



Stonebow Primary School

Policy name - Attendance

Date: September 2024

If applicable:

Date approved by governors: September 2024

Review Date – September 2027

Date and summary of any updates:

Updated as [Working together to improve school attendance](#) guidance became statutory from 19 August 2024:

1 Introduction

“Improving attendance is everyone’s business”

“Support First Approach”

2 Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Senior Leader for attendance (updated as also known as SAC – Senior Attendance Champion).

3 Registration

Afternoon registration updated to reflect new lunch hour: registration 1.00-1.10pm

4 Definitions/6 If a pupil is absent

Added – the option to use Weduc messages to inform the school of absence

Updated absence codes

5 Repeated unauthorised absences (read in conjunction with section 8)

Updated text in italics regarding penalty notices, supported by Appendix 2 *Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences: What you need to know about the changes. (shared with parents)*

7 Requests for leave of absence/Holidays in term time

Merged previous sections as above

8 Issuing a fine (read in conjunction with sections 5 and 7)

Penalty amounts amended following updates to statutory guidance

1 Introduction

“Improving attendance is everyone’s business” “Support First Approach”

Stonebow Primary School will work together with families to:-

- **Intervene early** by using data to spot patterns of absence before they become persistent and working with families to remove the barriers to attendance.
- **Target support** for persistent and severe absentees with all agencies and schools- working together to re-engage pupils.
- **Take a “Support First” approach to improving school attendance with greater focus on supportive measures.**

We expect all pupils on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all pupils. We will reward those pupils whose attendance is very good through half termly attendance certificates. We will also make the best provision we can for those pupils who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school. Pupils who attend school on a regular basis can take advantage of the full array of educational opportunities available to them and make maximum progress. Research shows that those pupils who have irregular attendance are at risk of not achieving their full potential.

At Stonebow, regular attendance is expected to be attendance of 97% or above.

It is a parents’ responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and provide the school with current contact details including a home or mobile telephone number.

School Responsibility - THE LAW and School Attendance

- Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 the governing body is responsible for making sure that admissions and attendance registers are kept.
- Our school governors are bound by the statutory requirement under Section 538 of the Education Act 2006 which requires governing bodies to provide information requested by the Secretary of State. This includes absence data that will be collected every term through the School Census.
- The Headteacher and all staff work to ensure a high level of enjoyment and commitment to learning as a means of ensuring regular attendance.
- Where school attendance problems occur, the school will endeavour to work with parents in the interests of the child to achieve a resolution.
- Attendance is recorded and data stored and analysed using the SIMS Attendance module.
- It is a statutory duty for class teachers to call and maintain accurate registers; these are legal documents, and may be called for as evidence by the court. Class Teachers are legally responsible for marking their class attendance register twice per day at the start of each session.

Related Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of [Working together to improve school attendance](#) outlined by the Department for Education (DfE).

It is also based on the following legislation and guidance:

Statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(with subsequent amendments\)](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#) (Part 7)

[The Education Act 2002](#) (Part 3)

[The Education Act 1996](#) (Part 6)

2 Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is the responsibility of all members of the school community. However, we have allocated specific roles and responsibilities to named individuals to ensure that we are meeting statutory requirements.

Governors

Those responsible for governance at the school will:

- ensure that the school fulfils statutory attendance requirements;
- work with leaders to establish policies, protocols and expectations relating to attendance;
- reinforce the importance of attendance in documentation and communications as appropriate;
- ensure that key staff receive relevant training relating to attendance;
- review and analyse attendance data and support leaders to address any issues that become apparent;
- offer appropriate challenge regarding attendance data;
- keep up to date with changes in guidance and legislation and ensure that leaders are aware of any changes;
- hold the headteacher to account for the effective implementation of this policy.

Headteacher will:

- take responsibility for the implementation of this policy;
- monitor school-level attendance and absence data and communicate key information and data to those responsible for governance;
- monitor the impact of any attendance strategies and systems that are in place, identifying new approaches where relevant;
- ensure that there are systems in place so that when a pupil has a social worker, they are informed about any unexplained absences;
- liaise with attendance staff to identify when it would be appropriate to issue fixed penalty notices;
- decide whether requests for leave should be granted in exceptional circumstances.

