Stanton Community Primary School

Behaviour Management Policy

Nurture, Enjoy, Aspire, Achieve

ATTENDANCE POLICY

1 Introduction

1.1 High attainment depends on good attendance. Stanton Community Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils. This can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. Only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

1.2 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

1.3 The policy has been drawn up after consultation with the whole community and is based on the Department for Education "School Attendance: Statutory Guidance and Departmental Advice, August 2013", Departmental Advice October 2014 and Local Authority guidance. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

4 Parents' / carers' responsibilities

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Stanton Community Primary School. The Act says:
"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school failed to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence."

Stanton Community Primary School expects parents / carers will:

- ensure their children attend the school regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.
- Avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children in school hours;
- notify the school by telephone or emailon the first day of absence;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- ensure that their child follows school procedures if they arrive late;
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- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework/reading diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;

- contact the class teacher without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives or of difficulties that might prevent them from attending regularly and on time. Stanton Community Primary School will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

Pupils should attend school on time, ready to learn. Parents also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

A guide for parents is included as Annex A.

3 Pupils' responsibilities

All pupils will be made aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher or form tutor.

4 Staff responsibilities

School staff have a responsibility for ensuring that pupils have good attendance by:

- Working to provide an environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day;
- Contributing to an ethos that places a high value on regular attendance and punctuality and setting a good example in their own behaviour;
- Ensuring attendance registers are kept accurately;
- Differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence according to this policy;
- Responding to absenteeism promptly, firmly, consistently and with care;
- Contacting parents when they are concerned about a pupils' absences, and recording the contact;
- Consulting with the Education Welfare Service if a pupil's attendance continues to give cause for concern;
- Promoting regular school attendance through school and class reward schemes;
- Operating the first day calling system.

5 Governors' responsibilities

The governing body of Stanton Community Primary School will examine data on attendance at least termly and will monitor the implementation of the policy, reviewing it at least every two years. It will consider the school's attendance data in comparison to other schools and expect it to be in the top 40% of similar schools as shown on the Ofsted Data Dashboard.

6 School's roles and responsibilities

6.1 <u>Attendance Leader</u>

A member of the Leadership Team will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person, known as the Attendance Leader, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared regularly with all staff, pupils and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body half termly. (S)he will

ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.
In this school the attendance leader is Sue Chapman

6.3 Admission Register

i) The law requires the school to maintain both an admission and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both registers. The admission register will contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

ii) Expected first day of attendance: the school will enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school will establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly.

iii) Deletions from the admission register: a pupil can lawfully be deleted from the register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

iv) Every amendment made to the admission register or the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

v) Every entry in the admission register and attendance register will be preserved for at least a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

vi) Children at Risk of Missing Education: the school will inform the local authority in advance if any pupil is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents are and being educated outside the school system eg. Home education;
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live with reasonable distance of the school for which they are registered;
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state to attend school;
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the school does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school a the end of that period; or
- Have been permanently excluded.

The school will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

vii) Home educated children: on receipt of written notification to home educate, the school will inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register.

6.3 Registration

i) The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day: once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. On each occasion classroom teachers are responsible for recording whether every pupil is:

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

ii) The school will follow up any absence to:
- Ascertain the reason;
- Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not; and
- Identify the correct code to use for completion of the electronic register which is used to download data to the Schools Census. The prescribed codes are included in Annex B.

iii) The register will be called promptly at **9.00 am** and **1.00 / 1.30 pm** (Yrs 5 & 6) by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.

iv) The registers will close at **9.05 am** and **1.05 pm / 1.35 pm** (Yrs 5 & 6) Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent.** Pupils who arrive before the register closes will be counted **present** but will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness (see para. 4.5).

6.4 Categorising absence

i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absent unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that both the original entry and the amendment/correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the classroom teacher but must be made according to this policy. The Attendance Leader will be consulted if there is any doubt.

ii) Stanton Community Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Stanton School will therefore challenge parents about the need and reasons for their children's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised.

iv) **Authorised Absence**:
The decision to authorise absence is at the headteacher's discretion based on his or her assessment of the situation. The headteacher will take into account the pupil's previous record of attendance and will determine the length of authorised absence as well as whether it is authorised at all. If an event or absence can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time, then it will not be authorised.
Parents requesting a leave of absence for their child or children, must complete the "Leave of Absence Request Form". The school will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in

writing giving the reasons for the decision. The school will not authorise leave of absence during periods of national tests ie: KS1 and KS2 SATS. Circumstances where absences may be authorised are exceptional (that is, rare, significant, unavoidable and short). They include:

(a) where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

(b) where the pupil has a medical appointment that cannot be arranged out of school hours. Pupils are expected to attend school before and after the appointment unless medical reasons prevent this;

(c) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions that prevent the child from getting to school safely;

(d) absence for a bereavement of a close family member, for the funeral service, but not for extended leave;

(e) where families have experienced a significant trauma or crisis and need a short period of time to recover together;

(f) the pupil lives more than two miles (if he/she is under eight) or three miles (if he/she has reached eight) and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;

(g) the pupil is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the pupil has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits and, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;

(h) where a leave of absence has been granted by the school in advance. Exceptional circumstances where this may be authorised, having due regard for the pupil's overall pattern of attendance, include:
- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance or sporting event;
- a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion that could not have been arranged in the holiday period;
- absence for important days of religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil or pupil's parent belongs. If the religious observance requires travel, this may be considered, but extended leave will not be authorised. This would be for one-off occasions and not for regular or recurring events.
- where a parent in the armed services is returning from a long operational tour that has prevented contact during term time.

