



ATTENDANCE POLICY

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| Approved by: Judy Packham | Date: 02/09/2024 |
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Policy statement

This policy describes the importance Springboard attaches to ensuring a high level of attendance. The practices incorporated into this document have evolved as a result of constant review and consultation with staff, parents, education welfare service, and students.

Legal framework

The policy is based upon guidance from:

- A. Working together to improve school attendance (Statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities)
- B. The Education Reform Act 1988
- C. OFSTED recommendations.
- D. The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) National Forum for Values in Education and the Community Consultation Document (November 1996).
- E. West Sussex LA Policy on Attendance.
- F. Keeping Children Safe in Education

Overview

It is often the nature of our students, particularly the older ones, to be absent from time to time. One of Springboard's strengths is our engagement with learners whose attendance at school has been very low or even zero for some time. Consequently, attendance figures need to be viewed on an individual basis, usually showing great improvement over time.

Background

At the heart of good attendance is the value and importance that parents, carers and students put on what the school has to offer.

School must be seen as a centre that helps develop individual intelligence, skills and talents so that students can face the future with confidence.

School must be a community that teaches the skills needed for students to develop into co-operative and useful members of the society of which they are part.

It must ensure that students feel secure, supported and stimulated. Schools should provide students with a sense of wonder, fascination and enthusiasm to want to continue to learn.

In order to achieve and make the most out of their time at school good attendance is crucial. If students are not attending, they cannot learn; if students are not present, they cannot be helped.

All efforts must be made to ensure their best possible attendance.

Roles and responsibilities

Ensuring the best attendance possible is a partnership involving many people, who play different roles in helping the students make the best use of their time at school:

Parent / Carers: need to support the general attendance of their child and keep the school well informed as possible about any reasons for absence. For children under the age of 16, their parent/guardian/carer have the legal obligation of ensuring their child attends school under law.

Class Teacher: encourage and stress good attendance and punctuality, accurate register information, follow up notes / liaise with families, discuss targets, keep records, display information and raise attendance awareness.

Senior Leadership: will oversee the whole school policy – report to Directors / liaise with external agencies, work with management team and Directors in setting targets for improvement. Monitor registers and administration procedures, weekly registers, unauthorised absentees - sign in/ out book/ attendance data for DfES and school on the school system.

Both the HMI and the Elton Report (1989) emphasise the responsibility of the Directors to ensure that attendance registers are properly kept and that regular returns of attendance figures are made to the DfES.

Attendance data is reported to SLT termly.

Aims

1. To create a positive environment in which attendance is valued, praised and rewarded.
2. To expect good attendance.
3. To monitor and evaluate individual attendance patterns.
4. To be aware of and sensitive to individual needs and respond to them.
5. To facilitate the recording and reporting to the LA and the DfE.

Statement of values

The curriculum and other opportunities available at Springboard are only accessible if the student attends on a regular basis.

It is vital that the school works in partnership with parents, carers, guardians and the student in order to ensure a positive environment that aims to encourage attendance and an active involvement in the educative process. Confidentiality is always respected, unless the safety of the student is compromised.

Statistical information

The following points should be considered:

- Attendance is a joint school/ parent responsibility. The school will always attempt to make contact with home on the first day of un-notified absence and will take appropriate action if this is unsuccessful.
- Non-attendance is possible avoidance strategy. Avoidance could be due to
 1. bullying
 2. consequences of actions
 3. sanctions
 4. certain lessons
 5. 'unusual events'
- Non-attendance is possibly habitual.
- Non-attendance is possibly disaffection.
- Non-attendance is possibly a condoned outcome.
- Non-attendance is possibly a sign of neglect.
- The school monitors non-attendance across the age range against a number of criteria.

Attendance assessment

- Identify trends in non-attendance.
- Identify reasons for absence, poor behaviour and lack of progress.
- A note of explanation from the parent must follow non-attendance (or an unjustified mark). If the attendance pattern causes concern, then the following procedures should be engaged.

Procedure of persistent non-attendance

1. Contact made to home by School Admin/Safeguarding Team to ascertain reasons for non-attendance.
2. Management to hold weekly behaviour and attendance meetings to identify students and families who need extra support to improve attendance.

3. The Safeguarding team must be made aware about the lack of attendance and must support the Headteacher in improving schools' attendance.
4. Head Teacher to ascertain reasons for absence if persistent.
 - 4.1 A letter will be sent home to remind parent/guarding/carer of attendance percentage going down.
 - 4.2 Meeting together with parents, carers and staff to discuss strategies to improve attendance and when appropriate students should be included.
 - 4.3 Student will be put into an attendance improvement plan, where attendance will be monitored for a period of 10 weeks, any absences without a doctor note will be classed as unauthorised. LEA will be informed of this step.
 - 4.4 The safeguarding team will begin to make referrals if attendance does not improve
 - 4.5 In extreme cases the LEA will issue fines for non-attendance.
5. Legal implications can be negative therefore it is preferable to foster positive home / school links to find areas of interest to motivate the student into a positive attitude towards the school curriculum.
6. Individual programmes or re-integration of long term absentees.
7. Parents may have difficulties in assisting improved attendance e.g. transport problems. All necessary help should be offered to gain a more positive attendance record.
8. If non-attendance (Springboard has an expectation of a minimum of 85% attendance) remains persistent the local authority needs to be made aware of the situation.
9. Regular lateness will also be followed up.

