



SPRINGWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy (Pupils)

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Written / Reviewed by:	Judith Pitt
Date written:	February 2015
Reviewed:	November 2020
Next Review:	November 2023

1. Introduction.

Springwood School believes that regular school attendance is the key to enabling children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them.

Springwood School recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on Safeguarding, Bullying and Behaviour. This policy also takes into account the Equality Act 2010.

2. Why Regular Attendance Is So Important.

Learning:- Any absence affects the pattern of a pupil's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a pupil's regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of parents / carers and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding:- A pupil may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding and the interests of each pupil is everyone's responsibility and, within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for each pupil encompasses:-

Attendance
Behaviour Management
Health and Safety
Access to the Curriculum
Anti-bullying

Failure to attend school on a regular basis (unless otherwise agreed) will be a Safeguarding issue.

3. Legal Framework.

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that pupils of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary, use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require schools to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

The register must record whether the pupil was:

- Present;
- Absent;
- Present at approved educational activity; or
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This is a legal requirement for all schools.

4. Understanding Types of Absence.

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the School (**not** by parents / carers) as either authorised or unauthorised. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received. This preferably needs to be in writing, although verbal explanations may be accepted where appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking families, such as contact with English speaking members of the family.

Categorised Absences - Authorised.

- **Illness** - In most cases a telephone call or a note from the parent informing the school that their child is ill will be acceptable. Parents may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be in the form of an appointment card, prescription, etc.
- **Medical / Dental Appointments** - Parents are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside of the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for part of the day. Parents should show the appointment card to school. A number of clinics are held in school including dietician, medicals, feeding etc., in order to decrease the necessity for appointments out of school.
- **Special Circumstances** - This relates to occasions where there is cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example, family bereavement, visiting a parent in prison, or part-time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration or transition package.
- **Exclusions** - Exclusions from attending school is counted as an authorised absence. The pupil's class teacher will make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Religious Observance.

Springwood School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body. Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified that only the specific days for religious observance will be authorised. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Unauthorised Absences.

Unauthorised absences are those which school do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been granted. This type of absence can lead to the school and the Local Authority using sanctions and / or legal proceedings.

- Parents / Carers keeping pupils off school unnecessarily
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping or birthdays
- Day Trips
- Family Holidays

Parents / Carers are strongly advised to avoid taking their children on holiday in term time. Parents / Carers **do not** have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time and the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The 2013 Regulations also state that Headteachers should determine the number of school days a pupil can be away from school if the leave is granted.

All requests for leave of absence **must** be given in writing and the school will respond to those requests in writing. (Please see Appendix 1)

If a pupil fails to return and contact with the parents has not been made or received, this will be discussed with the SEN Team and school may take the pupil off the school's roll in compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. This means that the pupil will lose their school place.

Persistent Absenteeism (P.A.)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 20% or more schooling across the academic year. Absence at this level is unacceptable and is doing considerable damage to the pupil's education.

School will monitor pupil absence thoroughly and the parents / carers of any pupil who has reached the P.A. mark or is at risk of moving towards it will be informed. All our P.A. pupils and their parents / carers are supported in raising attendance and are invited to an Attendance Panel with the Assistant Headteacher. At the Attendance Panel, any issues will be discussed, an action plan compiled and targets agreed.

However, it is recognised that due to the complex needs of a proportion of the pupils at Springwood there may be increased absences in order to attend hospital and / or hospital appointments, and this will be taken into account when monitoring pupil absence.

Deletions from the Register

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- The school is replaced by another school on a School Attendance Order
- The School Attendance order is revoked by the Local Authority
- The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory school age
- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Death of a pupil
- Transfer between schools
- Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil
- A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school-age
- In custody for more than four months (in discussion with the Youth Offending Team)
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the Local Authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
- Left the school but not known where he / she has gone after both the school and the Local Authority have tried to locate the pupil

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 state that schools will also have to notify the LA in the following circumstances:

- Pupil stops attending school named in school attendance order
- Pupil stops attending one school while registered at two schools
- Pupil has not returned for 10 days after authorised absence, is not believed to be unwell, and neither the school nor the local authority knows where the child is (NB The school and LA will also now be required to work cooperatively in investigating)
- Pupil has been absent from school for 20 days (continuous) without authorisation

Roles & Responsibilities **School and the Governing Body.**

Springwood School believes that improved attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, Governors, parents / carers, pupils and the wider school community.

As such the school will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents / carers.
- As per school policy, review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Identify a member of the Governing Body to lead on attendance matters.
- Ensure that the Registration Regulations, England, 2006, 2013 and 2016, and other attendance related legislation is complied with.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through half termly reporting at Governing Body committee meetings.
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority and / or Department of Education as required.
- Ensure that the school has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Telephone parents / carers on the first day of absence.
- Form positive relationships with parents / carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource.
- Develop a multi-agency approach to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the Local Authority should legal proceedings be instigated.

Parents Will:

- Contact the school immediately if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return. Follow this up with a note where possible on the child's return.
- Try to avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists, etc., outside school hours.
- Ask for school to help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bed times, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before.
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid taking their child on holiday during term-time.
- Keep the school informed of any changes to emergency telephone numbers.

Attendance Data and Targets

The school has targets to improve attendance and pupils and their families play an important part in meeting these targets. Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and any other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

School recognises that poor attendance may be an indication of difficulties in a pupil's life. Parents are asked to make school aware of any changes or difficulties in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance. This will help school identify any additional support that may be required

Whole school attendance is monitored by the Assistant Head each half term. This monitoring process analyses individuals and a range of pupil groups (listed below) and tracks their attendance over time. Analysis each half term makes it possible for early intervention to take place to promote attendance should it fall below 90%.

Identified groups for attendance monitoring include:-


- Whole school
- Year groups
- Male
- Female
- Free School Meals
- Looked After Children

Staff involved in School Attendance are:

- Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher
- School Admin Team and SIMS Manager
- Allocated Educational Welfare Officer to carry out termly register inspections

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the above staff if you have queries regarding attendance.

Appendix 1

LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME Request Form			
Name of Parent / Carer			
Address			
Telephone Number			
Pupil Name			
Reason for request			
Dates (Inclusive)	From:	To:	



.....
This slip will be returned home

School Action

Does this reflect the School Policy?	Yes	No
The request has been agreed	Agreed	Denied
Criteria		
Signed		