

STOWUPLAND HIGH SCHOOL



POLICY ON ATTENDANCE

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Stowupland High School

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Stowupland High School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

1.2 The whole school community – students, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone’s part in this.

1.3 The policy has been drawn up after consultation with the whole community and is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

2. School’s roles and responsibilities

2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Stowupland High School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our students are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

2.2 Attendance Lead - The Assistant Headteacher (Attendance Lead) will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school’s work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure that Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Attendance Lead will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to staff, students and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and that reports are prepared for the governing body. S/he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

2.3 Registration

i) Students of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice each day: once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. It is the practice of this school to register ALL students (including those over compulsory school age).

ii) The register will be called promptly at **8.55am** and **1.35/1.25pm** by each tutor and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each student.

iii) The registers will close at **9.00am** and **1.40/1.30pm**. Any student who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as absent. Students who arrive **before** the register closes will be counted as present but will be dealt with under the school's policy on punctuality and lateness.

iv) A mark will be made in respect of each student during registration. Any student who is not present at this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment/correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the form tutor under the advice and guidance of the Guidance Leader.

v) Stowupland High School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, (and) except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Stowupland High School will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their children's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.

vi) If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised.

2.4 Class registers

In order to track students' whereabouts throughout the day, deal with any truancy that occurs after morning or afternoon registration and to ensure the safety of students, subject teachers will take a register at the beginning of every lesson to record absence and lateness. Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the school office and measures taken to locate the student.

2.5 Staff training

The School Attendance Lead will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. Absence: Authorised

3.1 Authorised Absence

As a guide, the school is likely to authorise absences in the circumstances below. Where indicated requests for leave should be submitted using the Pyramid Absence Form **(PAF)**

- (a) where the school is satisfied that the student is too ill to attend
- (b) where the student has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible, and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him/her to school beforehand)
- (c) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
- (d)** where the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/carers belong; **(PAF)**
- (e) where the student lives in catchment, but more than three miles from school and no suitable transport arrangements have been made by the Local Authority;
- (f)** where the student is of no fixed abode, his/her parent/carer is engaged in a trade which requires him/her to travel, the student has attended school as often as the nature of the trade permits **and**, having reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months; **(PAF)**
- (g) in other **exceptional circumstances** e.g. the wedding of a close family member **(PAF)** or a family bereavement and for a very limited period;
- (h)** the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong. **(PAF)**
- (i) where a licence application for an approved performance or event has been submitted to the school and Local Authority and the school has authorised the absence (see section 6.3);
- (j)** where **exceptional** holiday leave is granted as outlined in section 5. **(PAF)**

4 Absences: Unauthorised

Absences will **not** be authorised where:

- (a) no explanation has been given by the parent/carer;
- (b) the school is not satisfied with the explanation of an absence;

- (c) the student is staying at home to mind the house or care for a relative;
- (d) the student is shopping during school hours;
- (e) the student is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday, family gathering or family celebration;
- (f) oversleeping or lateness due to a social event;
- (g) the student is absent from school on a family holiday without prior permission or
- (h) where insufficient notice has been given for an absence request to be processed;
- (i) the student has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent/carer is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.

Please note: Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices will be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a student is stopped by Truancy Patrol or if a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance (see also section 5.2)

5. Term Time Holidays

5.1 Term Time Holidays

School term dates and holidays are published a year in advance and holiday periods exist at half-term as well as Christmas, Easter and the Summer.

Stowupland High School's policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays **is not a right**. An application form (Appendix H) must be submitted **in advance** of the intended holiday. Requests to the school should be made **prior to booking** and the school requires **15 working days** in order to make a response.

Stowupland High School will only consider authorising holiday leave in the following circumstances:

- for armed service personnel (Army, Navy, RAF) whose specific tours and duties prevent them from taking holidays during term-time;
- for emergency services personnel (Fire, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard) who are unable to take leave at any other time due to a national event or a period of national significance;

- for a family which needs to spend time together during or after a significant emotional crisis (this should be supported by at least one external agency).

