

Attendance Policy



RATIFICATION: Autumn 2024

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: Autumn 2025

REVIEWED BY: Executive Headteacher

APPROVED BY: Local Governing Body

Stokesay Primary School Attendance Policy

Aims and Objectives:

- To ensure all pupils take full advantage of opportunities for learning in school
- To ensure the well-being and safety of children at Stokesay
- To set school targets for attendance
- To monitor pupil absence and the reasons

Intentions:

- To actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all pupils
- Each Monday the best attending class will be applauded and celebrated in assembly
- To celebrate 100% attendance for individual pupils at the end of every term
- To monitor regular and unauthorised absence and take steps to resolve this
- To work with EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) to ensure no child is absent without school being aware of the reason
- To ensure that unauthorised requests are referred to EWO
- To ensure that Leave of Absence is used only in exceptional circumstances, (family holidays are not deemed as such).
- To use the School Information Management System to analyse and monitor pupils' patterns of absence and work with parents to rectify patterns

Teaching and Learning Impact

Stokesay Primary School will endeavour to reduce the disruption to children's learning through unnecessary absence and will work with families towards avoiding lateness or avoidable time off from school.

Equality and Inclusion

All children will be dealt with in the same manner. Allowances within this policy will be made for children with severe disabilities or illnesses which require additional time off for administration or medication. This includes pupils whose mental health requires additional time off to attend therapy/ counselling etc.

Safeguarding

If a child is absent for any reason, and that this is unknown to the school, Parents or Carers must contact the school office in some way before 09.00 am on the first day of absence (unless this is not possible due to travelling to an appointment/ organising childcare arrangements). Parents or Carers will be phoned after the close of morning register, should nothing have been heard. School will be unrelenting in pursuing pupils who are absent without explanation, to ensure them and their family's safety.

Registration of pupils

- Stokesay Primary will ensure that staff are aware of any new legislation with pupil registration.
- Registers are to be completed accurately at the beginning of every session i.e. morning and afternoon.
- Parents to be made aware of importance of contacting school to report absence before 09:00 (unless impossible due to travelling to an appointment/ sorting childcare arrangements).
- Senior Leaders and School Governors to ensure evaluation of attendance procedures.

- Regular reports will be provided for the Governing Body of Stokesay Primary School and the Trust Board through the termly headteacher's report.
- All absences will be reported by the Headteacher to the Educational Welfare Officer on their half termly visit.

Contents of the Attendance Register

Each class teacher will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session. On each occasion they will record whether every pupil is present or absent. Arrival at school after the register closes will result in an unauthorised mark.

The school will follow up any absences to:

1. Ascertain the reason;
2. Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
3. Identify whether the absence is authorised or not; and,
4. Identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register or management information system which is used to download data to the School Census

Registration and Absence Procedures

The school day begins at 8.45am and again at 1.00 pm. Arrival after the register closes will result in an unauthorised mark. The registers close at 9.00 am and 1.15pm. After that time any pupil who arrives will be recorded as being late. Parents/Carers must sign children who are late in at the main office before reporting to class. Where possible all medical/dental appointments should be made outside of the school day. However, if this is impossible, a copy of the child's medical or dental card should be shown at the office to confirm this. We can then confirm lateness as a 'medical' absence and therefore authorised.

Reporting Absences

It is a parent's responsibility to inform school of any reasons for a child's absence, before 09.00 am (unless impossible to contact before that time), each day that they are absent from school (unless otherwise arranged with school) and to provide further information as required. The process for notification is included as part of the school's welcome pack and indicates a phone call or contact on the first day of absence. We will send a letter requesting information if an explanation has not been received. We will refer the matter to the school's EWO (Educational Welfare Officer) if no response is forthcoming.

Leave of absence during term time

Since September 2013 family holidays are not deemed a reason for authorising a leave of absence.

Any family requiring leave of absence during term time will need to contact the school and book a meeting with the Headteacher, who will then explain the procedure and consider the request in light of the following criteria:

1. The child's previous attendance history.
2. The age and stage of education of the children (It is no longer possible to authorise absences in the first half term of a transition stage i.e. on entry into Reception or Year 3).
3. The time of year in relation to SATs (Y2 and Y6) or phonic screening (Y1).

4. The nature of the absence.

Where the school and the Parents/Carers fail to reach an agreement, and the child is then absent from school the absence will be marked down as unauthorised and the EWO will be informed and procedures in line with the August 2024 updates to “Working together to improve school attendance” will be adhered to.

Where the Parents/Carers keep the child away for longer than the agreed period, the extra time off will also be marked down as unauthorised.

If the absence is granted, the Headteacher will sign and return the Notification of Absence.

Medical Appointments

Parents of children attending a medical appointment during the school day need to produce an appointment card/letter or similar paperwork prior to the appointment.

Action on repeated absence

Where a child is persistently late or absent, even if the Headteacher has been informed, the following steps will be taken:

A letter will be sent home informing parents that if absence/lateness persists then the parents will be contacted by the Educational Welfare Officer.

Please note that any lateness or unexplained absence will be monitored by the EWO as a matter of course.

Schools and EWOs must adhere to the ‘Code of Conduct under the Provision of The Education (Penalty Notices) Regulation 2007 and Subsection (1) Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003’.

Under this subsection (1) it will now be possible that in certain cases of unauthorised absence a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers responsible. Under these provisions the penalty is £80 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Notice, rising to £160 if paid after 21 days but within 42 days of receipt. Additional measures can include being subject to an Education Supervision Order or prosecution, in accordance with the August 2024 updates to “Working together to improve school attendance”.

If a pupil is likely to be absent for a longer period of time (perhaps due to a severe medical condition or severe family instability), school will work alongside other relevant agencies, in line with both local and national guidelines, in order to ensure the best outcomes for the pupil. The pupil’s wellbeing and safety will be at the forefront of all decisions made.

Appendix A – Request for Leave of Absence in Term Time

Request for Pupil Leave of Absence in Term Time in Exceptional Circumstances

Headteachers can only authorise any absence when an application has been made in advance by the parent/carer with whom the child is normally resident and it is felt to be for an exceptional circumstance. An annual family holiday would not be deemed an exceptional circumstance.

Full name of child(ren) _____ Address: _____

Reason for application and dates _____

Parent's forename _____ Surname _____

Parent's forename _____ Surname _____

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) _____ Date: _____

The headteacher may take into account:

- It is highly unlikely that the event will occur again in a child's school life.
- It is necessary for the child to be in attendance at the event.
- The event **cannot** be organised outside of the school term.
- Taking part in the event will be of greater value to the child than attending school.

Office use only

Authorised Unauthorised

Signed(headteacher) Date:

WARNING

If this requested period of absence has not been authorised, details will be passed to Shropshire Council's Education Access Service. The Council may, in the following circumstances, issue a formal Warning, serve a Fixed Penalty Notice or take court action in respect of non-school attendance for this and any future unauthorised absence:

- Parents have not sought permission from the headteacher before taking their child out of school for a holiday in term time
- The headteacher has refused the request but the absence occurs anyway; or
- A pupil has not returned to school by the agreed date with no satisfactory explanation