



Attendance Policy

Status	Current Policy
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Published	Sept 2022
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Review Cycle	Every two years
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Next Review	September 2024
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Lead Staff	Deputy Headteacher
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Chair of Governing Board	Alex Krutnik
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Headteacher	Jane Hatwell
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Mission Statement

We accept all pupils **as they are** and believe that every one of them is **entitled** to the very **best education**, delivered in an **environment** that is **supportive, caring** and **safe**.

Our goal is to develop our pupils to become:

- **Successful** Learners.
- As **independent** as possible.
- **Confident** individuals and self-advocates.
- **Effective** communicators and **contributors**.
- **Responsible** citizens.

We will do this by working to **ensure we get every aspect of their provision just right**, helping them to achieve academically, personally, socially and morally.

Rights Respecting Schools

The Unicef UK Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA) is based on principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The RRSA seeks to put the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child at the heart of a school's ethos and culture to improve well-being and develop every child's talents and abilities to their full potential. A Rights Respecting School is a community where children's rights are learned, taught, practised, respected, protected and promoted.

Stone Bay is a Bronze, Rights Committed School

This policy is written with reference to:

Statement of Intent

Stone Bay School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

One of our basic principles is to celebrate success. Good attendance is fundamental to a successful and fulfilling school experience. We actively promote 100% attendance.

We accept that our Governors, Headteacher and Staff in partnership with parents have a duty to promote full attendance at Stone Bay School.

Parental Responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines the systematic development of their:

- Expressive communication skills.
- Receptive communication skills.
- Resilience.
- Ability to self-manage their actions.
- Levels of self-control.
- Levels of Independence.
- Levels of Engagement
- Educational attainment and progress.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a **safeguarding issue** requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the schools main office and inform the main office when their child is returning.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 9am. Considering the distances some pupils have to travel the school will expect transport colleagues to inform the main office if a child has left home at the normal time but is held up on the road.

The Role of the School Staff

At Stone Bay School there is a whole school responsibility and approach for improving school attendance, with specific staff taking individual responsibility.

Class teachers are responsible for completing a register check at the beginning of each morning and once during the afternoon session. Marking the attendance registers twice daily is a legal requirement. (The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations

2006). Teachers mark pupils present, absent or late. The school office, admin staff, will monitor the daily registers through SIMS.

It is the responsibility of the school office to ensure:

- Attendance and lateness records are up to date
- If no reason for absence has been provided, parents are contacted on the first day of absence by a phone call from the school office.
- Where there has been no communication, the office will communicate this to the Family Liaison Officer (FLO), who will attempt to make contact again, it may be necessary for the FLO to make a visit to the house to complete a welfare check. This will be decided by the Assistant Head for Lower or Upper school and the FLO.
- Complete and return 'Attendance return'
- The appropriate attendance code is entered into the register (see National Attendance Codes).

The Family Liaison Officer and Assistant Head teachers for Lower and Upper school will follow up on any issues of persistent lateness or absence and may involve external partners as they work to resolve any issues that have been identified that are impediments to high levels of attendance and punctuality.

Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

The school office will monitor trends in pupil's attendance/absence. This will be recorded on a spreadsheet and shared with the Leadership team.

- 95 - 100% attendance – FLO to investigate and notify the appropriate Assistant Headteacher of concerns who will then contact the parent if appropriate.
- 90 - 95% attendance - meeting with parents
- Where the level of absence has not improved and there are unauthorised absences, the Family Liaison Officer will offer appropriate support to the family. The Family Liaison Officer may need to consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice.
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make an Early Help Notification if required.

Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below:-

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a [Child Missing Education referral](#) for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (student file) has been requested by another school.

Lateness

At Stone Bay School the register is taken by 9.30am and 1.30pm. Pupils arriving after these times will be marked as an unauthorised absence (Code O).. A pupil arriving after the register has closed should be recorded as absent using code U, or another absence code that it is more appropriate. "Frequent lateness after the register has closed (U) will be discussed with parents, the FLO will phone parents and offer support. All register codes are included in **Appendix A**.

