



Stanley St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Statement on Term Time Absence

As a church school we believe that every person, every child and every adult is unique and special with God given gifts and talents which it our job to nurture and cherish.

Stanley St Andrew's Church of England Primary School has excellent attendance records, with pupils positively enjoying their time spent in school. We believe that regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential. This is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational 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.

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

Exceptional Circumstances

There is a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in 'exceptional circumstances'. The DfE do not define 'exceptional circumstances' and the governing body have agreed that each request should be individually considered by the Headteacher in order to decide whether it would be classified as an authorised absence under exceptional circumstances. If the Headteacher is unable to reach a decision, the request will be considered by the school's governing body. If the governing body are not due to meet prior to the first day of the requested absence, then the Chair of Governors can make this decision using delegated powers.

Exceptional circumstances can only be authorised for the period in which the exceptional circumstance occurs and will not be extended beyond the minimum time required to attend. Any other time, before or after the event, will not be authorised. This includes requests involving long distance travel.

It should be recognised that when making a decision on whether or not to authorise an absence, schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with educational needs and/or

disabilities and the school will ensure that our Attendance Policy (which this statement forms part of) is implemented in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

If you feel your request would be classed as an exceptional circumstance, but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
- Year six transition days (for pupils in year six only)
- SATs week (for pupils in year two and year six)
- Screening weeks (for year one pupils)
- At any other time specified by the school which is identified to parents prior to application.

The Headteacher will not authorise absences if they believe it is to the detriment of a child's education or if they have concerns that attendance is already a concern.

The Headteacher will not retrospectively authorise absence from school.

The Headteacher cannot, and will not, authorise school absence solely for the purpose of a family holiday. A family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance. There may be many reasons for which a family may wish to plan a holiday in term time, including restrictions at work or financial opportunities, however, these do not override the constraints placed on Headteachers not to authorise family holidays.

We advise that you do not plan for your child to be absent from school without gaining prior agreement from school first. Family requests for holidays to see relatives are not deemed to be exceptional circumstances, the availability of cheap flights or holidays are also not deemed to be exceptional circumstances.

If your request is authorised, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and school are not obliged to provide work for your child to complete under such circumstances

How to make a request for term time absence.

Any requests should be made on our school's leave of absence request form, regardless of whether or not you feel there are exceptional circumstances. These forms can be obtained from the school office and they should be completed and returned to the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. In addition to completing this form, you may also be required speak to the Headteacher and you may be requested to provide evidence to support your application.

You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

What happens if I either take absence without requesting it, or if I do not abide by the judgment of the school?

Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records which will be submitted to the Local Authority. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

If your request is declined, and you still take your child out of school, each parent within your household will be issued with a penalty notice for each child you have taken out of school. At the time of writing this statement the fixed penalty is £60 per parent per child per holiday. This figure doubles if the penalty is not paid within 21 days. **Penalty notices will be issued by the local authority and no payments are made to the school.**

Statement Review

This statement forms part of our school Attendance Policy.

The Attendance Policy was approved for use on **25 September 2023** by the governing body and will be reviewed on an annual basis in accordance with our schools' policy delegation schedule.

We will review this policy earlier than the scheduled review date should there be any change in guidance or legislation related to this policy or should we feel that an earlier review is necessary.

Parents/carers and staff will be made aware of any changes to this policy.

This statement along with the Attendance Policy will be made available on the school website and can also be obtained from the school office.

Parents will be signposted to this policy at the start of each academic year.