



## Attendance Policy



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## 1. Aims & Rationale

**For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential.**

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#), through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all children
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every child has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure children have the support in place to attend school

Spring Lane staff are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our children and endeavour to provide an environment where all children feel valued and welcome. Parents and children play an important part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which they are entitled. Parents, carers, leaders 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 children and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. This will be through strategies such as weekly bulletins containing attendance data and celebrating classes with high attendance in weekly assemblies.

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 progress rates, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying

- Regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. We will work with parents to ensure our expectations of what parents will need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance are clear.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Provide information on all matters related to attendance in our regular news bulletin and on our website
- Report to you on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

### 3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, children and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
  - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
  - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific children, where appropriate
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual children or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance, providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting children needs
- Holding the Head of School to account for the implementation of this policy

### 3.2 The Head of School, with support from the Senior Leadership Team

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Building a culture of community and belonging for children which supports school attendance

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it at Campfire Education Trust (CET) Head Teacher fortnightly briefings and to the Local Governing Body (LGB)
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Improving universal provision for all children, supporting improvements with attendance where cohorts or classes are identified as needing leadership action
- Working with the parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), alongside our SENDCOs to develop specific support approaches for attendance for children with SEND and where children with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating, alongside our SENDCOs with the local authority when a child with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the child's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to children and parents through all available channels

### **3.3 The attendance lead**

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Effectively implementing and regularly reviewing the attendance policy at all levels
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children through SIMs, Astar and INSIGHT data systems
- Building a holistic understanding of children and families, supporting the diagnosis of specific needs
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating the impact of approaches
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with children, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Communicating effectively with families, building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance barriers
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with children and their parents/carers
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to children and families to supplement universal provision

### **3.4 The office and admin mentor**

The office and admin mentor is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7) for DfE groups and percentages
- Issuing attendance letters in line with the school policy and recording actions taken on SIMs
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Booking attendance meetings for SLT
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance, and the Head of School
- Working with outside agencies to tackle persistent absence, in agreement with SLT
- Advising the Head of School and Attendance Lead when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### 3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes (see Appendix 1), and submitting this information promptly to the school office once the register is closed. If parents attempt to report absence via class teachers, they are responsible for re-directing them to the school office so that the correct attendance procedures are followed.

- Input either a present code or N in the register only
- Build positive relationships with parents/carers of children who have been identified by the attendance lead as either severely absent or persistently absent, communicating via My Concern relevant holistic information which identifies barriers to attendance
- Communicate pro-actively with the school office where there is an absence concern

### 3.6 School Office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls and emails from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school SIMs system, following the attendance call flow chart
- Follow up on unexplained absences and update SIMs accordingly, prioritising the vulnerable children and flagging with SLT where concerns remain
- Check and add the relevant late information from inventory to SIMs
- Communicate daily attendance data to the Head of School & SLT
- Promptly process arrival and departure child information ensuring registers are correct and the relevant information has been ascertained
- Keep the Child Missing in Education log up-to-date, raising any new concerns with the Attendance Lead and Head of School

### 3.7 Parents and carers

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

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence
- Ensure their child arrives on time for registration, gates open between 8.40am and close at 8.50am
- Register their child at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours
- By 9.30am, ensure that any absence is clearly accounted for on the phone (or email if the phone is unavailable) on the first and subsequent days of absence and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, non-urgent medical or dental appointments for their child are made outside of the school day, if this is not possible, parents must ensure a medical appointment form is completed for the appointment
- Support the school with their child's attendance aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance
- Keep to any attendance contracts they make with the school
- Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance register

We keep an electronic attendance register for all child; we take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once at the start of the second session in the afternoon. Marks use the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

We will also record for children of compulsory school age:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a child is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### 4.2 Punctuality & Lateness

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions. The start of lessons are 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 and cause disruption to the lesson for others. These are just a few reasons that could then lead to possible further absence.

The school day begins at 8:40 am with morning learning (gates open at 8:40am and close at 8:50am) and all children are expected to be in school at this time. Morning registration closes at 8:50am.

Afternoon registration closes at 12.40pm for EYFS, Y1, Y3, Y5 and at 1.40pm for Y2, Y4, Y6 (due to staggered lunchtimes).

All lateness is recorded electronically using the inventory system held in our school reception. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.

- If a child arrives late before the register closes (9.30am), they will be marked as late (L); if the child arrives after the register closes they will be marked as late (U – any time after 9.30am)
- If a child is late due to a medical appointment, and school has been notified in advance through the medical appointment form, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that, where possible, doctor and dentist appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- If a child arrives late and/or after the close of the register, in exceptional circumstances, the Head of School can, at their discretion, authorise this.

