Attendance Policy

Approved by:	Local Governing Body	**Date:** September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Contents

1. Aims 3
2. Legislation and guidance 3
3. Roles and responsibilities 3
4. Recording attendance 5
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence 7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance 8
7. Attendance monitoring 8
8. Monitoring arrangements 9
9. Links with other policies 9

Appendix 1: attendance codes 9

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence

- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

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 It also refers to:
- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Building relationships with parents and carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Jackie Johnson – Assistant Headteacher.

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Whole School Attendance (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Chanel Stephens and can be contacted via email attendance@stopsleyhighschool.co.uk or telephone calling **01582 870 900** and **pressing 1** when prompted

3.5 Form Tutors and Class Teacher

Form Tutors and Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis on our school management information system. Morning registration is completed during tutor time which begins at 8:30am in the morning. The afternoon registration is completed by period 5 teachers at 1:25pm.

3.6 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 8.40am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day

3.7 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend every timetabled session on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment See appendix 1 for the Department for Education attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30am on each school day.

Pupils' AM registration opens at 8:30am. After 8:30am students will be marked L (late) to school. From 9:00 students will be marked as U (Late to school after registration closes). The register for the second session will be taken at 1:25pm and will be kept open until 1:55pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent or carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school 01582 870900 and pressing 1 when prompted. Alternatively, an email can be sent to attendance@stopsleyhighschool.co.uk (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is for a longer period or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents and carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent or carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent or carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may need to complete a home visit, raise concerns by completing a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or contact the police to request a welfare check
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent or carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer

4.6 Reporting to parents and carers

The school will regularly inform parents and carers about their child's attendance and absence levels via their termly reports.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and sent directly to **attendance@stopsleyhighschool.co.uk** with any available evidence to support the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness (including mental illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents/carers belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents'/carers' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents and carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent / carer must pay £80 within 21 days of receipt or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

For a second penalty notice within 3 years, issued to the same parent in respect of the same child, the fine is £160.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead. This will often include the consideration of prosecution.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance and punctuality

Attendance of 97% and greater is a core part of students achieving Top Class Status every term. In addition, attendance is celebrated in assemblies with awards for tutor groups co-operating to achieve the highest attendance over a half term.

Our U Matter punctuality strategy provides a clear, supportive and consistent framework to help students arrive on time every day. Through supervised entry, daily reminders of expectations and a tiered system of early intervention, we identify concerns quickly and work closely with families to improve routines. This structured approach ensures punctuality is reinforced as an essential part of strong attendance and readiness to learn.

7. Attendance monitoring

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor daily, weekly and termly attendance figures
- Identify students who are absent, late or have declining attendance through use of alerts via Arbor Auto Attendance and the DfE Absence Bandings.
- Identify which groups (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities -SEND, Free School Meals 6 - FSM6, Persistent Absence -PA, Severe Absence - SA, Child in Need - CIN / Child protection - CP / Children Looked After - CLA, medical or mental health needs, young carers, pupils with protected characteristics, new arrivals and high mobility pupils, and pupils with repeated lateness) are emerging as concerns
- Whether patterns are starting to form

Pupil-level absence data will also be collected weekly and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's VYED (View Your education Data) and FFT Aspire (Fischer Family Trust) national statistics releases. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the Local Governing Body.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance data to identify causes, trends and patterns and implement interventions / actions to address these
- Identify barriers and trigger to attendance
- Analyse attendance and absence data weekly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

🎬 Use the ABIE (Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectation) target as our minimum benchmark for improvement and apply the school's Top Class attendance target of 97% to drive high expectations and identify pupils approaching excellent attendance.

- Complete and review the Attendance Officer Weekly Impact Report to monitor emerging patterns, compare school-level trends with national benchmarks, and act swiftly on pupils flagged as at risk by setting targeted actions for the following week.

- Year Manager Attendance Impact Report — Use weekly cohort-level analysis to identify pupils, tutor groups or year groups requiring targeted support or escalation.
- Vulnerable Pupil Attendance Tracker — Track attendance for SEND, disadvantaged pupils, young carers and pupils with social workers to ensure barriers are identified early and support is coordinated.
- Attendance Barrier Identifier — Analyse individual pupil data to identify root causes (e.g., transport, anxiety, routines, curriculum engagement) and match interventions accordingly.
- ESBA Action Plan — Use the Emotional, Social and Behavioural Attendance framework to plan targeted support for pupils whose attendance is affected by wider needs.
- Student Comeback Plan — Develop personalised reintegration plans for pupils returning after periods of absence, ensuring barriers are removed and routines re-established.
- Tomorrow Morning Plan — Provide immediate, practical next-day actions for pupils and families to reset routines and prevent further absence.
- School Day Friction Mapper — Analyse pupil movement and lesson transitions to identify "friction points" contributing to lateness or lesson absence.

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Monitor pupils approaching the persistent absence threshold via the PA Prevention Pipeline and intervene before they reach 90%, using structured, escalating support.
- Hold regular meetings with the parents and carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Utilise our Attendance Support Plan to create structured, multi-agency plans for pupils with entrenched absence, ensuring accountability, review points and measurable improvement steps.

8. Supporting Documentation

The following documents will be used to support our ongoing monitoring of attendance, provide robust analysis of emerging patterns**,** and record the voices of pupils and their parents/carers:

Attendance Officer Weekly Impact Report

Head of Year Impact Report

Vulnerable Pupil Attendance Checker

Attendance Barrier Identifier

EBSA Action Plan

Student Comeback Plan

Tomorrow Morning Plan

Student Day Friction Mapper

9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and annually by SLT Link to attendance, Jackie Johnson, Assistant Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Local Governing Body.

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site).
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted leave of absence for exceptional circumstance
C1	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance
C2	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil is subject to a part-time timetable
E	Excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is attending a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)

	O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
	U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
	Code	**Definition**	**Scenario**
	X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
	Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.
	Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency.
	Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remain in use.
	Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	The school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
	Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or • detained under a sentence of detention
	Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	Pupil is well enough to attend but there are Government rules or guidance to limit the spread of infection or disease which say they should not attend their school
	Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	An emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause affects the pupil, not the parent. Examples may include bail conditions / court attendance
	Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
	#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day