Requests for holidays for the following reasons will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- family events;
- holiday paid for by a relative;
- availability of the desired accommodation or location;
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods;
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

Stowupland High School will NOT authorise a holiday during periods of national tests i.e. GCSE examinations or assessed components (Controlled Conditions Assignments etc)

All requests for leave of absence for a holiday must be submitted using the Pyramid Absence Form (**PAF**) - see appendix H.

5.2 Penalty Notices for Absences

A Penalty Notice will be issued for any unauthorised holiday or for series of authorised absences within any one term. In line with the amendments made to The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher will request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when students are taken out of school for 7 sessions or more (ie the fourth day of absence) without school authorisation. This absence may represent a single occasion or an accumulation of authorised absences over the course of a term;
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days and within 28 days;
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 42 days the Local Authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance;
- Penalty notices are issued to each parent/carer for each child.

6 **Approved Educational Activities**

6.1 Alternative Provision

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Where a student is unable to attend the provision,

6.2 Trips and Visits

Educational trips and visits arranged by the school are deemed to be approved activities and have a separate coding in attendance registers.

6.3 Performance and Sporting Licences

Leave of absence may be authorised for specific performing and sporting activities which the school has not organised and with which the school is not directly involved.

A licence application should be downloaded or obtained from Suffolk County Council and the relevant sections completed before passing to the school for leave to be considered and authorised. (Schools do not hold the application forms).

Licences are usually obtained by the organisation responsible for the activity or directly by the coaches themselves. Any questions or queries relating to the activity or the licence application process should be directed to the designated officer at Suffolk County Council.

The school will require between 5 - 7 working days in order to check and respond to the request for absence. Suffolk County Council requires up to 21 days to process the application once received.

When approved, absences covered by sporting and performing licences receive a separate coding in attendance registers.

Please note that any request for leave of absence for sporting or performance events will be managed through the licence application. Parents / carers do not need to fill in the Pyramid Absence Form.

7. Collection and analysis of data

The Attendance Lead will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the Senior Leadership Team, parents and the Governing Body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

Attendance is monitored by year group, tutor group, at subject level and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

8. Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance

Attendance has a very high profile at Stowupland High School and is regularly discussed at assemblies and in tutor groups. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and weekly attendance figures are displayed prominently in school.

Stowupland High School has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week.

8.1 First-day calling

Stowupland High School has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day a student is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage students who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the school will send a letter to them by first class post.

8.2 School Strategies to Tackle Absence

The Attendance Lead is responsible for the school management of attendance, policy and systems to ensure that Stowupland High School intervenes in non attendance at an early stage.

Where there is an emerging pattern of a student's absence the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for absence. Plans should be put in place with the parents and student to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

Stowupland High School will organise Attendance/Governor Panels to intervene in levels of non attendance when parents will be invited to discuss the issues of the attendance.

8.3 Referral to the Education Attendance Service

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the student is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Education Attendance Service. Regulations (Education Pupil Regulations 2006) require schools to inform the LA of every student who has been continuously absent without a good reason (i.e. the absence is unauthorised) for 10 school days or more. Schools must also inform the LA of every student who fails to attend regularly which is interpreted to mean those students who have patterns of unauthorised absence without amassing 10 continuous absences.

8.4 Lateness and Punctuality

Students are expected to arrive at school and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Students who arrive after the register closes (see para 2.3) will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This

absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the students to be late. A student who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Education Attendance Service.

Students who arrive late for school but after the register closes

For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Students arriving late should therefore report to the School's Attendance Office. **It is important that all students arriving late follow this procedure.**

For the same reason it is important that students leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day notify the School's Reception Office (or the Sixth Form Office).

8.5 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a student goes missing from school having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the student will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. Stowupland High School takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen. If, however, a student appears to have left the premises without authorisation, the school will try to make contact with his/her parents immediately.

