



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular school attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them at Springfield School. We seek to maximise attendance rates by instilling in children a respect for education, recognising and praising those who achieve full attendance and investigating the reasons behind missed sessions. Through policy and practice we strive to promote the value of regular attendance with pupils and parents. We apply the regulations set out in the Portsmouth City Council Guidance for Schools document including guidance on Maintaining and Improving Attendance, Children Missing from Education and Fixed Penalty Notices. We also follow the government guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2016 and Working Together to Safeguard Children March 2015.

PROCEDURES:

REGISTRATION

It is a legal requirement that all schools must keep an Attendance Register. At the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, a pupil should be marked present or absent. Registration at Springfield is carried out electronically by form tutors. Once saved, reports showing which pupils are absent can be produced. The Attendance Assistant prints out these reports and puts them on the Staff Room notice board so that staff can cross check these lists with their own subject class registers. The lists will be displayed on the notice board by 10.05am.

- Morning registration will take place at 8.45am and afternoon registration at 1.05pm
- Every pupil must be marked either present or absent
- Any pupil arriving in the tutor room after 8.45am and before 9.05am will be marked as late by the tutor
- Any pupil arriving at school after the end of the tutor period (9.05am) or after their year group has gone into assembly must sign in as late at the Welfare Office where a late slip will be issued. This must be shown to the tutor at the next registration and the pupil must also report to the tutor for 15 minutes at the end of school. The Year Office will follow up all pupils who sign in late
- Any pupil who misses their Year Group Assembly through lateness may expect to receive a School Detention
- TGAs and Prefects must register before they go to meetings or activities
- A School Detention will be issued to any pupil receiving three or more late slips within a half term. Parents will always be informed and same day detentions will be issued for persistent offenders
- Statistics on attendance and punctuality will be shown on the pupil's Records of Achievement. 100% attendance will be recognised by the presentation of a certificate in assembly on a termly basis. Those pupils achieving 100% attendance throughout the school year will receive a special certificate

FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

- The school employs an Attendance Assistant who will attempt to telephone the parents of every absent pupil on the first day of absence. A dedicated 'phone line and answer machine is available for parents to telephone the school when their child is absent and this is monitored by the Attendance Assistant. It is important that form tutors inform her if they have been given advance notice by parents that a pupil will be absent from school. These notes must be left at the front of the register so the Attendance Assistant can see them immediately. She will then code the absence and will keep the letter in the Welfare Office for half a term. However, there is no legal requirement to store notes once the sessions have been coded unless there are specific concerns about a pupil's level of progress
- Where the Attendance Assistant has established why a pupil is absent from school a note will be added to SIMS and marked accordingly. This removes the requirement for the pupil to bring a note on their return
- Care should be taken over which codes to use for sessions caused by work placements or attendance at specialist units. Advice should be sought from the DHT, Head of Achievement or Attendance Assistant
- If the Attendance Assistant cannot make contact with a parent, having tried for three days, she will inform the Year Office concerned, by printing out a list of unexplained sessions. The Year Office will then take the necessary steps to chase up the sessions with the pupil and ask for a note to be brought in. If a note is not produced then the absence will then be cleared and coded accordingly. If a note is not produced then it will be assumed that the pupil has truanted and their parents will be contacted and sanctions imposed. It may be necessary for the Head of Achievement/Pastoral Manager to discuss this directly with parents
- The Head of Achievement, in consultation with the DHT, reserves the right to refuse to authorise an absence if the reason given is not considered as acceptable. This applies even where a note has been provided by the parents. If tutors have any cause to doubt the validity of the note or the signature they should report their concerns to the Head of Achievement immediately
- Parents must provide medical evidence of illness if an absence exceeds 5 days
- If the School Nurse sends a pupil home for part of the school day having contacted the parents, then there is no need for the parents to send a note in when the child returns to school
- All pupils leaving school during school hours for medical, dental or similar appointments must first sign out in the Welfare Office, showing a note from home initialled by the tutor, and an official pass will be issued. They must also sign back in on their return
- The Attendance Assistant produces regular lists of pupils who arrive late to school – morning or afternoon – and informs parents. Head of Achievements or the Pastoral Managers then follow up with sanctions

LONG TERM ILLNESS OR INJURY

- Pupils with long term medical conditions or who have sustained serious injury that affects their attendance are closely monitored by the School Nurse and the Head of Achievement who will liaise with parents and/or other medical personnel, including the NHS School Nurse. If long term support is required, an individual health care plan will be set up in order to ease return to school and to address gaps in learning

- Work to be done at home is provided by the school, particularly in the core subjects, as appropriate. The Head of Achievement will organise provision and subject departments will ensure that appropriate work is set and marked. If the absence becomes prolonged, then the Head of Achievement may request support from The Harbour School with individual tuition.

