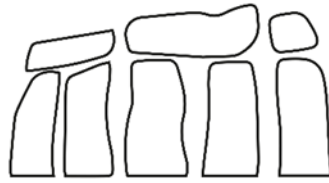


Stukeley Federation



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Attendance Policy

in support of

William Stukeley CE Primary School
and
Deeping St. Nicholas Primary School

Policy approved by Full Governing Body: April 2022

Policy to be reviewed: April 2025

Attendance

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Link Governor
March 2022	March 2025	Health & Well-Being Faculty	Mrs S Buck

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the school ethos, enables consistency and quality across the school and is related to the following legislation:

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2005
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Advice on School Attendance (DfE)
- Improving Attendance at School (DfE)
- School attendance parental responsibility measures: Statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police (DfE)

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

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We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment requires good attendance.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School personnel have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

In many instances, a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault; in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times, we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

Whilst very rare within the Stukeley Federation, we believe truancy is also a matter that would be treated very seriously, as we feel pupils would not only be losing valuable learning time, but they would be putting themselves at serious risk as the school and their parents would not be aware of their location.

We have a duty to ensure that all parents are aware of our 'legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders or penalty notices to address poor attendance and behaviour in school.' Parents have a duty to ensure their children are well behaved and attend school regularly, as 'good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects'. (Penalty notices are also available for parents of pupils found in a public place during school hours, after being excluded from school).

We will exercise a consistent approach and ensure equity for all pupils.

We aim to be judged at least 'good' in all school inspections by aiming for standards, for all pupils, that are higher than schools of a similar size and that standards continue to improve faster than the local and national trend. We believe we will achieve this by having in place a home-school agreement that all parents have signed-up to, and by improving pupil attendance.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that are connected with this policy.

Aims

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Absence

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings which may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court, whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If you are found guilty in court, you will receive a criminal conviction.

Unauthorised absence includes, yet not limited to:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive after 9:30am, once registers are closed, are marked using a 'U' code. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is recorded as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips
- looking after other children, or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments
- their own or family birthdays
- holidays taken during term time without leave, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' - this may result in school applying to the local authority to issue a penalty notice, or if you have previously been issued a Penalty Notice, the school may request a direct prosecution by the local authority.
- day trips
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed

School Attendance and the Law

There is no longer any entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school".

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 were amended in September 2013. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. The amendments specify that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are reasons considered to be **exceptional**, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the Head Teacher (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for

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a leave of absence must be made in writing to the Head Teacher. Where a parent removes a child when the application for leave was refused, or where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty notice may be requested by this school.

Within the Stukeley Federation, 'exceptional circumstances' will be interpreted as:

Being of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are 'rare, significant, unavoidable and short'. By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

In the event of 'exceptional circumstances' a request for leave must be made in writing, giving at least two weeks' notice, to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher along with the Governors will monitor any applications for leave and consider the given **exceptional circumstances**.

Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time, in order not to disrupt the child's education; the school may request evidence to support this.

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. However, from time to time children need to be absent from school for medical reasons and other similar appointments; such absences usually only take up part of a day. School should be informed of such absences in writing in advance, and children should be brought in to school for morning registration (where possible) and back to school following the appointment.

Children Missing In Education

The school will follow the Lincolnshire County Council policy regarding Children Missing in Education, a copy of which is available on request from the school or Lincolnshire County Council.

When a pupil does not attend the school, the following procedures are in place:

- If there are Child Protection concerns, then the Lincolnshire Area Child Protection Procedures will be followed immediately.
- If a message is not received from parents/carers (telephone call, answerphone message, email or letter), the parents/carers will be contacted on the day of the absence by phone call and/or text/email.
- If no contact is made with parents/carers, the school will attempt communications with next-in-line contacts on the pupil file. Contact will be attempted periodically throughout the day, to obtain a reason for absence.
- Where there is no response, a phone call will be made on following day, or a letter sent to attempt to identify a reason for the child being absent, at this point a 'safe & well' check will be considered. After three days of unexplained absence, a letter will be sent and there will be a visit from members of the school staff.
- Should a child be absent with no explanation given for a period of 5 days, a referral will be made to the Children Missing in Education (CME) Team at Lincolnshire County

