Arthur Terry Learning Partnership

Together we are stronger

Nether Stowe School
Attendance Policy

2025-2026



Document Control

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Principles and Aims

At Nether Stowe School, we want every student to feel welcomed, understood, and valued from the moment they arrive. We aim to create a school environment where all students experience fairness, belonging, and care, reflecting the values we share across the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership.

We are committed to helping our students feel safe and supported so they can attend school every day, arrive on time, and be ready to learn. Good attendance is key to helping every student reaches their full potential; academically, socially, and emotionally.

We understand that there are many reasons why a student might struggle to attend school regularly. At Nether Stowe, we aim take time to listen, show empathy, and work together with families to find practical solutions that meet each student's individual needs.

We want parents and carers to feel confident in how we support attendance at Nether Stowe School. We aim to keep parents and carers informed, offer help when and where needed, and explain clearly what steps we'll take if a student is absent so that we can work together to keep their child's education on track.

Attendance Matters

As a school we aim for students to have 100% attendance. We recognise that for some this may be a challenging target; therefore we will provide additional support to students and their families to encourage excellent attendance.

There is a direct link between attendance and attainment at school. Nether Stowe School is committed to working with parents and carers to ensure all students achieve as high a level of attendance as possible.

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age receives a suitable education. Students should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence and legal action may be taken by the Local Authority.

Schools have a duty in law to refer any absence of 5 days or more where they have been unable to contact the parent/carer/child or have general concerns about the absence to the Local Support Team.

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether a student is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a student of compulsory school age is absent, every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised. The decision lies with school as to whether or not an absence will be authorised. For this reason, information about the cause of each absence is always required.

The Effect of Attendance

The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. A student who has 90% attendance is likely to achieve, on average, **one grade lower** in their GCSEs across all subjects compared to a student with good attendance.

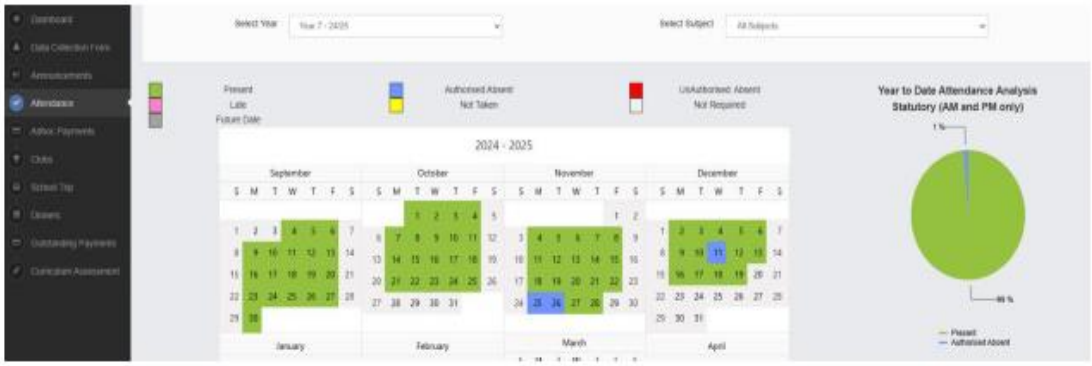
Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which equates to this many lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	60 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	120 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	180 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	240 lessons

Tracking your child's attendance using MCA

Your child's attendance can be viewed in the My Child At School (MCAS) app or via the desktop version.

A guide on how to view your child's attendance can be found here: How to view Attendance in the MCAS Desktop Site – Bromcom – Documentation Centre

How to login and use the MCAS Web Parent Portal – Bromcom – Documentation Centre



Overview of Absence, including leave during term time

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006.

Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional. Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue), family holidays are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration. Family emergencies need careful consideration.

It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the student to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school with support from staff and peers can provide children with a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

Request for leaving during Term Time, including family holidays

Parents/Carers are able to request permission to take their children out of school during term time where there are exceptional circumstances. Any request should be emailed to the attendance team via email (nss-attendance@netherstowe.com) at least two weeks before they are due to leave. Request for leave during term time can only be authorised by the Headteacher and the outcome of the request will be communicated to Parents/Carers. Where a request has been denied or a request has not been submitted but the absence still occurs, the school may take legal action in the form of a Penalty Notice. Please note leave in term time cannot be requested or authorised retrospectively

Leave of Absence for Sporting, Performing Arts, and Other Commitments

Nether Stowe School is committed to supporting students in pursuing their ambitions in sport, theatre, drama, and other disciplines. We recognise that some students may be invited to attend external programmes, rehearsals, competitions, or auditions during the school day. While we value these opportunities and the personal growth they offer, it is essential that students maintain a strong commitment to their education.