Parents should not take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. The headteacher will not allow holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances surrounding the situation and an application has been made in advance. When an application is made for a holiday via the "Leave of Absence Request Form", it will be considered by the headteacher and will only be authorised in rare, exceptional cases.

v) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:
    - no explanation has been given by the parent;
    - the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
    - the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
    - the pupil is shopping during school hours;
    - the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday;
    - the pupil is absent for a family event that could have been arranged in the school holiday;
    - the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission;
    - the pupil has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence of 8 sessions (4 days) or more within a 12 week period to the Education Welfare Officer. The local authority has the power to issue penalty notices and fines to parents when a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

6.5 Approved educational activity
Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

6.5 Staff training
The School Attendance Leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receives sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

7 Collection and analysis of data

7.1 The Attendance Leader will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the leadership team, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

7.2 Attendance is monitored by year group, class and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs, those eligible for pupil premium and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

7.3 Accurate attendance returns will be made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

8 Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

8.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Stanton Community Primary and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in class. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and attendance figures are displayed prominently in school.

8.2 The school will call parents on the first day of unexpected absence to establish the reason and will continue to actively monitor progress until the pupil returns to school.

8.3 School strategies: The Attendance Leader is responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that there is intervention in non attendance in emerging patterns of absence at an early stage. Where absence falls below 90%, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans will be put in

place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

8.4 Referral to the Educational Welfare Officer: The schools will refer attendance issues with a pupil to the local authority Education Welfare Officer in the following circumstances:

- If support and assistance has been provided to a pupil but there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all
- If a pupil has unauthorised absence of 8 sessions (4 days) in a 12 week period.
- If a pupil is persistently late.
- The local authority has the power to issue penalty notices and fines to parents when a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

8.5 Lateness and punctuality: Pupils are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes (see para. 2.4 (iii)) will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

8.6 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. It is important, therefore, that all pupils arriving late should report to the school office and sign in. For the same reason it is important that pupils leaving the premises (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day sign in an out at the school office.

8.7 Post-registration truancy: no pupil may leave the school site without permission during the school day as it endangers pupil safety. The school takes such truancy very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. Class teachers and other school staff, including midday supervisors, will report to the head teacher immediately if a child goes missing from class or the school premises without authority and a search of the site will be undertaken. If a pupil appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will try to make contact with his/her parents immediately and will inform the police if no verifiable explanation can be established.

9. Conclusion

Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring positive outcomes for all children. It keeps pupils safe, supports good emotional and social development, helps keep pupils healthy and supports children to achieve their maximum potential. All members of the school community will treat good attendance as a high priority.

Policy approved by the Governing Body on: 5th May 2015

Review date: Summer term 2016

ANNEX A: A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. **When does my child need to be in School?**
   Your child should be at school in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **9 am** and the afternoon register at **1 / 1.30 pm**.

2. **What happens if my child is late?**
   Registration finishes at **9.05 am** in the morning and **1.05 / 1.35 pm** (Yrs 5 & 6) in the afternoon.
   If you child arrives between **9 am** and **9.05 am** he/she will be marked **late**
   If your child arrives after **9.05 am** he/she will be marked as **absent**
   If your child arrives between **1 pm** and **1.05 or 1.30 and 1.35 pm** he/she will be marked **late**
   If your child arrives after **1.05 / 1.35 pm** he/she will be marked **absent**

   Pupils who arrive after registration should report to the school office, and sign the Late Book. If a pupil is late on two or more occasions a meeting will be arranged with a member of staff to discuss reasons/ difficulties for lateness.

3. **Does the School need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?**
   We expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report.

4. **What reasons will the school accept for absences?**
   - Illness
   - Emergency dental/medical appointment that cannot be arranged out of school hours. Please make routine appointments after school or during the holidays.
   - Day of religious observance
   - Close family bereavement

Except in the case of illness, you should ask for permission for your child to miss school well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness you may be asked to produce a medical certificate.

5. **What is unacceptable?**
   The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

6. **Will the school contact me if my child is absent?**
   The school operates a first day response to absences: we will phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

   If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

7. **Can we take family holidays during term time?**
   Family holidays will not be authorised during term time except in limited and exceptional circumstances. Circumstances where a leave of absence will be considered include:
   - The parent is a member of the armed forces or emergency services and his or her leave is limited for operational reasons and cannot be taken in school holidays;
   - When an exceptional family crisis occurs and a leave of absence is requested.

   Requests for holidays for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

The school will refer cases of unauthorised absence of **8 sessions (4 days)** or more within a 12 week period to the Education Welfare Officer. The local authority has the power to issue penalty notices and fines to parents when a pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school.

8. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas to visit relatives. What should I do?

The school recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family. Contact the headteacher as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

Where possible, you should arrange the visit for the school holidays and the school will only consider applications for extended leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. The school would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's SATs years (Years 2 and 6). You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Headteacher then approves the visit, the school will set work for your child to complete while away.

9. What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your child will bring home a homework/reading diary each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your child and sign it ready for the next day.

10. My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Contact your child's class teacher and the headteacher immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases, you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Welfare Service can be contacted on 01473 265364 and further information can be found on the Suffolk County Council website: http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/education-and-careers/pupil-welfare-and-support/school-attendance/

Annex B

REGISTER CODES

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