



Nether Stowe School

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date: September 2021

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Next Review Date: Sept 2022



## AIMS & PRINCIPLES.

Nether Stowe School is committed to providing a high- quality education to all students, in an environment where all feel safe and able to achieve their full potential- academically, socially and personally.

For a student to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. Research shows that *“overall absence had a statistically significant negative link to attainment – i.e. every extra day missed was associated with a lower attainment outcome”* (DfE publication: the link between absence and attainment at KS2 and KS4 March 2016.)

90% attendance is the equivalent to ½ a day missed each week; over the course of an academic year that equates to a student missing 4 weeks of learning; by Year 11 the total learning lost 20 weeks (1 ½ terms).

**Persistent absence** is defined as a student missing 10% of their education; this is based on student’s individual possible attendance (for the majority of students this will mean an attendance figure of 90% or less).

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling young people to maximise the opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

As a school, we recognise that the high correlation between attendance and attainment also applies to punctuality.

Practically, when students arrive late, they miss out on essential instructions given at the beginning of the lesson/school day. Poor punctuality can also cause disruption – when one pupil arrives late it disrupts the teacher and the rest of the class, compromising everyone’s learning. Good punctuality, by contrast, can denote a high level of social awareness, courtesy, consideration and respect for others, as well as reliability and trustworthiness. Our aim is for students from Nether Stowe to leave with the right routines for working life; developing self-discipline through good punctuality and attendance is of lifelong value.

Parent/ carers should work closely with the school to overcome any issues that may affect their child’s attendance or punctuality.

**Our target for every student is at least 96% attendance over the course of the year.**



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## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Parents*

- Ensure children attend regularly, and punctually
- Contact expected on first day of absence
- Contact each day for continued absence
- **Provide at least 2 emergency contact numbers**
- Provide medical evidence for absence, as required
- Avoid any leave of absence in term time unless absolutely unavoidable
- Requests for leave of absence to be submitted on the authorised form, giving a minimum of 28 days' notice. **Permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.** Family holidays are not considered to be exceptional circumstances.
- Early contact with school where parents become aware of problems with attendance or punctuality
- Attend meetings if concerns are identified
- Participate in Attendance Panels as required
- Support Attendance Contracts where appropriate
- Support the school in agreed interventions/action plans

### *Students*

- Acknowledge routines needed out of school e.g. early bedtimes to allow punctual attendance
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration
- Adhere to attendance contracts where appropriate

### *Senior Leader (with responsibility for attendance)*

- Take the lead in ensuring attendance and punctuality have a high profile within the school
- Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- Develop a strategic approach to address attendance / punctuality issues
- Ensure students are safeguarded through robust policies and procedures
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance

### *Attendance Officer*

- Monitor daily attendance and punctuality
- Verify validity of any messages left from parents regarding absence
- Confirm authorisation of any absence (without medical evidence) with Senior Leader
- Arrange meetings with students, parents and key staff at Trigger points, as identified within the policy
- Highlight concerns and / or falling patterns (with particular focus on disadvantaged groups)
- Work with parents to ensure the students attend on time
- Conduct Safe & Well checks for unaccounted absences
- Provide weekly attendance data in comparison with national figures
- Liaise with the Pastoral / College Heads to provide rewards for improving attendance/ punctuality and overall high attendance



### *All Staff*

- Complete all registers accurately and promptly
- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for students
- Provide a safe learning environment
- Ensure an appropriate and high -quality curriculum is planned and delivered
- Provide a sympathetic response to any students' concerns
- Promote regular attendance and punctuality
- Be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- Be aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all students
- Provide support in completing missed work upon a student's return to school
- See students' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff

### *Governors*

- Agree adoption of Attendance Policy
- Monitor attendance figures termly
- Evaluate effectiveness of Attendance Policy
- Attend Attendance Panels as required
- Appoint a Link Governor for attendance and behaviour
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## REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

### *Registration*

The Senior Attendance Lead should ensure that staff responsible for marking registers are aware of the codes to be used and that registers are marked accurately and consistently.

