



St. Stephen's School  
and Children's Centre  
*Learning for life*

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date	By	Role	Ratified
March 2022	Georgia Dawson Jenna Chapman	Deputy Head Teacher Deputy Head Teacher	Governing Body
November 2022	Jenna Chapman Esther Williams	Deputy Head Teacher Assistant Head Teacher	Governing Body
November 2023	Esther Williams Zahira Khonat	Assistant Head Teacher Assistant Head Teacher	Governing Body
October 2024	Misbah Dar Zahira Khonat	Pastoral Manager Assistant Head Teacher	Governing Body
October 2025	Misbah Dar Jennifer Ward	Pastoral Manager Assistant Head Teacher	Governing Body

***Article 28 (right to education) Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child.***

## SCHOOL AGREED STATEMENT

The school recognises the need for every pupil on roll to attend every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We believe that good attendance is essential in giving a child the best opportunities for learning. The school fully recognises the link between attendance and attainment.

## AIMS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- To successfully implement the school's attendance policy, the law and the local authority policy and procedures.
- To ensure pupils attain a regular pattern of attendance and punctuality that will support levels of achievement in school.
- To guide and support all partners on attendance issues.
- To work towards attaining school attendance targets.
- To achieve and sustain high levels of attendance and attainment at St Stephen's.
- Manage monthly attendance, defined as children who are below the school % target.
- Manage persistent low attenders, defined as the children with 90% or more attendance.
- Manage persistent poor punctuality, both in the morning and at home time.

## LEADERSHIP ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Register pupils at the start of each school session, using the class register on Google Drive.	Class Teachers
Monitor daily absence and contact parents of absentees.	Attendance Lead
Update attendance and record absentees on school system.	Attendance Lead Office staff
Record the reason for absence on the class registers	Attendance Lead Office Staff
Meet monthly to monitor attendance figures. 1. A total % attendance figure for the whole school 2. Individual pupil data for below monthly targets 3. Persistent Low Attenders Tracker 4. HNF Attendance Tracker	Attendance Lead and School Clerk
When attendance is below the monthly target, send <b>Letter 1</b> to inform parents of the fact, stating their current attendance. The parents will also be sent a leaflet about the importance of good attendance and punctuality. Appendix 3	Office staff
If no improvement is made, the following month, <b>Letter 2</b> is sent home.	Office Staff
When <b>Letter 2</b> is sent, contact must be made with the parent to discuss either by telephone or face to face and verbally warned of the possibility of a fine.	Learning Mentor
If attendance continues to fall for the third month, the class teacher will contact parents.	Class Teacher
If attendance continues to fall, the attendance lead will send <b>Letter 3</b> , inviting the parents in for a meeting.	Attendance Lead
Please note, in extreme circumstances the borough has advised that the school can bypass penalty letters and meet with parents. The meeting would inform families that we can seek court action following the Statutory Intervention Route. The school would have written evidence of the parent meeting and then	Attendance Lead

**In addition:**

- To praise and promote good attendance and punctuality across the school by awarding certificates in achievement assemblies and end of term whole school assemblies.
- All staff encourage and inform pupils on the importance of daily attendance & punctuality in relation to their overall attainment gains.
- Teachers to inform the Attendance Lead of any pupil who is absent for 5 consecutive days.
- Governors agree realistic school attendance targets.
- The governing body at St Stephen's offer their full support in ensuring the schools attendance and punctuality policy is carried out to the full.

**Definitions:**

Authorised absences

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 guardian in writing or through a telephone call.

Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without permission of the school.

**LOCAL AUTHORITY (LA) RESPONSIBILITIES**

The LA shares the legal responsibilities in respect of school attendance.

- The local authority will keep the school informed of current government and LA policy and statutory requirements.
- The local authority will issue penalty notice and fines where appropriate.

**PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents need to take the responsibility of their child's daily attendance and punctuality at St Stephen's very seriously. Parents must inform the school if their child is unwell.

The **Primary School** times are:  
Monday - Thursday 8.30 am - 3.15 pm  
Friday 8.30am - 12.45pm

The **Nursery School** times are:  
**Morning** 8.45am -11.45am  
**Afternoon** 12.30pm-3.30pm.  
The children who have a 30 hour place will attend 8.45am -3.30pm

**EXTENDED LEAVE PROCEDURES**

If a parent/carer chooses to take a child on an unauthorised holiday, the local authority and school will register this as an absence.

