



# Stafford Manor High School

Review frequency (Free/annual/etc.)	Free – Every 2 years
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Responsibility of (FGB/Committee/individual)	Progress and Learning Committee
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Signed by Chair (Viv Evans/Progress and Learning Committee)	<i>V Evans</i>
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## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

The school will promote positive behaviour and good attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials. Good attendance and behaviour by students will be recognized appropriately.

All children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open. The school day starts with registration at 08:45am and students will be expected to be in the classroom at that time.

08:45 to 09:00	Registration
09:00 to 10:00	Lesson 1
10:00 to 11:00	Lesson 2
11:00 to 11:20	Break
11:20 to 12:20	Lesson 3
12:20 to 13:20	Lesson 4
13:20 to 14:00	Lunch
14:00 to 15:00	Lesson 5

All children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems that arise with attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. Only school can authorize the absence, not parents.** This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

The attendance and punctuality policy must include procedural referral agreements that are designed to promote and safeguard the welfare of students.

Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 10 days or more where they have been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service.

**Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason.**

**Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:**

- **Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily**
- **Truancy before or during the school day**
- **Absences which have never been properly explained**
- **Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark**
- **Holidays during term time**

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact the school at an early stage and work together with the staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful.

If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Worker from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child.

Penalty notices may be considered appropriate if one of the following criteria is met:

- There is unauthorised persistent absence. "Persistent" means at least 20 sessions of unauthorised absence over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- There is a period of absence not authorised by the headteacher or in excess of the period authorised by the headteacher (eg family holiday).
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of unauthorised late arrival over a period of 12 school weeks, excluding holidays. These late episodes do not need to be consecutive.
- The presence of an excluded child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. An "excluded child" is one who has been excluded from school for a given period under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

## Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices

Regular and punctual attendance at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise their educational opportunities. In recognition of this, the law makes it an offence for a parent or carer to fail to secure the regular attendance of their child at a school at which the child is a registered pupil, without good reason or the agreement of the school.

Penalty notices are one of the sanctions available for this offence and offer a means of swift intervention, which can be used to combat attendance problems before they become entrenched.

Further guidance can be found below;

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/Attendance/Code-of-Conduct-From-1.1.2018.pdf>

The penalty notice fine would be:

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent per child if paid within 21-28days
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted on S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

If a prosecution takes place please be advised that the maximum fine is £1000 per parent per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWW themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

## Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences.

Clear instructions are laid down for the completion of attendance registers in each lesson.

1. Absences not supported by absence notes must always be reported to the appropriate member of staff.
2. Parents are requested to telephone the school on the first morning of an absence. If no telephone message is received by 10am then a text message will be generated. Parents are asked to formally give reasons of any absence preferably in writing by letter. **The school reserves the right to authorise any absence not parents.**
3. School will always endeavour to contact home for an explanation of absence on the first day. If after three days of absence there is still no contact, then the school will contact other agencies such as LST or others depending on the circumstances and what is

known about the student. Where it is known that a false excuse has been given by a parent for an absence, this will be challenged.

4. Electronic lesson by lesson attendance registers help to minimize truancy. Pupils suspected of actual truancy will always be reported to parents and sanctions applied. It is common practice for time lost through truancy to be made up either during break, lunch or after school. The further preventative measure of a lesson-by-lesson, on report arrangement will usually be put in place in almost every case.
5. The Behaviour & Safety Manager, Assistant Head teacher and form tutors, with administration support monitor registers at regular intervals, identify trends and patterns, and will often make spot checks on particular absences. Where attendance cannot be secured in spite of any known illness the EWW is expected to pursue such cases with vigour and keep the school informed accordingly.
6. Good attendance is encouraged by the rewards system and Attendance Certificates. Students are able to keep track of their own attendance via the information presentation in form tutor every week.
7. Attending school regularly and attending on time are considered to be equally important. To ensure that latecomers are challenged and treated consistently, all late arrivals at the school after the end of tutor period must report to the school office. The Form Tutor closely monitors any lateness initially and refers the student to the appropriate person if the problems persist. Sanctions are put in place for persistent poor punctuality which may include detention at break, lunch or after school. Very firm pressure is put on children and their parents to ensure punctuality which will include regular contact with parents, meetings with the Head teacher and / or meetings with the Governors.
8. There are a few families who have great difficulty in organising their affairs to secure good attendance and punctuality and whose aspirations for their children are low. Great efforts are made by the senior staff to provide support and encouragement, using a mix of understanding and resolution that works in some cases but not all. Penalty notices will be issued where necessary.
9. Students attendance should always be at or above 95%
10. The school aims to have all of its students maintaining higher than 95% attendance. When an individual student's attendance level falls below 95% the school will monitor attendance very closely and may require parents and students to attend regular meetings to implement improvement strategies.
11. If attendance continues to fall the student and parent will need to attend more formal meetings with senior staff within school, The Head teacher or Governors.
12. If attendance falls at or below 90%, without good reason, a referral to the EWW will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

13. It is not appropriate for the school to authorize absences for shopping, looking after other children, haircuts etc. Leave may be granted in an emergency or for **unavoidable medical appointments** during school time. Making medical, dental and other appointments after lunch rather than in the morning will help your child maintain good attendance. Additionally, returning to school after a morning medical appointment will also greatly improve attendance
14. Students are NOT allowed to take holidays during school time. Amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into effect on the 1 September 2013, now make it clear that head teachers will only authorise a holiday in school time under exceptional circumstances. Parents who take their children out of school for a holiday could result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution, even if their attendance has been at or above 95%. In cases of unauthorised leave of absence both parents or carers will be fined regardless of which one applied for the leave.
15. The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure a high a level of attendance.
16. If illness persists for 3 days or more then medical evidence / confirmation must be given to school.

Stafford Manor High School recognises the importance of the Disability & Discrimination Act and will take every opportunity to ensure it is implemented for the benefit of all students, staff, parents and visitors.