Designated senior leader for attendance (DSL)/Senior Attendance Champion (SAC)

It is expected that schools will have a designated senior leader for attendance – Senior Attendance Champion. At our school, this person is **the headteacher**. The senior leader will:

- oversee attendance across the school;
- retain an oversight of attendance data across the school;
- foster a clear vision and expectations throughout the school community;
- identify and/or devise systems and interventions to improve attendance;
- arrange meetings with parents/carers to address attendance issues;
- advise the EWO in instances where it would be appropriate to consider a fixed penalty notice.

Office/Attendance staff

Those responsible for the day-to-day oversight of attendance, in conjunction with the DSL at the school will:

- answer and record attendance-related phone calls from parents/carers;
- ensure that any safeguarding concerns are reported using the school's agreed safeguarding systems and protocols.
- monitor individual and group attendance on a day-to-day basis;
- gather information and produce reports relating to attendance (as required by leaders);
- work with education welfare officers (EWO) and any other external partners to tackle attendance issues;
- (the above) deliver targeted interventions where a need has been identified;

Class teachers will:

- complete attendance registers at the times specified by the school using the school's agreed systems;
- make DSL's aware of any absences which are a cause for concern
- use accurate attendance and absence codes as set out below (4 Definitions)

Parents and carers will:

- ensure that their child is in school each day, except for when a statutory reason applies;
- notify the school of their child's absence as soon as possible using the school's agreed systems;
- ensure that leave of absence is only requested in exceptional circumstances and, where possible, advance notice is given;
- book any non-emergency medical and dental appointments outside of the school day, where possible;
- engage with any support offered to address any barriers to their child's attendance.

Pupils will:

- attend school punctually every day;
- engage with any support offered by the school to help them overcome any barriers to attendance.

3 Registration

Registration at Stonebow Primary School is as follows:

The two entrance gates open at 8:40am, where the children can enter school via their allocated entrance door. Years 1 and 2 via Stonebow Close, EYFS and KS2 via Maxwell Drive. The gates close at 8.55am.

Morning registration is between 8:45 and 8:55am

Afternoon registration is between 1:00 and 1:10pm

The school day ends at 3.15pm

Pupils who do not register within these times will be marked as 'late' – coded 'L'

Once the register closes any child who attends school after that time will be coded as a 'U' which equates to an unauthorised absence.

4 Definitions

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either:

AUTHORISED or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably by telephone, Weduc message or in writing.

Absence Codes:

School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved educational activity
K	LA arranged provision at a place other than a school	Approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
C	Absent with leave (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
C1	Absent due to participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Part-time timetable	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J1	Interview	Authorised absence
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence

D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
Q	Lack of transport or boarding access arrangements arranged by LA	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Transport normally provided by LA or school not available	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel due to local, national or international emergency	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	School partially closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Pupil in criminal justice detention	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	Travel or attendance contrary to public health guidance or law on transmission of disease	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils (planned closure)	Not counted in possible attendances

KEY

Present
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Not counted in possible attendances

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a pupil has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.

Parents do not authorise any absences and only the school can decide to authorise absences. An example where a school will not authorise an absence is when a parent takes a pupil out of school to go shopping during school hours.

The school will code an absence as authorised if the parents/carers provide an acceptable reason to justify their child's absence. **School will expect parents to provide evidence that medical advice has been sought for any absences exceeding 3 days.**

The school may make a referral to our Education Welfare Officer, Naina Zavery (**see Appendix 1**), if a pupil has an increasing number of authorised or unauthorised absences as this is classed as 'persistent absence' (attendance 90% or lower). Contact will be made with the parents regarding the absences.

The school may also make a referral to our Education Welfare Officer if there is a concern about a pupil's welfare or safety. Parents will be contacted to ascertain if further action needs to be taken.

Parents are expected to co-operate with the school and attend any meeting when requested to do so by the school.

Unauthorised Absence – coded as 'O' - unauthorised or 'G' - family holiday not agreed

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a pupil is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given.

All absences are coded as unauthorised if a pupil is away from school without good reason even with the support of a parent. Examples of this are:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Parents keeping pupils off school because they themselves or the child's siblings are ill
- Family holidays or leave of absence that has not been agreed

5 Repeated unauthorised absences (read in conjunction with section 8)

The school will contact the parent/carers of any pupil who has unauthorised absence. If a pupil has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents/carers will be asked to a meeting at the school to discuss the problem.