It is the school's policy that pupils will **not** be given permission for an extended holiday during term time. Although extended leave will be denied this academic year (2024-25), parents are still required to complete the following as a safeguarding procedure so that the school is able to locate the child:

1. Parents submit a notification of extended leave form - see appendix 3
2. Parents are requested to provide evidence of flight details stating the date of departure and return within this form

Office staff will make it clear to parents that by submitting these documents, the school has not authorised the holiday/ extended leave and has the right to refer to Newham Council who may issue a penalty notice.

The office staff will then complete additional office details and inform the attendance lead and teachers of any absences. The School Business Manager will inform the Headteacher. The leadership team will work closely with the office staff to prevent families from taking extending leave, particularly for pupils whose attendance is below 98% (the school target).

School staff are aware of the following Female Genital Mutilation indicators when requesting extended leave:

- A family comes from a community that is known to practise FGM.
  - A child may talk about a long holiday to a country where the practice is prevalent.
  - A child may confide that she is to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion.
- Any concerns are directly referred to the designated safeguarding lead.**

### MANAGING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE

Identifying and praising good attendance can play a major role in the improvement of the overall school attendance rate. At St. Stephen's we celebrate and acknowledge this in a number of ways:-

- Praising the individual pupil and positive comments to the family
- Recognition in school assemblies of class attendance
- Class star chart displayed in the corridor
- Written comments on parental reports
- Termly prizes for the class with the best attendance
- Termly certificates presented to pupils with 100% attendance
- Special certificates for pupils who have 100% attendance over the whole year

### MANAGING PERSISTENT LATENESS

#### Punctuality

1. Any pupils who arrive at school after 8:30 am will receive a late mark in the register. Office staff will add an 'L' to the online register and this will be displayed in blue.
2. Any child who arrives at school after 8:30 am will have their name, class and time of attendance noted in the school punctuality record book.
3. Attendance Lead and team will monitor persistent lateness and issue letters/ensure meetings with parents according to the steps set out below.

<u>Step 1:</u>	<u>Step 2:</u>	<u>Step 3:</u>	<u>Step 4:</u>	<u>Step 5:</u>
<i>2 lates or more in a week your child's teacher will speak to you.</i>	<i>4 lates or more in 3 consecutive weeks.  A phone call home from our Learning Mentor</i>	<i>6 lates or more in 3 consecutive weeks..  Letter to parents - see appendix 5 and a meeting with the Phase or Attendance lead.</i>	<i>Decision to escalate or continue with support in place.</i>	<i>Letter home and meeting with Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher</i>

Parents will be notified of their child's attendance and punctuality on their child's report/report cards. Attendance and punctuality will be set as a target if necessary each term.

### **REPORTING AND WORKING WITH GOVERNORS**

The school informs the Governors with a termly report on attendance, presented through the Head Teacher's Report to the Governing Body.

### **CRITERIA TO MEASURE SUCCESS**

We are successful when:

- We have achieved the annual school attendance targets.
- The termly and annual attendance percentage rate shows continual improvement in pupil attendance.
- All staff successfully implement the agreed School Attendance and Punctuality Policy.
- We have raised the profile and importance of regular and punctual attendance within the local community (Pupils/Parents/Carers).
- We make effective use of the LA Attendance Management Service and Early Intervention Team.

# Appendix 1 -Letter 1



Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

## ATTENDANCE LETTER OF CONCERN

PUPIL NAME :

It is our school's aim for pupils to have as close to 100% attendance as possible. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify pupils whose attendance causes concern.

Attendance	
Authorised Absence	
Unauthorised Absence	
Number of days missed	

Thank you if you have previously informed the school, however it is our duty to let you know that all absences, including authorised absences, for example medical appointments and agreed holidays, contribute to your child's attendance percentage.

Please note, if there is no improvement in school attendance, with no acceptable reason, a fixed penalty notice can be issued.

Thank you for supporting the school by making every effort to ensure that your child comes to school every day.

Please contact us via the school office on 020 8472 7575 if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Misbah Dar and Joanna Fleming  
Attendance Leads

*For Information - Failure to ensure regular and punctual school attendance may result in the issuing of a penalty notice under **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003** and /or prosecution under **section 444 of the Education Act 1996***

## Appendix 2 - Letter 2



St. Stephen's School  
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Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

### ATTENDANCE LETTER OF CONCERN

**PUPIL NAME :**

Following on from our previous letter, your child has had further absences and it is our responsibility to inform you of this. Please see the table below.