Parents or carers of children who have patterns of lateness will be contacted through a punctuality letter to discuss the importance of good timekeeping and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists within the specified monitoring timeframe (typically 4 school weeks), parents or carers will receive a second punctuality letter and be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with support offered. If lateness continues to affect school attendance, then a third letter will invite parents in to a formal meeting with either the Attendance lead or Head of School. A punctuality agreement will be documented and time frame specified for improvement, with barriers addressed.

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 child to a place of safety and share concerns as necessary with other agencies, if deemed necessary. If no alternative is available, the school will place a child into the after school club, which will need to be paid for by the parent/carers.

### 4.3 Unplanned absence

Parents or carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.30am, or in exceptional circumstances, as soon as practically possible, by calling the school office staff.

- We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

- Where the absence is longer than 5 days, or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. For any child on a stage 2 in the monitoring process, will need to have medical evidence if they are to have further absence in their monitoring period.
- If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

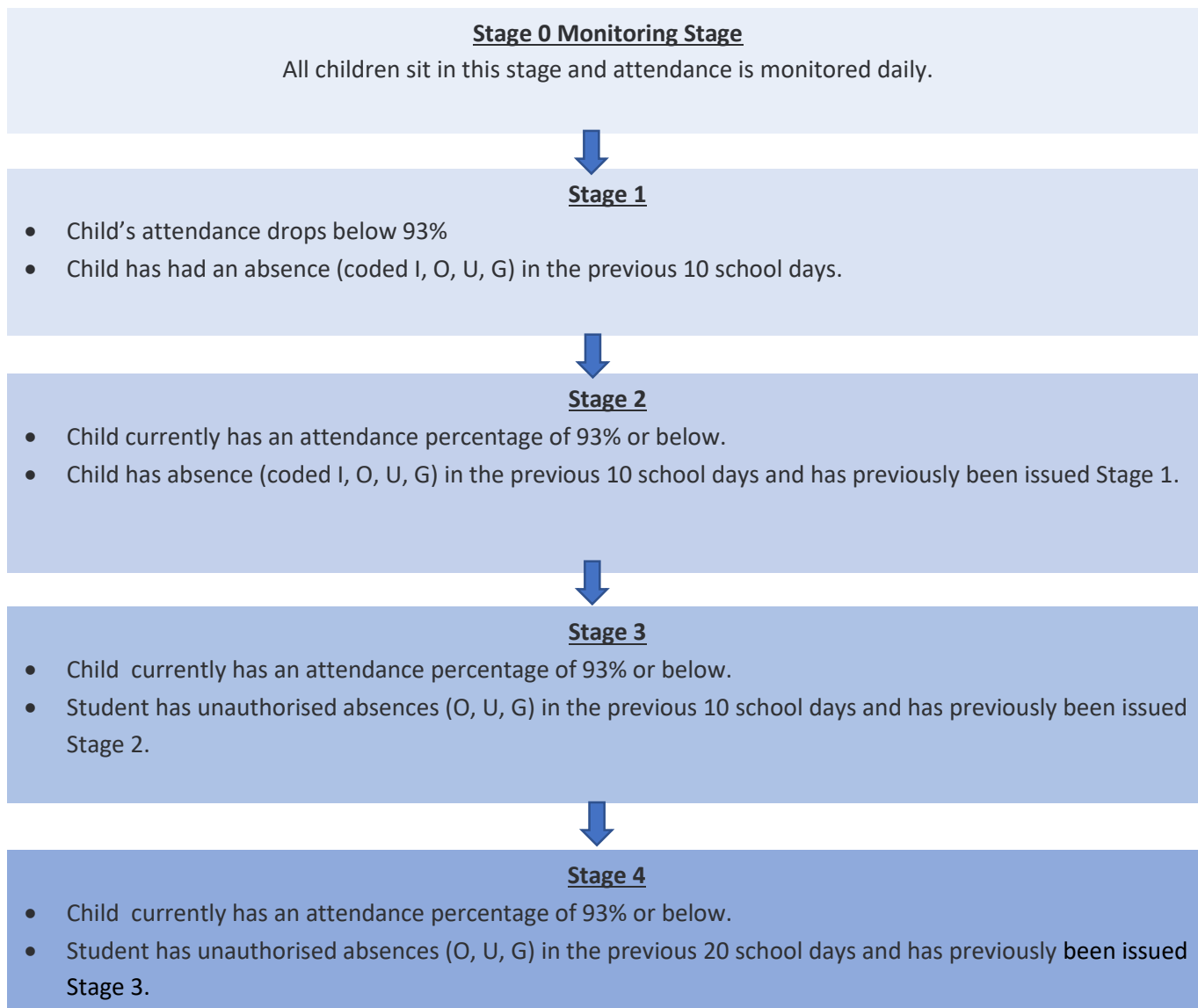
#### **4.4 Following up unexplained absence**

