STANNINGTON INFANT SCHOOL

Policy for Attendance and Term Time Leave

January 2026

Review January 2027

Stannington Infant School
Policy for Attendance and Term Time Leave

Stannington Infant School Vision

- **To encourage a caring and positive attitude amongst the children towards all others and their environment.**
- **To provide a challenging, creative and rich curriculum which will develop curiosity, confidence and independence.**
- **To provide an inclusive, safe, secure, healthy and happy environment.**

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Definitions
4. Attendance expectations
5. Absence procedures
6. Attendance register
7. Authorising parental absence requests
8. SEND- and health-related absence
9. Safeguarding and Attendance; Children Missing in Education
10. Working with parents to improve attendance
11. Monitoring, analysing and responding to absence data
12. Persistent Absence (PA)
13. Legal intervention
14. Training of staff
15. Truancy
16. Missing children
17. Monitoring and review

Appendices

Appendix 1 National Attendance Codes
Appendix 2 Concern letters

Statement of intent

Stannington Infant School strongly believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school. We have an established culture and ethos of encouraging good attendance.

As children start school their patterns and routines of school attendance quickly become habits. Poor routines are hard to disestablish further up the school system. A prevention and early intervention approach that helps to establish good habits can underpin the whole of a child's school career – and potentially their life opportunities. Young children, however, are dependent upon the adults in their life to get them to school regularly and on time. This school culture and clarity of purpose amongst all stakeholders in the school provides the best conditions for promoting good attendance.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, this policy whilst being rigorous in endeavouring to achieve high levels of attendance, sets out how we cultivate a safe and supportive process for attendance at school to maintain (and forge where necessary) strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents. It has been shown in DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance that it is in this framework that strategies to achieve high attendance have most success."

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance, and recognise the impact that our policies and practise in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

1. **School Culture:** Promoting, modelling and maintaining high attendance through a whole school culture that celebrates its benefits.
2. **An Attendance Policy which is Understood**: Ensuring our attendance policy is clear and easily understood by all staff, parents and pupils.
3. **Effective Day to Day Practices:** Having accurate registers and effective day to day processes in place to follow up absence.
4. **Thorough Monitoring, Analysis and Positive Action:** Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support and taking prompt and thorough action in order to resolve absence issues where appropriate
5. **Strong and Productive Relationships with Families**: Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance; listening carefully to any barriers to attendance and working with families to remove these barriers.
6. **Collaboration with Other Schools and Agencies:** Working collaboratively in an organised and regular basis with other schools (particularly those in Peak Edge MAT) and agencies including the local authority's Attendance and Inclusion Service. Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
7. **Equality for All Pupils:** Ensuring equality and fairness for all including tackling disadvantage
8. **Ensuring Statutory Responsibilities are Met:** Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

The school's attendance officers are **Rebecca Juggins and Sarah Binns**, and can be contacted via enquiries@stannington.sheffield.sch.uk. Staff, parents and pupils will be expected to contact the attendance officer for queries or concerns about attendance.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance particularly including DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance' It is informed by but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended in 2024 by the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024.)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2024) 'Working together to improve school attendance
- DfE (9.6.22) What does the new attendance guidance mean for schools?
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- DfE (2024) National Framework for Penalty Notices

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board has the overall delegated responsibility from Peak Edge trustees for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Working with the School's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to promote the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensuring appropriate attendance training has been arranged for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals and reviewing attendance data.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy (From stage 3 of the policy and beyond).
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a **Children Absent in Education Policy** in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the Senior Attendance Champion role or taking on this role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and that the school will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy (at Stages 1 and 2 of the policy).

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Using agreed communication systems including CPOMs to inform relevant senior leaders about attendance issues.
- Following agreed actions in any individual pupil attendance plans thoroughly and reporting back to the SLT on matters arising relating to each plan.

The Senior Attendance Champion is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school in liaison with the Headteacher (if the Senior Attendance Champion is not the headteacher his/herself).
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying and implementing plans for intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance and working systematically for successful outcomes for pupils.
- Working at regular intervals with the Local Authority (LA) Attendance and Inclusion team for advice and support
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when already in school.

Parents are responsible for:

- **The attendance of their children at school.**

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

3. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed at 9.00 for KS1 and 9.10 for FS
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed where the reason given for lateness has not been satisfactorily explained.
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children, birthdays or other celebrations.
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no legitimate reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason

4. Attendance expectations

The school has very high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality, and rigorously ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. **Our target is for all children's attendance to be 97% or higher.** There are, of course, legitimate reasons for school absences (and why a child's attendance might fall below 97%) however all absence disrupts pupils' education and the higher the absence rate, the more concerning the absence becomes. This is why the school communicates and works with parents to try to reduce all absence where it is safe and suitable to do so. Where attendance is low, different children and families will need different types of support and challenge (where appropriate) to help improve their child's attendance. That support will be decided upon after communication with families (see section 12 below).

