am they will be given an UNAUTHORISED mark.**

A frequent number of late and/or unauthorised marks will incur Education Welfare Service intervention and a penalty notice may be issued.

Children arriving late should enter the school via the front entrance. Parents/carers are required to sign the child in electronically giving date and time of arrival and any reason for lateness. This also ensures an accurate record in case of fire or other emergencies on the premises.

The class teacher/office staff records lateness in the class electronic register.

The Assistant Headteacher is made aware of any child who has three late entries within a half term/termly period. Parents may be contacted in person, by telephone or letter to discuss this matter. Persistent late coming will result in parents being invited to discuss the reasons with

the Headteacher and any further late coming may involve a meeting with the Headteacher and the Chair of Governors and may result in a referral to the EWO.

A record is also kept in the school office of any children who are collected late at the end of the school day. After 20 minutes a telephone call is made to parents/carers to determine if there is a problem or how quickly the child can be collected.

In the event that a child is regularly late in being collected from school at the end of the school day, the class teacher or Headteacher will contact parents to request a meeting to discuss the situation. It is a parent/carer's responsibility to ensure that their children are collected promptly from school and is a responsibility which the school will actively promote.

A child who is still persistently collected late from school will be referred to the EWO who will advise the school of the appropriate action to take.

Term Time Absence

From September 2013, no absence will be authorised unless the Governing Body consider the request to be exceptional circumstances.

Parents seeking permission for term time absence will need to request a meeting with the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher and governors, who will consider each case in the light of the individual circumstance presented.

The necessary paperwork (Appendix) should be completed during the meeting, if it has not already been completed and the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher or/ and Governing Body will make a decision to grant the request or otherwise.

Circumstances for Issuing a Penalty Notice:

The Education Welfare Service will generally only consider it appropriate to issue a Penalty Notice if, following assessment, a parent is judged capable of but unwilling to secure the required improvement in their child's school attendance.

A Penalty Notice will be issued when either:

A pupil has at least 20 unauthorised absences recorded against their name within the previous 120 school sessions (i.e. equivalent of 10 school days in any 12 school week period), or

A pupil has leave of absence in term-time for which no permission has been sought from the school, or permission sought but refused, (that is unauthorised) or child has not returned by the agreed date (and no acceptable reason for delay has been received), or

A child has been encountered on more than one truancy patrol, and the absences were unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence is where the school / college has either not received a reason for absence, or the reason given is unacceptable. It is the Head teacher who determines whether or not the absence is authorised. NB The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 (Statutory Instrument No 756) amends regulation 7 of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 to the effect that Head teachers are prohibited from granting leave of absence except where an application has been made in advance and they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

The Isle of Wight Council v Platt case considered by the Supreme Court makes it clear that regular attendance shall mean attendance in accordance with the school rules. Therefore, any non-attendance which is not in accordance with the school rules will be deemed unauthorised and it would therefore be appropriate to issue a PN.

Payment of Penalty Notices

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 came into force on 1st September 2012

The fine is £60 per parent/carer per child if paid within 21 days of issue, increasing to £120 if paid between 21 - 28 days.

The policy agreed by the LA Attendance Strategy Group with regards to parents who repeatedly take their children on holidays, trips etc. without the head's agreement is that a parent is taken directly to court and no Penalty Notice is issued at the point of the 3rd unauthorised holiday for that child

The following is from advice from the Local Authority

- Parents are required to complete a holiday request form, they are required to provide full details of their
 - 1.) intended destination and 2.) reason for the trip
- Where we have reason to believe a child was absent and had been away/on holiday etc. where this information is from a third party (e.g. from the child or other children in the class), we will write to parents to say that we **understand the child was on holiday etc. and therefore, they may be issued with a Penalty Notice (per parent for each child) or, their case may be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.** (If parents don't come back at this point to challenge the information and prove the child wasn't taken away, the letter sent will be used in evidence in court.)

The school's current target for pupil attendance is 96%, which is high and reflects the importance that the school and parents attach to regular attendance.

Request for absence for religious observance

In line with DfE guidance, for all religious observance, it is expected that only one day is to be authorised for each religious celebration and then only where it falls on a school day. Parents should request this absence from the Head teacher beforehand.

A reminder of this policy will be sent out at the beginning of each academic year in the Key Stage handbooks and in newsletters.



Applications for leave of absence Guidelines

Stokes Wood Primary School is very reluctant for a pupil to miss any part of his/her education.

- 1. In line with the Government guidance, the school management and its governors are unable to authorise any term time absence, unless our view is that there are exceptional circumstances. Please note holidays taken in term time will NOT be authorised.**
2. If permission is granted, photocopies of airline or travel tickets will be required by the school office **before** you travel. If your request has been agreed, failure to provide this information will mean that the request is no longer agreed and your child's absence will be classed as unauthorised.
3. We may also request copies of other travel related documents from you. We will advise you if this is the case. Where we do not receive copies of documents requested, this is likely to mean that we will not authorise some or all of any absence your child has in relation to this request.
4. If permission is granted, pupils must ensure that they are up to date with their school work before they leave and in addition, it will be parents'/carers' responsibility to ensure that their son/daughter makes up any missed work in his/her **own time** upon return.
- 5. The decision made by the school is final.**

Please note

If your child has unauthorised leave of absence you will either be issued with a Penalty Notice of £120 per parent per child (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days), or, your case will be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates' Court.

Application form for pupil's leave of absence

Please read the information on the previous page before completing this form.

For your request to be considered, the form must be completed with the Head teacher/deputy head teacher and governor of Stokes Wood Primary School at least two weeks before you plan to leave.

Please do not book any flight tickets etc until you have received confirmation from school that leave has been authorised.

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|---|---------------------------|
| Name of student: | Form: |
| First day of absence: | Date of return to school: |
| Date of Request/Form Submitted to School: | |

I request authorised absence for my above son/daughter for the following reason/s:

Full Destination Address:

Date you plan to travel: _____

Date you plan to return: _____

(Please note the application will not be considered without all the above information).

I confirm that I have read and understood the information above and the guidelines (see over).

Signed: _____ parent/guardian

Date: _____

Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher/Governor decision

Absence authorised from _____ to _____

Absence unauthorised from _____ to _____

Signed (Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher) _____

Date _____

Head teacher: Mrs J Gadsby

Deputy Head teacher: Ms E Stone, B.A. Hons

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