



# **Stramongate Primary School Attendance Policy**

**2023**

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## Statement of intent

Stramongate School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

Stramongate School is committed to:

- Following the framework set in Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 which states that:

*'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

*(a) to age, ability and aptitude and*

*(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have*

*Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'.*

- Promoting and modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Ensuring equality and fairness of treatment for all.
- Implementing our policies within the Disability Discrimination Act (2010).
- Early intervention and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Rewarding regular attendance.

Furthermore, through enrolling their children at Stramongate School, parents subscribe to upholding the principles of this Policy.

## **1. Key roles and responsibilities**

- 1.1. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for the implementation of the attendance policy and procedures of Stramongate School.
- 1.2. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for ensuring that the attendance policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.
- 1.3. The Board of Trustees has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- 1.4. The Headteacher (Mr. M. Beresford) will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the attendance policy and procedures of Stramongate School. Mr. Beresford can be reached on 01539 725073 / [admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk).
- 1.5. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for following the attendance policy and for ensuring pupils do so too. They will also be responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented fairly and consistently. Staff can be contacted through ringing 01539 725073
- 1.6. Staff, including teachers, support staff and volunteers, will be responsible for modelling good attendance behaviour and implementing the agreed policy.
- 1.7. Parents and carers will be expected to take responsibility for the attendance of their child/children during term-time.
- 1.8. Parents and carers will be expected to promote good attendance behaviour and ensure that pupils attend school every day.
- 1.9. The LA Inclusion Officer, from the Access and Inclusion Team may conduct home visits and parents shall cooperate fully.

## **2. Definitions**

- 2.1. Stramongate School defines "absence" as either:
  - Arrival at school after the register has closed.
  - Not attending school for any reason.
- 2.2. School defines Stramongate an "authorised absence" as:
  - An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave.
  - Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time for which the school has granted leave.
  - Religious or cultural observances for which the school have granted leave.
  - An absence due to a family emergency.
  - Unavoidable closure of school.

2.3. Stramongate School defines an “unauthorised absence” as:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Arrival at school after the register has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed. See section 9.
- Leaving school for no reason during the day.

2.4. Stramongate School defines “persistent absenteeism (PA)” as:

- Missing 10 per cent or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason.**

### **3. Training of staff**

- 3.1. At Stramongate Primary School, we recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, teachers receive training in identifying potentially ‘at risk’ pupils through Safeguarding procedures.
- 3.2. Teachers and support staff will receive training on the attendance policy as part of their new starter induction and at regular points of the year.
- 3.3. Teachers and support staff will be informed to direct attendance concerns about any pupil to the Inclusion Manager (Mrs. Karen Alston- Hewitt) or Head Teacher (Mr. Matthew Beresford)

### **4. Pupil expectations**

- 4.1. Pupils will be expected to attend school every school day.

### **5. Absence procedures**

- 5.1. Parents/carers must contact the school (01539 725073 / [admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk)) by 9.30am on the first day of absence, and any following day of absence.
- 5.2. Parents/carers will be contacted by phone call/text message to any child who has not reported their absence on the first day that they do not attend school. See Appendix 1 for details of the School’s First Day Calling Procedures.
- 5.3. ‘Letter A’ will be sent weekly to parents who have not provided a reason for absence in that week.
- 5.4. In the case of persistent absence, the Inclusion Manager will monitor absence rates each half term and work with parents and other agencies to improve attendance. Where necessary the Inclusion Manager, Mrs. Karen Alston-

Hewitt, will signpost parents to wider support services. The Inclusion Manager can be contacted on 01539 725073 / [admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk). See Appendix 2 Attendance Monitoring procedures.

## 6. Contact information

- 6.1. Parents/carers must provide accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- 6.2. Parents/carers are responsible for informing the school of any change to contact details.

## 7. LA Inclusion officer

- 7.1. If they are persistently absent, pupils will be referred to the Inclusion Manager who will co-ordinate.
- 7.2. If a swift resolution to the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the Inclusion Manager will contact the LA Inclusion Officer, Ms Nicola Braund- Smith.

## 8. Lateness

- 8.1. Punctuality is of the utmost importance.
- 8.2. The school day starts at **8.45 am for all pupils**. Pupils should be in their designated lines before this time so they are ready to come into school at this time.
- 8.3. Registers are marked by **9am** at the latest. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- 8.4. Pupils attending after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.
- 8.5. The school day finishes at **3.15pm** for Yrs. 1 – 6. It finishes from 3.15pm onward for the reception class. If children are not collected promptly they will be taken to the school office by a member of staff. Parents will be contacted and if the child / children are not collected by 3.15pm then they will be placed in after school club and parents will be billed accordingly.