We classify rates of absence as follows. This table is regularly communicated to parents. **It is important to note that the descriptors below relate to each child's attendance not the effort of parents to bring children into school as regularly as possible.** *See attendance rate bands below*

Attendance rate band	Likely impact on pupils' progress and well being in school
95% or higher **Good**	This gives children the best chance of success in school. They access more learning and wider school experiences. Learning is progressive so children can better make connections between different aspects of their learning. They become more settled into school routines and have more chance to play and socialise with their peers. We communicate with parents twice a year to let them know how their child's attendance is benefitting their education and well-being at school.
90% - 94.9% **Becoming a Concern**	Significant numbers of school days are being missed at this level of attendance particularly at the lower end of this band's range. This will mean that children will not have been introduced or had chance to consolidate many aspects of their learning. Children may well miss completely certain aspects of work which could well impact upon their learning and confidence at school in the future. There will be fewer opportunities for staff to work with children to provide challenge or give support. School routines start to become fragmented which could make children less settled. Parents will be informed that their child's attendance is becoming a concern at least three times a year. Where patterns of attendance or reasons given for attendance are becoming a concern to school staff managing attendance parents will be contacted in order to improve attendance as they would if their child's attendance was at the attendance rate band below. (See sections 12 and 15 of this policy below).
Less than 90% **Concerning**	Attendance at this level is now very likely to have significant negative impacts on pupils' progress, well-being and confidence at school. **Both the DfE and the Local Authority Attendance and Inclusion Service regards attendance at this level as 'persistent absenteeism'.** Improving pupils' attendance from rates below 90% will be given the highest priority. Normally all* parents of children with attendance below 90% will be contacted in the autumn term and again in January in order to work together to improve attendance for their child. Plans will be made for each child bespoke to their needs and reasons for their absence which will be reviewed termly. Different approaches will be needed for different children's and family circumstances however the school will not cease to work with families to improve a pupil's attendance until it is at least at satisfactory levels and consistently so. (See sections 12 and 15 of this policy below). • *Where children have had attendance of over 95% in the previous school year and there have been clear and legitimate reasons for short periods of absence in the autumn term which significantly skew the child's overall attendance rate for the new school year, parents will not be contacted.*

Expectations for Arriving at School:
The school day starts at 8:50a.m for KS1 and 9.00a.m for FS. It is expected that all children are seated, ready to start the first lesson of the day at that time. Morning tasks and staff are available for classes from **8:40 a.m / 8:50 a.m respectively**. to help children settle into class ready for the official start of the day.
Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school for the full day. Parents can bring children to school from **8:40/ 8:50** or take advantage of the school's Busy Bees Breakfast Club which starts at 7:30a.m.

Expectations for Registration:
Registers will be taken as follows throughout the school day:

- **The school day starts at 8:50a.m for KS1 and 9:00a.m for FS.** Teachers should endeavour to take the school register promptly at this time. Pupils arriving at school after the register has been taken but before **9:00a.m (KS1) 9:10a.m (FS)** will be given an **L = Late arrival before the register has closed** mark.
- The morning register will be marked by **9:00a.m (KS1) 9:10a.m (FS)** Pupils will receive an unauthorised late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. The morning register will close at **9:30am**. Pupils will normally receive a mark of absence **U = Arrived after registration closed** mark if they arrive in class after **9:30am**.
- The afternoon register will be marked and will close at **1:00pm.** Although, theoretically, pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time, it is the responsibility of school staff to ensure children return to class from the school playground (or other parts of the school) to start afternoon school on time. If parents have taken children out of school for the morning or at lunchtime, they will be told when afternoon school starts for their child's class.

Parents and pupils will be encouraged to communicate any concerns related to attendance, punctuality and absence as soon as possible to the relevant member of staff. Staff will communicate any such concerns confidentially with the senior leadership team (SLT) and the Attendance Champion. Any substantive or on-going issues (especially if they regard welfare or safeguarding issues) should be recorded on CPOMs as soon as possible. (See Section 16 below.)
Parents and staff will be regularly informed of the school's attendance expectations detailed above.

5. Absence procedures

Parents' Responsibility to Inform School Regarding Absences:

Parents will be required to contact the school office via telephone before 8:40a.m**.** on the first day of their child's absence – they will be expected to provide:

1. confirmation that their child will or will not be in school. (If this is not clear and the child is absent, parents should be contacted.)
2. an explanation for the absence
3. an estimation of how long the absence will last, e.g. one school day.

The school will regularly let parents know about this expectation and how they can inform school. Parents should either

1. email enquiries@stannington.sheffield.sch.uk
2. talk directly to a member of the office staff.
3. leave a message on the school phone number – 0114 2344401.

Staff Response When Parents Have Not Followed the Agreed Process for Informing School about Absence:

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, school administrative staff will contact the parent by telephone call as soon as is practicable (before 10a.m.) on the first day that they do not attend school. If parents cannot be contacted, all adults given as contacts by parents on the school's database will be contacted in the priority order given to us by parents to ascertain if the child is safe and well. If no one on the list is contactable, admin staff will contact a member of the SLT, normally the School Attendance Champion to make a decision on what steps to take next. Depending on the specific details known about the child's welfare, needs and previous attendance, a decision will then be made whether to contact social services, the police or any other appropriate agency e.g. Sheffield MAST. Home visits by school staff may also be made following the school's home visits policy.

The school will always follow up any absences in order to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is being taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or not.
- Identify the correct code to use to enter the data onto the school census system.

Where a pupil is absent for more than five school days in a row, or more than ten school days in one term, the pupil's parent will be expected to provide a signed letter with an explanation for the absence(s).
The school will not, in most cases, request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness. Where a child's attendance has dropped below 90% (or has attendance that is causing a concern) and an initial letter of concern form has been sent to parents, medical evidence will be sought for every absence due to illness or a medical appointment. Parents will be informed of this before medical evidence is requested. It will be made clear to parents in the initial letter of concern that the school is not asking for a medical note. Parents will also be informed that the school may need to follow the Local Authority's GP protocol.

In the case of Persistent Absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance officer. The school will endeavour to discuss with an Attendance and Inclusion officer from the LA (currently Bliss Howard), at least twice per school year, the details of pupils who have attendance lower than **90%,** or who have missed 10 school days or more without authorisation. Other pupils with attendance which is higher than 90% but who have a pattern of attendance which is concerning may also be discussed.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for longer than 10 days after an authorised absence, or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school will start the process of removing the pupil from the admissions register if the school and the LA have failed to establish the whereabouts of the pupil after making reasonable enquiries. The school will consult with Sheffield's Attendance and Inclusion Service, Sheffield Admissions team and other agencies working with the child. It is highly likely that the Sheffield Safeguarding team and the Police will have been contacted before this step is taken.