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If a child is not in school for 3 days, the Senior Leadership Team may make the decision to carry out a welfare call at the child's house, even though you will have informed us daily for the reason they are absent. Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the child's parent on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the child's emergency contacts your child will be deemed as missing and further advice will be sought through the Local Authority. The school may carry out a welfare call at the child's house.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not and whether this is a Child Missing in Education concern
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session(s) for which the child was absent
  - Call the parent on each day that the absence continues without explanation, to make sure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will involve the County School Attendance Support Service
- Where appropriate, offer support to the child and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the child needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with, the school will either communicate notice to improve, inform the Local Authority who may issue a penalty notice or initiate legal intervention (see section 5.2 below), as appropriate]

## 4.6 Reporting to parents

The school will inform parents or carers about their child's attendance and absence levels where attendance drops below 93%. This is done through attendance letters and parent engagement meetings, following the attendance concern procedures set out below.



As we strive for all children to have good attendance, our escalation route is as follows:

### **Stage 1**

Where the child has met the criteria for Stage 1; the child's attendance falling below 93% and having an absence in the previous 10 days. A letter will be sent home to parents/carers and the child's attendance will be monitored for the next 10 school days.

The child may be moved to Stage 2 if they have further absence and meet Stage 2 criteria. If deemed appropriate Stage 2 may be initiated before the end of the 10 day monitoring period.

Should the child attend every session and have no further absence, Stage 2 will not be initiated.

### **Stage 2**

If the child's attendance continues to be below 93% and they have subsequent absences, a Stage 2 letter will be sent to parents/carers requesting **medical evidence for any future absence to be authorised**. Alongside the Stage 2 letter, parents/carers will also be issued with a feedback form.

The child will be monitored for the next 10 school days. The child may be moved to Stage 3 if improvement criteria is not met. If deemed appropriate Stage 3 may be initiated before the end of the 10-day monitoring period.



Should the child attend every session and have no further absence, Stage 3 will not be initiated.

### **Stage 3**

At Stage 3, parents/carers will be issued with a letter along with an Attendance Action Plan. The child's attendance will be monitored for 20 school days. However, if the child has further instances of unauthorised absence within the monitoring period, the child may be escalated to Stage 4.

If no further unauthorised absences are recorded within the monitoring period, the child will remain at Stage 3.

For a child that have not had unauthorised absences during the 20 school days monitoring period, the child will be de-escalated to Stage 1 and the above criteria for the suggested Stages will be followed.

### **Stage 4**

If a child's attendance remains a concern and they continue to have unauthorised absences, they may be escalated to Stage 4. At Stage 4, a child may be referred to the Local Authority and legal proceedings may commence. The Local Authority could take action that could include, but not be limited to, issuing parental contracts, issuing fixed penalty notices, pursuing prosecution towards potential educational supervision orders or other court sanctions.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

Children are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absence:

1. Authorised Absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.
2. Unauthorised Absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
  - parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, and holidays in term time
  - absences which have not been explained

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. Any changes will be communicated to parents/carers.

An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The Head of School and/or Attendance Lead will allow children to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The Head of School and/or Attendance Lead will only grant a **leave of absence** to a child during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the Head of School's and/or Attendance Lead's discretion, including the length of time the child is authorised to be absent for. The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, **it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday, or visiting family members.**

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 6 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form. The Head of School may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Other valid reasons for **authorised absence** include (but are not limited to):

- Illness (including mental-health illness) and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the child is attending educational provision
- If the child is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

Other reasons the school may allow a child to be absent from the school site, which are not classified as absences, include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the child is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the child not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## 5.2 Sanctions

If term time leave is taken without prior permission from the school, the absence will be unauthorised and if the number of sessions absent hits the thresholds set down in this policy, parent or carers will be issued with a fixed-penalty fine or other legal action in accordance with the code set out by the Local Authority.

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

### Penalty notices

A penalty notice (PN) is an alternative to prosecution and requires the parent(s) to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's irregular attendance at school. It is issued per parent, per child.

Northamptonshire County Council issue them through the School Attendance Support Service following notification from the school.

They are used when:

- a child has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 10 school week period (a school day is 2 sessions - morning and afternoon) or
- a child has a series of unauthorised absences leading to irregular attendance

This includes:

- absence marked in the register as unauthorised
- persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken and is recorded as an unauthorised absence

- absence in term time which has not been authorised by the head teacher - the Government has directed that head teachers may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances

PNs can also be used during the first 5 days of exclusion. Parents are made aware of the consequences by letter when a child is excluded from school.

