Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School



Attendance Policy

Last review date: Jan 24

Next review date: Jan 25

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Responsibility for Maintaining Policy

Jane Townsend

Review Date

Annually

Policy Statement

Good attendance and punctuality are vital if pupils are to achieve their maximum potential. Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School is committed to working with parents/carers to ensure that each pupil benefits from the academic, personal and social opportunities available to them during their years with us.

A high level of attendance at school is not only a legal requirement but is vital for all our pupils to enable a continuity of learning, thereby ensuring maximum progress for all. There is a clear link between good attendance and academic achievement, as well as enabling the development of personal, social and emotional skills.

We aim to achieve an attendance level of over 96%. We also aim to minimise levels of unauthorised attendance.

We are committed to a family of school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent/carers.

Aims of the Policy

- Clear procedures encouraging pupils to achieve their maximum potential by maintaining good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring parent/carers and pupils are informed about the procedures for attendance and encouraging them to take an active role in promoting good attendance and punctuality
- Ensuring all teaching staff, non-teaching staff and governors understand the procedures
- The commitment to allocate resources to support the policy
- Addressing attendance and inclusion issues in the curriculum
- To recognise and reward pupils who achieve attendance and punctuality targets throughout the academic year

The Law

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance particularly including DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance' It is informed by but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (As amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE (2022) 'Working together to improve school attendance
- DfE (9.6.22) What does the new attendance guidance mean for schools?
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2016) 'Children missing education'
- Sheffield Attendance & Inclusion Team "Schools Own Management of Attendance" 2022

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school or Trust policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

The 1996 Education Act requires that:

- All pupils of compulsory school age receive a suitable full time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise
- The Local Authority must provide school places to parents who wish their children to be educated at school
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning session and during the afternoon session
- The school must report to the Local Authority pupils who fail to attend regularly or are absent for more than ten days without explanation
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law

Partnership

What the school expects of our pupils and parents

- That parents/carers fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school regularly, on time and ready to learn
- That parents/carers ensure pupils are prepared for the day with appropriate equipment e.g. P.E. kit
- That parents/carers report to the School Office to sign their child in should they arrive after their class start time
- That parents/carer inform a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent their child attending school
- That parents/carers contact school every day that their child is absent from school for any reason.
- That parents/carers arrange medical and dental appointments out of school times wherever possible, and ask for authorisation from the school if this is unavoidable
- That parents/carers arrange holidays out of school time. Further guidance is offered under the section
 Term Time requests for Exceptional Leave later in this policy
- That parents/carers ensure the School Office has up to date contact details at all times including addresses, e-mails and telephone numbers.

What parents/carers and pupils can expect from the school

- A broad, balanced education that is dependent on regular attendance at school
- Promotion of good attendance and punctuality at school, and regular encouragement and rewards
- Efficient and accurate recording and monitoring of attendance
- Contact to be made with parents/carers when absence is unexplained
- Prompt action when a problem has been identified
- Liaison with officers from the Local Authority to assist and support families where needed

- Regular attendance information is given to parents/carers e.g. by newsletter, individual letter, and parent evenings. When attendance is of serious concern, contact may be made by the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST)
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact school to discuss any issues impacting on their child's attendance or punctuality.
- Any concerns or problems raised by parents/carers will be responded to quickly and sensitively by the school.

Procedures

Registers are a legal document. Great care must be taken to ensure registers are marked accurately. Attendance of all pupils is monitored and evaluated regularly using the following procedures:

Registration

- The main school gates for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children open 10 minutes before school starts so that children can be on site and ready to start their day when their class starts.
- Class registers open when school starts and close 5 minutes after.
- Registers are entered electronically into SIMS by the class teacher. In the event of difficulties with registration on-line, an emergency paper register must be completed.
- A code may already have been entered into the register if school has been notified of a pupil's absence.
- Pupils will be marked absent if they are not present at the time of registration. A pupil cannot be marked present on the word of another pupil.
- Any unexplained absences must be followed up by the school.
- Pupils arriving up to 20 minutes after their class register closes are marked as late (recorded as an 'L' in the register).
- Pupils arriving more than 20 minutes after their class register closes are marked as an unauthorised absence (recorded as a 'U' in the register).
- Afternoon registers are also taken by the class teacher after lunch and follow the same procedure as above.