## 9. Term-time leave

- 9.1. At Stramongate School, our aim is to prepare pupils for their future lives and careers. With this in mind, we require parents/carers to observe the school holidays as prescribed.
- 9.2. Following the September 2013 amendment to The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.

- 9.3. The Headteacher is only allowed to grant a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. Applications must be made four weeks in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied by the evidence which is presented. Forms to request leave of absence can be obtained from the school office.
- 9.4. The Headteacher will determine the amount of time a pupil can be away from school. Any leave of absence is at the discretion of the Headteacher.
- 9.5. Leave during term time will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, for example, bereavement or serious illness.
- 9.6. Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the pupil's previous attendance record will be taken into account.
- 9.7. If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice, issued by the local authority.

## **10. Monitoring**

- 10.1. Stramongate School monitors attendance and punctuality regularly throughout the year. The traffic light letter which shows the child's up to date attendance is sent out to parents on a termly basis.
- 10.2. Stramongate's attendance target for each child is a minimum of 96%.
- 10.3. Stramongate School will use attendance data to monitor attendance at termly progress meetings resulting in implementing strategies and interventions to improve attendance.

## **11. Encouraging good attendance and punctuality**

- 11.1. It is important to remember that the vast majority of children at Stramongate School arrive on time and attend every day. An important part of our attendance policy is that this good practice is commended and applauded publicly. In order to do this we:
  - 1. In Assembly, Award a trophy for the class with the best attendance on a **weekly basis** in both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1.
  - 2. Award Certificates annually for children with 100% attendance.

## **12. Religious observances**

- 12.1. Stramongate School may take advice from local religious leaders of all faiths to establish the appropriate number of days required for observance of religious festivals.
- 12.2. Parents must inform the school in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance.

## **13. Appointments**

- 13.1. As far as possible, parents/carers should attempt to book medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.
- 13.2. If the appointment requires the pupil to leave during the school day, they must be signed out by a parent/carer.
- 13.3. Pupils must attend school before and after the appointment wherever possible.

## **14. Young Carers**

- 14.1. Stramongate School understands the difficulties that face young carers.
- 14.2. Stramongate School will endeavour to identify young carers at the earliest opportunity from enrolment at the school and throughout their time at the school.
- 14.3. Stramongate School takes a caring and flexible approach to the needs of young carers and each pupil will be examined on a case-by-case basis, involving other agencies as appropriate.



## Appendix 1 – First Day Calling Procedures

1. Registers saved.
2. Absence calls listened to so absence messages are checked.
3. Classes checked for late children / absence emails sent to class teachers.
4. Call made to the first name on contact list within one hour of school start time. If no answer, voice message left.
5. Calls then made to further contacts identified as having parental/caring responsibilities. If no answer, voicemail left.
6. Text message sent asking for response.
7. If no response within first hour and a half, ring down contact list until reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
8. Alert DSL/DDSL that this child is absent and no contact has been made within an hour and half of school start time.
9. Discussion held with Inclusion Manager who may call parents / carers or alert any other agencies involved with the family.
10. Contact Police if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child. This should be done using the **101** number.

## Appendix 2 – Attendance monitoring procedures.

The Inclusion Manager meets Half termly with Office Staff to follow up the progress of individuals. The following information is collated by Office staff via SIMs Registration:

1. Attendance record of any child with 90% or less attendance.
2. Attendance record for any child whose absence shows particular trends.
3. Attendance record for any child who has been frequently late.
4. Year % totals v Pupil Premium Year totals.
5. Pupil Premium + FSM children's attendance.
6. SEND children attendance.

Information is shared about previous cases and decision take about the next stage of intervention where it is appropriate.

### School Procedure in cases for intervention

Although a range of strategies and actions will be taken on an informal basis, a formal procedure is applied where an absence remains unexplained:

1. **Teacher-led discussion** on an informal level with the child/parent and reminder about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality.
2. Where a child is absent from school, and no holiday form or telephone call regarding sickness has been received, First Day Calling Procedures, as outlined in Appendix 1, are followed.
3. Where an absence remains unexplained, **letter A is sent via Parent Mail**, requesting the digital form is completed.
4. If this is not returned, nor a telephone call received from the parent or carer explaining the reason for the absence, **the absence may be recorded as unauthorised**.
5. All letters are recorded on SIMS.
6. If attendance remains erratic, letters are sent from school drawing attention to the child's attendance and offering the parent/carers an **opportunity to meet with the Headteacher Or Inclusion Manager**.
7. If this is not successful, **telephone contact is made requesting a meeting** between the parent/carers and Headteacher in order to discuss the pattern of attendance.
8. The next stage is for the school to notify the LA inclusion officer to agree next steps.
9. **Further formal approaches** might then be made according to the LA's Attendance Policy and may lead to the issuing of fixed penalty notices for absence and court proceedings being followed.
10. In all cases, where the School is concerned for a child's safety the School may involve other agencies at any point 1-9, above.