6. The Attendance Register

Our school uses SIMS (an electronic management information system) to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities including local authority and the Department of Education.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. Staff members input data into registers diligently and accurately. They understand their role in the context of, on-going absence monitoring, reducing pupils' absence and working with families and other staff following the ethos and practises outlined in this policy.

This register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit or an approved sporting or cultural activity.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. Our school will use Department for Education's "Working together to improve school attendance" September 2024 to ensure coding is robust and appropriate. The document also gives useful advice about how parents can be supported and challenged after giving reasons for absence appropriate to the different codes. *Appendix 1 National Attendance Codes*

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the **code '#'** will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days. All amendments made to the attendance register will include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date of amendment and the name and role of the person who made the amendment.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for six years.

7. Authorising Parental Requests for Leave of Absence for their Child

Requests for Exceptional Leave of Absence

Parents will be required to request certain types of absence in advance in exceptional circumstances. In order to have requests for a leave of absence considered, the school will expect parents to contact the headteacher by completing an exceptional leave request form *(Appendix 2)* prior to taking this leave at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date of the leave of absence, providing the reason for the proposed absence and the dates during which the absence would be expected to occur. All requests for absence will be handled by the headteacher – the decision to grant or refuse the request will be at the sole discretion of the headteacher, taking the best interests of the pupil and the impact on the pupil's education into account. The headteacher's decision is not subject to appeal; however, the school will pay careful consideration to the reason's parents give exceptional leave requests and will be sensitive to the needs of the child and the family.

Leave should only be granted in accordance with the circumstances permitted under regulation 11 of the 2024 The school attendance Pupil Registration Regulations England Regulations 2024. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be considered. Where the absence is granted, the headteacher will determine the length of time that the pupil can be away from school.

The school is not likely to grant leaves of absence for the purposes of family holidays.
Where term time leave request is denied, parents/carers will be notified in writing with the reasons why.

Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- In the first two weeks of a new school year
- Immediately before and during statutory assessment periods. Statutory assessment dates will be given to parents as early as possible in the new school year.
- In most cases, when a pupil's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence. The headteacher may use discretion for a minimal number of unauthorised late codes.
- Where a pupil's authorised absence record is already above 10 % for any reason. For requests received in the first half term of the new school year, attendance data from the previous school year will be used.
- Where the reason for exceptional leave request is clearly not exceptional and could normally be expected to happen for most children and families e.g. a milestone birthday celebration

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may result in sanctions, such as a penalty notice. The school will usually send a request to the local authority for a fine to be issued to parents for periods of unauthorised leave which are **5 days or longer**. The school cannot grant leaves of absence retrospectively; therefore, any absences that were not approved by the school in advance will be marked as unauthorised.

Illness and healthcare appointments
Parents will be expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents will be expected to obtain approval for their child's absence to attend such appointments as far in advance as is practicable. Parents will be responsible for ensuring their child misses only the amount of time necessary to attend the appointment. Where appointments are during the school day it would be expected that they attend school prior to the appointment and return to school after the appointment. Where children are present for registration medical appointments will not be not be classed as an absence.

Performances and activities, including paid work
The school will ensure that all pupils engaging in performances or activities, whether they receive payment or not, which require them to be absent from school, understand that they will be required to obtain a licence from the school which authorises the school's absence(s). It is the responsibility of the organising body of the performance or activity to provide a letter of request to the school for this absence.

Additional arrangements will be made together by the school and parents for pupils engaging in performances or activities that require them to be absent from school to ensure they do not fall behind in their education.

The pupil will engage in education that, when taken together over the term of the licence, amounts to a minimum of three hours per day that the pupil would be required to attend a school maintained by issuing the licence. The period of absence should not extend to over 5 school days (or equivalent) in any given school year.

Where a licence has been granted and it specifies dates of absence, no further authorisation will be needed from the school. Where an application does not specify dates it is at the discretion of the headteacher to authorise the leave of absence for each day. The headteacher will not authorise any absences which would mean that a pupil's attendance

would fall below **95%.** Where a licence has not been obtained, the headteacher will not authorise any absence for a performance or activity.
*****_During the Autumn term, the previous year's attendance will be used in conjunction with in-year attendance to help make a decision._

Religious observance
Parents will be expected to request absence for religious observance at least **two weeks** in advance.
The school will only accept requests from parents for absence on grounds of religious observance for days that are exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body. The school will define this as a day where the pupil's parents would be expected by an established religious body to stay away from their employment to mark the occasion.
The school may seek advice from the religious body in question where there is doubt over the request.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, the parent will be expected to request a leave of absence for their child at least two weeks in advance. Absences will not be granted for pupils from these communities under this code for reasons other than travel for occupational purposes.

Penalty notices – (enforcement for unauthorised absence)

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices (2024), the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued by Stannington Infant School after 19th August 2024. Stannington Infant School, like all state funded schools, must consider whether a penalty notice for absence is appropriate in each individual case where one of their pupils reaches the national threshold for considering a penalty notice. Stannington Infant School, like all schools in England, does not have a blanket position of issuing or not issuing penalty notices. The school Headteacher makes judgements on each individual case to ensure fairness and consistency across the country. Advice on penalty notice can be sought from attendlegal@sheffield.gov.uk

The National Threshold for Penalty Notices

The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).
How and when Penalty Notices are issued:

- **Per Parent, Per Child Penalty Notice Fines** will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
- **5 consecutive days of term time leave**
  Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days. We do not include Inset training days in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period
Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

- **First Offence**
  The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- **Second Offence** (within 3 years)
  The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.
- **Third Offence and Any Further Offences** (within 3 years)
  The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court, under Section 444 Education Act 1996. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'. A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

Two penalty notice limit and escalation in cases of repeat offences.
A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

Once 3 years has elapsed since the first penalty notice was issued a further penalty notice can be issued, but in most cases it would not be the most effective tool for changing what may have now become an entrenched pattern of behaviour.

