



Attendance Policy

St. Stephen School recognizes that regular attendance at school is important to student development, readiness to learn, and social and academic progress. St. Stephen School is committed to providing a school environment that enforces the compulsory attendance law through proactive cooperation among students, parents, administrators, teachers, district judges, juvenile probation, and the Office of Children and Youth.

St. Stephen School is responsible for monitoring and maintaining records of the attendance of students. All absences will be treated as unexcused until a written excuse explaining the reason (s) for an absence is received.

Absences and tardiness are considered excused for the following reasons:

- when a student is prevented from attendance for mental or physical illness,
- family emergency
- death of a family member
- medical or dental appointments
- authorized school activities
- educational travel of five or fewer days

Absences and tardiness are NOT considered excused for the following reasons:

- Oversleeping
- Running late
- Not allowing sufficient travel time
- Forgetting supplies or materials
- Missing bus transportation due to any of the above reasons

In addition, lawful absences include student attendance at court hearings related to the student's involvement with the Office of Children and Youth or juvenile probation. It is the responsibility of St. Stephen School to determine the validity of all excuses.

Please note that a student's attendance can affect their eligibility for athletic participation.

Educational Travel (Vacations)

It is highly recommended that families plan for extended travel and vacation during the summer vacation and during school breaks. For educational travel, parents must submit an Educational Travel Application for advanced permission from the principal for a child to miss

school. Educational Travel Days (up to five full days per school year), count as part of the ten days absent without a doctor's excuse. All requests must be submitted two weeks prior to the student's absence and be pre-approved by the principal. Educational travel will be denied if the child will surpass ten cumulative absences while on the trip. Permission is given on a case-by-case basis. All missed assignments will be given upon the child's return to the school.

Cumulative Lawful (Excused) Absences

A maximum of ten days of cumulative lawful absences verified by written parent notification are permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten cumulative days require a written excuse from a physician or they will be considered unlawful.

Unlawful Absences

An absence for which the school has not received a written excuse from the parent/guardian and is not listed as a lawful excuse or has advance permission to be away for educational travel, is considered an unlawful excuse. If an excuse is not received within three days of the absence, the absence is permanently counted as unlawful.

Truancy

A student is considered truant when he/she is absent for three or more days without a valid excuse (unexcused). After three unexcused absences, the truant officer for Oil City Schools and Children and Youth Services will be contacted. The truant officer will issue fines if deemed necessary. The public school district is responsible for enforcing the Pennsylvania compulsory attendance laws.

Tardiness

Students are considered tardy if they are not in their classrooms by 8:05 a.m. Tardy students must obtain a tardy slip from the office before going to their classrooms. Tardiness due to bus delays is not counted against the student; however, the student must report to the office prior to reporting to the classroom to let staff know of their arrival. *Running late or oversleeping are NOT valid excuses for being tardy.*

Consequences for Unexcused Tardiness

Repeated unexcused tardy infractions will result in the following consequences:

1. Anytime after 8:05 am students must report to the office.
2. 2nd offense same quarter: written warning sent to parent
3. 3rd offense same quarter: parent conference with child and principal-verbal warning of detention.

In addition, per the attendance policy, for every 300 total minutes that a child is late due to tardiness that is not medically excused, one unexcused absence will be assessed.

We want every child to have success in school. If a child is not here, they are missing valuable information and instruction. Please have your child here on time every day.