- Registration takes place twice a day at 8.40 am and as part of period 4
- The formal close of registration for morning registration is 9.30 am
- If students arrive after the doors have locked at 8:50am, but before 9:30am, they are marked as L (Late before registration closes)
- If students arrive after registration has closed, they are marked as U (absent for the full session)
- Truancy call will be triggered for any unexplained absences after 9:30am
- If no response has been received by 12:30pm, contact will be attempted with all other named adults. Parents / relatives will be informed that a Safe & Well check may be conducted if no response is received. This may also lead to seeking advice from the Staffordshire Safeguarding team. Safe and Well checks will always be conducted for those students about whom previous safeguarding concerns have been raised.
- If a pupil needs to leave school during the day they must sign out at reception, providing staff with a note from parents, which must be countersigned by their Pastoral / College Head
- There is an answer-phone facility available for parents to leave messages regarding their children's attendance or parents can inform the school via the MCAS website. Messages will be verified by reception staff or the attendance officer
- Any such messages received by school are logged, with the time, date and reason for absence noted
- The Attendance Officer and Senior Attendance Lead are authorised to amend absence codes
- Where students are dual registered, are on voluntary service or are taking part in other approved educational activities, the register will be amended following regular discussion and information sharing with the other establishment



- Consistency of use of codes, and acceptable reasons for absence across the whole school will be monitored as part of ongoing attendance data evaluation
- It may be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by the Attendance Officer in conjunction with the Senior Attendance Lead and/or the Pastoral or College Head, and must be communicated to parents in a letter giving reasons for the decision

### *Leave of Absence*

- Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school, for any reason, during term time
- All requests for leave of absence will be declined unless parents can evidence exceptional circumstances
- Requests for leave of absence during exam times will not be authorised
- Parents must apply for leave of absence using the school's application form which can be requested from the school office or downloaded from the school website
- If a student fails to return from an agreed period of absence, investigations will be made by staff
- If school investigations fail to make contact with the parents/student the case will be referred to the Children Missing Education Team who may, after further investigation, inform school that the student may be removed from roll. Police welfare checks may also be requested.
- Penalty Notices may be used in cases where an application for leave of absence is refused and the student is subsequently absent during the dates originally requested. Parents will be warned of potential consequences when an application for leave of absence is declined.
- Penalty Notices may be used in cases where a student is absent without a request for leave of absence being submitted, and where the school is satisfied, after investigation, that the pupil is on an unauthorised holiday.

### *Lateness*

The school has clearly defined systems for identifying students whose punctuality is a cause for concern and for implementing work with those students.

- Students arriving late to school must sign in at reception with the Attendance Officer, who will discuss the reason for their lateness. If students do not have a valid reason, they will receive a lunch detention, to be served on the same day.
- Students arriving late more than once in a week, will receive a 60-minute detention, to be served on the day of the second or subsequent late arrival
- Pastoral and College Heads will discuss the effects of persistent lateness with students and parents as necessary
- Where persistent lateness is a serious problem (students receiving 5 late marks in one half term) parents and students will attend a meeting
- Students may be placed on a punctuality contract
- Penalty Notices may be issued for persistent lateness

### *Attendance Contracts*

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003(Part 3.19) makes provision for the use of Contracts where attendance is a cause for concern. The school may choose to initiate such contracts following the case being discussed at the Attendance Panel and agreed by the Senior



Attendance Lead.

Attendance contracts will not typically be used the first time a pupil and their parents are invited to attend an attendance panel. In serious cases where all previous targets have failed, parenting contracts may be used as a precursor to prosecution and used as a method of gathering evidence of parent's failure to improve their child's attendance.

