

Stechford Primary School



Attendance Policy

Version	October 2026
Ratified by Governing Body	
Policy owner / Senior Attendance Champion	Miss R Hatton, Headteacher and Attendance Lead
Review	Annually and whenever statutory guidance changes

1. Aims

Stechford Primary School is committed to securing high levels of attendance and punctuality for every pupil. Regular attendance is fundamental to safeguarding, wellbeing, attainment and wider development. Attendance is everyone's responsibility and is promoted through a whole-school culture of high expectations, early support and strong relationships with families. Our approach is grounded in community and belonging: every pupil should feel that they are a valued member of Stechford Primary School and that their presence matters. The school's CARE values - Challenge, Achieve, Resilience and Encourage - shape how we promote attendance and how we work with pupils and families to overcome barriers.

- Promote the benefits of high attendance and punctuality.
- Reduce absence, including persistent absence and severe absence, through early identification and targeted support.
- Listen to pupils and families to understand barriers to attendance and work together to remove them.
- Provide additional support and reasonable adjustments where pupils face barriers linked to physical or mental ill health, SEND, disability, caring responsibilities or wider family circumstances.
- Work collaboratively with Birmingham City Council and other partners where absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- Use legal intervention only where support is not appropriate, has not been successful or has not been engaged with.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy reflects the Department for Education statutory guidance Working together to improve school attendance (July 2026) and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. It should be read alongside the Education Act 1996, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Equality Act 2010 and the national framework for penalty notices.

The school will review this policy when national or local guidance changes and will publish the current policy on its website.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governing Body

- Promote the importance of attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure leaders fulfil statutory duties and the expectations in national guidance.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends, and focus improvement on pupils and cohorts who need it most.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate attendance training.
- Hold the Headteacher to account for implementation and impact.

3.2 Miss R Hatton, Headteacher / Senior Attendance Champion / Attendance Lead

- Provide strategic leadership for attendance and communicate a clear vision for improvement.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and ensure these are consistently followed.
- Maintain a strong grasp of attendance data and evaluate the impact of strategies and interventions.
- Liaise with pupils, parents, the local authority School Attendance Support Team and other agencies as required.

- Ensure the school uses support, formal intervention and enforcement proportionately and lawfully.

3.3 Attendance Team, Senior Learning Mentor and Family Support Worker

Miss R Hatton, Headteacher and Attendance Lead, has strategic oversight of attendance. The Senior Learning Mentor and Family Support Worker work alongside the Attendance Lead and School Office to coordinate day-to-day attendance work, monitor patterns and individual cases, contact families, arrange meetings and home visits where appropriate, provide or broker support and work with the local authority and relevant partner agencies.

3.4 Class teachers and office staff

- Class teachers record attendance accurately at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- Office staff record reported absence, follow up unexplained absence and ensure attendance information is passed promptly to the attendance team.
- All staff are expected to identify and report emerging attendance concerns and reinforce the school's expectations consistently.

3.5 Parents and carers

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open, on time, unless absence is unavoidable or has been authorised.
- Notify the school before 9.00am on the first day of unexpected absence and on subsequent days, giving the reason and expected return date.
- Keep emergency contact information up to date and, where reasonably possible, provide more than one emergency contact.
- Arrange routine appointments outside school hours wherever possible and request any leave of absence in advance.
- Work with the school and relevant services when support is offered to overcome barriers to attendance.

3.6 Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend every day, arrive on time and engage with support offered to help them attend regularly.

4. Recording attendance and punctuality

4.1 Attendance register

The school keeps electronic admission and attendance registers. Attendance is recorded at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session, using the national attendance and absence codes. Every entry in the admission and attendance register will be preserved for 6 years from the date the data was entered.

Where a register entry is amended, the original entry, amended entry, reason, date and name of the person making the amendment will be retained. An unexplained absence code will be replaced with the correct code as soon as the reason is established and no later than 5 working days after the session.