Penalty Notice Proceedings for Lateness

Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with [Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct: April 2017](#), when:

- 10 incidents of late arrival after the registers have closed during any possible 100 school sessions leads to a Penalty Notice Warning Letter.
- The Penalty Notice Warning Letter sets out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period, a Penalty Notice(s) may be issued (one per parent per child)
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days of issue the Local Authority will instigate court proceedings

The above information is Local Authority guidance, however as a SEN school, Stone Bay acknowledge that late arrivals / non-attendance may not solely be due to parent/pupil refusal but for a number of reasons that are due to the pupils SEN need and or transport issues. We will on most occasions work together with families, Local Authority and any relevant outside agencies to promote full attendance.

Authorising Absence

Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. If absences are not authorised, parents will be notified.

If no explanation is received, absences will not be authorised.

Absence during term time can only be approved in "exceptional circumstances".

Penalty Notices Proceedings for Poor Attendance

Where Penalty Notices are issued, they are issued in accordance with [Kent County Council's Education Penalty Notices Code of Conduct: April 2017](#).

- A Penalty Notice can only be issued in cases of absence for 10 or more half day sessions (5 school days) without authorisation during any 100 possible school sessions or period of 50 days of schooling – these do not need to be consecutive.

- A Penalty Notice can also be issued where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours.
- After the appropriate request for a Penalty Notice is received, the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service will issue a warning letter setting out 15 school days during which no unauthorised absence is to be recorded
- If unauthorised absence is recorded during the 15 day period a Penalty Notice will be issued (one per parent per child)

Exceptional circumstances could include:

- Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the parent will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
- Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent's or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
- Any strong personal reasons why a family might need to take a child away from school for a short break.
- Situations where a break may play a significant role in ameliorating difficulties a student may be facing in their lives due primarily to their Autism.

All pupils at Stone Bay have a diagnosis of Autism, which can affect their school attendance due to their anxieties and sensory issues, which can trigger a fight or flight response. Stone Bay school will work together with families, the Local Authority and any other relevant outside agencies, to promote pupil attendance. We will always endeavour to adapt the provision, the school day or the teaching approaches to reduce the child's anxiety and associated sensory difficulties to improve pupil attendance and engagement in learning.

It is important to note that Headteachers can agree the absence of a child in exceptional circumstances and this discretion can be used also to determine the length of the authorised absence.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body ([Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

All applications for exceptional absences must be made in writing on the school form. Parents/Carers can request a form via the school office.

If an absence is authorised a letter will be sent to parents to explain this. The letter template can be found in the SLT google drive and the school attendance officer has a template of the letter.

Safeguarding, Equality and Equal Opportunities Statement

Stone Bay School, and all policies and procedures, will promote equality of opportunity for all pupils and staff from all social, cultural and economic backgrounds. The school will ensure that no student or staff member is disadvantaged, discriminated against or treated less favourably because of their gender (including gender reassignment), race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or due to pregnancy or maternity.

Stone Bay School aims to;

- Foster good relationships and create effective partnerships with all sections of the community
- Ensure that the school's service delivery, commissioning and employment practices will not discriminate unlawfully, either directly or indirectly
- Provide an environment free from fear and discrimination, where diversity, respect and dignity are valued and celebrated

All aspects of Safeguarding will be embedded into school life and will remain the responsibility of all members of our school community.

Appendix A

Register Codes used in school.

/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session	Basic
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session	Basic
B	Educated off site	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
D	Dual registration (attending other estab)	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
E	Excluded (no alternative provision ma...	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in e...	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
H	Annual family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
I	Illness (not med/dental appointments)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
J	Interview	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session	Basic
M	Medical / Dental Appointments	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
O	Unauthorised Abs (not covered by oth...	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session	Basic
V	Educational visit	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic
W	Work experience	Approved Educational Activity	Out for whole session	Basic
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional c...	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	---
X	Non-compulsory school age or COVID...	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
Z	Pupil not on roll	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
-	All should attend / No mark recorded	No mark	No mark for session	Basic
7	Illness due to Covid 19	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session	Basic
8	Self-isolating due to Covid 19	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
9	Shielding due to Covid 19	Attendance not required	Out for whole session	Basic
@	Do not use	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session	Basic