

Springdale First School

Imagine, Believe, Achieve!



Attendance Policy

Our school welcomes your child. We are excited to get started on this year's lessons and activities.

Help your child be an attendance HERO! **H**ere, **E**very day, **R**eady, **O**n time!

If your child is registered at our school, it is our responsibility to work with you and your family to ensure regular school attendance. Good attendance is linked to better life chances in the future.

In our school we have a member of the senior leadership team who leads on attendance as well as your child's class teacher, pastoral Lead and our pupil officer, who are always happy to talk.

In the event of your child being absent, to support attendance we may:

- make daily contact with you to seek information on your child's well-being and reason for absence
- visit you at home as part of our safeguarding responsibility
- meet with you and your child to find agreed solutions to any barriers in attending
- make reasonable adjustments to help your child attend
- work with you to decide on a plan to include your child's voice in helping them attend
- seek outside agency help as needed
- keep records of any absence and reasons for absence
- inform the local authority if needed

Missing school can mean missing out.

Talk to us if your child is having difficulties coming to school.

Please phone the school by 9am on the first morning of absence and each morning after that. This helps us keep your child safe.

If we are not satisfied with the reason for absence, we may not authorise the absence. If your child has more than 10 unauthorised absences in any 8-week period, we may issue a fixed penalty notice warning and alert the local authority.

Headteacher: Miss Debbie Budden

Attendance Lead: Mrs Simonne Burgess

Pupil Officer: Mrs Jo Lee

Registration: 8.45am

Present mark given until: 8.45am

Late mark given between: 8.45am-9am

U code, un-authorised absence, applied after: 9am

This policy adheres to Department of Education guidance found here [School attendance guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614222/school-attendance-guidance.pdf) Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education as stated here [Stat guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614222/stat-guidance-template.pdf)

Statement of Intent

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents/ Carers and pupils play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.

The policy is based on current Government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

Responsibilities of classroom staff

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately.
- Promote and reward good attendance with pupils at all appropriate opportunities.
- Liaise with the attendance leader on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of pupils

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents/Carers will:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence.
- Discuss with the class teacher any planned absences well in advance.
- Support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year.
- Make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone or text on the first and subsequent days of absence, or by letter if a phone is unavailable.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments.
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

Responsibilities of Governors

The governing body will play an appropriate role in challenging and supporting the school in promoting attendance in line with National Average expectations. A named Governor will have responsibility for attendance and ensure regular visits and reviews are made with the Attendance Lead.

Registration

The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day: once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for the completing the attendance registers using the electronic system and prescribed codes. The registers will be taken promptly at the start of each session. A mark will be made in respect of each child at these times.

Recording attendance

We will record attendance twice daily using the following coding-

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip <u>organised, or approved, by the school</u>
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<u>Authorised absence</u>		
C	<u>Authorised leave of absence</u>	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	<u>Authorised holiday</u>	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during <u>their public examinations</u>
T	Gypsy, Roma and <u>Traveller absence</u>	Pupil from a <u>Traveller</u> community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised absence		
G	<u>Unauthorised holiday</u>	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	<u>Unauthorised absence</u>	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
Other circumstances		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Requests for leave of absence

The DfE states: 'Head teachers should only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. If a head teacher grants a leave request, it will be for the head teacher to determine the length of time that the child can be away from school. Leave is unlikely, however, to be granted for the purposes of a family holiday as a norm.'

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and enforced from September 2013: (Pupil registration) (England) regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional** circumstances only and this is not the norm. It is important to note that Headteachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well as whether absence is authorised at all.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable circumstances (which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time). There are no rules on this as circumstances vary from school to school and family to family.

There is no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and, in most cases, holiday will not be authorised.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for a leave of absence need to fill in an application form (available from the school office) in advance and before making any travel arrangements. If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will automatically be unauthorised. If the number of sessions absent equates to 10 or more sessions in an academic year, the school may request the Local Authority to consider issuing a fine or a warning letter.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and as such, we expect parents to help us by not arranging holidays during school time.

School work for pupils that are absent will only be provided during exclusions or long-term medical absences and not during unauthorised absences.