To ensure a balanced approach, students must maintain an attendance rate of at least 95% for such events to be approved. This threshold reflects our belief that academic engagement and personal development go hand in hand. All requests for leave of absence must be submitted at least two weeks in advance. The final decision regarding any leave will rest with the Headteacher, who will consider the individual circumstances of the request, including the student's attendance record, academic progress, and the nature of the opportunity. The school reserves the right to request evidence of the opportunity and will continue to monitor attendance to ensure ongoing eligibility.

Reporting Absence

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is important that the school is made aware.

This can be done using the studybugs app or via the studybugs widget on the school website.

If a parent or carer doesn't notify the school in a timely manner, the absence will be classed as unauthorised. Please note that unauthorised absences from school, may lead to legal action being taken against you. The parent/carer will need to explain fully the reason for their child's illness. We are unable to accept single word responses such as unwell or ill.

Parents/Carers will need to report their child's absence by 8:30am each day their child is absent. Failure to report a child's illness before 8:30am may result in a truancy message being sent home, phone calls from the attendance team and an unauthorised absence mark.

If a parent/carer does receive a truancy message they must reply swiftly to support the safeguarding procedures the school is required to follow. Notifying the school of your child's absence does not automatically mean it will be authorised. The school determines whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised based on specific circumstances, this means that attendance marks can change if deemed appropriate.

The Headteacher may require further evidence to authorise an absence and if this is the case the attendance team will be in contact. Medical evidence will be required in cases of illness which are 5 continuous days or longer.

Additionally, please be aware that unannounced home visits may also be conducted.

Medical Appointments

Where possible, parents are required to arrange appointments outside of school hours, e.g. dentist, doctor. If this is not possible, parents should notify the Attendance Team prior to the appointment by emailing nss-attendance@netherstowe.com When emailing the attendance team please include any appropriate evidence to support the absence such as:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- An appointment letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Print screen of a text message appointment

If evidence is not provided, then the absence may be marked as unauthorised until evidence is provided.

Children Missing in Education and Home Education

Children Missing from Education (CME)

As a school, we are concerned about any child or young person who may be missing education because in addition to their educational development their safety and wellbeing may be at risk. Staffordshire Council's Children Missing from Education (CME) team works jointly with schools in respect of pupils on roll at school, who are absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown'.

This might be:

A child who is not at their last known address and: has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:

• has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown. This policy does not cover those children not receiving education due to a family not taking up an offer of a school place from the School Admissions Service.

Home Education

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Some parents may elect to home educate their children and may withdraw them from school at any time to do so (unless they are subject to a School Attendance Order). Where a parent notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school must inform the local authority using the Staffordshire County Council EHE referral form, before removing the child from its admission register.

Registration and Punctuality

For safeguarding purposes, a register is taken at the start of the school day and each lesson. Each student will receive two registration marks throughout the day, an AM and PM registration. These two registration marks contribute to a student's overall attendance percentage.

Morning Registration (AM)