8.6 Study Leave

Stowupland High School believes that students' needs are best met if they attend school every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period, therefore, and students will be expected to attend school in the usual way. Study leave will only be granted to Year 11 students during the time of the GCSE examination period. Should any students wish to attend school (or should their parents wish them to) on the days and at times when they are not sitting examinations, arrangements will be made for them to do so.

The school will work within the legal requirements of:-

- study leave should only be granted to Year 11 students and never to those in other year groups;
- it should never exceed 15 school days in a year and is most appropriately granted during the examination period itself, i.e. not before the beginning of that period;
- it should always be granted sparingly taking account of an individual student's ability to manage and benefit from unsupervised study;
- any student has the right to attend school during study leave and a parent has the right to insist he/she does so;
- any session given to students as study leave has a statistical meaning of authorised absence (it is not an 'approved education activity' as it is unsupervised) and should be recorded and reported on by the school as such.

9. Conclusion

Regular school attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring the outcomes of *Every Child Matters* –

be healthy –

- attendance at school supports children’s emotional and social health and development
- the school curriculum teaches children to be healthy

stay safe –

- schools and the LA have a statutory duty to promote the safety and welfare of children
- the best way to safeguard children is to ensure they attend school regularly

enjoy and achieve –

- good school attendance supports children in reaching their maximum potential and enjoying the fulfilment this brings

make a positive contribution –

- membership of a school community builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute to and be responsible for the well-being of others

achieve economic well-being

- good school attendance supports engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life-style.

Appendix A Responsibilities

Appendix B Attendance - A Guide for Parents

Appendix C Attendance - A Guide for Students

Appendix D Register Codes and Instructions for Tutors

Appendix E Warning Letters

Appendix F Request for Notification of Absence Letter

Appendix G Education Welfare Officer Referrals (Fast Track)

Appendix H Absence Application Form

Appendix A Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- approve the policy and any proposed changes
- receive regular attendance reports
- ensure that the policy is implemented throughout the school, and is available to parents

The Headteacher will:

- set attendance targets as part of the target-setting process
- monitor progress
- determine (in collaboration with Assistant Headteacher (Students) and Guidance Leader) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested in writing
- liaise with the LA and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to school
- make an annual report with statistics to the governing body

The Assistant Headteacher (school attendance lead) will:

- set attendance targets, in consultation with the Headteacher, for the school, each Year group and each Tutor group.
- ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the leadership team and governing body at key points each term. This to include comments and progress towards the school target.
- ensure that attendance returns are made to the DfEs within the stipulated time frame.
- ensure that attendance data is reported to students, parents, governors and staff on a regular basis.
- encourage a positive and proactive ethos within the school, prioritising, promoting and embedding attendance in to school policies, plans, practices and processes.
- promote the involvement of all parties in improving attendance and highlight the link between attendance and achievement.
- provide a strategic overview of the input and impact of external support services to the school
- co-ordinate the support services to promote attendance and assist the school in meeting attendance targets.
- provide a strategic overview of attendance by utilising data to inform attendance practice, prioritise resources and activities which raise achievement and prevent disaffection.
- ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in attendance are actively communicated.
- ensure that the school has an up to date attendance policy.
- co-ordinate an action plan for improvement where improvement is needed.
- monitor and evaluate any action plan on attendance.
- establish an agreed system for registration and data collection to include:-
 - A system for completing registers and recording absence.

- Attendance data at authorised and unauthorised level.
- Attendance data at group, year, subject level.
- Student profiling of the % of a student's attendance levels.
- Links between attainment and attendance.
- Reasons for absence.
- Outcomes of attendance strategies used by the school.
- review the available data and report to the LT and governing body of key issues to inform planning, teaching and learning strategy, celebrate success and address poor performance.
- ensure that the school has a range of strategies to promote whole school attendance.