For the purpose of the escalation process, previous penalty notices include those not paid (including where prosecution was taken forward and the parent pleaded or was found guilty) but not those which were withdrawn.

In cases where a pupil has moved school or local authority area in the previous 3 years, an additional check should be made to try and ascertain whether previous penalty notices have been issued to the parent in respect of the pupil. If the pupil has moved between local authorities in the previous 3 years and the previous local authority(ies) is known they should be contacted to check whether a penalty notice has been issued to that parent for that pupil in the previous 3 years. These checks can be made by the school and/or local authority. In cases where the previous local authority is not known or the information cannot be, or is not, provided by the previous local authority, it should be assumed that the parent has not previously received a penalty notice and the escalation process started as a new case. Further advice from Sheffield Attendance and Inclusion on penalty notices can be found on the Sheffield Code of Conduct for Issuing Penalty Notices (August 2025)

8. <u>SEND- and health-related absences</u>

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult.
In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHCPs (Education Health Care Plans) or Ill Health Plans (including reduced timetable plans) that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.
Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health in accordance with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) policies and procedures outlined in the school's PSHE and SEND policies.
If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the local authority's Attendance and Inclusion team if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Provide the Attendance and Inclusion team with information about the pupil's needs, capabilities and programme of work.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure parents know how to find out information about school events and clubs.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. This may form part of a child's SEN Support Plan/My Plan /EHCP or as part of a reduced timetable return to school plan. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.
To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding regular and timely meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Identifying any unmet needs through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Using an internal or external specialist.
- Enabling a pupil to have a reduced timetable with a phased return to school plan.
- Ensuring a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.

*9.*Safeguarding and Attendance inc. Children Missing in Education

Regular attendance is a safeguarding priority. Pupils who are frequently absent, missing from education, or whose attendance patterns change unexpectedly may be at increased risk of harm. This section sets out how the school links attendance management with its safeguarding responsibilities, in line with *Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE)* and *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*.

The school recognises that **poor, irregular or unexplained attendance can be a safeguarding concern** and may indicate abuse, neglect, exploitation, or other unmet needs. All staff understand that attendance concerns must be considered within the broader safeguarding context and that safeguarding procedures take precedence where a pupil's absence places them at risk. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the **Attendance Champion** – (Senior Leader with responsibility for attendance work) closely to identify patterns of concern and ensure early intervention. **The Local Governing Board and Trustees of Peak Edge Trust m**aintains oversight of attendance and safeguarding practice, ensuring compliance with statutory duties.

Repeated, intermittent or sudden drops in attendance are flagged through the school's monitoring systems and reviewed by the Attendance Champion and DSL as a potential safeguarding as well as an attendance issue. Attendance is considered in relation to other indicators of vulnerability, including:

- Pupils with SEND or EHCPs
- Pupils with medical conditions
- Pupils with a social worker
- Children who are looked-after or previously looked-after
- Pupils with known family or welfare concerns

Where patterns of absence could indicate safeguarding risk, the DSL will apply the school's child protection procedures and work in partnership with external agencies where appropriate.

The school follows statutory **Child Missing in Education guidance** – September 2025. Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools - GOV.UK.

Any pupil who is absent without explanation, or repeatedly absent from school for reasons, due to professional curiosity, appear suspicious, there will be a prompt investigation. **Where a pupil's whereabouts cannot be established**, the school will take all reasonable steps to contact parents/carers and emergency contacts, and escalate concerns to the Local Authority without delay. If a pupil is believed to be at risk of harm, radicalisation, exploitation or trafficking, the school will make an immediate referral to children's social care, Prevent or the police, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025). See appendix 1

Off-rolling is the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without using a permanent exclusion, when the removal is primarily in the best interests of the school, rather than the best interests of the pupil. This includes pressuring a parent to remove their child from the school roll. The school should be aware of its legal compliance in relation to potential off-rolling. The school will **never remove a pupil from the admission register unlawfully** and will follow the *School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024* for all deletions from roll. The school will **notify the Local Authority** in all circumstances where removal from roll is permitted by the regulations, including elective home education, long-term non-attendance, and confirmed moves. Safeguarding considerations will be reviewed before a pupil is removed from roll to ensure there is no risk of the pupil becoming missing from education.

As detailed in the section 10 of this policy, parents/carers of all children should be engaged early and this is particularly important where there are safeguarding concerns unless that engagement would pose a risk to the child. The school should work collaboratively with the Local Authority's Attendance and Inclusion department and safeguarding partners where there are attendance and safeguarding concerns about a child. Shared data is used to support safeguarding, early identification of pupils at risk of persistent absence, and coordinated multi-agency support.

Where attendance concerns persist and pose a risk to the child's education or welfare, the school may involve external safeguarding or attendance services as appropriate.

10 Working with parents to improve attendance (Also see sections 9 and 15)

In line with the Statement of Intent at the beginning of this policy, the school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies as appropriate working with pupils and their families to support attendance, e.g. social services.

The school will ensure that there are at least two sets of emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. illness (which would mean the child is too ill to learn at school or would jeopardise their well-being or future health if they were to come to school and/or which could spread infectious disease to others) or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance.