10. Home Visit by staff to assess the situation, discuss any problems and help come to a positive solution.

Strategies for promoting good attendance

Generally, the school aims to make the environment as welcoming as possible. Students are encouraged to make use of leisure and play facilities are provided during breaks. Staff promote positive interactions with the student at all appropriate opportunities. Parents and Carers are informed on a regular basis of their child's achievements.

Examples of Strategies for Improving Attendance

HMI are in favour of positive strategies that encourage students to attend, and support the following:

- Scrupulous maintenance of registers, careful monitoring of the attendance of individual students and swift and effective following action;
- Raising the profile of attendance by setting targets, involving classes and students;
- Entering improvements on the school record of a poor attender;
- Devising flexible and innovative responses to those who find it difficult to attend regularly for whatever reason;
- Welcoming students back after illness, and taking specific measures to ease students back into school after protracted absence;
- Teachers to prepare work to be sent home to encourage and support students to come back to school;
- Briefing teachers on how to organise the work of a class to allow for returning absentees without loss of momentum for the class as a whole;

Registration

The system for marking registers is as follows:

The register may only be completed by a member of staff and this should be done using **Class Charts** system, under, **Attendance tab**. **If the system is not available a paper register will be used.**

Symbols to denote reason for absence should be used according to this chart.

Register codes

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| / | Present at the school AM | Authorised | |
| \ | Present at the school PM | Authorised | |
| # | Planned whole or partial school closure | Authorised | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • days between terms; • half terms; • occasional days (for example, bank holidays); • weekends (where it is required by the management information system); • up to 5 non-educational days; • use of the whole school as a polling station |
| - | All should attend/No Mark Recorded | | Incomplete Register |
| B | Attending any other approved educational activity | Authorised | <p>The pupil is attending a place for any other approved educational activity.</p> <p>A comment must be added, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending courses at college • Attending taster days <p>(Not to be used as dual registration)</p> |

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| C | Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances | Authorised | Leave of absence granted by school. E.G: Funeral, pupil is pregnant, service families. |
| C1 | Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad. | Authorised | Paragraph 317 to 320 of Working together to improve school attendance for more information. |
| C2 | Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable | Authorised | Part time timetable. There must be an agreement between the school and the parents and written evidence. |
| D | Dual register at another school | Authorised | Students that attend college. |
| E | Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made | Authorised | |
| G | Holiday not granted by the school | Unauthorised | |
| I | Illness - Not medical or dental appointment | Authorised | Student is unable to attend due to illness (both physical and mental health related) |
| J1 | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution | Authorised | |
| K | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority | Authorised | The pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil, for educational provision arranged by a local authority under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996 (exceptional provision of education), section 42(2), or 61(1) of the Children and |

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| | | | <p>Families Act 2014 (special educational provision off site). A pupil attending provision arranged by the school rather than the local authority must be recorded using Codes P or B instead.</p> <p>A comment must be added, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home tutoring • College courses |
| L | Late arrival before the register is closed | Authorised | Only AM, add how many minutes late to the description box and reason why if known. |
| M | Leave of absence for the purpose of attending a medical or dental appointment | Authorised | |
| N | Reason for absence not yet established | Unauthorised | Follow non-attendance by 9:15 procedure. (Admin staff to be informed) |
| O | Absent in other or unknown circumstances | Unauthorised | Where no reason for absence is established or the school is not satisfied that the reason given is one that would be recorded using one of the codes statistically classified as authorised. |
| P | Participation in a sporting activity | Authorised | |
| Q | Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements | Authorised | The pupil is unable to attend the school because a local authority has a duty set out in regulation 10(12) or (13) to make access arrangements to enable the pupil's attendance at school and have failed to do so. |
| R | Religious Observance | Authorised | |
| S | Leave of absence for the purpose of | Authorised | |

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| | studying for a public examination | | |
| T | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Authorised | |
| U | Arrived in school after registration closed | Unauthorised | After 9:30 arrival without unexplained reason. (SLT discussion, this goes case by case) |
| V | Attending an educational visit or trip | Authorised | |
| W | Attending work experience | Authorised | |
| X | Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school | Authorised | |
| Y1 | Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available | Authorised | <p>The pupil is unable to attend because the school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport to and from the school that is normally provided for the pupil by the school or local authority is not available.</p> <p>Walking distance in relation to a child under the age of 8, means 2 miles, and for a child of 8 or above, means 3 miles. In each case measured by the nearest available route.</p> |
| Y2 | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel | Authorised | The pupil is unable to attend the school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency. |
| Y3 | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed | Authorised | Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use and the pupil is one of those that the school considers cannot practicably be accommodated in those part of the premises that remain in use. |