4.2 School times and lateness

Pupils must arrive by 8.50am. The morning register is taken at 8.55am and closes at 9.25am. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes are recorded as late. Pupils arriving after 9.25am are recorded as absent for that session using the appropriate unauthorised absence code unless another

absence code applies. The afternoon register is taken at the start of the afternoon session and remains open for no longer than 30 minutes.

4.3 Unexpected absence and first-day response

Parents/carers must contact the school by 9.00am on 0121 464 3245 and provide the pupil's full name, class, reason for absence and expected return date. The school will contact parents on the first day where a reason has not been received. If absence continues without explanation, further contact and safeguarding action will be considered, including contact with other emergency contacts, relevant professionals and a home visit where appropriate.

4.4 Illness and health needs

Illness, including physical and mental health related illness, will be recorded using the appropriate national code. Medical evidence will not routinely be required. The school may seek reasonable evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the reason given, or where evidence is needed to understand prolonged or recurring health needs and put suitable support or reasonable adjustments in place.

Where the school has reasonable grounds to believe a pupil will miss 15 school days, consecutively or cumulatively within the school year, because of illness, it will make the required sickness return to the local authority and work with partners to support continuity of education.

4.5 Medical and dental appointments

Parents should arrange appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, the school should be informed in advance and the pupil should miss only the minimum time necessary. Evidence of an appointment may be requested where appropriate.

5. Leave of absence during term time

Leave of absence must be requested in advance. For maintained schools, leave can only be granted in the circumstances permitted by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Requests for exceptional circumstances will be considered individually, taking account of the facts, relevant context and the pupil's individual circumstances. The school will not apply a blanket rule automatically authorising particular events.

A holiday, or other absence for leisure and recreation, is not generally considered an exceptional circumstance. If exceptional leave is granted, the school will determine the period authorised. Other permitted leave categories include regulated performance/employment, interviews, study leave where applicable, and temporary part-time timetables in very exceptional circumstances.

5.1 Religious observance

Absence may be authorised for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs. Where more time is requested, any additional leave will be considered separately under the applicable leave of absence provisions.

5.2 Part-time timetables

A part-time timetable for a pupil of compulsory school age will be used only in very exceptional circumstances where it is in the pupil's best interests, never as a behaviour management measure. It must be agreed with the parent, form part of a wider support or reintegration plan, include regular review dates and have a proposed end date. Relevant professionals will be involved where appropriate.

6. Supporting attendance and reducing absence

The school follows a support-first approach, rooted in Birmingham's Right Help, Right Time framework. When a pattern of absence emerges, staff will listen to the pupil and family, identify barriers and agree proportionate support at the earliest appropriate stage. Miss R Hatton, Headteacher and Attendance Lead, works with the Senior Learning Mentor, Family Support Worker and wider staff to coordinate support. This may involve pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, early help, health services, SEND support, family support, social care, Birmingham City Council or other relevant agencies.

Where voluntary support does not lead to improvement or is not engaged with, the school will work with Birmingham City Council to formalise support. This may include an attendance contract or an Education Supervision Order. Where appropriate, a Notice to Improve may be issued before a penalty notice. Legal intervention may be considered where support is not appropriate, has not been successful or has not been engaged with.

6.1 Persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of possible sessions. Severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of possible sessions. The school will identify emerging patterns early, meet with pupils and parents, review barriers, provide targeted support, work with the local authority and relevant agencies, and monitor the impact of interventions.

6.2 Pupils with additional barriers

High attendance ambitions apply to all pupils. The school will apply this policy fairly and consistently while considering individual needs. Particular care will be taken to understand and support pupils with SEND or disabilities, long-term physical or mental health needs, pupils with a social worker and young carers. Reasonable adjustments will be considered where required by the Equality Act 2010.

7. National Framework for Penalty Notices

All state-funded schools must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate in each individual case when the national threshold is met. The threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. The 10 sessions can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span terms or school years.