IMPROVING ATTENDANCE

- One of the Heads of Achievement has specific responsibility to oversee attendance across the school and to have oversight of provision for pupils with medical conditions. This role involves close liaison with all Heads of Achievement, the designated Pastoral Manager and the Attendance Assistant
- A Pastoral Manager has the responsibility to oversee attendance with the designated Head of Achievement and to manage a case load of pupils and families with complex difficulties that have an impact on attendance
- Each Head of Achievement and Pastoral Manager work closely with the Attendance Assistant, meeting every week to discuss concerns about individual pupil attendance. The Attendance Assistant publishes lists every week of all those pupils whose attendance falls below 90% so that the Head of Achievement/Pastoral Manager can act on any pupils who appear to be at risk of declining attendance
- The DHT meets with the Heads of Achievement weekly to highlight attendance concerns and decide action where appropriate
- The Pastoral Manager with responsibility for Attendance and Family Intervention supports pupils and their families to resolve individual or family issues with school attendance. She will meet with pupils on an individual basis in school and conduct home visits. She also supports preventative work in school via assemblies, parents' evenings etc
- The Attendance Assistant and Head of Achievement agree a plan to raise concern with parents when attendance drops to 95%: by letter or 'phone call. Parents may also be asked to meet with the designated Pastoral Manager and Head of Achievement and agree an action plan to improve their child's attendance. The NHS School Nurse may be involved if there are health problems. This meeting provides an opportunity to discuss and resolve any social, emotional or academic concerns a pupil may have regarding attending school. An attendance target form is completed and a review meeting set
- The school produces a leaflet, issued to all Year 7, for parents that outlines the school's aims and expectations for pupil attendance and the responsibilities the school, parents, local authority and pupils have. This can also be found on the school website
- Referrals are made, via the DHT, to outside agencies such as CAMHS, ITYSS (Integrated Targeted Youth Support service), PYOP where they might have a role in supporting families with attendance. The school will lead or support TAF/TAC meetings as appropriate
- The School Attendance Team may issue Fixed Penalty Notices as an early preventative measure and will continue to carry out the mandatory annual register checks. Warning letters for these are sent to the parents of pupils who have 10+ unauthorised sessions in a term. An officer from SAT will chair an Attendance Panel for pupils who have had significant unauthorised sessions and whose family are unwilling to cooperate with the school over this issue. The panel will set a six week plan with a possible prosecution if no improvement is made

PERSISTENT ABSENCE

Pupils are considered by the Local Authority and the DfE to be persistent absentees if their attendance falls below 90%. The Year Offices use the attached School Absence Escalation Process and referrals from the Attendance Assistant in order to identify and intervene with pupils at risk of becoming persistent absentees. The DHT reports to governors every half term on attendance and unauthorised absence figures and annually with a more detailed review of persistent absenteeism data.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE TAKEN IN TERM TIME

The 2013 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; references to family holiday and extended leave have been removed. The amendments came into effect on 1st September 2013.

‘Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.’

In line with these DfE regulations, the school will not authorise holidays or ‘family days’ in term time for students of any age. Holidays (or other leave of absence) taken without permission will be recorded as unauthorised absence on the pupil’s attendance record and school report.

The leave of absence form (‘LOAF’) reminds parents that unauthorised absence will be referred to the local authority; a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued or other formal action taken.

Note that parents may apply for a leave of absence for their child for exceptional reasons by completing a ‘leave of absence from school’ form and submitting this to the Headteacher with a supporting letter, if required.

PERFORMANCE ABSENCE REQUESTS AT SPRINGFIELD

It remains the policy of the governors that parents of children who have commenced their GCSE programme should expect applications for sessions to take part in performances such as pantomimes to be refused. In practice the governors agree that the Headteacher is permitted to assess applications with a degree of flexibility according to criteria such as:

- Overall attendance record of the pupil in question so that flexibility is reduced as other sessions increase
- The number of days’ or half days’ absence requested
- The likely impact on key learning opportunities for that pupil
- Alternative arrangements that may be agreed for the pupil to compensate for lost learning

Having considered those criteria the Headteacher is free to agree all or part of an application for absence if the overall impact on learning is thought to be manageable. Such decisions do not need to be referred to governors unless an irreconcilable dispute with the parents remains.

HOLIDAY DATES AND OFFICIAL CLOSURES

Dates for the next half term period are published on the Springfield Newsletter, which is sent home towards the end of each half term. These dates also appear on the school website (www.springfield.uk.net). Any particular events such as periods of suspended timetable for Year 11 examinations, non-uniform days or professional closure days for the staff are highlighted on these publications and on the website. Where possible, we liaise with other schools in our cluster to coordinate any closures.

TRUANCY

If a pupil is caught truanting from school the parents will always be informed. The school may impose a range of sanctions including:

- Time in the Isolation Unit to catch up on missed work
- The pupil being required to attend on a closure day
- Senior Teachers Detention
- Report card to monitor attendance at lessons

POST REGISTRATION TRUANCY

- Class teachers are required to call a register or pupils in their teaching group at the start of each lesson
- A list of absent pupils is posted on the staff notice board each morning by 10am. If there is any cause to question a pupil's absence from a lesson they should be checked against this list. Likewise, the Attendance Assistant should be informed if a member of staff notices inaccuracies on this list. If a pattern of absence begins to emerge in the class register or on SIMS, this should be drawn to the attention of the Head of Achievement
- Periodic random checks will be carried out by the Head of Achievement to ensure that pupils who are marked present are in their lessons.

Equality Policy compliant – July 2015
Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5

NB: 'session' = half day

Review Date: Autumn 2017