- Each individual contract will identify areas of concern and set specific targets to be met by students, parents and the school
- Each contract will typically last three to four school weeks
- Following this period, the contract will be reviewed, and a new contract issued if necessary
- Attendance contracts are voluntary, although parents will be encouraged to accept them.
- Where contracts are successful a letter of acknowledgement will be sent, and new targets set to continue the improvement
- Where contracts are unsuccessful, they will be reviewed, and a new contract may be issued, or school may decide to make a request for prosecution

### *Penalty Notices*

The school may seek to use Penalty Notices in the following cases:

- Following an Attendance Panel where parents have been warned in writing of the school's intention to use a penalty notice
- Where an application for leave of absence has been refused and the student is subsequently absent during the requested dates
- Where an application for leave of absence has not been submitted but the student is absent and the school is satisfied, following investigation, that the pupil is on an unauthorised holiday
- Students failing to return after an authorised leave of absence
- Students who are persistently late after registration has closed

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying policy

Reference should also be made to the following publications:

- Elective Home Education (April 2019)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2020)
- School Attendance (DfE August 2020)
- Children Missing Education (DfE September 2016)
- Staffordshire Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices (January 2018)
- The link between absence and attainment at KS2 & KS4 (DfE March 2016)



*APPENDIX 1 – Attendance codes – descriptions and meanings*

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>STATISTICAL MEANING</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised Absence
G	Family Holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised Absence
H	Family Holiday	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised Absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Study Leave	Authorised Absence
T	Traveller Absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work Experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances
8	Student late to lesson	Not counted in possible attendances



APPENDIX 2 – Summary of attendance procedures for unauthorised absence.

Day of Absence	Procedure	By Whom
1 <sup>st</sup> Day Student marked as “N” (no reason given)	Physical check to be conducted (by 9:30am). Truancy Call sent. No response to Truancy Call by 12:30pm – all other contacts to be tried (phone call, text, email). Advise that Safe & Well check may be conducted. No response by 2:30pm – seek advice from First Response re: conducting Safe & Well check <b>Absence to be coded “O” (unauthorised)</b>	Attendance Officer  DSL / DDSL  Attendance Officer
2 <sup>nd</sup> Day	As for Day 1 absence <i>Safe &amp; Well check must be conducted where previous safeguarding concerns have been raised.</i>	Attendance Officer  DSL / DDSL
3 <sup>rd</sup> Day	As for Day 2 absence Safe & well check conducted. Letter of concern to be handed to parent OR Follow up phone call to confirm letter received (if no answer)* *Advice from First Response if no sign of child or parents at home	Attendance Officer  DSL / DDSL
4 <sup>th</sup> Day	As for Day 3 absence Safeguarding referral to be made. Safe & Well check from PCSO to be requested	Attendance Officer  DSL / DDSL



*APPENDIX 3 – Summary of procedures for lateness.*

<b>Day of Late arrival</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Staff member</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	Student to sign in at reception. Student will receive same-day 10-minute after school detention  If student's arrival is later than 9:05, detention will be extended to 60 minutes after school	Reception staff / Attendance Officer  Pastoral Head to set  College Head to decide
2 <sup>nd</sup> and subsequent <b>(in the same week)</b>	Student to sign in at reception. Student will receive same-day 60-minute after school detention Parent to be informed and lateness discussed	Reception staff / Attendance Officer  Pastoral Head  Pastoral Head
5 <sup>th</sup> <b>(in the same half term)</b>	Parent and student to meet with Pastoral / College Head and Attendance Officer Continued poor punctuality will lead to Attendance Contract and potential Penalty Notice.	Pastoral / College Head & Attendance Officer
Continued lateness	Parent and student to meet with Senior Leader and Attendance Officer to sign Attendance Contract. <b>To be reviewed in 3 weeks</b>	Senior Leader & Attendance Officer  College / Pastoral Head
Review meeting – <b>no improvement</b>	Penalty notice to be issued	Senior Leader
Review meeting – <b>target met, improved punctuality</b>	Agreed reward issued to student Letter to acknowledge improvement to be sent.	Pastoral / College Head  Senior Leader



