

Attendance Policy

Stockport Academy:

- believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident, committed and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their broader school community;
- expects every student to achieve 100% attendance during an academic year;
- believes in 'the Best in Everyone' and will work with families and give support where possible to identify the reasons for poor attendance and try to resolve any difficulties; and
- recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community.

Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation, it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and teaching and learning.

Scope

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational need they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age at Stockport Academy by the last Friday in June of Year 11.

The aim of this Policy is to enable the school to improve students' attendance by either full and efficient Legal sanctions under section 444 of the Education Act or by referring the student and their families to the relevant agencies to access support.

Intention

Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Stockport Academy are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

At Stockport Academy we give the achievement of good attendance and punctuality high priority. Students who do not attend school cannot take advantage of educational opportunities and rarely achieve their potential.

Registering students

All morning and afternoon registers must be accurate and complete on Arbor by the end of the registration period.

All teaching staff are responsible for registering students within the first 10 minutes of a lesson. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

Students' daily attendance can be seen on Arbor. If a student is missing from a lesson, it can be seen immediately by the member of staff who will then alert the attendance team. This method of communication between school staff will be used in the following situations (this list is not exhaustive):

- to enable staff to locate a student who is not in their timetabled lesson; and/or
- to closely monitor students with safeguarding concerns. These students' absence is usually reported to relevant outside agencies as part of a Child In Need or Child Protection Plan.

All staff can view information regarding a student's attendance and staff are able to view the information contained therein and act accordingly.

Arbor is an integral part of the school's Attendance Policy. It is imperative that all staff follow this procedure as it forms a key aspect of our Safeguarding roles and responsibilities towards our students.

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement. The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the student was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity off site; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

Recording Absence

Morning and afternoon attendance and absences are recorded electronically using the school's Arbor system. Attendance Officers will use attendance codes as set out by DfE.

In addition, the Attendance Team will record any absences where a parent notifies the school in the event of illness on the morning of school through the dedicated absence line, email, or school phone number.

Categorising Absence

Where students at compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Parents should advise by telephone on each day of absence. This should be followed up in the form of a written note from the parent/carer, verbal explanations will be acceptable where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

Where students have an unacceptable level of attendance, parents will be informed in writing that no further absences will be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.

Absence can only be authorised by the Head teacher or the Attendance Officer and cannot be authorised by parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the student's absence has been received.

The Attendance Officer shall be responsible for changing attendance codes early on the morning of the school day on Arbor to reflect information received from parents in order for teachers to be advised of reasons for absence. The Attendance Officers shall be responsible for first day contact to establish the reason for an unauthorised absence.

Absence will be categorised as follows

Illness – In most cases, a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill would be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence informing the school that their child is ill where there are repeated absences due to a reported illness. This would usually take the form of a GP stamp in the child's school planner, an appointment card or a prescription.

Medical/Dental Appointments – Parents are usually advised to make appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, students should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school. Students leaving school during the school day to attend a medical/dental appointment must report to student services and sign out on receipt of a pass.

Other Authorised Circumstances - this relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Excluded - (No alternative provision made) Exclusion from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The child's Head of Year or Pastoral Manager will make arrangements for work to be sent home. Pastoral Managers will assist Heads of Year in collating work set by teachers for excluded students.

Requesting Leave

Parents are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on leave during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be made aware that if their child is absent for 10 school days, they will miss 5% of their education during that academic year. The Headteacher will only authorise requests for leave during term time in very exceptional circumstances.

Parents wishing to take request leave during term time for their child must arrange a meeting with the Head of Year to discuss their request. Any request for a leave of absence must also be put in writing to the Headteacher. Retrospective requests will not be considered and therefore will result in the absence being categorised as unauthorised. Each request will be considered individually.

All requests for leave of absence will be responded to in writing. Where a request has been granted the letter should state:

- the expected date of return;
- that parents must contact school should any delays occur; and
- that the child may be removed from the school's roll if the family do not return as expected

If a student fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, Stockport Academy will remove the Student from the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the child will lose their school place.

If permission to take leave is not requested or is not granted and the student still goes on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised. In such cases the school may issue a Penalty Notice.

