



Stafford Manor High School

Review frequency (Free/annual/etc.)	Free – Every 2 years
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Signed by Chair (Michelle Whiteman)	
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Date received by Staff	w/c 13 October 2025

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY September 2025

Rationale

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

Stafford Manor High School will promote positive behaviour, good attendance and punctuality through our attendance matters strategy including the subject based and behaviour curriculum, which includes morning routines, including line up, tutor time, social times, movement between lessons and also through extra-curricular and interventions. Good attendance, punctuality and behaviour by students will be recognised appropriately through the 4Rs framework, through our attendance matters strategy which includes: Prize draws, free daily lunches, front of queue passes, books, VIP lounge, games room passes, stationary and by applying rewards through the use of class charts to catch students doing the right thing and making positive choices.

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- › Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- › Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- › Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- › [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- › [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024 from 19 August 2024](#)
- › [School census guidance](#)
- › [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- › [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Stafford Manor High School - Timings of the school day:

All children should be at school, on time, every single day that the school is open. The school day is outlined below:

Time	Activity/lesson
08:30 am	Gates Open
08:40 am	All students should be on site
08:42 am	Students make their way to their tutor line
08:45 am	Students should be silent in their tutor lines
08:50 am	Students dismissed to tutor time
08:50 – 9.15am	Tutorial Programme (Registers close at 09:00am)
09:15 am -10:15 am	Period 1
10:15 am -11:15 am	Period 2
11:15 am -11:30 am	Break
11:30 am -12:30 pm	Period 3
12:30 pm -1:30pm	Period 4
1:30 pm -2:15 pm	Lunch
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Period 5
3:15 pm onwards	Extra-Curricular programme/detention

Good punctuality helps to ensure a positive start to the school day. Stafford Manor High School expects all students to be on site no later than 08:40am.

SMHS graduated response Punctuality		
Punctuality	What you should do	If no credible reason given
Arrival to school after 08:45	Join line-up. A text message is sent home regarding punctuality.	Same day lunchtime detention – 30 minutes
Arrival after 9:00	Continue to tutor. A text message is sent home regarding punctuality.	Same day lunchtime detention – 30 minutes
Regularly late after 9:00	Letters sent home, a meeting will be held with yourself and/or parent.	Same day lunchtime detention – 30 minutes and potential penalty notice to parents.
Late to class	Talk to your teacher about why you are late.	Same day lunchtime detention – 30 minutes

Stafford Manor High School Attendance Expectations:

Stafford Manor High School has high expectations for student attendance.

Our target for attendance each year is 98%. Through our monitoring, if attendance for individuals, or groups should start to fall there will be regular and sustained involvement from the attendance team to listen and facilitate support by removing barriers in school, and offering support via other means and agencies.

It is important that parents and students attend any attendance meetings, to discuss the support being offered via school and other agencies, to keep to attendance plans when these are drawn up, and to keep in regular contact with school if there are continued issues.

School will discuss options regarding medical and other health needs, and will need to have regular meetings and regular updated plans to support pupils' attendance.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence:

Authorised absences are time away from a school for a good reason such as a medical appointment, a genuine illness or an unavoidable reason, and/or an exceptional circumstance that school are made aware of by parents.

We encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments after school hours to minimise disruption to their child's education and to ensure that attendance expectations are met.

Unauthorised absences are those that a school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' or 'permission' has been given. Unauthorised absences include:

- **Parents keeping students off school unnecessarily.**
- **Truancy before or during the school day.**
- **Absences which have not been properly explained.**
- **Students who arrive at school after registration has closed (Registers close at 09:00am)**

It is important that parents maintain their responsibility to ensure students arrive on time and attend school every day. Should a student be unable to come to school **there is an expectation that parents will contact school EVERY day that their child is absent.** Failure to contact school, or respond to texts, emails and phone calls will mean that the absence will be logged as **UNAUTHORISED.**

Recording attendance through registers

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 Stafford Manor High School can authorise a child's absence, not parents.

Parents are requested to **telephone the school on the first morning of an absence, and EVERY day of their child's absence/ illness**. Parents may also contact the school by email attendance@smhs.staffs.sch.uk again, on the **first morning of an absence, and EVERY day of their child's absence/ illness**.

If no telephone message or email is received by 10am then a text message will be generated and MUST be responded to by parents with the reason for their child's absence.

Parents are asked to formally give reasons for a leave of absence preferably in writing by letter, or by email to attendance@smhs.staffs.sch.uk.

The school reserves the right to authorise or unauthorise any absence and will record each absence as such.

Stafford Manor High 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 make an appropriate decision to either complete a home visit, and/or contact other agencies 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 by the school.

Where there are frequent absences or illness logs without credible evidence after discussions with parents, then absences will be marked as unauthorised.

Stafford Manor High School will work with students and parents where there are difficulties with attendance and punctuality to school, and will offer support by developing options, interventions and plans, and be in regular contact via meetings, phone-calls, TEAMS meetings, texts, emails, and letters.

However, if plans for improving a child's attendance are not being followed, or if poor punctuality or attendance is at a level that is of high concern, the school reserves the right to involve the **Education Welfare Service (EWS)**, and other agencies.

If attendance and punctuality continue in a downward trend, or falls at or below 90%, without good reason, a referral to EWS will be made by the school. Following investigation any unresolved issues will result in the parent receiving a Penalty Notice or ultimately a prosecution under the Education Act 1996 s.444.

As a Local Authority school we will apply the following criteria to attendance:

96% to 100%	Expected – Good attendance
91% to 95%	At risk of Persistent absence and will require school interventions to improve attendance
80% to 90%	Persistent absence – will have school and Education Welfare interventions to improve attendance, and may include Penalty notices.

51% to 79%	At risk of Severe Persistent absence and will involve Education Welfare and potentially other agencies to improve attendance. And may include penalty notices and possibly court action.
Below 50%	Severe Persistent absence – Education Welfare and other agencies involvement.

Electronic lesson by lesson attendance registers help to minimise truancy. Pupils suspected of actual truancy will always be reported to parents and sanctions will be applied, which may include time in our reset room and, break and lunch time detentions and/or after school detentions.

Stafford Manor High School 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 EWS is expected to pursue such cases swiftly and with vigour and keep the school informed accordingly.

Good attendance is encouraged by the rewards system and students are able to keep track of their own attendance via the information presentation in form tutor every week through the weekly attendance KPI, as part of our attendance matters strategy.

Attending school regularly and attending on time are considered to be equally important and latecomers are challenged and treated consistently and given detention. Stafford Manor High School closely monitors any lateness and sanctions are put in place for persistent poor punctuality which may include after school detentions and regular contact with parents, meetings with relevant outside agencies, as well as being issued with a Penalty Notice.

Holidays during Term Time:

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 an unauthorised leave of absence, both parents and carers will be fined regardless of which one applied for the leave.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty by law to make sure that their children attend. Stafford Manor High School staff are committed to working *with* parents. This is the best way to ensure a high a level of attendance.

Circumstances Where a Penalty Notice will be issued:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) over a 10-school week period lost due to unauthorised absence during the current and previous term. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- Unauthorised absences of at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to a leave of absence (including holiday related) in term time not agreed by SMHS. These absences do not need to be consecutive.
- Unauthorised sessions that are below the threshold of 10 sessions (5 school days) if there is a pattern of repeated short absence.
- Persistent late arrival at school, i.e., after the register has closed, in the current and previous term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival.
- The presence of a suspended child in a public place at any time during school hours in that child's first five days of exclusion. A "suspended child" is one who has been suspended from school for a given period under the Education and Inspection Act 2006.

Raised national expectations and consequences of poor punctuality and attendance will generate consequences. The Education Welfare Service (EWS) can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents/carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on their child.

Penalty notices:

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 from 19 August 2024 are outlined as follows:

- The first Penalty Notice is £160 per parent per child and reduces to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.
- If there is a second Penalty Notice within 3 years it will be at a fixed rate of £160 per parent per child with no reduction.
- If prosecution takes place under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 the maximum fine is £1000 per parent per child.

This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school. Alternatively, parents/carers or students may wish to contact the EWS themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice.

Exceptional circumstances:

Leave of absence and holidays in term time due to urgent and unavoidable circumstances (such as a family bereavement) would clearly be considered exceptional. Other than this, however, it will be appropriate for the school to deal with applications on a case-by-case basis.

Children Missing in Education (CME):

Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 20 sessions (10 days or more) where they have not been unable to make contact with the parent/child or have general

concerns about the absence to the Education Welfare Service and students can be removed from roll.

Further guidance can be found below:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Education/Education-welfare/Attendance.aspx>

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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.