If the pupil continues to accrue unauthorised absences the school will make a referral to the Education Welfare Officer, Naina Zavery, who will make contact with the parents to arrange a meeting and seek to ensure that the parents/carers understand the seriousness of the situation.

Where required, legal action will be sought and the EWO will submit the case before the Local Authority for a Penalty Notice and /or prosecution. The Education Act 1996 (Section 444) states:

'If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at school fails to attend regularly at the school, the parent is guilty of an offence'. The school reserves the right to consider taking legal action against any parents/carers who repeatedly fail in their responsibility to send their children to school on a regular basis.

All schools are now required to provide LAs with the name and address of pupils who are coded for illness and who they believe will miss 15 consecutive or cumulative days. The National Framework for issuing of Penalty Notices for school absence – sets national threshold for 10 sessions of unauthorised absence (5 school days) in a rolling 10-week period.

Once the above threshold is met, the school will consider whether it's appropriate to ask for a Penalty Notice to be issued or whether other intervention (including legal intervention) or support is likely to improve

attendance. There is a national limit of 2 penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, for a 3rd offence parents likely to be prosecuted.

Where appropriate support is being offered but parents are not engaging with this, an 'Introduction of Notice to Improve' letter for parents will be issued, which gives a parent a final opportunity to engage in support before they are issued with a penalty notice.

Please see Appendix 2: Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences: What you need to know about the changes.

6 If a pupil is absent

Parents and carers should inform the school on the morning of the first day of absence either by telephone on 01509 646217 or leave a voice message (or Weduc message), clearly stating the reason for the absence and the expected duration of illness.

When a pupil is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, which will inform the school office. If the office has not already been informed of the reason for a pupil's absence, they will endeavour to contact a parent or carer by telephone or text message. When the pupil returns to school, parents or carers must ensure that a note or verbal confirmation is provided to explain the reason for the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a pupil has a medical appointment. Parents are encouraged to provide the appointment card/letter.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a pupil, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office.

As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school office will endeavour to contact the parent or carer and other emergency contacts if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence, to check on the safety of the pupil. Where the school has concerns about a pupil's safety our EWO will be contacted and a 'Safe and Well' check will be carried out.

7 Requests for leave of absence/Holidays in term time

We believe that pupils need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible.

Government guidelines prevent Headteachers from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday during term-time does not fall under the category of 'exceptional circumstances' and the school is therefore unable to grant leave of absence for any family holiday.

However, we do understand that there are exceptional circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, e.g. a family crisis. We expect parents and carers to contact the school and request the leave of absence on the official school form (available via Weduc). The Headteacher will respond to the request as soon as possible.

Holidays taken without permission will be recorded as 'unauthorised absence' – family holiday not agreed ('G' code).

8 Issuing a fine (read in conjunction with sections 5 and 7)

The parent(s) of any pupil who has a number of absences recorded as a result of an unauthorised family holiday, will each be fined £80, which must be paid within a 21-day period. Failure to pay the fine(s) within this timescale, will result in the fines being doubled to £160, which will need to be paid within 28 days of the original fine being issued.

Parents can seek further clarification from EWSM on 07947994289 or email naina.zavery@ews-m.com

9 Long-term absence

When pupils have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work. This work must be completed and returned to school so that the school can monitor the pupil's progress.

Where it is deemed that a pupil is unable to return to school due to chronic medical or other medical reasons the school will make a referral to Naina Zavery to ascertain if any alternative provision for education can be requested. Parents will have to provide medical evidence that clearly states a pupil is unable to return to mainstream education.

Parents must provide the school with medical evidence when their child is going to be off from school for a long period, but alternative provision is **not** being sought. The school may refer this for further investigation to Naina Zavery, who will contact the parent/s.

10 SEND and Health-Related Absences

Stonebow Primary School recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. The school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for pupils to reduce barriers to attendance. Furthermore, the school will secure additional support from external partners to support attendance where appropriate.