Religious Observance - Stockport Academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends, and this may necessitate a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

Study Leave - Study leave may be granted in Year 11 for students approaching GCSE examinations. The school may offer in school study programmes during this period to reduce absence levels.

Traveller Absence - The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.

It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school. When in or around Stockport, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Stockport Academy will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the student must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school, in such cases, the student's school place at Stockport Academy will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

Stockport Academy can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- inform the school regarding proposed return dates.

Punctuality

Late Arrival begins at 8.25am. A reason must be provided for lateness e.g. a note from parents about an emergency doctor's appointment.

If students accrue an unacceptable amount of 'U' late marks, where an unauthorised absence has been marked within a half term, parents will be subject to prosecution or fine.

On arrival after the close of register (9.45am), students must immediately sign in via student services to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

The absence will only be authorised if a satisfactory explanation for late arrival can be provided, for example, attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as unauthorised if the student has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry, length of travel etc.

Absence/ lateness will be unauthorised for the following reasons:

- Full days absence for routine medical appointments where attendance either before or after the appointment could have been achieved;
- Shopping for uniforms;
- Having their hair cut;
- Closure of a sibling's school for INSET (or other) purposes;
- No reason given;
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school;
- Leave of absence taken without the authorisation of school;
- Failure to provide medical evidence following attendance letter 2; or
- Any other reason that the Attendance Office deems as unauthorised.

Deletion from Register

In accordance with the Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, students will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order;
- The School Attendance Order is revoked by the local authority;
- The student has ceased to be of compulsory school age;
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed;
- Death of a student;
- Transfer between schools;
- Student withdrawn to be educated outside the school system;
- Failure to return from leave after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the student;
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age;
- The student is in custody for more than four months (in discussion with The Youth Offending Team);
- The student has 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the student; or
- The student left the school but it is not known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate them.

Children Missing from Education

Stockport Academy will follow Stockport Local Authority's Children Missing Education Protocol and DFE's Keeping Pupil Registers guidance when a student's whereabouts is unknown.

Reduced Timetables

All education should be suited to a child's age, ability and aptitude, taking into account any special educational need and any medical need (including mental health needs). The starting point for every student is that they should receive full-time education consistent with their key stage. A timetable is considered reduced when it consists of something less than that which is provided to the majority of the student's peers in that setting.

It is important to highlight that there is no statutory basis upon which to establish a reduced timetable. However, national guidance does permit, in exceptional circumstances, for schools to implement reduced hours on the condition of a full agreement from a parent/carer. The aim of a reduced timetable is that it should be for a limited period to support a student who cannot attend school full-time to reintegrate into full-time provision.

Possible reasons for a reduced timetable may be where a student demonstrates a high incidence of:

- anxiety;
- agitated behaviours that present a high risk to the wider school community;
- attachment/relationship management issues, in turn resulting in a history of conflict in school in terms of relationships with adults and peers;
- non-attendance; or
- mental health concerns.

In managing these social, emotional and mental health needs of the student population, reduced timetables may provide a constructive response on a case-by-case basis, under close supervision from professionals and with consent and commitment of both the student and their parent/carer.

In making a decision to implement a reduced timetable, lead professionals at the school must have substantial evidence of one or more of the following:

- I. The young person, family or an external agency (specifically CAMHS) raises concerns about their mental health in relation to school attendance – commenting that school is overwhelming as a whole or that particular aspects of the school day are overwhelming;
- II. Medical professionals report the young person has a specific mental health issue that are acting as a substantial barrier to school and/or are exacerbated by the school situation;
- III. Medical professionals report the young person has a medical condition that is acting as a substantial barrier to school and/or are exacerbated by the school situation;
- IV. The young person is a longstanding non-attender – they are attending sporadically (below 65%) or not at all, there is no routine or structure to their attendance;
- V. The young person is involved in an ongoing, not easily resolvable conflict with a peer/peers within the Academy which presents a serious risk in terms of their own well-being (physical, emotional) and that of others;
- VI. The young person has made specific threats to a member of the community and/or is observed to be perpetually targeting them with aggression/abuse – and is not responding to support put in place which would enable their full-time attendance and others to have a safe, productive school day; or
- VII. The young person is perpetually behaving in an anxious and agitated way that is significantly detrimental to the safe and orderly running of the Centre and is not responding to support put in place which would enable their full-time attendance and others to have a safe, productive school day.

