



Attendance Policy 2016



Stow Heath Primary School, Hill Road, Portobello, Willenhall, WV13 3TT
Telephone: 01902 558820 Fax: 01902 558821
Email: stowheathprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

 Shine like a Star 



Principles

Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action by the Local Authority. Children need to be at school regularly and on time every day to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. As a school we see the maintaining of good regular and punctual attendance as a priority. The school will celebrate good attendance by rewarding children termly.

Partnership between school and parents

By law, all children of compulsory school age [5-16] must get a proper full-time education. Parents are responsible for ensuring that this happens by registering the child at a school or by making other arrangements which provide effective education. In most cases children attend school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school and that they stay at school. Parents are responsible for securing regular attendance and that their child arrives at school on time properly attired and in a condition to learn.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Parents are expected to contact the school and to work with the school in resolving problems together. If the problem cannot be sorted out the school will request that the parents sign a formal Parenting contract or where this is not acceptable the school will inform parents that their child has been referred to the Education Welfare Worker.

Sometimes children are unhappy about attending school. Families can be going through unsettled times that can make regular school attendance difficult. Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties, are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child at an early stage. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that school attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence from school has to be recorded by staff at the school as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the staff at school do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. These are an offence by the parent and include:

- *parents keeping children off school without a good reason*
- *truancy before or during the school day*
- *absences which have never been properly explained*





- *children who arrive at school too late to get a mark*
- *taking unauthorised holidays*

Each child's attendance can be summarised as:

<i>100%</i>	<i>attendance – excellent</i>
<i>97%+</i>	<i>good</i>
<i>95%</i>	<i>satisfactory</i>
<i>Below 90%</i>	<i>a cause for concern and unacceptable</i>
<i>Below 85%</i>	<i>seriously unacceptable</i>

Information for parents

The school prospectus contains information on attendance and absence. Parents are asked to inform the school by telephone or to send in a letter when the child returns to school stating the reason for absence. Follow up letters are sent out weekly and absences are followed up by the Attendance Officer and Headteacher.

Parents are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may offer parents a formal Parenting Contract or refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement wherever possible but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use legal proceedings if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution. Alternatively, parents or pupils may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Procedures

The school has a special responsibility to reduce the number of children whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. These are called "persistent absentees" by the Government, whatever the reason for their absence. Special procedures may be applied to children at risk of falling into this category.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Parents/Carers to contact the school on the first day of absence, if they have not contacted us during the morning, then Mrs A Mincher (Attendance Officer) will try to make contact with the family.

It is not possible for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, minding the house, birthdays, day trips and holidays.

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school time wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, staff should be informed and provided with proof (in advance if at all possible). A "present" mark can still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can. It is always better to attend for some of the time, rather than missing the whole day.

Responsibilities Parents:





To ensure that registered children of compulsory school age attend school regularly and on time;
To inform school of reasons for absence;

Headteacher:

To maintain an admission register;
To maintain an attendance register;
To ensure that an attendance register is taken twice a day;

Attendance Officer:

To ensure registers are ready for staff at the start of each session;
To analyse attendance data;
To follow up any absences;
To report any absences of vulnerable children to the Head teacher the same day;
Liaise with the EWO;
Meet with parents.

EWS:

To monitor attendance and support parents with their responsibilities;
To visit parents of children whose attendance is a cause for concern and where no contact

or

Explanation has been received by the school;

Staff:

To mark the attendance register accurately at the start of each school session;

Punctuality

Good attendance is essential and part of our drive to improve attendance is our insistence that pupils arrive on time every day. Lateness is recorded on our SIMS management system and when punctuality becomes an issue then parents will be invited in to meet with Mrs Mincher or the EWO.

Holidays in term time

The school follows DfE and LA advice with regard to holidays.

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives and strategies

The school has adopted the following attendance targets:

Whole school: 96%

Persistent absence target: 2.1%

We follow the LA targets and constantly have discussions to achieve these.





The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Mrs A Mincher – Administrator with responsibility for attendance. Monitoring low attending pupils, identifying reasons for poor attendance and, where possible, working with parents to improve this. Referring to the EWS if deemed necessary.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to promote good attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly. School staff are committed to working closely with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Please work with us. We appreciate your continued support.