Progress Leaders will:

- support and monitor the consistent implementation of approach and expectation across the year team, for the Attendance Policy
- oversee the correct completion of all registers in their Year Group.
- ensure that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- ensure that individual students causing concern are monitored carefully and records kept
- work closely with tutors in identifying and supporting absent students
- work closely with the Attendance Officer in setting and monitoring attendance targets for students and groups.
- liaise and work with other agencies (including the EWO) to support attendance
- encourage the use of a range of strategies to celebrate attendance and support absent students.
- oversee letters to parents regarding 10% absence and invite parents in to school
- In consultation with EWO meet students, who have significant absence, and their parents
- Organise training for tutors, as appropriate.

Form Tutors will:

- mark registers at the morning and afternoon sessions.
- deal with absences and lateness by using the appropriate codes.
- record absence notes.
- monitor attendance
- liaise closely with the Progress Leaders regarding students with attendance problems and identify any patterns of absence or truancy
- speak to students who have significant absence, and if necessary contact parents.
- ensure that letters, messages and notes on contact with parents are appropriately filed.

Attendance Officer will:

- be responsible for first day calls.
- ensure absence letters are sought, when a letter is not received from parents.
- monitor attendance.

- update SIMS attendance system.
- liaise with the EWO, Guidance Managers and Assistant Head (Students and KS5).
- produce attendance reports as required.

EWO

- meet with the Attendance Lead to discuss attendance issues.
- meet regularly with the Progress Leaders with regards to specific attendance issues.
- meet regularly with the Attendance Officer with regards to data and the monitoring of student absence.
- meet, as necessary, with students identified as having unauthorised absence in excess of 10%
- meet with students and parents where absence is at or exceeds 20%.

Subject Teachers will:

- check the attendance of students at their lessons
- inform the (Progress Leader/Tutor) of the names of students who are absent without notification

Parents'/carers

The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rest with parents/carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Stowupland High School.

Stowupland High School expects Parents/Carers will:

- notify the school on the first day of absence;
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives. Stowupland High School will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

Students

All students should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher or form tutor.

Students should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher or form tutor a note from their parents to explain the absence. Students also have a responsibility for following school procedures if they arrive late.

A Guide for Students is attached.



1. When does my son/daughter need to be in School?

Your son/daughter should be in school in time for registration which commences at 8.55 in the morning and 1.35 in the afternoon, Wednesday afternoon registration commences at 1.20.

2. What happens if my son/daughter is late?

Registration finishes at 9.00am in the morning and 1.55pm in the afternoon, 1.30pm on a Wednesday.

If your son/daughter arrives after 8.55am in the morning or after 1.35pm in the afternoon, 1.30pm on a Wednesday, he/she will be marked as late.

If your son/daughter arrives after 9.00am or 1.40pm, 1.30pm on a Wednesday, he/she will be marked as absent and we will need a letter from you explaining the reason.

Students who arrive after registration should report to the attendance office, and sign the Late Book. If a student is late on a number of occasions parents will be contacted to discuss the reasons/difficulties for lateness and appropriate action will be taken by the Form Tutor, Guidance Leader or Education Welfare Officer.

3. Does the School need letters explaining my son/daughter's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the school on the first day of absence and each subsequent day. If you do not phone us, we will try to phone you. If you do phone, using the dedicated absence line (01449 742428) then your call will be recorded and a note will not be necessary unless you have been informed of the need to provide written confirmation of absences. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your son/daughter's Progress Check.

4. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

Examples include:

- Illness.
- Dental or medical appointments, where these cannot be taken outside school hours. Every endeavour should be made to ensure that the time away from school is as short as possible.
- An absence due exclusively for religious observance and set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parent). Leave of absence must be requested in advance.
- An unavoidable absence eg a catastrophic event at home.
- Exclusion from school.
- Participation in national sporting activities, music events or drama productions, overseen by the appropriate governing body of that activity and with the appropriate permission/licence granted in advance of the absence.
- Family bereavement.
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university, etc.

Except in the case of illness you should ask for permission for your son/daughter to miss school well in advance, (ideally a minimum of 15 working days), giving full details. This should be addressed to the Headteacher. You will then receive a reply indicating if the absence is to be authorised.