2023 - 24 School Start Times

MAIN SCHOOL (Reception, Year 1 & Year 2)

- School starts at 8.30am Monday to Friday during term time. The school gates open at 8.20am and close at 8.30am.
- Class registers open at 8.30am and close at 8.35am.
- Pupils arriving between 8.36am and 8.55am are marked as late.
- Pupils arriving from 8.56am onwards are marked as an unauthorised absence.

NURSERY

- Nursery starts at 8.40am. The Nursery gate opens at 8.30am and closes at 8.40am.
- The register opens at 8.40am and closes at 8.45am.
- Pupils arriving between 8.46am and 9.05am are marked as late ('L').
- Pupils arriving from 9.06am onwards are marked as unauthorised absence ('U').
- For pupils starting their 15 hours per week provision on Wednesday afternoon the Nursery gate opens at 11.45and and closes at 11.50am. Pupils arriving between 11.51 am to 12.20pm are marked as late mark ('L'). Pupils arriving from 12.21pm onwards are marked as unauthorised absence ('U').

Responding to lateness

- Pupils arriving after their class start time should enter via the school office only, not via any other opened gate. This is so we can ensure that they are 'signed in' appropriately and lunches are ordered. It is also to avoid classes being disrupted and/or delayed by children arriving after the start of class.
- Parents / carers will be asked to sign in their child using the school's Inventory system. This will ask
 parents / carers to provide a reason for their child's lateness. We appreciate your cooperation in this
 regard.
- The school monitors punctuality as well as attendance and will contact parents/carers in relation to punctuality when lateness is persistent. Contact with parents / carers is made via letter and in some cases parents/carers may be invited to attend a meeting in school to help resolve any ongoing issues relating to their punctuality.
- Unauthorised absences can lead to a pupil's attendance being brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and/or Sheffield City Council's Attendance and Inclusion Officer.

Responding to absence

- The school will contact parents/carers when a pupil's absence from school is unexplained.
- Evidence may be requested in relation to the reasons given for absence.
- Under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that your child attends school regularly. Failure to do so could ultimately result in the Local Authority issuing a Fixed Penalty Fine and/or a summons to appear at Magistrates Court.

Authorising Absence

• Only the school may authorise absence. Even when a parent/carer provides an explanation of absence the school will decide whether to accept the explanation and authorise the absence.

Absence may be authorised if:

- The pupil is too ill to attend school.
- The pupil is prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause.
- The pupil is absent on a day set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent/carer belongs.
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return.
- There is a close family bereavement.
- The pupil has a local authority licence to take part in a public performance and the school has granted leave of absence.

Absence will not be authorised if:

- No explanation is offered by the parent/carer.
- The school is not satisfied with an explanation offered.
- The pupil is staying home to look after parents, siblings or the home.
- The pupil is absent on special occasions e.g. birthday.
- The pupil is absent on a request for leave of absence during term time for longer than agreed by the Head Teacher.
- The pupil is absent on a request for leave of absence during term time not agreed by the Head Teacher.

- The pupil is absent unnecessarily e.g. taken shopping, for a haircut, because it's their birthday, to see a show.
- The pupil's attendance is below 90% and no acceptable medical evidence is provided.
- The illness lasts more than 5 days without medical evidence being provided.