The school will liaise with parents to help children with mild illness attend school if it is judged to be possible, safe and appropriate to do so. Measures the school might take appropriate to each child's case could include:

- Keeping children indoors for part or the whole of breaktimes
- Providing the child with a quiet and comfortable place to eat their lunch
- Temporary modifications to the child's learning for the day
- Letting the child know which member of staff to go to if they need help or feel worse.
- Phoning parents for an update at lunchtimes
- Liaising with the parents regarding medication and providing medication in school where parents have completed and signed the school's administering medication in school form and where this complies with school policy.

Such measures should be agreed with parents ahead of attendance wherever possible and in every case in regards to medication.
The school will inform all parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality at parents' evenings and in the annual report to parents. It will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally through school newsletters and the school's website

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school's senior attendance champion will work collaboratively with the family to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than immediately reach for punitive approaches.
The school will develop strategies for ensuring that pupils with health needs or home circumstances that result in additional absences are not unfairly excluded from attendance

rewards, e.g. by setting individualised targets. The sybhealthiertogether.nhs.uk. document provided by the NHS is a useful guide to establish whether a child can attend with the presenting illness, and if not, the length of time they should be absent for.
Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, e.g. bullying, the attendance officer will work with any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENCO, to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the attendance officer will liaise with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. FIS, children's social care or the LA's Attendance and Inclusion team, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

The school will acknowledge pupils attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- The attendance section in school reports
- A standard item at parents' evening
- Annual certificates for excellent attendance (97% and above)

11. Monitoring, analysing and responding to absence data

Stannington Infant School's procedures for monitoring, analysing and responding to data absence follow guidance from the Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance – August 2024. Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024)
Stannington Infant School has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:
Any attendance/punctuality trends noticed by classroom teachers or administration officers are passed immediately to the SLT. Where trends are of a concerning nature, this information should be recorded on CPOMs
Contact is made with parents on the first day of absence for any pupil absence not reported wherever possible by 10a.m. 'N' codes are used to indicate that the pupil is absent for a reason not yet provided; these N codes are reported to the Attendance Officer daily. Contact is made to the parents of any pupils marked using the N code. Any N codes not established after a week are recorded as an unauthorised absence.
If a pupil's attendance falls below 97 percent, parents are notified that attendance has fallen below the school's target at parents' evenings in October, April and in the end of school report in July. Information outlining how parents can work with the school and their child to improve attendance is sent to all parents at the beginning of each year.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality, truancy, and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils. (including those with or at risk of Persistent Absence (PA)
- Disadvantaged pupils
- Ethnic groups where numbers of pupils would ensure the data would be statistically significant and not identify particular children.
- Pupils with SEND,

The school's attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data:

1. **Point 1:** In the first four weeks of the school year using both in-year data and data from the previous school year
2. **Point 2:** In January

3. **Point 3:** After the Easter break

This will include identifying, for each group: (to identify patterns and trends.)

- Judgements on overall attendance for all pupils, cohorts and groups (see above). Judgements will be made by comparing data to:
  - Attendance bands set out in Section 4 of this policy relating to the school's ambition for all pupils
  - National published DfE data for attendance for benchmarking purposes (see school IDSR)
  - Other pupil data to those pupils in specific groups
- How current data compares to historic trends of attendance and absence in school.
- Patterns in uses of certain codes at a whole school level.
- Changes in attendance rates for individual pupils with persistent absence
- Changes in attendance rates for individual children who are becoming or may become persistent absentees. **(Those with attendance below 95%).**
- Patterns of particular days and reasons given for poor attendance for individual pupils vulnerable to persistent absence.

The school's attendance officer will record how successfully the school's work is impacting on school attendance as a whole and in relation to other groups and make professional, informed judgements on the reasons for patterns in the data.

The school's attendance officer will bring analysis on all individual persistent absentees (those with attendance below 90%) and those children whose attendance is becoming a concern (90-94.9%) **and** have concerning patterns of attendance to regular **triage meetings**. These meetings will include other relevant members of the SLT including the DSL and SENDCO At the **triage meeting** an action plan will be written for each child.

Process:

Once pupils are identified the support process to help increase attendance will align to the following framework.

Assess Identify the following:

- The reason preventing the child attending regularly
- What has already been implemented to improve the child's attendance?
- The needs across Education, Health and Care
- Has the child's voice been captured, what do they need to happen so they can attend?
- Have the staff working most closely with the child got any concerns or suggestions? What information does CPOMs provide?
- What support is required to improve the attendance?
- What interventions may be required to improve the child's attendance?

- What further assessments may be required?
- Has the child's health been considered? Have you received any medical evidence? What more do we need to know?
- Is the child a Young Carer, and is this having an impact on their attendance?
- The patterns on 'by-lesson or 'by-day' attendance', and if patterns are evident speak to those teachers.
- If siblings are having the same absences. Have you contacted the school the siblings attend? If unsure which schools, ask your linked Attendance & Inclusion Officer.
- Are there any SEND needs affecting attendance? If so are the child's attendance needs supported by the SEN Support Plan, My Plan or EHCP? When was the last review?

Plan the following:

- What next steps need to take place to help the child attend every day, on time and have timescales been set?
- Who will support and what their actions are?
- Have family circumstances been considered and have you considered with the family what support may help them at this time? Have any referrals to other agencies been offered e.g. MAST?
- If external services are involved has a meeting taken place? e.g., TAF, Child in Need, PEP, Transition Pathway meetings
- Would the child benefit from attending breakfast club to ensure they are on school site on time each day?
- Set time scales for the plan to be implemented (See Timetable section below).
- What outcomes do we expect to see?
- Where reasons given for absence are primarily health-related and the school has concerns about patterns of attendance and reasons given for absences, the school can request medical evidence such as prescriptions, medicine packaging/labels and appointment confirmations. **The school cannot ask for a doctor's note** unless a GP protocol is in place (see below). Working together to Improve School Attendance 2025 states that schools "should only request reasonable medical evidence" when necessary to record absence accurately — not automatically for every sickness. It should be recorded by the school when and why such requests have been made and this information should be shared with parents.
- Where there are health needs, if appropriate, have you consulted with the linked Attendance and Inclusion Officer to consider using the G.P. Protocol or School Attendance Planning meeting?