### **Notice to Improve**

Following the release of the government's Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance. West Northamptonshire Council will be introducing the Notice to Improve document.

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve attendance before a penalty notice is issued.

The length of the period of improvement will be 4 school weeks. What sufficient improvement will look like will be decided on a case-by-case basis considering a child and family's circumstances.

### **National Framework for Penalty Notices**

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes have come in to force:

#### **National Threshold**

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (a school day is 2 sessions - morning and afternoon) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence. The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

#### **First Offence**

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days. Increasing to £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court

#### **Second Offence (within 3 years)**

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. Any non-payment of the Penalty Notice may be referred to the Magistrates Court

#### **Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)**

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court.

Prosecution under s444 (1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to £1,000. Prosecution under s444 (1) (a) Education Act 1996 where if convicted you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or 3 months' imprisonment.

#### **Per parent, per child**

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent, for each child that was absent. For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

## 6. Supporting children who are absent or returning to school

### 6.1 Children absent due to complex barriers to attendance

In exceptional circumstances, there may be complex barriers to attendance. Our Senior Leadership Team aim to work closely with families, building positive relationships that enable them to understand the complex barriers faced and how best to implement strategies for removing them. Complexities vary, and we would take an individualised approach on a case by case basis.

### 6.2 Children absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

If a child has a Social, Emotional or Mental Health need or is on the Special Educational Need and Disabilities register, our school will take this in to account when supporting attendance. We would aim to work closely with families through early identification and reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning in the classroom. Additional support may be provided in agreement with parents or carers, for example a reduced timetable or external agency support.

Where a child has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the child's needs, the school will inform the local authority.

### 6.3 Children returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

We aim to support children back into school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence through identifying the gaps to learning they have experienced and addressing these through home/school engagement and where applicable, booster intervention.

## 7. Attendance monitoring

Attendance is monitored through SIMs and Astar attendance. Astar attendance is a data system (linked to SIMs) in which every child has an individual tab which displays key attendance information:

This informs our attendance letters. Each registration code is tracked so that we can closely monitor every child's attendance:

Children falling below the 90% dotted line, are classed as 'Persistent Absentees'. Children who fall below 93% move through the stages and are issued attendance letters. This is to support parents in avoiding falling into the persistent absence category. This reporting is all in line with the Department for Education's (DfE) expectations.

### 7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) daily, half-termly, termly and annually across the school and at an individual child, class and cohort level. It uses the DfE attendance thresholds:

Attendance Thresholds		
Attendance thresholds define how Insight evaluates attendance percentages, and the options available when filtering and grouping pupils.		
Note: Attendance range lower bounds are exclusive, except for zero. Upper bounds are inclusive.		
The school is inheriting thresholds from Campfire Education Trust.		
Attendance % range	Evaluation	Description
[0, 50]	●	Severely absent (50% or more sessions missed)
(50, 90]	●	Persistently absent (10% or more sessions missed)
(90, 95]	●	At risk of persistent absence (5-10% sessions missed)
(95, 99]	●	Good attendance (95-99%)
(99, 100]	●	Excellent attendance (99%+)

Specific child information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

## **7.2 Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify children, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify children whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

## **7.3 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual children, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the children it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports through parents evenings, to facilitate discussions with children and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and child premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other Campfire Education Trust schools, local authorities and other partners where a child's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific children, where appropriate

## **7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a child misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a child misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of children who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these children. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence
- Implement sanctions, where necessary (see section 5.2, above)

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Head of School and Executive Head. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes



The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Child is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Child is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Child arrives late before register has closed
<b>Attending a place other than the school</b>		
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	Child is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	Child is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Child is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
W	Attending work experience	Child is on an approved work experience placement
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	Child is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience
D	Dual registered	Child is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>Absent – leave of absence</b>		
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Child is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school
M	Medical/dental appointment	Child is at a medical or dental appointment
J1	Interview	Child has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
S	Study leave	Child has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination

<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Child of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>C2</b>	Part-time timetable	Child is not in school due to having a part-time timetable
<b>C</b>	Exceptional circumstances	Child has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>		
<b>T</b>	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Child is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Child is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>I</b>	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Child is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)
<b>E</b>	Suspended or excluded	Child has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made
<b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b>		
<b>Q</b>	Lack of access arrangements	Child is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school
<b>Y1</b>	Transport not available	Child is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available
<b>Y2</b>	Widespread disruption to travel	Child is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency
<b>Y3</b>	Part of school premises closed	Child is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open
<b>Y4</b>	Whole school site unexpectedly closed	Every child absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g. due to adverse weather)
<b>Y5</b>	Criminal justice detention	Child is unable to attend as they are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul>
<b>Y6</b>	Public health guidance or law	Child's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law
<b>Y7</b>	Any other unavoidable cause	To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes
<b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Holiday not granted by the school	Child is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason for absence not yet established	Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes
<b>O</b>	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	No reason for absence has been established, or the school isn't satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Arrived in school after registration closed	Child has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session
<b>Administrative codes</b>		
<b>Z</b>	Prospective child not on admission register	Child has not joined school yet but has been registered
<b>#</b>	Planned whole-school closure	Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays



### Spring Lane Primary School

## Application for Leave of Absence

Application for Leave of Absence under Regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Regular attendance of students at school is a legal requirement under section 7 of the Education Act 1996.

The Head of School and Attendance Lead will consider your request, taking your child's attendance record into account. For further information please refer to our attendance policy displayed on our website: <https://www.springlaneprimary.com/school-attendance>

**If leave is taken without authorisation it will be recorded in the school attendance register as an unauthorised absence, which is truancy.**

Ofsted judge our attendance as a key measure of our performance – our aim is meet National standards for attendance with a 96% overall attendance rate. We urge parents to support our ongoing efforts to reduce the lost days of education which can affect your child's progress.

**Please complete the form and return it to the School Office.**

Please be aware of the following prior to making an application:

- All leave must be applied for at least two working school weeks in advance of the first day of requested leave. Only in emergency situations will requests be considered in short timescales.
- We strongly advise you not to make any travel arrangements until the Head of School and Attendance lead have made a final decision of the request for leave of absence.
- Failure to request leave in the appropriate way, is likely to result in unauthorised absence and a possible fixed penalty notice.
- For the purposes of education law, the Department for Education (DfE) considers a 'parent' to include:
  - all biological parents, whether they are married or not
  - any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, a guardian or other relative
  - any person who, although they are not a biological parent and do not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person*A person typically has care of a child or young person if the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after them, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.*

I request permission from the school for my child to be granted Leave of Absence for the following dates/s and reason/s:

Name(s) of Pupil(s) for which leave of absence is being applied for:	Date of Birth	Class
Child 1: _____	____/____/____	_____
Child 2: _____	____/____/____	_____
Child 3: _____	____/____/____	_____

Dates (inclusive) for which leave of absence is being applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

For how many school days do you require the pupil(s) to have leave of absence? \_\_\_\_\_

On which date will the pupil(s) return to school?

Please use the space below to:

- Justify the 'exceptional circumstances' for which the leave of absence is being requested
- List any evidence attached to support your justification (e.g. wedding invitation)

If you are requesting a leave of absence which requires travel and a stay away from home, you are also required to provide copies of booking details and travel (including return ticket); please ensure you have attached:

- Flight/Booking Confirmation
- Other

Please note here:

Printed name of parent(s) making application who will be responsible for the pupil whilst they are absent:	Parental signature:	Date:
1. _____	1. _____	____/____/____
2. _____	2. _____	____/____/____

Please note Penalty Notices will be considered for any 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks.

School Office Use:

Academic year:	2024-2025		
Date application received:	Child 1	Child 2	Child 3
% Attendance for academic year to date			
No of sessions absent in last 10 weeks			
Booking/flight confirmation received	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N
If no – office to chase & obtain this			

Head of School/Attendance Lead Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Office Action:

Register Code & comment added to SIMs	Date:
Parent(s) sent letter informing of final decision	____/____/____

We aim to respond to an Application for Leave of Absence within 5 working days of receipt.



## Spring Lane Primary School

### Medical Appointment Form



**Parents/carers must ensure that, where possible, non-urgent medical or dental appointments for their child are made outside of the school day, if this is not possible, parents must complete a Medical Appointment form as set out below.**

I writing to inform the school that my child requires Leave of Absence for a medical appointment:

Name of Pupil:		Date of Birth:		Class:
Type of Medical Appointment [please highlight or circle]:				
Doctors Appointment	Dentist Appointment	Opticians Appointment	Hospital Appointment	Other
If other please specify what the medical appointment is: N/A				
Date of medical appointment:				
Absent from:		Due to be back at school by:		

**Please evidence the appointment by attaching photo/screenshot of the booking.**

Please email completed form to: [absence@springlaneprimary.com](mailto:absence@springlaneprimary.com) or hand in to the school office.

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**School Office Action:**

Register Code & comment added to SIMs	Date: ____/____/____
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