Requests for leave of absence during term time

- Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time. Following Government guidelines, Sheffield City Council's policy is to not authorise leave of absence for holidays during term time. School expects all holidays to be arranged out of term time.
- Where there are genuine exceptional circumstances school may authorise leave during term time and will consider each request on its own merit.
- All requests for term time leave should be made in writing on a <u>Request for Exceptional Leave form</u>.
 The request should be submitted at least 20 working days in advance of the intended leave. The forms can be collected from the school office and can also be found on the school website.
- The actual date that the child will return to school should always be provided by the parent/carer.
- School will inform parents in writing advising whether the leave is authorised or unauthorised, clearly stating why a decision has been taken.
- Parents/carers should contact school if any holiday delays occur.
- Parents should consider all requests to be unauthorised unless they hear otherwise.
- If an unauthorised holiday is taken a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Council. The decision is made by Sheffield Council's Prevention & Intervention Service and the Council undertakes any necessary action.
- The school must apply the Council's policy consistently.

Every Day Matters - Sheffield City Council's School Attendance Policy

Information relating to the Council's Attendance Policy and the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices is available on the Council's website at https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/schools-childcare/school-attendance-truancy

Information provided by the Council about Fixed Penalty Notices is also attached to this document.

Penalty notice fines are changing. From August 2024 each parent will be fined for each child for 5 or more consecutive days of term time leave. The fine is increasing to £160 per parent, per child within 28 days. This is reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days. If there is a second offence within 3 years the fine increased to £160 per parent, per child.

The Council's flyer in relation to these changes is also attached to this document for information.

You and your child

Excellent Good	Your child's attendance is above 98% As well as being an excellent attender your child will almost certainly achieve the best grades for their ability and later in their lives, have real opportunity in further education or the world of work Your child's attendance is 96.1%-97% Your child is likely to achieve their targets that will give them the
Expected	skills they need for the next phase of their education. Your child's attendance is 96% and has reached the schools target
Needs to Improve	Your child's attendance is 90.1 – 95.9% This is below the national government threshold of 95% Significant numbers of school days are being missed at this level of attendance particularly at the lower end of this band's range Attendance at this level will probably impact upon the child's learning and confidence at school in the future.
Concern	Your child's attendance 85% – 90% You may receive a fixed penalty fine as your child is now classed as a Persistent Absentee. You will start receiving warning letters and attendance will be monitored. Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for them to keep in touch with lessons and learning. Both the DfE and the Local Authority Attendance and Inclusion Service regards attendance at this level as 'persistent absenteeism'.
Serious Concern	Your child's attendance is below 84.9% Take action now. You will receive a fixed penalty fine or further legal prosecution if your child's attendance does not improve. Your child is missing so much time from school that it will be impossible for them to keep in touch with lessons and learning. Both the DfE and the Local Authority Attendance and Inclusion Service regards attendance at this level as 'persistent absenteeism'.

Pupils at risk or classified as Persistent Absentees (<90%)

- Individual pupil attendance is reviewed regularly.
- Pupils with attendance 90% or lower, will be classed as a persistent absentee.
- The school has a responsibility to reduce the number of pupils whose attendance is below 90% over the school year.
- Once a pupil falls below 90% attendance and becomes a persistent absentee, the school must explain to the local authority why the pupil's attendance is low.
- Any pupil showing an attendance of below 90% for the last half term is discussed with the relevant adults in school. This may include their class teacher, the Attendance Administration Officer, the Education Welfare Officer (EWO), the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Safeguarding Officer.
- The school will write to parents/carers in relation to persistent absenteeism.

- Letter 1 (appendix 1) will explain that we are becoming concerned with the level of the pupil's attendance and that it will now be monitored.
- If improvements are not seen, parents/carers will receive Letter 2 (appendix 2), which explains that no further absences will be authorised without evidence. The pupil's attendance will continue to be monitored
- If improvements are not seen at this stage parents/carers will receive Letter 3 (appendix 3), which invites them into school for an attendance review. If no improvements are made after this, School will inform the local authority who will present the parent/carer with a fine.

Criteria for requesting support from the Attendance and Inclusion Service

- Case may be referred to the Attendance and Inclusion Service if home/school contact has not prompted an improvement in attendance, or there are existing patterns of absence or poor overall attendance (e.g. below 90%).
- If attendance continues to give cause for concern strategies will be considered and steps taken in an attempt to improve attendance and punctuality. This could include working with members of staff, the Attendance and Inclusion Service or other professionals if deemed appropriate.
- When a pupil has not attended for 10 school days the school has a statutory responsibility to inform the Attendance and Inclusion Service .