Lateness/Punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions. The start of school is used to give out instructions or organise work. If your child is late, they can miss work time with their class teacher getting vital information, cause disruption to the lesson for others, and it can be embarrassing leading to possible further absence.

- The school day begins at 8.45am.
- All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U in line with Department of Education guidance. This mark shows them to be on site but is legally recorded as an absence.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentist appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10-week period, the school or LA will be required to issue parents/carers with a Penalty Notice. If you collect your child, please collect your child promptly at the end of the school day. Where late collection is persistent and/or significantly late, the school is obliged to take any uncollected pupil to a place of safety and share concerns, as necessary, with other agencies. If one is available, the school will place a child into the after-school club and provide the parent/carer with the bill.

Absence Due to Illness

It is recognised that children can become ill and may occasionally need to have time off school. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, school will request parents to provide medical evidence to support the illness.

Letters and recommendations from medical professionals will be considered on a case-by-case basis but will not automatically be seen as a reason to authorise an absence. Absences due to parents/carers health or medical procedures will not be authorised. If your child is unwell and you are unsure of whether to send them in to school a useful site to check is <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

What to do if my child is absent

First Day Absence

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding** matter in the first instance. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is always required.

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence (before 9am).
- If contact is not made by the parent/carer, then the school will phone, email and/or text the contacts listed for this child to endeavour to make contact.

If your child is absent, we will:

Telephone on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you; This is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance. If we are unable to reach you and do not hear from you by 10am, your child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and we will continue to try and contact you via named contacts on your child's record and if we are still unable to make contact we will seek advice from the Local Authority and/or Children's services for next steps. We may-

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Inclusion/Pastoral if absences persist
- If absence is unauthorised and attendance falls below 90%, we will follow all DfE guidance

Please note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence the school is required to start child missing in education procedures. We will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends, wider family.

Third day absence

If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with you or any of the named parent/carers after three days of absence the school is required to start a Child Missing in Education procedure as set down by Southampton Council Guidance. We will make all reasonable enquires to establish contact with parents and the child including making enquires to known friends, and wider family. The Family Support Worker or SLT member will try to establish contact. If contact is unsuccessful the school will follow BCP guidance by making a CME referral.

Ten days' absence

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Continued or ongoing absence

If your child misses 10% (three weeks/30sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as **persistent absentees**. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education. If your child is still absent has had absence and their attendance level is falling towards 90%, we will contact you and, depending on the reasons for the absence, will contact you to inform you of our next steps. All our persistent absentee pupils and their parents are subject to an Attendance Recovery Action Plan

Medical Conditions

Pupils attending our Schools may have medical conditions, either long or short term that will affect their attendance at some stage in their school career. We understand that students with medical conditions are more vulnerable and have greater needs than many of their mainstream counterparts. This means that they may have more genuine absences from school for medical reasons or experience greater social needs than others. It is our responsibility as educators to do all we can to encourage and support regular and frequent school attendance whilst they are facing the challenge of ill health and remove the in-school barriers these pupils face, including considering external support and reasonable adjustments, for example, supporting their ongoing learning.

One of our aims is to support children back into school as soon as their health allows. We aim to help ensure that the reintegration process encourages maximum attendance is resumed as quickly as possible. This includes working with families, ensuring that they understand how important regular attendance is to their child's development and health. We will support routines where school transport is regularly being missed and work with other partners to encourage the scheduling of additional support interventions or medical appointments outside of the main school day.

We give high priority to conveying to parents/carers and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance. If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents/carers and pupils, alongside the main educational setting, to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

It is crucial that our schools receive and fully consider advice from healthcare professionals and listen to and value the views of parents and pupils. We understand that some children with medical conditions may be disabled, under the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. Some pupils may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. We will ensure that staff are properly trained to provide the support that pupils need, their healthcare plan is closely monitored and implement an Individual Healthcare plan if needed. We do not, however, have to accept a child in school at times where it would be detrimental to the health of that child or others to do so.

We are committed to ensuring that all relevant staff are made aware of a child's condition, that there are cover arrangements in place in case of staff absence or turnover and any supply staff are briefed fully. Parents/carers should provide the school with sufficient and up-to-date information about their child's medical needs. Our attendance policy should be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so we will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

Policy Review

The school will review this policy each year.

Date of review: September 2023