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| Y4 | Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed | Authorised | Where a school was planned to be open for a session, but the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather), the attendance register is not taken as usual because there is no school session. Instead, every pupil listed in the admission register at the time must be marked with code Y4 to record the fact that the school is closed. |
| Y5 | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention | Authorised | The pupil is unable to attend the school because they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in police detention, • remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing •detained under a sentence of detention. |
| Y6 | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law | Authorised | The pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contrary to any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease published by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (or the equivalent in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), • prohibited by any legislation relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease |
| Y7 | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause | Authorised | This code should be used only where something in the nature of an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending the session in question. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent. The fact that a parent has done all they can to secure the attendance of the pupil at school does not, in itself, mean |

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| | | | the pupil has been prevented by unavoidable cause. A comment must be added. |
| Z | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Authorised | |
| 1* | Internal suspension | Authorised | Only agreed by SLT |

If a student arrives late after registration has closed at 9.30 a.m. or at 1.30 p.m. Staff should inform management team, giving date, time, and reason.

Definitions

Authorised absence: students are deemed to have authorised absence if we are given knowledge of illness or a prior reason for absence which is within the definition for authorised absence in the latest Government Circular on the subject. **Staff MUST not assume authorised absence until agreed with Senior Management Team, until then staff should assume the absence is unauthorised.**

Unauthorised absence: The law requires absences not agreed in advance to be unauthorised unless and until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming. Students are deemed to have unauthorised absence if we know that the child is truanting - i.e. the parent assumes that the child is in school, or if we are given an unacceptable reason for a child's absence.

Although, we understand that parents may want to take their child out of school to attend family holidays, Springboard advises that parents do not do this. The Headteacher will not authorise any holiday requests, the attendance for the student will be marked as **CODE O**.

Procedures

Registers are taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions in the **Class Charts** system. **If the system is not available a paper register will be used.**

- A welcome duty rota has been created where two members of staff will wait at the entrance of the school to greet students, parents and/or visitors.
- A member of the main office staff will oversee the welcome duty staff.

- Students MUST arrive at school between 8:45 am and 9:00 am.
- Welcome duty staff will be to complete the morning register on Class charts and paper register.
- Welcome duty staff are to redirect children directly to their classes and also to monitor which students have not arrived for school.
- The students that arrive between 9:00am and 9:30am should be marked as “late” and in the text box staff should state the number of minutes.
- Welcome duty staff are to inform the main office staff at 9:00am and notify who is yet to arrive.
- Welcome duty staff are to inform the main office staff at 9:10am and notify who is yet to arrive.
- Main office staff will make the calls to the parents/carers and any important information regarding the absence will be fed back to the relevant class teacher/Tas, via Teams or in person.
- Teachers/LSAs/HTLAs **DO NOT** have to make calls to parents or chase missing students. This will allow them to start their tutor time promptly.
- If a student arrives in the meantime at any point, then this should be communicated immediately either by Teams, in person or phone call to SLT/Admin. (Emails may not be picked up immediately).
- If a student does not arrive in the meantime, **CODE N (Reason for absence not yet established)** is to be used in the register until school has contacted the parent/carer/guardian.
- If a student arrives but walks away from school premises, register should not be completed, welcome duty staff to attempt to ascertain a reason from the student, remind them to come back to school, also inform the main office staff who will make a decision on the next steps.
- If a student absconds before arriving into school premises, register must not be completed, welcome duty staff to inform the main office, if possible staff to follow the student and request for further support. Main office will make a decision on the next steps. If the student goes missing, staff must follow **Missing Person Procedure**.
- Teachers are required to complete the afternoon registers by 1:30pm.

The register is closed at 9.30 and those who arrive later are marked **CODE U (Arrived in school after registration closed)** and a reason is asked for, unless we have prior notice of the lateness - e.g., Dental or doctors’ appointment etc.

Parents and carers are requested to let Springboard as soon as possible by email, phone call or verbal message.

From time-to-time letters are sent to all parents reminding them of the importance of regular attendance.

If the child does not arrive at school and staff have been unable to reach out to parents and/or taxi company within a 30 minutes window, school will either do home welfare check or contact the police to make a welfare check.

Link to other policies

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

Missing Person Procedure

Positive behaviour support and Physical intervention Policy

Discipline and exclusion Policy

Education and Welfare Policy

Health & Safety Policy and Procedure

Student mobile phone Policy