Children Missing from Education

Mrs Townsend and Miss Redgate are the nominated members of school staff who liaise with the Children Missing from Education Team at Sheffield Local Authority. Pupils who cannot be located will be considered missing. The Children Missing from Education Team will be informed and will pursue the matter in accordance with Local Authority procedures

Looked after children

Mrs Townsend is the Lead Teacher who liaises with the Children and Young People's Directorate Looked After Children Team. The attendance of Looked After Children is checked daily and monitored more closely.

Religious Observation

School 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 necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. Leave may be granted for any day of religious observance if recognised by the parents/carers religious body. Parents/carers are requested wherever possible to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent. In the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than two days be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in any academic year.

Children with special educational needs (SEND)

Where SEND needs affect a pupils' attendance the school will work with parents and pupils to ensure that any supportive provision is made available where appropriate to support the child accessing mainstream education. Further information about the schools accessibility and provision can be found on the school's Local Offer: www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk

Awards and Rewards

- Assemblies are held regularly which celebrate good attendance.
- Improved attendance is recognised and rewarded.

Roles and Responsibilities

The local governing board has the overall delegated responsibility from Peak Edge Trustees for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Working with the School's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) including the school's Attendance Officer to promote the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensuring appropriate attendance training has been arranged for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the SLT to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals and reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools in Peak Edge Multi-Academy Trust.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy when required.
- Having regard to 'Keeping children safe in education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Ensuring there is a Children Missing in Education Policy in place and that this is regularly reviewed and updated.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Appointing a member of the SLT to the attendance officer role or taking on this role.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and that the school will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy (at Stages 1 and 2 of the policy).

The Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school in liaison with the Headteacher.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance in liaison with the Headteacher and Local Governing Board.
- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying and implementing plans for intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance and working systematically for successful outcomes for pupils.
- Working at regular intervals with the Local Authority (LA) Attendance and Inclusion team for advice and support
 - Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

The Attendance Administration Officer is responsible for:

- Receiving, updating and maintaining accurate class registers on-line- in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2001.
- Liaising with class teachers to contact pupils missing without explanation
- Maintaining SIMS attendance database and update on a daily basis
- Providing statistics about attendance
- Providing reports from SIMS to governors, Head Teacher and other school staff, Local Authority officers as requested
- Providing relevant information to Local Authority officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality
- Maintaining an overview of attendance and manages the day to day implementation of attendance plans and strategies
- Meeting half termly with a representative from the LA to discuss individual pupils whose attendance is of concern, e.g. by below 90%, and agree action as necessary
- Investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education in conjunction with the Headteacher.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.
- Using agreed communication systems including CPOMs to inform the school Attendance Officer and other relevant senior leaders about attendance issues.
- Following agreed actions in any individual pupil attendance plans thoroughly and reporting back to the SLT on matters arising relating to each plan.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.
- Arriving punctually to lessons when already in school.

Parents are responsible for:

- The attendance of their children at school.
- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school if their details change.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

Letter 1	Appendix1
Dear Parent/Carer	
Notice of Att	TENDANCE PERCENTAGE
Pupil: Class: Date:	
	idance is currently %. Letters are sent to parents where of target is 96% and attendance below 90% is considered
see improvements in your child's attendance. It is	d's attendance for the next three weeks. School expect to important therefore, that you contact school on the first may be causing your child to miss school. Absences may that is accepted by school.
Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School is committed t that you support us by ensuring that your child at	o raising the profile of attendance in school, it is important tends school on time, every day.
Please give this your urgent attention. If you v Townsend, Rob Barker or Carly Redgate.	wish to discuss the matter further please contact Jane
Yours faithfully	
Jane Townsend	
Headteacher	