At all times we believe that a positive approach which aims for cooperation is essential if improvements in attendance are to be sustained.



# **Stramongate School**

## **Certificate for 100% attendance**

**Presented to**

**XXXXXX**

**For 100% Attendance during XXXX Academic Year**



**Signed**

**Headteacher**



DATE

«Forename» «Surname»

«Reg\_Group»



Dear Parent/Carer

We believe passionately that every school day matters in a child's education. This is backed up by plenty of research to show how crucial regular attendance is in ensuring children reach their full potential in our education system and develop confident, well rounded adults who are equipped for life. You will see a box around one of the traffic lights below for «Forename»'s attendance.

**WELL  
DONE**  
96%-100%  
Attendance

GREEN means that INSERT NAME managed to achieve an attendance figure of 96% or more

**Below  
National  
Average**  
96%-90%  
Attendance

YELLOW means that INSERT NAME achieved 90% attendance or more (but not higher than 95.95)

**RED ALERT**  
Below 90%  
Attendance

**RED means that INSERT NAME attended school for less than 90% of the time**

**This is cause for concern and a meeting with school maybe needed**

#### **WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?**

**There are 190 school days each year.** To ensure a child fully achieves their potential, they should be in school **for at least 96% of this time -in other words 182 days.**

#### **WHAT CAN I DO AS A PARENT?**

As parents, we all want the very best for our children and key to this is a good education. We are proud of what we do for our pupils here at Stramongate. For this to work, children need to be in school all the time and we urge that, as parents you:

- Ensure that INSERT NAME arrives at school on time each day – from September this will 08:45 for all ages of children.
- Ensure that INSERT NAME only misses school for reason which are unavoidable or justified, such as illness days or religious observance
- Always notify school as soon as possible - preferably on the first morning of absence and any subsequent days
- Try to avoid booking family holiday during term- time
- Talk to school if you are concerned that INSERT NAME may be reluctant to go to school

Our children aren't children for long, we need to ensure they make the most of their childhood and ready themselves for a life filled with potential. I hope you feel the same and will support us in our attempts to ensure that INSERT NAME has the very best start on their lifelong learning journey.

Regards

### **Letter A unexplained absences – Digital**

If your child is absent and the school has not been notified, the school office will contact you via telephone. If we do not receive a response, as digital form will be sent via Parent Mail.

Please complete and return this form as soon as possible so that the reason for your child's absence can be recorded in the Attendance Register. If no reason is provided for the absence then it will be coded as "unauthorised".

It is important that you telephone or email the Office before 9.30am if your child is going to be absent.

The form will ask:

Childs name.....
Class.....
Date absent from school: .....
Reason.....
Name of person completing the form.....
Relationship to named child.....



Date

Dear Parent/Carer

**ATTENDANCE RATE FOR .....- .....%**

When a pupil's attendance rate is 90% and below, they are classed as a 'Persistent Absentee'. Following a register check, I would like to bring to your attention that ..... has fallen into this category.

Unless ..... is very unwell, please make every effort for him/her to attend school every day. I hope with your support we can bring this attendance rate up to an acceptable level of at least 96%.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Beresford  
Headteacher

Headteacher: Mr M Beresford, BEd(Hons)

Blackhall Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 4BT

Tel: 01539 725073 Email: [admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stramongate.cumbria.sch.uk)

[www.stramongate.co.uk](http://www.stramongate.co.uk)





Date

Dear Parent/Carer

### **ATTENDANCE FOR .....**

With reference to my letter dated ....., I am writing to let you know that .....’s attendance has not improved which, unfortunately means that his/her attendance rate is now fallen to ....%.

..... has missed a total of ..... days of school this academic year. I should like to remind you how important good attendance is. We understand that, for some pupils, genuine medical/health reasons mean they are not always able to attend school every day, however a low attendance rate at Primary School impacts on educational outcomes and fails to set the good habits needed for positive attendance at Secondary School. With this in mind, please make every effort for ..... to attend school every day with the aim to improve attendance going forward:

- Please try to schedule medical and dental visits out of school hours as far as possible.
- Please do not take your child out of school for avoidable activities such as shopping trips.
- Please remember that holidays in term time are particularly disruptive for all children in the class, as the teacher has to spend additional time on the absent child when they return to cover what was missed, to the detriment of everybody else in the class.

If you have any particular concerns about ..... that you wish to discuss, please don't hesitate to the class teacher or myself. You may be assured we will do everything we can to help you and all discussions will be kept in the strictest confidence.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Beresford  
Headteacher

Headteacher: Mr M Beresford, BEd(Hons)

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