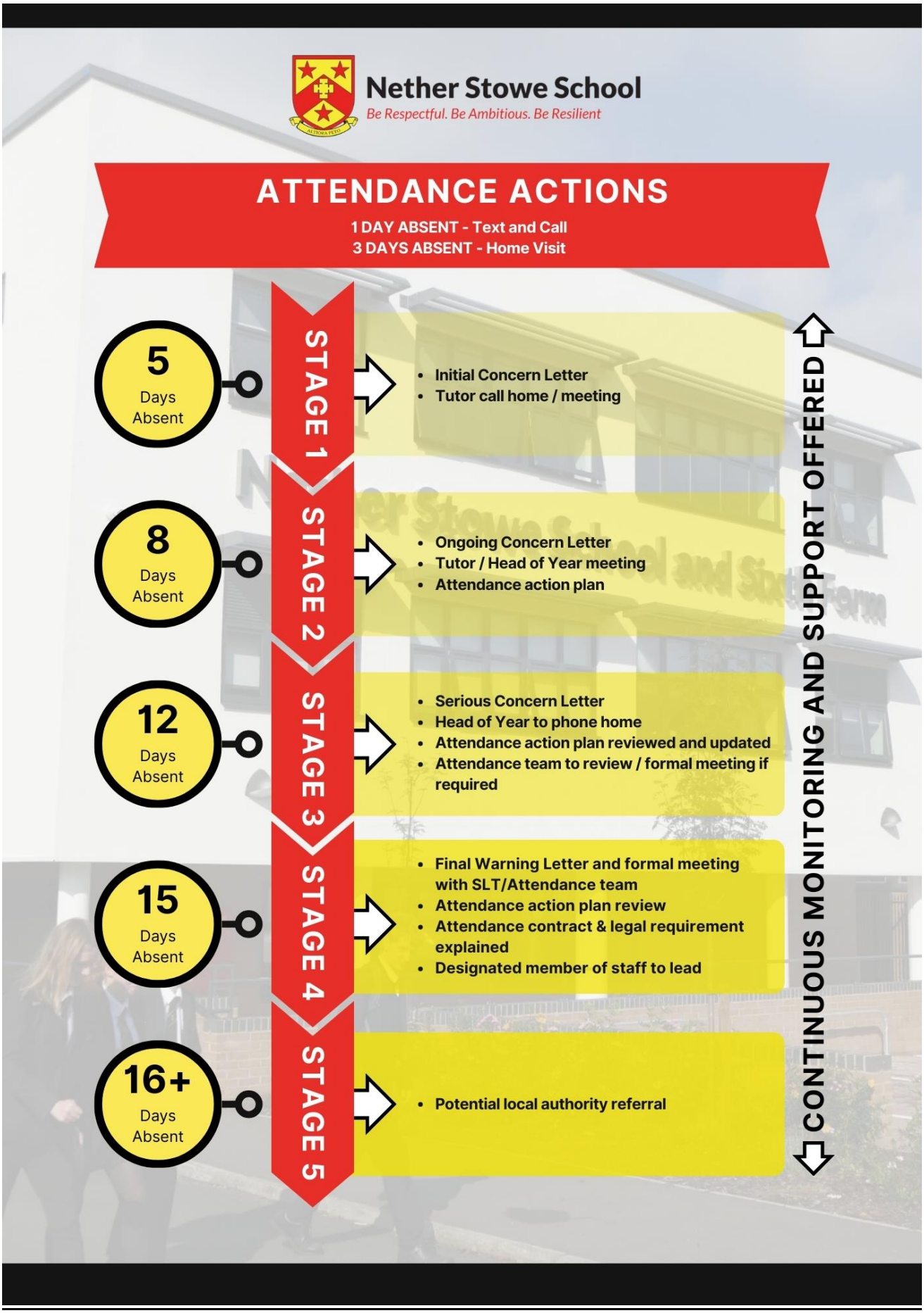
8.30am	School opens for students
8.40am	Whistle goes, students should be present at strong start at this point. **STUDENTS ARRIVING AFTER THIS TIME ARE LATE**
8.40-9.20am	Students arriving during this time will be greeted by a member of staff. Students will be marked L for school.
9.20am	Registers close – students arriving after this will be marked as U (present after registers closed). This constitutes an absence.
9.30am	All students arriving after this point will need to sign in at reception.

If the student's lateness is due to exceptional travel circumstances this detention may be reviewed. This will need to be in liaison with the Heads of Year and Parents. There may be occasions where in liaison with the attendance team and Heads of Year special consideration for lateness will be granted for a short time and a student will not be sanctioned. Special considerations for lateness will need to be discussed prior to a student's lateness. Parents should email nss-attendancenetherstowe.com or the relevant Head of Year to discuss this.

Afternoon Registration (PM)

Students will receive their afternoon registration mark during their Period 5 lesson. Students have a warning whistle at 1:15pm and are expected to be in their lessons by 1:20pm. Teachers will use their discretion and may issue a next day 30-minute detention for any student who arrives after 1:20pm.

Monitoring Attendance, our 'staged approach'



Local Authority Referral Process

If a student has at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in total and all previous actions have been followed, the school will seek advice from the Local Authority regarding improving attendance. This will only be used after each stage above has been actioned.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 makes if an offence if a parent fails to secure their child's regular attendance at school at which they are registered, if that absence is not authorised by the school. Penalty Notices supplement the existing sanctions currently available under s444 Education Act 1996 or s36 Children Act 1989 to enforce attendance at school where appropriate