

Stoke Holy Cross Primary school is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We have developed this as a Cluster Policy in order to give a consistent response to all students and families in our care.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to students and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this Cluster attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

Each year the Cluster schools will examine their attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and Norfolk attendance targets. The Cluster schools will discuss their attendance figures individually and collectively. The success of this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and will include systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the Cluster will use to meet its attendance targets.

Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity ('attendance out of school'). Only the Head teacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

The Cluster schools set their own registration times. At Stoke Holy Cross Primary School morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.45am. The registers will remain open for 10 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases, for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.15pm and close 5 minutes later.

Pupils arriving after the start of school, but before the end of the registration period, will be treated for statistical purposes as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

On the first day of an absence parents and carers should contact school before the registration period closes. If no contact has been made, the Office will endeavour to contact parents or carers as quickly as possible during the day and will transfer information to the registers, alerting the Head teacher or other key staff to any wellbeing issues. The School decides whether an absence is agreed or not.

Third Day Absence

If the child is still absent and no contact has been established with the family, a letter will be sent home and Children's Services informed by contacting the Attendance Support and Enforcement Officer. The Police may be contacted if the School has continuing concerns.

Continuing Absence

If the absence continues, further enquiries will continue, including within the local community.

Ten Days' Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days must be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team if the School has concerns. This is a legal requirement. The School will include details of the action that they have taken. At Stoke Holy Cross Primary School, this action is taken at an earlier point in order to maintain our very high levels of attendance.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the School to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents and carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Nursing Team if the problem appears to be a medical one and this course of action is appropriate, and will work in partnership with other health professionals. In other cases the school will seek advice from the School's Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO). Action may include the use of the Fast Track system and/or Fixed Penalty Notices.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This could include ensuring that the child is helped to catch up on missed work, if necessary, and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other young people.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting good attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education and will make clear the links between attendance and attainment.

The Home/School agreement may be used in this way. A promotional leaflet will be used.

Leave of absence in term time

Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 have removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head teachers may not authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Parents must apply in advance for permission using the request for leave of absence form. The Cluster schools will confer where there are siblings in different schools. The schools will apply to the Local Authority for fixed penalty notices to be issued.

Attendance Awards

The Cluster schools will reward pupils who have good or improving attendance, in particular through praising the individual child and, for example, by awarding certificates for 100% attendance on a termly basis. Other initiatives are under development.

The registration system

The School will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil/student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils/students	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil/student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils/students	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Computer registers must be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes. Alternatively electronic back-ups or micro-fiche copies can be made. These also need preserving for at least three year.

Register Security *The registers are stored safely.*

Documents used to support this policy:

- A promotional leaflet: "School Attendance Matters"
- Cluster request for leave of absence form

APPENDIX 1:

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

[a] to his age, ability and aptitude; and [b] to any special needs he may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil/student who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

A Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils/students where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

B Authorised absence

This is for those pupils/students who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the current legislation and guidance.

C Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note: Pupils/students recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration