



Stony Dean School
Working to Inspire

Stony Dean School Attendance Policy



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Date: September 2022

Review: September 2024

Stony Dean School is committed to providing a full, effective and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

This policy contains within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

In order to improve the overall attendance of pupils in school we aim to:

- Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
- Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
- Implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
- Provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils.



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- Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
- Recognise and address the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Definitions

It is the Head Teacher's discretion as to whether a child's absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

Authorised absence:

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example if a parent takes a child out of school and gives the reason that it was to go shopping for school shoes, this will not mean it is authorised absence.

First Day Absence

Parents/Carers will be expected to contact the school office and leave a message stating the name of the pupil and reason for absence. If a call has not been received by 09.30 an administrator will contact the parent/carer first by text, the phone call to establish the reason for absence. This information will then be relayed to the person responsible for each class register, to record as required. If contact cannot be made after 7 days a letter will be sent home requesting a reason for absence. If no response is received another letter is sent. If there is no response at this point an unauthorised mark will be given.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Unauthorised absence:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Persistent absence (PA):



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- The DFE define a 'persistent absentee' as a pupil who, at any point in the year, has accumulated absence at **10%** or more of the available sessions regardless of whether or not any of it is authorised. The PA status may change as the terms progress but these pupils are at particular risk of achieving poor outcomes at school and beyond.

Late Pupils:

Pupils who arrive before registration closes at 9:15 are marked using the normal '/' code. Pupils arriving after 9:05 but before 9:30 will be marked using the 'L' code. Pupils arriving after 9:30 will be marked with the U code which indicates that a child arrived after 9:30 and that this was unauthorised by the school.

Medical appointments

Children will be marked as M for a medical appointment.

Requests for leave of absence:

We believe that all children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. For this reason, as a general rule, we do not authorise leave of absence (including holidays) in term time.

The Head Teacher has the discretion to make exceptions to this rule and can authorise leave of absence for special circumstances, when the leave of absence is for no more than 10 days (Using Code H: Family Holiday Agreed). Special circumstances may include:

- Service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education.
- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.
- Families are **not** encouraged to take their children out of school for family holidays or trips abroad during term time. Any absence request in term time will be reviewed by the Head teacher and only approved in **exceptional** circumstances.
- Requests for leave of absence during term time should be made to the Headteacher in writing. Each request will be judged on a case by case basis.
- **A penalty notice will be considered for all absences due to unauthorised holiday's or irregular school attendance.**

Religious Observance:

The DCSF recommends the use of Code R when children are absent from school to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals. Parents should be encouraged to give advance notice.



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This is interpreted to mean that if the parent's religious organisation sets the day as a religious festival then the school must authorise the absence. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parent's religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

If the religious body has not set the day apart there is no requirement for the school to approve the absence or grant a leave absence. Additional holidays and days off linked to the religious festival but not "exclusively set aside for religious observance" by the religious body are not marked using Code R.

Identified pupils with specific medical, therapy or Special Educational needs, who have a high level of absence, will be supported by the following strategies:

- Half termly monitoring of attendance and absence will be completed by the Head of Year and Deputy Head
- If there is a concern the staff members will work with Parents/Carers and students to support pupils in improving their attendance
- Recording absence as authorised
- Working with the Local Authority to record such absences as authorised to reflect attendance as good as can be expected for these pupils and the school
- Recognise that some pupils are not 'available for learning' and work with the LA and other agencies to allocate appropriate provision which may not be within our school. This will include a personalised or flexi schooling programme to support the student with their individual needs and requirements.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to adjust to school's daily routine; catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. The Head Teacher will be responsible for monitoring attendance against target.

Our school targets is: 92%

The registration system

The School will use SIMS keeping the school attendance records.

Absence Concerns



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If absence drops below 90% and the absence is not related to a known/authorized medical condition the County Attendance Team process will be followed (see flow chart attached).



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Roles and responsibilities:

All members of the school community have roles and responsibilities in promoting and ensuring good attendance and punctuality

Role of the children:

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the education opportunities available.

All pupils will:

- Ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.
- Be aware of their current attendance record and targets.
- Be aware of the consequences of poor attendance or truancy.
- Arrive to lessons punctually.
- Not leave school without permission.
- Follow correct procedures for known absences.
- Respect themselves and others.
- Encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.
- Be happy and encourage others to feel happy
- Inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied or feel unhappy in school.

Role of parents:

Parents have an essential role in ensuring their child's good attendance.

We ask parents to:

- Establish good attendance habits by acting as a role model and showing the children that good attendance and punctuality is important.
- Praise and reward good attendance, even small successes, e.g. getting ready quickly, even if resisting going to school.
- Talk regularly with their child about school and how they feel about it. Children are more likely to want to attend and learn if they feel supported and their anxieties are listened to.
- Contact the school by phone, text, email or letter as soon as possible to say why their child is absent, and when they are expected to return.
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness.
- If appropriate, arrange for a friend to take a child to school if a sibling is sick.
- Avoid taking holidays in school time.
- Ensure that wherever possible, medical appointments are made outside of the school day.



