

Sprowston Cluster of Schools



Cecil Gowing Infant
Falcon Junior
Garrick Green Infant
Hainford and Frettenham Primary
Partnership
Hall School
Lodge Lane Infant
Old Catton Junior
Sparhawk Infant and Nursery
Spixworth Infant
Sprowston Community High
Sprowston Infant
Sprowston Junior
White Woman Lane Junior

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Approved by Cluster Governors and the Governing Body of Cecil Gowing infant school.

September 2019

Review date: September 2021

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Aims

The Sprowston Cluster of Schools is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards 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.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

Each year schools in the Sprowston Cluster will set individual attendance/absence targets for their school.

Each school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it an explanation of the procedures that this school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorize the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Authorised Absence
2. Unauthorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996. Eg) Illness or medical appointments which unavoidably fall in school time. We ask parents/carers to try to book dentist/doctor appointments after 1.45pm so pupils can receive their attendance marks for the day.

2. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

These include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips or holidays in term time

Whilst any child maybe off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or give into pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

Holidays in Term Time

- From July 2013 the law states that holidays can no longer be authorised.
- Any parent/carer requesting time out of school needs to discuss with the headteacher/designated person to clarify the reason.
- Records of absence are filed.
- The Sprowston Cluster of Schools follows guidelines and takes advice from our attendance officer.
- Absences other than illness can be marked as “Exceptional circumstances” (code C) if they meet the criteria agreed by the Sprowston Cluster of schools.

Each school within the Sprowston Cluster of Schools will maintain individual discretion but agree that exceptional circumstances may include:

- Armed forces personnel returning from a tour of duty
- Police or other service personnel whose leave has been cancelled during school holidays.
- Family funeral

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention through the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where they have:

- 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time (for absences from 1 September 2017);
or
- 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday.

The intervention could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice and any pupil who meets

either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. If unpaid, a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued; both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28 days. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

In order to support schools with the collection of information to send to the court officer. Sprowston Cluster Schools may now request medical evidence if a pupil is absent.

The registration System

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorized absence
O	Unauthorized absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorized absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorized absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances



Sparhawk Infant and Nursery School

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Sparhawk Infant and Nursery School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

Aims of this policy:

- To Safeguard pupils and ensure they receive their right to education.
- To improve and maintain levels of attendance consistent with established targets.
- To ensure that there is common and consistent practice amongst staff.
- To raise parents and pupils awareness of the importance of good attendance and of the impact attendance has upon achievement.
- To have a system of incentives and rewards which encourage individual pupils, and whole classes, to attend regularly.
- To ensure that pupils are not removed from roll other than within the safeguarding procedures set out by the local authority.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards 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.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Promoting attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The Home/School agreement will contain details of how we will work with parents and our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance.

We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good attendance and how this will benefit them.

Leave of absence in term time

Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorise the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply in advance for permission for their child to have leave of absence.

The Local Authority has introduced a system where any pupil who has an attendance of 85% or has more than 15% unauthorised absence in a 6 week period, This equates to 4.5 days unauthorised absence, will meet the criteria for legal intervention which could be in the form of a Fixed Penalty Notice. Any request must be made in writing to the Headteacher before the holiday is taken.

From 7th January 2014, any pupil who meets either criterion will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 *per parent per child* which must be paid in one payment in 21 days. Please refer to 'Fixed Penalty Notices for Unauthorised Leave' in the appendices.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences will be in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education.

Registers

Class teacher's complete the registers at morning and afternoon registration. In their absence, this task is completed by the Lead Teaching Assistant or a Supply teacher.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:55 AM. The registers will remain open for 15 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1:15 PM.

The registers will close at 1:30 PM

Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.

First Day Absence

School should be informed by 10:00 am on the 1st day of absence either by e-mail, text or by telephone.

If no contact is received from the parent/carer of the pupil on the morning of the first day of absence, the school office will contact the parent/carer by telephone or text if the parent/carer is unavailable, we will then contact other listed members of the family/ carers (provided on admission).

The information given from a telephone call or letter is passed on to the class team either verbally or by written message. E-mail information will be transferred straight to the register or a copy printed to the class team.

We may contact other emergency contacts for a pupil if we cannot contact parents/carers.

Third Day Absence

Where no message has been received from the parent/carer by the 2nd day of absence contact is made by telephone or letter (subject to any child protection concerns) or advice sought from the Attendance Officer or Social Services.

Continuing Absence

Advice will be sought from the Attendance Officer or Social Services particularly if there are child protection concerns.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Safeguarding responses to children who go missing

6.14 At Sparhawk all staff should be aware of the safeguarding responsibilities for children who are missing education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risks of their going missing in future.

At Sparhawk we adhere to the following procedures and processes to ensure there is an appropriate safeguarding response to children who missing:

- An attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session;
- We make every effort to contact parents and carers and follow up with the emergency contacts held;
- We hold at least two emergency contact numbers for each of the pupils on our roll wherever possible.
- Staff will alert DSLs to any concerns raised regarding children who are absent from school;
- The DSLs will meet regularly with the Attendance Lead, SENCo and other members of the pastoral team to ensure that each response is thorough and takes into account all the relevant information about individual children;
- We will follow the procedures outlined in our attendance policy including undertaking first day calling and monitoring data to ensure we intervene early in cases of poor attendance and/or unexplained absences.
- When removing a child from roll at the standard and non-standard transition points we will inform the Local Authority in accordance with statutory requirements and pass on all safeguarding files.
- If we have concerns around attendance we adopt the following: home visits, referral to Parent Support Advisor, attendance panel meetings with parents and carers, FSP etc

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the school office to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser

if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the attendance team.

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% will be subject to an action plan to support their return to full attendance. These action plans will be set up by the Headteacher.

The action plan will include engagement with all parties who can support the pupil's attendance. Other systems of support e.g. the Parent Support Advisor, Fast Track or the Early Help Assessment will be initiated where appropriate.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance:

- Termly attendance certificates and badges for individual pupils achieving 100% attendance
- Termly attendance certificates and badges for individual pupils achieving 97% attendance
- Monthly 'Sparky' Bear awarded to the class with the best attendance
- Weekly 'Jabba' Puppet awarded to the class with the best attendance
- End of year certificates for 100% attendance for staff and pupils.
- Display of our current attendance data and target in the front entrance of our school.
- Regular attendance information in school newsletters.
- Weekly reward for the class with the highest attendance

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

If a pupil is receiving education off site or is attending at a school where they are dual registered with, the school will liaise with the other education provider to check on attendance.

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Record preservation

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years.

Computer registers will be printed out at least once a month and bound into annual volumes or preserved as electronic back-ups and will be available for each month .

Register Security

Registers or attendance marking sheets if used must be safely stored. These are stored in the School Office.

Dayna Hewitt is our named governor for attendance.

Appendices

1 The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
- [b] To any special needs he may have.
either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Attendance Targets

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education (School Attendance Targets)(England) Regulations 2007

Guidance documents on attendance.

The following DfE documents are used to guide attendance recording.

Absence and Attendance codes (Guidance for Schools and Local Authorities)

Keeping Pupil Registers (Guidance on applying the Education Pupil Registration Regulations)

These and other guidance documents are available on the DfE website.