11 Persistent Absence

Any student whose attendance falls below 90%, will be classed as a Persistently Absent student. The table below shows the cumulative absence thresholds for 10% absence:

Term	90% attendance or below
Aut 1 st	7+ sessions (3.5 days absence)
Aut 2 nd	14+ sessions (7 days absence)
Spr 1 st	20+ sessions (10 days absence)
Spr 2 nd	25+ sessions (12.5 days absence)
Sum 1 st	31+ sessions (15.5 days absence)
Sum 2 nd	38+ sessions (19 days absence)

Therefore, if a student misses 19 or more days over an academic year, they will be classed as 'Persistently Absent'.

The DfE state: ***"If over 5 academic years, a pupil has attendance of 90%, that pupil will miss a half of a school year - that's a lot of lost education. As parents play an essential role in supporting attendance, the changes to persistent absence need to be shared with them"***

Pupils taking unauthorised leave of absence early in the year (for example, a holiday in term time) could be categorised as 'persistently absent' well into the fifth half term of the academic year, **even with excellent attendance from their return date onwards.**

Support with Persistent Absence

The Department for Education Guidance, [Working together to improve school attendance](#), states:

As patterns of attendance are habitual, early identification and support is essential for individual pupils in need of help. Where barriers go beyond the classroom, this requires schools, local authorities, and other partners to work together to put joint support in place as quickly as possible.

Where barriers to attendance for a pupil or family are complex and signposting to services is not sufficient, schools, local authorities, and other services should work together to provide more intensive whole family support to address them as soon as it becomes clear they would benefit from it. Schools and local authorities are also specifically expected to have agreed a joint approach for all severely absent pupils.

12 Lateness and punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive punctually, in time for registration. The school gate is locked from 8.55am and any pupils arriving after this time must enter school through the main entrance and be 'signed in' by a parent/carers.

Pupils arriving after registers close will be marked as 'L' – late, on the class register.

Any pupil who arrives at school after 9:30am without an adequate explanation, will be coded as 'U'. This equates to an unauthorised mark. Parents may be requested to meet with the EWO if this becomes a regular problem. Legal action can be taken when a child has a succession of 'U' codes.

Where possible, parents must ensure that they try and book all medical appointments either before school starts or after school finishes. It is useful for parents to provide the school with the appointment card and/or letter for any medical or hospital appointment. These absences will be coded 'M' if a pupil arrives late or leaves early to attend an appointment.

Parents/Carers of pupils who are persistently late will be contacted by the Headteacher and will be asked to address the problem. School may make a referral to Naina Zavery who will arrange to meet with the parent(s).

13 Rewards for good attendance

The class with the highest weekly attendance will be awarded the 'Attendance Cup' in assembly and retain the cup for one week.

14 Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the Headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The Headteacher will monitor attendance regularly to identify any pupils who are persistently absent or who continually arrive late. Parents will be informed by letter when their child's attendance is deemed 'low' and will be expected to address this, otherwise the Educational Welfare Officer will be informed.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a pupil's absence, they will contact the school office immediately.

The school shares it's daily attendance with the DfE, who produce an analysis for schools to compare their attendance against national data. The rates of attendance will be inspected by OFSTED who will make a judgement about the school's attendance in their inspection report.

Appendix 1

Meet our Education Welfare Officer

My name is Naina Zavery and I am a qualified senior Education Welfare Officer and I work for Education Welfare Services Midlands (EWSM). I will be working very closely with Stonebow Primary School on all matters related to Attendance, Punctuality and any Welfare issues.

I am very keen to work closely with parents in ensuring that their child attends school on time and on a regular basis EWSM work very closely with a number of agencies including the Local Authority, Youth Service, Local GP surgeries, CAMHS, Social Care and various other organisations.

I would ask that in the first instance parents should be contacting the school, to discuss any concerns they have but please do feel free to give me a call or email if you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the above matters

Please do take a look at the website for further details www.educationwelfareservicesmidlands.com

Tel 07947992289 or email naina.zavery@ews-m.com

Naina Zavery

Senior Education Welfare Officer

Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences: What you need to know about the changes.

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for unauthorised absences that occur after 19th August 2024.

5 Consecutive Days of Term Time Leave.

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days, and for fewer days where this has happened before.

10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10-week period.

Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10-week period.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child who was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

(No option to pay at £80 level)

Third offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to the Magistrates' court.

Magistrate's fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child.



Please consult your school's attendance policy and speak with your school if you are thinking of taking your child out of school during term-time. It is likely you will need to make a written request to take your child out of school and any leave of absence will need to be agreed by your Headteacher before it is taken.