

STENSON FIELDS PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for managing attendance at Stenson Fields Primary Community School and has been approved by the Governing Body. It will be reviewed bi-annually or revised prior to that date should change in regulations deem it necessary.

STATUTORY DUTY OF SCHOOLS

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

AIMS

At Stenson Fields Primary Community School we want children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available so we aim to:-

- Encourage children to attend school regularly and punctually by:-
Creating a warm, welcoming and secure atmosphere where pupils feel valued.
Providing children with a stimulating, broad curriculum
Providing a clean, attractive, safe environment in which to work.
- Keep a careful record of admissions, attendance and lunch numbers
- Pass on relevant information to relevant persons
- Discourage absence/lateness

IMPLEMENTATION

Attendance is the responsibility of all parents, children, staff and governors.

Schools will ensure that:

- Children are registered accurately and efficiently.
- Attendance targets are set for the school.

- Parents and guardians are contacted, by the Administration team, when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised.
- Children's attendance and lateness is monitored regularly by the Headteacher/School Business Manager.
- School attendance statistics are reported by the Headteacher to Governors. Unauthorised attendance will be reported to the Education Welfare Service at the Local Authority if deemed necessary by the Headteacher/School Business Manager.

Children will be encouraged to:

- Attend school regularly.
- Inform staff if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

Parents or Carers will:

- Be aware of their duties.
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality.
- Inform the school on the first day of non-attendance.
- Contact school if they have any concerns about their child's attendance.
- Understand that failure to ensure good attendance and punctuality will amount to an offence in law, making them liable to a penalty notice or other statutory action, including prosecution. The penalties for continued unauthorised absence can be severe.

Attendance Register

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to maintain an accurate register file, following the categorising instructions provided. The register is taken twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance file for all the children of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll. It is the Administration Team's responsibility to investigate any unexplained absences and to print off weekly registers and to record all attendance and non attendance into the Management Information System. This information may be passed onto parents, receiving schools, the DfE and other appropriate bodies. The attendance register files are kept in a secure place within the school office. In the event of a fire the Admin Officers will take out the attendance register files to class teachers.

Lateness

Parents and children are regularly reminded the importance of punctuality. Children not in attendance at registration time are marked absent. The register is closed at 09:10. Any children who arrived during this time are marked late with an 'L'. Children who arrive after this time are marked late with a 'U'. This is classified as an unauthorised absence.

Absences

Parents are requested to notify school by letter, telephone or orally regarding any absences of their child before 09.30. Parents are encouraged to have medical

appointments outside the school day, however if this is not possible, appointment cards/letters must be shown as proof at the school office.

The class teacher marks all known absences before the register closes, if the reason for the absence is not known it is marked as 'N' which will be followed up and categorised by the Admin team. Letters regarding absence are kept at the back of the register until the end of the year. They are disposed of at the end of the school year with any significant ones filed into the child's personal buff folder. Class teachers are informed of telephone and oral messages. The Admin Officers inform the School Business Manager of any unexplained absences on a daily basis who will then take appropriate action to ascertain the reason. In the event of school receiving no explanation, a standard letter ([Appendix 1](#)) requesting reasons for the absence is sent home. If notification is still not received, or the reason given unjustified, the absence is marked as unauthorised.

Leave of absence (Term-time Holiday)

Leave of absence will not be granted during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. This applies to all children of compulsory school age (a child begins to be of compulsory school age the term following the child's fifth birthday). The headteacher has the discretion to grant leave if he/she believes that there are exceptional circumstances and determine the number of school days a child can be away from school. Each request for leave of absence in term time will be judged on its own merit.

Circumstances that may **not** be considered exceptional are:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements.
- Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term.
- Birthday of pupil or family member.

Parents requesting leave of absence for exceptional circumstances must make the request in writing at least two weeks before the anticipated start date ([Appendix 2](#)).

The headteacher will respond in writing to each parent by name with his/her decision as soon as is practicable. Leave of absence cannot be approved retrospectively.

Penalty notices

Penalty notices can be issued by the local authority Education Welfare Service to each parent liable for the unauthorised attendance and for each child of compulsory school age.

Penalty notices can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies.

Parents who remove their child from the school for the purpose of a family holiday without seeking prior approval will be referred to the Educational Welfare Service and will be issued with a penalty notice.

The penalty is £60 (per child and per parent) if paid within 21 days of receipt rising to £120 (per child and per parent) if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. For example, two parents with three children would be fined a total of £720, reduced to £360 if paid within 21 days).

The payment must be paid direct to the local authority. The parents may be prosecuted by the local authority if 28 days have expired and full payment has not been made. There is no right of appeal by parents against a penalty notice.

EXCLUSIONS

We will try to deal with any severe disciplinary matters in such a way that exclusion does not become necessary but recognise there may be cases when this is the only option open. The governor will delegate powers to a Discipline Committee to deal with an exclusion matter which cannot be resolved.

The arrangement for exclusion procedures and the governors' duties are found in The School Standards and Framework Act 1998

Signed_____Headteacher

Date_____

Signed_____Chair of Governors

Date_____

Review Date:

STENSON FIELDS PRIMARY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mrs J Sadler BEd Hons NPQH

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Recipient(s) full name
Address

Dear

Absence from School

NAME was absent from school for NUMBER days between DATE and DATE without explanation. You were sent a text message, enquiring about the reason for absence, each day during this time. (Or give details of the contacts made by school during the absence.)

I understand (**or** - You have since informed us) that CHILD'S NAME was absent from school due to a family holiday. In view of this, in accordance with Government regulation, I must mark the register for CHILD'S NAME with a 'G' which means 'unauthorised absence for a holiday during term-time'. You may be issue with a Penalty Notice for this unauthorised absence.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J Sadler
Headteacher



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LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

PLEASE NOTE - The **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** state that Headteacher's should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Name of Child(ren) Year Group
..... Year Group
..... Year Group

Childs Address
.....

Name of Applicant(s) and Address (if different).....
.....

I / We wish to apply for our child(ren) to be absent from school for EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES on the following dates.

From..... To.....

Total number of days our child(ren) will be absent from school

Please supply in as much detail as possible the reason for your request and why you feel it is **exceptional circumstances**. Please include the names of the adult(s) who will be with your child(ren) during their absence from school. Continue over the page if necessary.

Signed (both parents if applicable)

Date

.....

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IF THE REQUEST IS FOR A FAMILY HOLIDAY PLEASE SUBMIT IT BEFORE THE HOLIDAY IS BOOKED.