Ensure the plan is shared with all parties including the child. Consider whether the plan is being carried out by

- School staff responsible
- Other professionals identified
- The parent/s (and/or wider family where appropriate)

Review and evaluate to what extent the support has worked:

- Does the child and parent/s feel they have been supported? If not why not?
- Has attendance improved? Are we seeing movement towards the desired outcomes? Even small improvements can be big steps e.g. attending a session every day is a

step towards no unauthorised absence, with gradual steps towards attending school every day, on time.

- What has worked well? What could be improved or amended?
- Has the child's home, health, mental well-being or welfare changed since the plan was written? Does the plan need to be amended to best meet the child's current needs?
- Has the child's voice been captured, how do they feel the last few weeks have gone, what difference has been made, what are they proud of, what could have been better?
- Has there been any party who hasn't carried out their actions?
- Is the parent/are the parents committed to making sure their child's attendance is as high as possible? Is a more punitive route required?

Timetable:

In the first half of the **Autumn Term**, all persistent absentees (and other children whose attendance is concerning) will receive an '**initial letter of concern'** *(Appendix 2)*. The letter will invite the parent to work with the school to help improve the child's attendance. It will emphasise the school's wish to have a united collaborative approach to helping improve attendance for that child. The letter will ask parents to provide medical evidence for all absences until their child's attendance improves. Parents will be told that this is standard practice.

The Attendance Officer will formally monitor attendance of children identified as having attendance causing concern on a monthly basis, the attendance officer will monitor attendance and act accordingly in relation to information on absence passed to them by other staff including the administration staff. School admin staff will also be asked to ensure full explanations for any absences from parents and remind parents of the need to provide medical evidence for their child's absence to be authorised.

It is important to note, that where the attendance officer is concerned by on-going data patterns **for any child**, steps to resolve this may be done at an earlier stage including meetings with parents and involvement of the Attendance and Inclusion team.

The child's class teacher will be made aware of all children in their class identified as having concerning attendance. They will be asked to feedback on relevant information shared with them by the child or by parents to the school's attendance officer, using CPOMs for any serious or concerning information.

In January, those parents of pupils (contacted in the autumn term) whose attendance has not improved (or is causing concern) will be sent a **second letter of concern** (*Appendix 2*)**.** This letter will invite parents to a formal meeting to help resolve the persistent absence. The letter will still stress that the school wishes to use a collaborative approach to resolve the situation but will mention potential consequences of their child's attendance not improving. Parents will be told that if they do not attend this meeting, that it will be held in their absence. The attendance and inclusion team may be invited to meetings where it is felt their input would be useful.

If attendance does not improve satisfactorily after this meeting and there are no unavoidable factors for this e.g. evidenced prolonged ill health, the attendance officer will follow guidance in Sections 13 and 14 of this policy (see above) in an attempt to improve attendance at a multi-agency level.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the SLT in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

12. Persistent Absence (PA)

Persistent absence is defined as pupils with attendance below 90%. Statistics reveal that both nationally and locally there are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and Persistent Absence.

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of PA to attend school. These methods are used systematically and judiciously (where appropriate and feasible) within the school's monitoring and analysing absence process (see section 15). These include

- Offering catch-up support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Meeting with parents and pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Leading systematic and regular check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress (See section 15)
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate or reviewing existing plans ensuring attendance is factored into to agreed support and targets.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.

The school will focus particularly on pupils with the highest rates of absence, and will work with the LA's Attendance and Inclusion Service and other partners to engage all relevant services needed to identify and address the wider barriers to attendance these pupils are facing.
Where a pupil at risk of PA is also judged by the school's DSL to be at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe PA following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
If a child's attendance does not improve to expected levels (at least 95%) during four weeks after attendance meeting following a second letter of concern, a fixed penalty fine will be issued.

13. Legal Enforcement

The school will allow sufficient time for the school's process of attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect after at least two school terms and after a full 'Plan, Do, Review' process, the attendance officer will consider:

- Holding formal meeting (in addition to meetings held within the support phase of the process) with parents and the school's attendance officer. The LA Attendance and Inclusion team will be invited to the meeting.

- Working with the LA's Attendance and Inclusion Team to put an attendance contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

Before any legal enforcement commences, the school should provide a full chronology of the school's record keeping and communications with the parent or carer of the child. These records should include where possible:

- The school's concerns in relation to attendance/absence and its impact
- Evidence of any support or advice offered to the parent/carer and/or child
- The impact of any support and advice

Any sharing of information about the above should comply with the school's UKGDPR policy and related documents.

Where attendance still does not improve following a fixed penalty notice, the school will always work with the LA Attendance and Inclusion service to take forward attendance prosecution as a last resort should the percentage of unauthorised absence meet local authority thresholds.

The process is as follows:
Attendance Legal Requests
An Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker (AISW) from the local authority supports schools with the attendance legal process

All schools have a link AISW from the attendance legal team. In the absence of your link worker, please contact Sheffieldinclusion&attendance@sheffield.gov.uk
Enforcement is the last resort, and we support schools to provide the child and family with help and assistance in accessing their education wherever we can. Our aim is to ensure that the school has exhausted all avenues of support before considering the legal route.

The link AISW will require the school to have undertaken certain measures **prior** to considering legal enforcement for attendance, as follows:

- School to have referred to the Ideas for challenging and improving attendance Checklist and completed the identified actions relevant to the situation
- School to ensure all parents/carers with day-to-day care have been informed of any attendance issues
- School to ensure all parent/carer details are up to date (who is in the household? Do both parents have parental responsibility? If so, on which days?)
- School to ensure they have spoken to all services involved with the child or your person
- School to explore where the family live in relation to school
- School should inform any social worker assigned to the child if this has not already been done so**.**

When considering the legal enforcement route for attendance our school always bears in mind **statutory defenses** prior to progression.