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Council. Should a child be absent for a total of four weeks without any explanation, and after due investigation, the school will follow the CME guidance and can remove this child from the school roll. The child will lose their school place and parents/carers would have to re-apply for a place in the school should they wish their child to return – there is no guarantee that a place would be available.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Head Teacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy;
- promote the importance of attendance and punctuality with all stakeholders;
- ensure compliance with all statutory pupil registration regulations;
- ensure that First Day Contact identifies and follows up all absence and lateness;
- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out;
- set statutory attendance targets for the year that are realistic and challenging in order to raise school attendance;
- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders;
- monitor termly progress towards these targets by considering the following questions:
 - Has attendance improved?
 - Has punctuality improved?
 - Has parental response to absences improved?
- ensure the Head Teacher, in consultation with the governing body, exercises his/her discretionary power to authorise absence in extenuating circumstances;
- ensure the Head Teacher, in consultation with the governing body, does not authorise absence if it is to the detriment of a child's education;
- have responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- have responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- have responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- have responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- nominate a link governor to:
 - visit the school regularly;
 - work closely with the Head Teacher and the First Day Contact personnel;
 - ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - attend training related to this policy;
 - report to the Governing Body every term;
 - annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- create a culture which encourages attendance;
- address all school based causes of poor attendance such as bullying, racism etc;
- organise the daily monitoring of school attendance via First Day Contact personnel by using an appropriate and effective registration system;
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure office personnel are fully trained in the registration process and with the appropriate categorisation of absence;
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day;
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees;
- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning;
- ensure early intervention in order to prevent absenteeism or truancy and to put in to affect a range of procedures to deal with this problem;
- provide parents, with a detailed attendance report on their child, during progress meetings;
- target intervention and support to those children and families that have been highlighted as poor attenders;
- agenda attendance at periodic meetings with school personnel;
- purchase Education Welfare Services, as necessary;
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence;
- question any parental explanation for pupil absence if there is doubt as to the validity of the explanation;
- expect an explanation for every absence and if one is not forthcoming then the absence will be categorised as unauthorised;
- ensure school personnel are aware that unauthorised absence is absence without approval from the Head Teacher and includes all unexplained absences;
- distribute a Full Governing Body report setting out attendance figures;
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- write to parents if they have applied for a holiday during school time;
- only consider 'exceptional circumstances' when a request has been made for term time holiday;
- apply a consistent approach across the school and ensure equity for all pupils;
- publicise good attendance and promote the importance of good attendance during collective worship, in newsletters and Full Governing Body reports;
- award attendance certificates to pupils when they have achieved 100% attendance;
- consider home tuition with the local support services for pupils with long term illness, provided they are well enough to undertake the work;
- where appropriate, consider procedures for reintegrating long-term absentees;
- organise training for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance;

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- work closely with the 'attendance governor' and First Day Contact personnel;
- strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families;
- recommend to the Governing Body the use of a Home-School Agreement:
 - in cases of poor attendance;
 - when a pupil has consistently misbehaved, or has been permanently excluded, or excluded for a fixed period;
 - when it is considered that parenting is a factor in the absence or bad behaviour of a child, and where the parent appears to be in need of support.
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide appropriate guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:
 - monitoring trends and patterns as highlighted in attendance data
 - looking at results from parent, pupil and school personnel questionnaires
- annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.

Role of the First Day Contact Personnel

First Day Contact personnel are responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Head Teacher;
- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 9:30am;
- sending a letter if no contact is made;
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made;
- contacting the key worker / Safeguarding Lead if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence;
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- keeping the Head / Safeguarding Lead informed of attendance figures and trends;
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- organising Attendance Panel meetings between the Head Teacher / SEND Manager / Class Teacher / Governor and parents to discuss concerns regarding their child's poor attendance;
- organising correspondence between the Head Teacher and parents to discuss their child's truancy;
- organising / arranging correspondence between the Head Teacher and parents to respond to term time holiday applications.
- compiling attendance data reports for the Head Teacher and the Governing Body.
- ensuring electronic registers are prepared, scanned for errors on completion and kept up to date.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with and implement this policy;
- be aware of all other linked policies;
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day;
- ensure registers are up to date;
- office personnel to be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents;
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations.