*APPENDIX 4 – Summary of attendance intervention.*

	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
All students	All registers completed accurately and within 10 minutes of the start of the session.	Form Tutor / Class Teacher
	Use weekly attendance figures to promote good attendance in tutor time and assembly.	Form Tutor / College Head
	Discuss attendance patterns and impact of attendance on a regular basis.	Pastoral Head / Attendance Officer
	Teachers to reinforce to students the link between good attendance and attainment on a regular basis.	All staff
	Students rewarded on a half termly basis, as part of college competitions: E.g., certificates, credits, non-uniform day, entry in to draw for trip days.	College Head
	Students rewarded at the end of each academic year e.g., trip day.	
	Students rewarded for improved attendance e.g., certificate, positive praise postcard.	



<p><b>Trigger 1</b></p> <p><b>3 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p> <p><i>Consideration will always be given to students who have external appointments (e.g CAMHS; hospital consultant) and / or long- term medical conditions preventing them from attending (e.g., severe fracture; auto-immune illness)</i></p>	<p>Student to meet with Attendance Officer.</p> <p>Letter of concern sent out, following meeting with student.</p>	<p>Attendance Officer</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce and send letter.</p> <p><b>Form Tutors, Pastoral and College Heads to receive copies of all letters and contracts via Bromcom.</b></p>
<p><b>Trigger 2</b></p> <p><b>6 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p>	<p>Student to meet with Attendance Officer &amp; Pastoral Head</p> <p>Phone call to parent</p> <p>Letter of concern sent out, following meeting with student.</p>	<p>Attendance Officer &amp; Pastoral Head</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce and send letter.</p>
<p><b>Trigger 3</b></p> <p><b>9 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p>	<p>Parent &amp; student to meet with Pastoral Head &amp; Attendance Officer in school</p> <p>Verbal warning - next stage will require Attendance Contract.</p> <p>Letter confirming meeting outcomes sent to parent</p>	<p>Attendance Officer &amp; Pastoral Head</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce and send letter.</p>
<p><b>Trigger 4</b></p> <p><b>12 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p>	<p>Parent &amp; student to meet with College Head &amp; Attendance Officer in school</p> <p>Attendance Contract (identifying any previously unmentioned needs or support strategies)</p> <p>Letter confirming meeting outcomes sent to parent</p>	<p>Attendance Officer &amp; College Head</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce contract.</p>
<p><b>Trigger 5</b></p> <p><b>15 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p>	<p>Parent &amp; student to meet with College Head &amp; SLT in school</p> <p>Attendance Contract to be reviewed and amended: Formal warning – high risk of persistent absence.</p>	<p>College Head &amp; SLT</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce contract and warning letter.</p>



	<p>Offer of referral to Early Help Services</p> <p>Referral to Education Welfare Worker services</p> <p>Letter confirming meeting outcomes sent to parent</p>	Attendance Officer
<p><b>Trigger 6</b></p> <p><b>18 days'</b> absence (in any academic year)</p>	<p>Parent &amp; student to meet with EWO in school (Attendance Officer or College Head also attend)</p> <p>Attendance Contract to be reviewed and amended:            Formal warning – next stage            Penalty Notice Warning</p> <p>Letter confirming meeting outcomes sent to parent</p>	<p>EWO &amp; Attendance Officer or College Head</p> <p>Attendance Officer to produce contract and warning letter.</p> <p>Attendance Officer</p>
<p><b>Trigger 7</b></p> <p><b>20 days'</b> absence (within 12-week period)</p>	<p>Penalty Notice Warning issued</p>	Attendance Officer

Every effort will be made to work with students and parents in identifying any potential barriers and providing support as required. This will include completion of risk assessments, where deemed necessary, to enable attendance to continue in a safe manner (e.g. following a medical procedure).

Particular focus will be given to those students identified as disadvantaged, to work more closely with parents and students in overcoming any potential barriers.

It is ultimately parents' responsibility to ensure their child arrives at school punctually every day.