All decisions regarding legal proceedings will be made by the **Attendance & Inclusion Social Worker** linked to our school. The Statutory Defenses (reasons why cases would not be progressed through the legal system) are as follows.

1. Authorised Absence - Leave granted by the Head teacher
2. Sickness - or any other unavoidable cause. Evidence presented will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
3. Religious Observance - Any day that is exclusively set aside
4. Distance from School - The school that the child is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home and no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority for either transport to and from school or enabling him/her to become a registered pupil at a school nearer his/her home. (Walking distance - Exceeding 2 miles for a child under 8 years old, exceeding 3 miles for a child aged 8 years and over)
5. Trade or business - The parent/carer **can prove** that their trade or business requires them to travel to such a degree that the child has attended school as regularly as the nature of the trade or business allows and the child has attended school for at least 200 sessions during the preceding 12 months.

Attendance Legal Documentation

If requesting the process to move towards the **Notice to Improve Letter stage** a discussion with the Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker must take place prior to any letters being sent to parents/carers. The following documentation should be available during the discussion:

- The attendance certificate for this academic year and the previous academic year.
- The level of unauthorised absence, as the legal process can only be pursued where absence is unauthorised by the Headteacher.
- The level of absence overall. This should be 92% or below.
- Evidence to show the School Attendance Officer/s have been involved for a minimum of 6 school weeks.
- Process of Assess, Plan, Do, Review is evidenced in line with the attendance response.
- Copies of the letters sent to parents making them aware of their child's attendance concern. These letters should be ones provided by the LA, or ratified by the LA.
- Evidence of any contact or plan that has been made with parents and the young person to ensure they are aware of the attendance concerns
- Evidence, if you are aware of siblings in other schools, that you have liaised with them to coordinate your support, as the Local Authority will work with the whole family.
- Evidence that identified actions have been completed by the school, and parents/pupils have been supported to complete their actions, with regular reviews where appropriately

Notice to Improve Letter

The Local Authority, in consultation with schools (and other agencies where appropriate), will be responsible for the decision to issue Notice to Improve Letters. This will ensure consistent practice across **all** schools in Sheffield, assist in avoiding school / home conflicts and ensure that Notice to Improve Letters are not being issued where it is inappropriate to do so, or where the Local Authority would be unable to support progression to court.

The attendance and inclusion social worker AISW will check whether any current involvement by Social Care or any other service would prevent the case being progressed to Court.

Where Notice to Improve letters are initially agreed in principle by the AISW, these will be subject to final checks to ensure that the legal process is appropriate.

When the checks are complete and there is no change to the initial agreement the AISW will notify the school that a penalty notice warning letter can be sent out.

Monitoring of the Notice to Improve period should be carried out by the school's Attendance Champion. If there is absence during the monitoring period, then a period of complaint will be provided to the school if the decision to proceed with a penalty notice is made by the Attendance and Inclusion Social Worker. **Final paperwork should be submitted by school within 21 days**.

Penalty notice paperwork required from school includes (as a minimum).

- Head teacher's Certificate
- Case Summary covering the period of complaint
- Evidence of the Attendance Response being followed including the APDR
- An up-to-date attendance certificate

All proformas will be supplied by the AISW.

This information would prove that during the period of complaint, the parents/carers were aware of the child's poor attendance.

If a pupil achieves full attendance during the Penalty Notice warning period, the School's Attendance Officer should continue to monitor the attendance and send a continue to monitor letter to the parents/carer. If deterioration occurs in later weeks, then they should consult with the AISW regarding further involvement in the legal process.

School Based Attendance Officers should monitor a pupil's attendance following a Court hearing and re consult if attendance is not acceptable.

Attendance and Inclusion social workers where appropriate will assess cases on a case-by-case basis, to make decisions as to whether it is appropriate to pursue other legal interventions available to us such as basic or aggravated offences. These will be discussed during attendance reviews and assessed based on the evidence provided, as to how the parent/carer is failing in their duty to ensure a full-time suitable education for their child.

14. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing board will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy as part of their induction. Following this initial training, staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance and how school's ethos and practices help engender good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's policy, strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it. Including the Attendance and Inclusion team

The governing board will support and challenge the headteacher to provide training to the attendance officer and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern, and know how such concerns should be managed.

15. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence. It does not simply refer to pupils not attending school without their parent/s' knowledge.

All staff are actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

All pupils are expected to be in their classes by **8:50a.m KS1 / 9.00a.m FS** where the teacher will record the attendance electronically. Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must 'check out' at the school office and 'check in' in again on their return. No pupil will be allowed to leave the school premises during the school day without a known adult collecting them.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be involved where an instance of truancy may be linked to a safeguarding concern. Any safeguarding concerns will be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

16.Missing children during the school day

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school. The following procedures will be taken in the event of a pupil going missing whilst at school:

1. The member of staff who has noticed the missing pupil will inform the headteacher immediately.
2. The office staff will also be informed as they will act as a point of contact for receiving information regarding the search.
3. A member of staff will stay with the rest of the class, and all other available members of staff will conduct a thorough search of the school premises as directed by the headteacher.
4. The following areas will be systematically searched:
    a. All classrooms
    b. All toilets
    c. Group work rooms and library
    d. The school grounds
5. Available staff will begin a search of the area immediately outside of the school premises, and will take a mobile phone with them so they can be contacted.
6. If the pupil has not been found after 15 minutes, then the parents of the pupil will be notified.
7. The school will attempt to contact parents using the emergency contact numbers provided.
8. If the parents have had no contact from the pupil, and the emergency contacts list has been exhausted, the police will be contacted. The process of phoning people on the child's contact list should be done swiftly and by more than one member of staff using both of the school phone lines.
9. The missing pupil's teacher will fill in an incident report, describing all circumstances leading up to the pupil going missing.
10. If the missing pupil has an allocated social worker, is a looked-after child, or has any SEND, then the appropriate personnel will be informed.
11. When the pupil has been located, members of staff will care for and talk to the pupil to ensure they are safe and well.
12. Parents and any other agencies will be informed immediately when the pupil has been located.