Attendance Roles & Responsibilities Flow Chart 2025-26

Role in School	Attendance Responsibilities	Weekly/Half Termly and Termly actions
Governors/link governor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development to ensure it is fit for purpose • Support and challenge leaders to improve attendance • Link Governor visits to QA attendance actions and SIP • Ensuring adequate attendance resources are in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review attendance policy and impact at governor meetings • Schedule link visits to review attendance plan fidelity • Use findings from link visits to produce impact reports • Plan, support and improve attendance resources & their impact
Head teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development and accurate implementation linked to DfE Working together to improve school attendance • Develop Attendance SIP targets and actions including monitoring impact each term. • Ensuring effective attendance resources are in place. • Ensuring everyone knows their role and responsibility for improving attendance • Lead attendance rewards strategy • SCC and LA challenge around PNR escalation • Ensure all aspects of school provision are unmissable and unforgettable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with governors to inform them and advise on policy • Lead policy development and implementation • Determines SIP targets and actions and monitor impact • Communication to students, parents and staff via Head’s Up parent newsletter, line up, staff briefing & assemblies. • Leads weekly meeting on attendance with school leaders • Ensure attendance rewards are delivered to students accurately • Ensure regular contact and challenge for SCC/EW regarding PNRs and escalation support.
Senior Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy development and accurate implementation. • Ensuring effective attendance resources are in place. • Ensuring everyone knows their role and responsibility for improving attendance. • Develop Attendance SIP targets and actions including monitoring impact each term. • Rewards strategy leadership. • Safe and well checks support where needed. • Ensuring that their teams keep attendance as a key priority in all meetings and discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termly policy review, development and support • Attendance target development and • Ensuring accurate implementation for registers, contact home to secure reasons for absence and escalation phone calls. • Ensure operational strategy on attendance and agreed actions are taken on individuals. • Support for attendance mentoring. • Rewards development to encourage more attendance. • Deliver and support assemblies and reinforce attendance. • Safe and well check visits to homes to challenge poor attendance.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality leadership and management that ensures SMHS is more unmissable and unforgettable! 	
Attendance Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Headteacher with policy development & implementation. • Data collection and analysis lead. • Weekly attendance meetings lead. • Rewards operation. • Communication with parents and students lead. • Agency meetings lead and coordination. • Education welfare and SCC liaison. • Legal actions, EHE and Removal from roll coordination. • Daily registers and phone calls lead. • Safe and Well checks lead with senior family support worker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise policy development with the Headteacher. • Target development with the headteacher. • Lead and evaluate operational strategy on attendance. • Data analysis on all aspects of attendance. • Develop and implement student rewards with headteacher. • Meetings emails letters texts with parents and meeting students to support and improve attendance. • Advise on attendance mentoring cohorts and review impact. • Family Action Early help social workers meetings. • Education welfare meetings. • PNR's, Court papers. • Safe and well check visits to homes (Lead).
Heads Of Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor time QA of attendance matters sessions each week. • Student caseload – mentoring. • Rewards operation for attendance in year groups. • Assemblies that reward and focus on good attendance. • Parent and student communication around attendance. • Recognise and promote good attendance each week. • Ensure SMHS is unmissable and unforgettable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings with tutors to promote attendance. • Regular meetings with students including mentees. • Review students' rewards and ensure these are issued. Accurately ad regularly to promote/improve attendance. • Deliver and support assemblies and reinforce attendance. • Parent/student meetings to support and challenge attendance. • Coordinate trips and visits that link to good and improving attendance.
Behaviour team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and student communication to support attendance. • Ensure behaviour/inclusion systems keep school calm, purposeful and inclusive to promote attendance in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and student meetings focus on and share attendance. • Barriers to attendance are removed e.g., support AP and other approaches.
Safeguarding and Student Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with parents and students. • Agency meetings to support inclusion and attendance. • Safe and well checks as needed with attendance lead. • Family Action Early help social workers meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings emails letters texts with parents and meeting students • Family Action Early help social workers meetings • Safe and well check visits to homes • Liaison with families and other external agencies

<p>Teaching staff / Tutors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all lessons are delivered using the SMHS Way/Say. • Make all lessons unmissable and unforgettable. • Student caseload for attendance mentoring. • Use weekly attendance KPI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet mentees with script and record conversations/targets • Display KPI in form rooms and discuss with tutor group • Ensure rewards are issued for improving or positive attendance
<p>Admin team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication with parents for attendance. • Support rewards programme and administration. • Collate and share relevant information and needed. • Make school welcoming and inviting for all including a positive public facing image (website/social media etc). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters, texts and emails to families. • Preparing certificates and letters for rewards. • Purchase rewards to support attendance matters strategy. • Regular positive presence on social media and on the website.
<p>Attendance Admin support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication with parents for attendance. • Support rewards programme and administration. • Collate and share relevant information and needed. • Registers checks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily contact – phone calls, emails, texts home • Chasing missing marks in registers • Support administration for attendance
<p>Site team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain site and ensure school is safe and welcoming. • Removal of litter and general maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain site and ensure school is safe and welcoming. • Removal of litter and general maintenance.

** Note: School leaders review the fidelity of these actions each term as part of SIP review cycles.