

Spire Junior School

Attendance Policy

Rationale

At Spire Junior School we recognise the importance of regular school attendance as a key factor in promoting the welfare, social inclusion and achievement of pupils.

Statutory Duties

The school takes account of the following:

- The Education Act 1996,
- The Education (Students' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991,
- The Education (Student Registration) Regulations 1995 (amended 1997),
- Social Inclusion: Student Support, DFES Circular 10/99.
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

Aims

1. To improve the overall percentage of pupils at school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
8. To promote effective partnerships with the school and other services and agencies.
9. To recognise the need of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Objectives

To achieve our aims Spire Junior School will:

1. Apply the attendance policy consistently.
2. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
3. Measure outcomes and monitor progress in attendance.
4. Create displays in the school relating to attendance and keep parents informed of targets and outcomes.
5. Monitor award systems including certificates and prizes.
6. Continue with first day response phone calls.
7. Define clearly roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
8. Highlight attendance in assemblies.
9. Provide regular information for parents and involve parents at the earliest stage.
10. Continue with standardised recording of absence.
11. Identify developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.
12. Promote expectation of absence letters/ phone calls from parents.
13. Identify finance for rewards.
14. Involve pupils in system evaluation.
15. Carry out initial intervention prior to referral.
16. Hold termly reviews of attendance.
17. Be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of returning pupils following significant periods of absence.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Parents have the responsibility to make sure that their child attends school regularly.
2. The Local Authority has the power to prosecute parents and issue penalty notices.
3. The school has a responsibility to positively promote regular attendance.

Working Partnerships

1. The school will work to promote attendance.
2. The school will also work with Spire Infant School and Parkside Community School to ensure a common approach and consistency.

Procedures

1. All class teachers will take a register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
2. Children arriving late will be entered in the late book and the register changed accordingly.
3. The Learning Mentor / Attendance Officer will monitor attendance on a termly basis and liaise with Derbyshire County Council when needed.
4. The Learning Mentor / Attendance Officer will inform parents by letter if attendance falls below 90% over a term.
5. If there is no improvement then an attendance panel meeting will be arranged, along with support. If no or unsatisfactory improvement in attendance is made then the school will pass evidence to Derbyshire County Council and ask for legal proceedings to begin.
6. The Behaviour Mentor or School Secretary will undertake the first day response.
7. The School will follow the LA procedures for processing holiday leave requests.
8. Termly certificates will be awarded for good attendance.
9. Regular prizes will be given for good attendance.
10. Attendance will feature on a regular basis in newsletters and flyers sent to parents.

Term Time Holidays

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 removed permission for schools to allow 10 days leave for holidays, and instead clarified that *‘Leave of absence shall not be granted by schools unless there are “exceptional circumstances”*. Please note that there is a discretionary power held by Headteachers to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances. It is important to state that a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance.

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only.

Exceptional circumstances **could** include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child’s rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Headteacher agrees to look at each case individually.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

1. The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils)
2. Year six transition day or week (for pupils in year six)
3. Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six)
4. At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents by each school).

If a request is declined, **and** the child has a poor attendance record **and** the child is still taken out of school, each parent within the household will be issued with a £60 penalty notice for each child they have taken out of school.

If a penalty notice remains unpaid after 21 days it will increase to £120. If after 28 days it remains unpaid the parent may be summonsed to appear before Magistrates to explain why their child has unauthorised school absences and they may be liable for a fine of up to £1000.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance is monitored on a regular basis.

Reports are sent to the LA and Governors.

This policy will be monitored and updated as necessary.