The headteacher will take the appropriate action to ensure that pupils understand they must not leave the premises, and sanctions will be issued if deemed necessary. Appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

The headteacher will carry out a full investigation and will draw a conclusion as to how the incident occurred. A written report will be produced, if the process went beyond step 4, and policies, procedures and staff responses will be reviewed in accordance with the outcome where necessary.

17. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the governing board. The next scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn 2026

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Appendix 1 National Attendance Codes

The following codes will be used: Please note the "type" column which notes whether the code notes a present mark, authorised absence, unauthorised absence or whether the child is not expected to attend school.

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision - Face to face education provided off school site	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Chapel House / Becton Outreach / CAMHS Lodges/Hospital Ed - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move - Attending Sheffield Inclusion Centre	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend

Appendix 2

Date_____

Initial Letter of Concern – Attendance

Name_____, DOB_____,
Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you because of ongoing concerns over your child's attendance, which is currently **…… %** and was **…… %** in the last school year. This is considerably below the school's target of 97% for all pupils. Please find enclosed a Registration Certificate for you to look at.

We very much want to work with you to overcome any barriers to regular attendance your child might have. We know that maximising attendance gives children the best chance at school and in later life. Tackling the impact of low attendance becomes increasingly challenging as a child progresses through school. We want your child to thrive at Stannington Infant School so we want to improve their attendance as soon as possible; if there is anything you would like to discuss with us please get in touch.

Initial letters of concern are now sent to parents of all pupils whose attendance has met thresholds in the school policy. This letter is about trying to improve your child's attendance and not necessarily to question the reasons for your child's absence which may have been unavoidable.

Because we need to take low attendance seriously, Stannington Infant School will continue to monitor your child's attendance. **Please also be aware that if your child's absence falls below (or continues to fall below) 90% in this school year, further absence will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.** Evidence could be in the form of a doctor's appointment card or showing prescribed medication to the school office. You are not being asked to provide a doctor's note, although if you are unable to provide medical evidence, the school may seek consent to request that the Local Authority follow their GP Protocol. It is important therefore, that you contact school on the first day of any absence or if there is any problem which may be causing your child to miss school.

We are obliged to inform you that under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly and failure to do so could ultimately result in the Local Authority issuing a Fixed Penalty fine and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates' Court. We do not want this to happen if at all possible and may well be entirely inappropriate in your child's case. We understand that there are a range of reasons why children might be absent from school, some of which are unavoidable, however, regardless of the reason for absence, low attendance impacts significantly on pupils' progress. Stannington Infant School is committed to raising the profile of attendance in school and it is important that you support us by ensuring that your child attends school on time, every day whenever possible.

Please give this letter your urgent attention and we look forward to witnessing together the benefits of improved attendance for your child.

Kind regards

Mrs S.Binns
Headteacher

Continued Low Attendance – Letter (January)

Date:

Re: Name and DOB

Dear Parent/Carer,

Through our regular attendance monitoring, we are increasingly concerned that your son/daughter is not in regular attendance at school. We know regular attendance at school gives children the best life chances and that continued low attendance becomes increasingly difficult to overcome in terms of children's progress and how settled they are at school.

As you will be aware, you have been contacted by us to try to resolve this issue and to see whether any support may be required to do this. However, despite our offer to support you, your son/daughter's attendance remains below **90%** (Could change) and does not meet statutory requirements. Please find enclosed a Registration Certificate for you to look at.

It has therefore been decided to invite you to a meeting in school.

The meeting will be held on;

…… at ……am/pm

where you will be given the opportunity to discuss any issues around **child's name** 's absences.

At this meeting we will consider together ways of improving **child's name** attendance, and therefore preventing further action being taken against you.

I need to inform you that, should you not attend, the meeting will still go ahead in your absence and we may have to pass our concerns onto the Local Authority.

We want the very best for **child's name's** progress and stability in school so please give this letter your urgent attention. Thank you very much indeed.

Yours sincerely

Head Teacher

Appendix 3

Sheffield City Council School Checklist to Locate Missing/Lost Pupils

Please complete fully and include 'no response' where appropriate, as this form will be required if a Child Protection investigation is undertaken

Name of Child: **DOB:**

School:

School Action	Details	Outcome including date completed
Telephone calls made to parent/carers	Mobile: Landline:	
Telephone calls to emergency contact numbers	Name & tel number	
Email to parent	Email address:	
Letters sent to last known address		
Enquiries made with school which siblings attend	Sibling name & School	
Has the child has moved to another part of the UK and address is known, please contact CME team (0114 2736462) and request 'safe and well visit'	Date requested:	Date response received: Outcome:
Enquiries made with agencies with known involvement		
Home visited completed (Min of 3 non-contact visits to be made). Schools may request this from their local MAST team		
Enquiry made with neighbours		
Any other enquiries undertaken		

All completed checklists need to be accompanied with a 'Request to Remove Child from School Roll' and sent to the CME team to enable deregistration to occur

CME Team, Floor 5, Moorfoot Building, Sheffield City Council (0114 2736462)***ed-missingchildren@sheffield.gov***. Sheffield Safeguarding Hub 0114 2734855