Holidays will only be authorised in the most exceptional of cases and permission must be sought before booking.

In cases of recurring absences through illness the school nurse may be involved.

The school would strongly recommend that any absences do not take place during your son/daughter's SATs, GCSE course (Years 10 and 11) examinations and Coursework or at key times in Year 12 and 13.

If authorised leave of absence is granted, the school will set work for your son/daughter to complete while away. Your son/daughter will need to arrange to see the teachers concerned to collect work.

5. What is unacceptable?

The school will not authorise absence for day trips, visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters etc.

6. How do I contact the School if my son/daughter is absent?

We have a dedicated absence line (01449 742428 – 24 hour answer phone) on which you should leave a message explaining why your son/daughter is absent. If we do not hear from you we will attempt to contact you by phone. This is because we believe it is our responsibility to ensure your son/daughter's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

Please keep us up-to-date with any change in telephone numbers.

If we are concerned about aspects of your son/daughter's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss the best way forward.

7. What can I do to encourage my son/daughter to attend School?

Make sure your son/daughter gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your son/daughter, by your interest, that you value his/her education. Your son/daughter will bring home a school planner each evening. Please ensure you look at it with your son/daughter and sign it as requested by your son/daughter's form tutor.

8. My son/daughter is trying to avoid coming to School. What should I do?

Contact your son/daughter's Form Tutor in the first instance and openly discuss your worries. Your son/daughter could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your son/daughter's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your son/daughter's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The school may also refer you to an Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise.

The Education Attendance Service for the Stowupland and Stowmarket area is based at:

Children & Young People's Services 12+ Integrated Team
The Mix, 127 Ipswich Street
Stowmarket, IP14 1BB
Telephone: 01449 745155



ATTENDING SCHOOL REGULARLY - A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. Attending regularly and on time.

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities here at Stowupland High School. It will help you;

- Keep up with your school work and get the best results you can;
- Get a job – employers like people who are reliable.

Remember, your attendance at school is shown on your Progress Checks, Reports and your Progress File.

Registration commences at 8.55am in the morning and at 1.35pm in the afternoon, 1.20pm on a Wednesday afternoon.

Registration finishes at 9.00am in the morning and 1.55pm in the afternoon, 1.30pm on a Wednesday afternoon.

If you arrive after 8.55am in the morning or after 1.35pm in the afternoon, 1.20pm on Wednesday, you are late and that will also be recorded and parents may be contacted to explain the reasons. On assembly days if you are late you should report to the appropriate assembly venue and see your form tutor.

If you arrive after 9.00am or 1.40pm, 1.30pm on Wednesday you will be marked absent and we will need a letter from your parent explaining the reason.

2. What reasons will the school accept for absences?

Examples include:

- Illness.
- Dental or medical appointments, where these cannot be taken outside school hours. Every endeavour should be made to ensure that the time away from school is as short as possible.
- An absence due exclusively for religious observance and set apart by the parents' religious body (not the parent). Leave of absence must be requested in advance.
- An unavoidable absence eg a catastrophic event at home.
- Exclusion from school.
- Participation in national sporting activities, music events or drama productions, overseen by the appropriate governing body of that activity and with the appropriate permission/licence granted in advance of the absence.
- Family bereavement.
- Attending an interview for a job, college, university, etc.

Looking after your brothers and sisters, birthdays, hair cuts, general trips such as shopping and helping at home are NOT reasons to be absent from school.

You will also need a note from your parents to explain ALL absences from school if we have not received a call or if you are persistently absent. You will also need a note if you arrive at school after 9.00am in the morning. If we do not receive a call, if you do not bring a note, or the explanation for absence is unsatisfactory, the absence will count as unauthorised and will be shown on your end of year report.

3. Need help?

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at school? Are things difficult at home?

You may feel that missing school is the answer. It is not – it may even make things worse. **TALK TO SOMEONE** – your class teacher, form tutor, another member of staff, your parents. We will do everything we can to help you get over the problem.