Before a penalty notice is sought or issued, the school and local authority will consider the individual circumstances, whether support is appropriate, whether sufficient support has been provided, and whether a Notice to Improve is appropriate. A Notice to Improve is not required where support would not be appropriate, for example in some cases of unauthorised term-time holiday.

Penalty notice charging framework:

- First penalty notice to a parent for a particular child within a 3-year rolling period: £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Second penalty notice to the same parent for the same child within 3 years: £160, payable within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent for the same child within 3 years of the first notice. Alternative legal action, which may include prosecution, will be considered.
- Penalty notices are paid directly to the local authority. There is no right of appeal against a penalty notice.

The school will act in accordance with Birmingham City Council's current local code of conduct for penalty notices, including checks designed to avoid duplicate notices and the local Notice to Improve process.

8. Attendance data, monitoring and partnership working

- Monitor and analyse attendance and punctuality weekly at individual, cohort and year-group level and identify early indicators of poor attendance.
- Undertake half-termly, termly and full-year analysis and benchmark school, cohort and year-group data against relevant local, regional and national information.
- Provide regular reports to teachers, leaders and governors and evaluate the impact of school-wide and targeted strategies.
- Hold regular Targeting Support Meetings with the local authority as appropriate and share legally required register information.
- Make new-pupil and deletion returns where required and provide attendance returns to the local authority at the required frequency.
- Make statutory attendance data available to the Secretary of State in accordance with current requirements.

9. Promoting good attendance

Stechford Primary School promotes the benefits of regular attendance through a strong sense of community, belonging and positive relationships. We want every pupil and family to feel known, welcomed, valued and part of school life, recognising that belonging is an important foundation for engagement and regular attendance. Our CARE values - Challenge, Achieve, Resilience and Encourage - underpin this approach: we challenge barriers to attendance, support pupils to achieve through regular participation in learning, build resilience when difficulties affect attendance, and encourage pupils and families through respectful, supportive partnerships. Attendance is promoted through assemblies, curriculum and pastoral work, communication with families and recognition of improvement. Any rewards or incentives will be used sensitively and without discrimination, ensuring pupils are not disadvantaged because of disability, health needs or other circumstances outside their control.

10. Reporting to parents

Parents will be kept regularly informed about their child's attendance and absence. Communication will aim to explain the amount of education missed and the likely impact on learning, rather than relying only on headline percentages. Where concerns arise, the school will contact parents early and invite them to work with staff on an attendance support plan where appropriate.

11. Monitoring and review

The Headteacher will review this policy at least annually and sooner where Department for Education or local authority guidance changes. The school will seek the views of pupils and parents when reviewing its attendance approach. The Governing Body will approve the policy and monitor implementation.

12. Links with other policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives

Appendix 1: Current attendance codes

The national attendance codes changed under the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024. Staff must use the current codes in the school management information system and refer to the latest DfE guidance. Key codes relevant to primary provision include:

Code	Meaning	Category / note
/	Present, morning session	Present
\	Present, afternoon session	Present
L	Late before register closes	Present
B	Attending another approved educational activity	Approved educational activity
D	Dual registered at another school	Not a possible attendance
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved educational activity
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
C1	Regulated performance or regulated employment abroad	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
J1	Interview for employment or admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
X	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to attend	Not a possible attendance
C2	Compulsory-school-age pupil on an agreed temporary part-time timetable	Authorised absence
C	Exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
I	Illness, including physical or mental health related	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded with no alternative provision yet in place	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted leave	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised absence pending clarification
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived after register closed	Unauthorised absence

Appendix 2: Key school contact information

School: Stechford Primary School

Telephone: 0121 464 3245

Senior Attendance Champion / Attendance Lead: Miss R Hatton, Headteacher

Day-to-day attendance support: Senior Learning Mentor, Family Support Worker and School Office, working with Miss R Hatton, Headteacher and Attendance Lead

Parents should notify unexpected absence before 9.00am.