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- Know routines of the school day to avoid issues, e.g. ensuring children have their P.E. kits on the right days.
- Establish a good bedtime routine, so that their child can sleep well, get enough sleep and make mornings less of a struggle.

Role of the School:

As a school we:

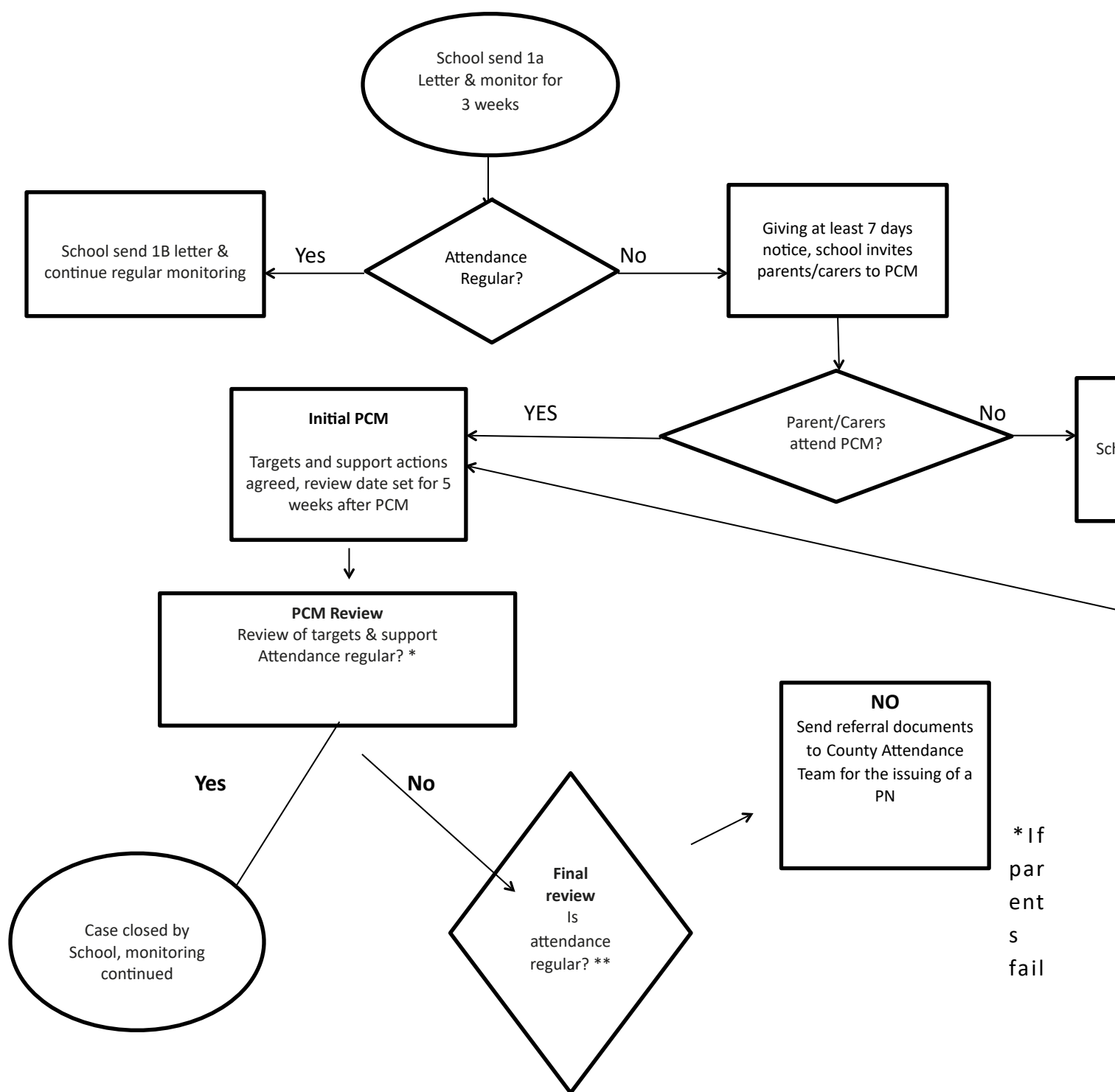
- Create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of.
- Give a high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- Develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- Develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- Encourage open communication channels between home and school.
- Adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of the resources available, and ensure that appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

Role of Governing Body:

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.



PENALTY NOTICE FOR IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE (FOR SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE NOT PURCHASED HOURS)





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final review meeting invite letter



** If parents fail to attend final review school to send either

County Attendance team
consider referral and
inform school of outcome

1B letter or advise parents a referral will be made to County Attendance Team

Yes

If a Penalty Notice has been issued previously please use “1a following PN letter” – we do not expect you to hold a PCM



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Our aim is to support schools in improving attendance if at any point during this process it is clear that there is

Improvement please contact the County Attendance Team, via email countyattendanceteam@buckscc.gov.uk for advice