

SPRINGSIDE SCHOOL



ATTENDANCE POLICY



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INTRODUCTION

Springside aims for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the school community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school and on time every day that the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends school regularly and this Policy sets out how we will achieve this together.

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS SO IMPORTANT:

Learning - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines and this may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility. Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE:

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents/carers, professionals and all members of school staff.

The school is committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure a high level of attendance. The pupils should only be absent if the cause is "unavoidable". Allowing a child to be absent without good reason is **against the law**.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason (illness, attendance at clinics/hospital etc or other unavoidable causes).

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable, and for which no agreement has been made.

On rare occasions some children may need encouragement to attend regularly. Any problems, worries or concerns are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. At all times it is important to stress that attendance does matter. Parents should contact school at an early stage and we will work together in resolving problems/worries.

If any difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school will refer to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the local authority. The EWO and the school will try to resolve the difficulties by agreement with parents and in the best interest of the child. If other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, the EWO can use court proceedings to prosecute parents/carers or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the pupil.

Parents/carers may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask their advice. They are independent of the school. Their telephone number is available from the school, or from the Local Education Authority.

PROCEDURES

Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are asked to telephone the school on the first day of their child's absence. The school will decide if the absence is to be counted as authorised. Although parents may send a message into school with the bus escort, they must still also telephone school to inform staff why a child is absent.

The school will endeavour to contact the parents/carers of an absent child, on the first day of absence where no telephone call has been received to find out the reason for the absence.

Pupils must attend on time to be given an attendance mark for that session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. Parents are expected to ensure that pupils are present at registration.

Pupils who are unwell in school

When a child becomes unwell at school the teacher should direct TAs to take necessary action. If the pupil continues to be unwell this should be reported to the class teacher in the first instance, who will contact the Head/deputy/assistant head to make the decision to contact parents/carers. In the case of vomiting and diarrhoea, due to viral infection, the medical recommendation is for children to stay at home for 48 hours. This will be reviewed daily in conjunction with families.

Holidays

Holiday leave in term time will not be authorised except in the most exceptional cases e.g. a child on an end of life plan who has the opportunity to have an experience from the 'Make a Wish' foundation. This will be authorised by the headteacher.

Eid

Every Muslim student can take 1 day off for each of the two Eid Celebrations and will be given an authorised absence (R). Any extra time taken off school will be registered as an unauthorised absence.

Parent/Carer's Telephone Numbers

As a safeguarding issue it is imperative that parents/carers keep the school informed of any changes to their telephone numbers so that school can contact them to follow up any un-informed absence.

School Staff

Classroom staff must take the attendance register at the start of the first session and at the start of the afternoon session of each school day. The registers will be closed by 9.30 am for the morning session and 1.30 pm for the afternoon session. On each occasion they must record whether every pupil is:

Present;

Attending an approved educational activity;

Absent; or

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will follow up any absence to:

Ascertain the reason;

Ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken;

Identify whether the absence is approved or not: and,

Identify the correct code to use before entering it onto the school's electronic register, or management information system which is used to download data to the school Census.

Roles and Responsibilities

Ensuring the best attendance possible is an integrated partnership between home, school, Education Welfare and any other Agencies involved with the pupil.

Parents/Carers - Have a legal responsibility to ensure that the pupil attends, and they must inform the school office immediately about any reasons for absence, by telephone.

Deputy Headteacher - Will oversee the whole school policy and will report to the Headteacher and Governors, as well as liaising with the EWO and other external agencies. The Deputy Headteacher, with assistance from the Senior Administrator, will also monitor the attendance figures.

Class Teachers/Admin staff - Will encourage and stress the importance of good attendance and punctuality and inform the Deputy Headteacher of any concerns. The classroom staff will ensure the electronic registration is carried out in an accurate and timely manner and the administrative staff will ensure that any un-notified absences are chased up.

EWO - Will liaise with the Deputy Headteacher on a regular basis. The EWO will carry out any necessary home visits or joint home visits and will give guidance to school regarding attendance monitoring and safeguarding issues.

SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its attendance/absence figures to parents and to promote good attendance. Equally, parents/carers have a duty to make sure that their child/ren attend school every day, where possible.

School staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to ensure a high level of attendance and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ABSENCE

