

# Stalham Infant and Junior Schools Attendance Expectations

## Jargon

**Overall Attendance** = how much of school your child has attended (e.g. your overall attendance is 98.3%).

**Persistent Absence** = Your child's attendance is 90% or under and needs to be improved.  
**Authorised Absence** = the school agrees that your child needed to be off of school these days.

**Unauthorised Absence** = the school does not agree that your child should be off school these days.

## 96% or Better Overall Attendance

- Your child is meeting or exceeding the school's attendance target.

## 95.99% or Lower Overall Attendance

- Your child has fallen below the school's attendance target (96% or better).
- Your child is missing, on average, 1 lesson per week (or 39 lessons over a whole year).
- At the end of half term a letter will be sent to parents to remind families of their current attendance and the school target.

We understand that this can seem imposing and, sometimes at this point, families will feel there was nothing they could do about the attendance (due to illness, etc). Remember, the letter is just a reminder of how much your child's attendance to lessons, matters to the school.

## 93% or Lower Overall Attendance

- Your child's attendance is significantly low.
- You may receive a letter requesting an informal meeting with the school attendance team.
- It is important that you attend any meetings offered at this point so the family and school can work together to identify how attendance can be improved and help your child catch up on missed learning.
- All absences hereafter will be monitored by the attendance team.
- We work together at this point to make sure your child avoids dropping below the next threshold (90%).

It is important at this stage to appreciate that we are working together to avoid 90% or less attendance. If this should happen, evidence for absences and evidence of working with the school are vital for showing your commitment to your child's attendance and avoiding any penalties or fines which may incur following further drops in attendance.

## 90% or Lower Overall Attendance

- Your child is now classed as "persistently absent" from school.
- Your child is now missing, on average 2.5 lessons per week (or 97.5 lessons over a whole year).
- Evidence for absence will **always** be required from this point onward.
- We may consult with the Local Authority to support our monitoring of your child's attendance together with the School Attendance Team.
- You will be sent a letter inviting you to attend a formal panel meeting to support your child.
- Your child's attendance will now be closely monitored each week.

At this point, it is vital to work together to help show significant improvement in attendance to avoid Fast Track procedures from Norfolk County Council. There is a real danger of parents being prosecuted and incurring fines or penalties, if attendance hasn't improved quickly, once the Fast Track meetings are started.

## IF ATTENDANCE IS NOT IMPROVED

- You will be asked to attend a Fast Track meeting at the school, even if you refuse to attend the meeting, the meeting will take place and a formal record will be submitted regardless.
- Your child's attendance will be monitored daily.
- If your child's attendance does not significantly improve, this could now lead directly to parents being prosecuted. It is a parent's legal obligation to ensure their children attend school daily.

### IF YOUR CHILD IS UNEXPECTEDLY GOING TO MISS SCHOOL (e.g. ILLNESS, FAMILY EMERGENCY etc) YOU MUST:

- Phone the school and leave a message on the absence line (01692 580053 then option 1) or email the school office [office@stalhamacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@stalhamacademy.co.uk) stating your child's name, class and reason for absence. This must be done in the morning of the first day your child is off. On the third day of absence, you must contact the school again to give an update of their absence.

### IF YOU ARE PLANNING FOR YOUR CHILD TO MISS SCHOOL (e.g. HOSPITAL APPOINTMENT, FUNERAL etc). YOU MUST:

- Phone the school or email the office to request a Leave of Absence Request Form. Alternatively, you can write a letter to the Headteacher (signed and dated) to notify the school as to why your child will be unable to attend school on that date/s. This must be done as soon as you are aware of the need for absence. We will notify you ASAP of the decision. We advise all parents try and avoid arranging medical appointments during the school day, as this will have a negative effect on your child's attendance percentage. We also request that parents aim to make medical appointments at times that mean your child attends at least either an AM/PM registration (8.30am/1.00pm).

### REQUESTING AUTHORISED ABSENCE FOR HOLIDAYS DURING SCHOOL TERM TIME:

- Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance, in writing (forms available from the School Office). The School Attendance team will discuss each case and must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, based on the individual facts of each request, which warrant the leave. Where leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will then determine the number of school days granted and will inform you in writing. Any leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the Headteacher and School Attendance team.

### School Attendance Team

Mr Russell - Executive Headteacher of Stalham Infant and Junior Schools  
Miss Barnes - Deputy Headteacher of Stalham Infant and Junior Schools