Stockport Academy has a safeguarding responsibility for all students on roll and therefore must be aware that even with parent/carer agreement to any reduced timetable arrangement they make, they are responsible for the risk assessment, and subsequent safeguarding and welfare, of all students on roll who are off-site during school hours. Where a risk assessment suggests a child will be exposed to significant, immitigable 'red' risk if not in school, then a reduced timetable should not be considered an option.

Only lead pastoral professionals at Stockport Academy can initiate a reduced timetable. They are Janine McCann, Kate Appleby and Andrew John.

When placing a student on a reduced timetable, lead professionals must adhere to reviewing the impact of the reduced timetable.

Risk Assessment Stage

The Lead Professional must undertake a thorough risk assessment before implementing a reduced timetable and give consideration to safeguarding measures for the duration. There must be written agreement about who is responsible for keeping the child safe for the time they would normally be in school. The risk assessment should include the safety and wellbeing of the student as well as the risk of the student engaging in criminal activity or substance misuse whilst not in receipt of education during the school day. It must also consider how parents/carers will be supported during the time when their child is not in school considering the pressures this may place on home life.

Using Attendance Data

Students' attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a student's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every week the Attendance Team will provide Heads of years and pastoral managers (pastoral teams) with attendance data for each student within their year. Pastoral teams will then communicate with the parents/guardians of those students who have been absent.

The Senior Leadership Team will receive a complete set of data.

This student level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention.

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

Stockport Academy will share attendance data with the Department for Education and the local authority as required.

All information shared will be done so in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Weekly attendance levels of each form will be sent to form tutors.

Support Systems

The school recognises that poor attendance is often an indication of difficulties in a child's life. This may be related to problems at home and or in school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in the school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, or incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required. All attendance officers have undergone safeguarding training.

Stockport Academy also recognises that some students are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those students with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee students and looked after children.

The school will implement a range of strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Referral to Pastoral Manager;
- Completion of EHAs;
- Parenting contracts;
- Attendance report cards;
- Referrals to support agencies;
- Peer mentors;
- Home visits;
- Additional learning support;
- Rewards for those who have 100% attendance;
- Positive behaviour mentor; and
- Reintegration support packages.

Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents and students.

Where parents fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, Stockport Academy will consider the use of legal sanctions.

Legal Sanctions

Prosecution - where intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The school will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent fails to ensure the regular school attendance of their child if he/she is a registered student at a school and is of compulsory school age, then they are guilty of an offence.

A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and or be imprisoned for a period of three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

The Parenting Contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target.

It will be reviewed regularly by the EWO at the Local Authority and can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents fail to carry out agreed actions.

Penalty Notices (Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003) Penalty Notices will be considered when:

- A student is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time, where the holiday is in excess of 5 days and the absence has not been authorised by the school; or
- A student has accumulated an unacceptable level of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.

A Penalty Notice gives the parent the opportunity to discharge themselves of their legal responsibility if a £60 fine is paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days of the date the notice was issued.

Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Education Supervision Order - An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring a parent and child to follow directions made in the Order and work alongside a Supervising Officer to improve the child's school attendance. The Supervising Officer will be put in place by Stockport Council and may be a Social Worker, Education Welfare Officer or other early help professional. Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under an ESO, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. ESOs usually last for a year but can be extended to up to three years.

Responsibilities – Parents

- Report absence to attendance lead on first and subsequent days of absence;
- Support the Academy attendance policy and expectations and work with the Academy attendance team where further support is required; and
- Parents and carers are expected to avoid making dental and medical appointments during the school day. Parents and carers should ensure that holidays are booked outside of term time.

Responsibilities – Senior Leadership Team

- Maintain and preserve accurate attendance registers as required by regulations (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006) and make them available for inspection by the local authority];
- Report pupils who fail to attend regularly and pupils who are continuously absent for 10 days or more without reasonable explanation to the local authority; and
- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents;
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters;
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site;
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Department for Education as requested and on time;

- Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the admissions register, ensuring that:
 - Pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance;
 - Pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 is satisfied;
 - All removals from roll are reported to the local authority; and
 - Information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the local authority to locate missing pupils.