<b>Attendance</b>	
<b>Authorised Absence</b>	
<b>Unauthorised Absence</b>	
<b>Number of days missed</b>	

Irregular school attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that irregular attendance is dealt with as early as possible to help improve habits of attendance.

We would like to remind you that all absences, including authorised absences, for example medical appointments contribute to your child's attendance percentage.

Please note, if there is no improvement in school attendance, with no acceptable reason, a fixed penalty notice can be issued.

We will continue to monitor their attendance closely and you will be contacted by a member of school staff, to offer support, in improving attendance.

Should attendance continue to fall, the school informs the local authority and, as already mentioned, you may be subject to a fixed penalty notice. Please contact us via the school office on 020 8472 7575 if you have any concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Misbah Dar and Joanna Fleming  
Attendance Leads

*For Information - Failure to ensure regular and punctual school attendance may result in the issuing of a penalty notice under **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003** and /or prosecution under **section 444 of the Education Act 1996***

## Appendix 3

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **ATTENDANCE LETTER OF CONCERN - School Attendance Support Meeting**

**PUPIL NAME :**

We wrote to you on [Insert Date] to inform you that we had concerns regarding your child's level of school attendance. A further letter was sent on [Insert Date] following additional absences.

At present, your child's attendance stands at [Insert %] and they have been recorded as late on [Insert Number] occasions. Regular attendance is vital for your child's learning, development, and overall progress.

To support you in improving your child's attendance, we would like to invite you to an **Attendance Support Meeting**. The purpose of the meeting is to understand any underlying reasons for the absences, discuss any support the school may be able to offer and work together to help improve attendance moving forward.

#### **Meeting Details**

**Date:**

**Time:**

If your child has been absent due to illness, please bring any relevant medical evidence to the meeting. This may include a doctor's or hospital letter, a copy of a prescription, or packaging for prescribed medication. Providing this information will help us determine whether the absences can be authorised.

Please contact the school office on 020 8472 7575 to confirm your attendance or to request an alternative appointment if necessary.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working with you in supporting your child's education.

Yours sincerely,

Misbah Dar and Joanna Fleming  
Attendance Leads

*For Information - Failure to ensure regular and punctual school attendance may result in the issuing of a penalty notice under **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003** and /or prosecution under **section 444 of the Education Act 1996***

# Appendix 4



## NOTIFICATION OF EXTENDED LEAVE

**Please note all extended leave will be unauthorised**

Please be aware, that by submitting these documents, the school has not authorised this holiday/ extended leave and has the right to refer to Newham Council who may issue a penalty notice, where attendance is already a concern.

**NAME OF CHILD\CHILDREN**

.....CLASS.....

.....CLASS.....

.....CLASS.....

<b>LAST DAY AT SCHOOL</b>	(dd/mm/yy)
<b>DAY OF RETURN TO SCHOOL</b>	(dd/mm/yy)
<b>REASON FOR LEAVE</b>	
<b>DESTINATION (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Address at Destination (if applicable)</b>	
<b>Telephone number at Destination</b>	
<b>I have enclosed copies of flight tickets where applicable</b>	

SIGNED..... DATE.....

- The Head teacher, attendance lead and class teacher will be notified of this absence.
- The school does not authorise holidays during term time.
- If your child\children do not return to school on the date agreed by the school then there is a possibility that the school will be unable to keep his\her place open and you may be fined by the London Borough of Newham.

**For office use only:**

Number of school days:	
Last extended leave taken:	
Flight tickets attached	Yes/ No

**Children's information:**

	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3
Attendance %			

SIGNED by SBM ..... DATE .....

## Appendix 5 - Punctuality Letter



Date

Dear Parents/carers,

### Re: Punctuality to School

I am writing to inform you that your child \_\_\_\_\_ is persistently late for school. Between date and date he/she was late on \_\_\_\_\_ occasions.

If a pupil arrives late, the child misses out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson and may not make the academic progress that they are capable of. Time keeping is a key skill that all children need to learn and develop going forward into adult life to become independent and successful. If your child is 5 minutes late every day, they are missing 3 whole days of school each year.

All children are expected to be in school between 8:15am and 8:30am in good time for registration at 8.30am when the register is taken promptly. Any child who arrives after this time is marked late in the register.

We must remind you that it is your duty as a parent /carer and as part of the home school agreement to ensure your child comes to school on time and every day.

We would like to work with you to ensure that your son/daughter is on time for school every day. If you feel there are issues which are preventing them from attending school on time, please contact the school office.

Yours Sincerely,

Misbah Dar and Joanna Fleming  
Attendance Leads