



**STIMPSON
- AVENUE -
ACADEMY**



Stimpson Avenue Academy Attendance Policy

September 2017 to July 2018.

Stimpson Avenue Academy Attendance Policy

Principles

Education is important. Missing school means missing out. Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day that the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence on the part of the parent that can result in legal action.

We understand that some families may 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; it may even 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, if possible in writing.

Definitions

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

Unauthorised absences are those that the staff at school do not consider reasonable, or for which no 'leave' has been given. These are an offence on the part of the parent and include:

- Keeping children off school without a good reason
- Truancy
- Absences that have never been properly explained
- Children arriving at school too late to get a mark
- Taking holidays during term-time.

Parents and Carers' responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together.

It is not **usually** possible for the school to authorise absences for holidays, shopping, looking after other children or adults, birthdays, day trips etc.

Leave may however, be granted in an emergency, exceptional circumstances, for example, for genuine pastoral reasons (e.g. after the death of close relative).

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 (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.

Why is attendance so important?

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:

First day absence

- Phone call home to ensure all children are accounted for.
- Parents should contact the school to inform of any absences and the reason for the absence. This should be done on a daily basis.

School absence line: 01604 631383

- If a parent takes a child to the doctors then medical evidence must be provided e.g. appointment card, prescription given, doctors letter etc.Attendance Reports

The school expectation and target is 96%. If a child's attendance falls lower than this the procedures are as follows:

Attendance Percentages below 95% by Term 5 (4 days off)

- Parents will be contacted and a conversation will explore the decline in attendance. Support from the schools Attendance Officer will be offered to the family if required and appropriate.

Attendance Percentages below 95%

- Parents will be contacted with a letter to outline the decline in attendance and the offer of support from the schools learning mentor to support the family identifying the procedures that will be followed should the attendance figure continue to drop.

Attendance Percentage below 90%

- Parents will be invited in to school to work collaboratively on creating an action plan, parents may be invited into school to discuss the situation in greater detail, medical records may be requested. This meeting will be with the school Attendance Officer.
- If attendance percentage does not improve parents will be invited to take part in an attendance panel held at the school. The attendance panel should include the Principal, a member of the SLT and a school governor. All evidence of the individual situation will be reviewed and appropriate targets will be set. Regular weekly review meetings will be arranged.

Fixed Penalty Warnings/Notice

- A warning letter will be issued after ten un-authorised sessions have been recorded over a period of twelve weeks. The warning letter will be effective for twelve weeks and during this time it is an expectation that the child's attendance increases. After three weeks, the attendance will be reviewed. If there is no improvement to the attendance for that child a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued which will result in a fine of £60 or £120 if not paid within 28 days.
- Parents will be given a leave of absence or holiday request letter where the penalty notice is made clear.

If Your Child is Absent.

- Please contact the school reception team on the day of their absence, informing them of your child's reason for absence before the registration period at 8.40a.m.
- Each reason will be recorded on your child's registration document
- Please contact the school EVERY day they are absent.
- Informing us of your child's absence is crucial, if you do not contact us and we cannot get hold of you, it may be necessary for us to conduct a home visit and if we are concerned for the safety of your child, phone the police.

Holidays within school term time.

The government is concerned about levels of pupil absence from school and has therefore made changes to the regulations regarding authorisation of leave. From September 2013 it was no longer possible to authorise family holidays. Leave may only be granted for 'exceptional circumstances'; this is at the Principal's discretion.

- A child that is taken out of school for a holiday will have that absence marked as unauthorised. It is important to note that the council can issue parents with a fine if they take holiday during term time. Parents are requested to make an appointment with the attendance officer to discuss the circumstances further.
- When exceptional circumstances occur, parents are requested to make an appointment with an attendance officer at the school so that the circumstances can be discussed together.

Punctuality

It is imperative that children learn the importance of punctuality in order to fulfill their own role in society as they grow into young adults. This role modelling of good practice begins in primary school.

- Children are expected to arrive at school between 8.45 a.m and 8.55a.m
- **The school gates will be locked at 8.55am**
- Registration is until 9.00a.m
- Lates are recorded in five minute intervals. If your child exceeds an accumulated 30 minutes late, contact with the parents will be made. Intervention from school can sometimes be a welcomed helping hand for supporting the child with routines in the morning.
- A late mark is given to any child arriving after 9.00 am
- Arriving after the allocated registration period will result in an unauthorised mark being awarded.
- More than 5 lates will result in an initial letter being sent to parents.
- More than 10 lates will result in a follow up letter with information regarding actions that will be taken, including contact with the Attendance Officer.
- Persistent lates will be called in by the Attendance Officer for a formal meeting and if improvements do not occur then there will be an additional meeting with the Principal and the Attendance Officer.
- If your child continues to be persistently late there will be the possibility of a fine.

Any planned absence from school for one or more days.

- Please note all holiday will be granted as unauthorized. For Nationally celebrated religious events, one day may be authorized. Any further days will be given as unauthorized.

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

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

- Stimpson Avenue Academy attendance target is 96%.
- Certificates will be awarded on a termly basis for 100% attendance and high attendance, 98 and 99%.
- Same day absence phone calls are made **every day** to ensure all children are accounted for.

Good attendance should be at the heart of the school ethos and as a result class teachers should discuss the importance of good attendance with the children in their class and during

school assemblies.

Staff Responsible for Attendance

The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Alison Hawkes-Principal

Mia Lewis- Deputy Principal

Stephanie Singlehurst - Attendance Officer

Phase Leaders

Class Teachers

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/ carers as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Please work with us. Thank you.

Date policy adopted – September 2017

Date policy to be reviewed – July 2018