Responsibilities - Local Governing Body

Stockport Academy believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of staff, governors, parents, students, and the wider school community. As such, the Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to students and their parents;
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure that the required resources are available to fully implement the policy;
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters;
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings by the Pastoral Sub-committee;
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all students, including those who are educated off-site;
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence;
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions;
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Department for Education as requested and on time;
- Ensure that there is a named senior manager to lead on attendance;
- Carry out all their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils at the school;
- Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the admissions register, ensuring that:
 - Pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance;
 - Pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 is satisfied;
 - All removals from roll are reported to the local authority; and
 - Information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the local authority to locate missing pupils.



Agreed by Stockport Academy LGB September 2023

Review: Annually

Signed by Chair of LGB

David Robinson (Chair)

Signed by Principal

Janine McCann (Principal)



Appendix – Reduced Timetable Risk Assessment Template

Student		Date of Assessment		Lead Professional	
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	Known Risk (in past 12 months)	Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Actions to Mitigate Risk
1	Is reliant on a school dinner for main meal of day.				<p><u>Examples:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provision of substantial food on attendance outside of lunch hour. - Daily welfare phonecall with parent – not just message, but conversation - Send additional work home - Morning sessions to ensure sleep pattern maintains - Afternoon sessions to break-up day - Automatic home visit on 3rd Day of Absence - Increased therapeutic input – Pastoral Mentor, Mosaic, FAV - Student attends Stockport Academy but outside of normal hours - Put in place additional tuition using supplementary fund - Taxi to increase attendance using supplementary fund - Put in place vocational placement using supplementary fund
2	Known to experience ‘sleep reversal’ when lacking daily routine.				
3	Known to have engaged in self-harm.				
4	Known involvement in substance misuse that poses risk to health and well-being but not fatal (cannabis).				
5	Known involvement in substance misuse that has documented fatal risk (‘legal highs’, alcohol, Class A drugs).				
6	Known involvement in anti-social behaviour within neighbourhood (‘pranking’, shoplifting).				
7	Reported domestic violence in the household (Operation Encompass)				
8	Known involvement in unhealthy relationship with another peer that poses risk to health and well-being but not fatal.				
9	Known to be involved in ‘missing from home’ incidents.				
10	Known involvement in potentially injurious / fatal anti-social behaviour (CSE, OCG involvement, vehicle crime, knife crime).				
Have other involved parties been consulted? Y / N					
Who was consulted? _____					



Reduced Timetable Provision Home School Agreement

Aim: The aim of phasing students back into full-time education following periods of absence relating to illness or school refusal is to ensure that students are re-engaged with learning at a pace that supports their progress and wellbeing. There is no fixed term for reduced timetables, but our aim will always be to ensure that we work alongside families and other external agencies to assess what a student feels capable of achieving with an understanding that the overall objective is to engage a student back in full time education. Reduced timetables would be agreed on recommendation by a GP or other external agency to support physical or mental health or as a result of needs highlighted within school.

All students must:

- Agree to and adhere to the agreed hours
- Arrive via reception where agreed and sign in
- Stay on site in the school building
- Attempt to engage in remote learning at home around their reduced hours
- Always follow staff instructions to remain safe. This includes hygiene and hand washing/sanitising.
- Wear uniform and follow uniform expectations
- Always remain in the designated areas
- Comply with all school rules. This includes NOT bringing a mobile phone on site
- Arrive on time and attend unless unwell

Parents and Carers agree to:

- Take responsibility for your child's safety before and after their agreed reduced hours
- Ensure that your child is at home during school hours around their reduced provision
- Support your child with remote learning at home
- Respond to communication from school e.g., via phone calls from school and text messages. If a call is missed, it must be returned
- Read any information sent by email or text message relating to arrangements in school
- Contact school via telephone or email over any concerns or queries
- Ensure your child is punctual for school to ensure attendance registers can be taken
- Support school by ensuring your child adheres to our expectations of behaviour and social distancing

I have read and understood the agreement set out above.

Lead Professional Signature

Parent Signature

Student Signature

Date