Role of the Parents

Parents/carers will:

- comply with this policy;
- work as partners with the school in the education of their children;
- ensure their children of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education;
- ensure their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance;
- inform the school on the first day of absence, and any subsequent days as necessary;
- provide a written explanation of absence, on the child's return to school;
- inform the school of any changes to their contact details;
- collect their children on time; please notify the school of alternative arrangements if you are unable to collect on time, so your child can be collected promptly
- notify the school of any changes to the named person collecting their child;
- take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- avoid taking family holidays in term time;
- fully understand the importance of the following times of the year:
 - the first six weeks of any academic year
 - Y6 SATs week
 - Y2 SATs week
 - Y6 transition week

Role of Pupils

Pupils are responsible for:

- being aware of the school attendance and truancy policy;
- arriving at school on time (school open from 8:30am)
- knowing the value of good attendance;

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- returning to school after a period of illness;
- support the school's Values and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school;
- liaise with the school council;
- take part in questionnaires and surveys.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality is worked out as follows (per short term):

- **0 Late Marks – Excellent**
- **1 Late Marks – Very Good**
- **2 Late Marks – Good**
- **Up to and including 10 Late Marks – Causing Concern**
- **More than 10 Late Marks – Poor**

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time.

School day timings for William Stukeley CE Primary School:

8.45am	Teachers collect children from playground.
8.55am	School starts and doors are closed. Children should be in class by this time (usually completing the first activity of the day). Children who arrive once the doors are closed must come to the front entrance and report to the office to ensure they are marked and recorded as having arrived at school.
9.00am	Children arriving at school / in class after this time are marked as late. ('L' code)
9.30am	Registers are officially closed; children who arrive to school after this time are classified as an unauthorised absence ('U' code) for the morning session, unless an acceptable reason is given in writing.
1.00pm	Afternoon registration is taken Reception and KS1
1.15pm	Afternoon registration KS2

School day timings for Deeping St. Nicholas Primary School:

8.40am	Teachers collect children from playground.
8.50am	School starts and doors are closed. Children should be in class by this time (usually completing the first activity of the day). Children who arrive once the doors are closed must come to the front entrance and report to the office to ensure they are marked and recorded as having arrived at school. This is used to monitor lateness.
8.55am	Registers are officially closed; children arriving in class after this time are then marked late.
9.30am	Children who arrive to school after this time are classified as an unauthorised absence , for the morning session, unless an acceptable reason is given in writing.
1.05pm	Afternoon registration

Dealing with Trends in Attendance

Attendance Percentages are worked out as follows:

- **96% - 100% Well Done**
- **91% - 95% Risk of Under Achievement**
- **85% - 90% Serious Risk of Under Achievement**
- **Below 85% Serious Cause for Concern and Under Achievement**

Our attendance target is **97%**; when there is a pattern of poor attendance then the following procedure will take place:

- Termly attendance at or below 95% will trigger an attendance letter giving full details and a notice of monitoring (with the exception of those with chronic health issues).
- Failure to improve attendance will promote conversations to consider what support the school could offer.
- Further failure to improve attendance may lead to an Attendance Panel Meeting (APM). During the APM, discussions will take place and an 'action plan' (including parent contract/s) created; targets from the action plan will be monitored for a period of 6 weeks.
- If the targets from the action plan are not met, the support of the Local Authority may be required; at this point, home visits, fixed penalty notices and further referrals will be considered.

NB: A similar process will be adopted for persistent lateness.

The table below shows how having a day absent from school affects % attendance during the school year:

Attendance during one school year	Equates to days absent	Which is approximately
94%	10 days	2 weeks
90%	19 days	4 weeks
85%	29 days	6 weeks
80%	38 days	8 weeks

Dealing with Lateness

We expect children to arrive on time for school. It is important that children are settled and are ready to learn on time. We understand that occasional lateness may be unavoidable, however when repeated, it can become problematic; lateness can develop into absence. Children may feel embarrassed or concerned at arriving late to class, when peers are settled and learning.

The office personnel monitor lateness and inform:

- the Head Teacher of patterns of lateness;
- parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be addressed

Celebrating Achievements

Throughout the academic year, all children achieving 100% attendance during the terms will be recognised with a certificate at the end of each term. At the end of each academic year, children achieving 100% attendance will be rewarded with an 'Outstanding Attendance' certificate. Children who have achieved 97% attendance will receive an 'Excellent Attendance' certificate.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Prospectus
- the school website
- meetings with parents such as introductory, transition, parent-teacher consultations
- school events
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as newsletters
- reports such annual report to parents and Head Teacher reports to the Governing Body

Training

All office school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on this policy on induction which specifically covers:
 - the importance of good attendance and punctuality
 - all aspects of this policy
 - the use and understanding of attendance codes
 - authorised and unauthorised attendance
 - looking at trends and patterns
 - bullying
 - the needs of vulnerable groups
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information

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- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed annually or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Head Teacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

- Admission
- Anti-bullying
- Behaviour
- Home School Agreement

Head Teacher:		Date:	
Chair of Governing Body:		Date:	