Letter 2 Appendix 2

Dear Parent/Carer,			Date:
<u>N</u> .	otice of attendance percentage	and need to improve	
Pupil: Class:			
I wrote to you recently informin concern. Improvements have no monitor your child's attendance invited to an "Attendance Meet to be improved. School will not authorised by myself or medical on your child's attendance recor	ot been made and because of t for the next 3 weeks. If your cling" where we can discuss the authorise any future absences reasons with medical proof. A	his Stocksbridge Nursery nild's attendance fails to matter in more detail an unless it is for exception	Infant School will closely improve you may be do offer support to enable it al circumstances
Please be reminded that, under your child attends school regula issuing a Fixed Penalty fine and/	rly and on time, and failure to	do so could ultimately re	
Stocksbridge Nursery Infant Scho important that you support us by			
Please give this your urgent atte Miss Redgate.	ntion. If you wish to discuss the	e matter further please o	contact myself, Mrs Priest or
Yours sincerely,			
Jane Townsend Headteacher			

Letter 3 Appendix 3

Dear Parent/Carer,	Date:		
Request to Attendance Review Meeting			
Pupil: Class:			
I am writing to inform you that your child's attending improvement since our last letter.	dance is currentlyand has not shown significant		
Because of this Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School be held at <u>Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School on:</u>	requires you to be present at an <u>Attendance Review Meeting</u> to ## Date		
offer support to you and your family to help improconducted by a representative from Stocksbridge	ossues surrounding your child's poor attendance/punctuality and ove your child's attendance. The review meeting will be Nursery Infant School and an attendance representative from d the meeting in person. Failure to attend this review may result a Fixed Penalty Notice.		
	e 1996 Education Act, you have a legal obligation to ensure that do so could ultimately result in the Local Authority issuing a t Magistrates' Court.		
Stocksbridge Nursery Infant School is committed t important that you support us by ensuring that you	to raising the profile of attendance and punctuality in school; it is ur child attends school on time, every day.		
Please give this your urgent attention. If the time ar	nd date stated is not convenient please contact school to rearrange.		
Yours sincerely,			
Jane Townsend Headteacher			

Penalty Notices

New provisions have been made within the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 to tackle the issue of truancy and irregular school attendance. These include Penalty Notices and Parenting Contracts. Sheffield Local Authority officers will abide by the following Code of Conduct and government guidance set out in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 when administering Penalty Notices.

1. When a Penalty Notice may be administered

Sheffield Local Authority officers may administer a Penalty Notice in the following circumstances:

Phase 1 – Commenced 11/04/05

As a result of a term time holiday that a Head Teacher has not authorised see previous page

Phase 2 – Commenced 01/09/05

 As a result of being stopped for the second time during truancy sweeps where there is an unacceptable reason for the child being absent from school and they are with their parent/carer.

Phase 3 - Commencing 01/01/06

- As an alternative to court prosecution by Sheffield City Council
 - 1. Where a child is attending school less than 90%, of which at least 20% of the absence is unauthorised without statutory defence.
 - 2. Where the parent/carer is judged capable of making sure their child attends regularly, but is not willing to take responsibility for doing so.
 - 3. Penalty Notices will be used at an earlier stage than a court prosecution, before attendance problems become severe.
 - 1.1. In all of the above phases, the child must also have an attendance record of less than 90%, with at least 20% of the absence being unauthorised.
 - 1.2. When considering the use of a Penalty Notice, Sheffield Local Authority officer's first response will be in the form of a formal written warning. In exceptional circumstances, however, a Penalty may be used as a first response. This could be where the unauthorised absence was for an extended period and condoned by the parent, for example where the parent has chosen to take their child on holiday during term time without authorisation.

Further information is available in guidance notes, a copy of which is held in school, titled *Education Related Provisions included in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Penalty Notice*

Every School matters!

enjoy · learn · achieve

sheffield.gov.uk/schoolmatters

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing!

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

5 consecutive days of term time

leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or Irregular Attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.