Attendance Policy for Students

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Contents

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedures through which we seek to improve school attendance, improve punctuality and, as a result, raise levels of achievement. This policy is written with regard for the legal powers and duties included in the following:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5);
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006;
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010; and
- The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-attendance-and-absence/

2. School Attendance, Absence and the Law

We understand how important school attendance is and how this relates to outcomes, not only academically but socially and emotionally as well. Students who attend school regularly benefit from fulfilling peer relationships, better academic outcomes and a vastly improved school experience which promotes successful transition onto their next stage of education.

We believe that there is a clear link between attendance and positive outcomes for children and young people. Our aim is therefore to encourage full attendance for all students at Springfield. We do this first by:
- Creating a warm and welcoming environment based upon the principles of nurture
- Ensuring that students feel safe
- Support positive relationships with staff and peers
- Making education enjoyable, interesting and appropriate to every child's needs.
- Encouraging, praising and rewarding success

Law

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that Engage School is open, except in a small

number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

For the most vulnerable students, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

Improving attendance is everyone's business. The barriers to accessing education are wide and complex, both within and beyond the school gates, and are often specific to individual students and families.Springfield has a foundation for securing good attendance; an environment calm, orderly, safe, and supportive where all students want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

Some students find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, we will work with students and parents to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships and working together to put the right support in place.

Securing good attendance cannot therefore be seen in isolation, and effective practices for improvement will involve close interaction with our efforts on curriculum, behaviour, bullying, special educational needs support, pastoral and mental health and wellbeing, and effective use of resources, including student premium.

It is not solely the preserve of a single member of staff, and is a concerted effort across all teaching and nonteaching staff in school, as well as governors, the local authority, and other local partners.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Our Responsibilities as a School

All schools are required to record details of students' attendance and absence. They do so at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. If a child is absent, it is required that parents/carers inform the school of the reason for the absence.

The school will record the absence under a particular category pre-set by the Department of Education (DfE). This data is then available to the attendance and student support service for each student. DfE also receives annually the overall data for each school.

Every member of staff has a responsibility to promote and support attendance.

The Senior Leadership Teams will:

- Continually monitor the whole school and individual attendance.
- Implement policies and strategies to support and improve attendance;
- Regularly produce data to analyse attendance information and ensure

procedures are in place to address issues;

- Implement a robust line management system that ensures all concerns are identified and addressed in a timely manner;
- Report to students and parents/carers regularly;
- Implement reward systems that motivate students to attend well;
- Support colleagues with systems that are accessible and ensure positive outcomes;
- Give attendance a high profile throughout the school;
- Ensure registers are accurately marked and absences appropriately coded
- Report regularly to the Interim Management board.

Responsibilities of all staff:

- Work to provide an environment that is welcoming and promotes good attendance;
- Ensure relationships with students are positive and individual needs are identified and addressed;
- Work with parents/carers to build positive, transparent relationships;
- Contact parents/carers regularly in the case of any absence and to recognise sustained and improved attendance;
- Ensure attendance is recorded including reasons behind any absences;
- Work with the data to address any reoccurring issues or patterns (such as the same day absence every week);
- Liaise with colleagues and be aware of any related issues;
- Promote a culture of mutual respect and ensure students are valued every day;
- Work closely with colleagues to communicate any issues that may impact attendance;
- Meet regularly with parents/carers and related professionals to address any issues affecting attendance;
- Ensure support plans are in place that make clear the roles and responsibilities of school/parent/carer and other professionals (including the mainstream school);
- Reward good and improved attendance in a fair and equitable way ensuring parents / carers are informed.

Responsibilities of Parents

- Inform school of any circumstances that may impact on attendance;
- Attend regular review meetings and meet with staff on request;
- Arrange holidays out of term time;
- Actively promote good attendance by encouraging and supporting your child to attend;
- Make medical or other appointments out of school time unless unavoidable;
- Work with staff to implement agreed strategies and actively promote good attendance.

Responsibility of Students
To promote good attendance students will:
- Attend school punctually and regularly

- Adhere to the School rules
- Hand in any letters of absence or requests for known absence to their class teacher (including pre-arranged medical appointments)
- Not take holidays in school time

4. The Importance of Good Attendance

As stated previously we have high expectations for our students and as such the expected attendance standard is 95%. Anything less than this is a concern and we take all appropriate measures to ensure we are addressing any barriers to attendance. We will always work to find solutions and promote the benefits of good attendance rather than implementing a punitive response.

8 days absence in a year = 96%. 19 days absence = 90%

- 90% attendance = ½ day missed every week.
- Over one school year this is 4 weeks of learning lost.
- Over the 5 years at school the student will have missed half a year.
- What impact might this have on a child's future?
- 17 missed school days mean that secondary school students could drop a whole GCSE grade.

Students being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning:
- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

We provide a healthy breakfast at our academies and we know that this starts the day positively and students can then focus and learn. If the student is late then an important part of the day is missed and this can then lead to an unsettled day. It is important that we work together to ensure students arrive on time and ready to learn.

We aim to ensure that all students recognise the importance of good attendance and punctuality for the next stage of their education or training as it is a vital life skill.

5. Concerns about Attendance

If there are concerns because a student is not attending on a regular basis, staff will make contact with parents and carers and conduct home visits to find ways to improve attendance. If a student's attendance falls below 90% then it will be recorded as a persistent absence.

Persistent Absence (PA)

The Government identifies persistent absence as any student who has attendance of less than 90%. Springfield recognises this figure and aspires to set this standard for all its students. Personalised attendance targets may be adjusted dependent on the

needs of the individual student. Springfield will put into place all reasonable measures to secure and sustain improved attendance.

Attendance Improvement Strategy

If a student's attendance falls below an acceptable level, we have a variety of strategies to re-engage students and overcome barriers to attendance. Some examples of these are:

• First day calls
• Strategy meetings
• Liaising with other agencies
• Bespoke timetables
• Home visits
• Rewards for good attendance or significant progress
• Motivational interventions

6. Procedures to Improve Attendance

We implement a five stage programme to encourage and promote good attendance and punctuality and support parents to ensure their child's attendance is exemplary.

Attendance Monitoring Programme

Stage 1 - Informal monitoring; Absence Response
Staff will follow the Absence Response flowchart (appendix 2);
- Phone calls home to ascertain reasons for absence, identify barriers that can be easily removed.
- Home visit(s) by a staff member. Ways forward to improve attendance will be discussed and agreed upon.
- Refer to Attendance Lead and/or Student Welfare Officer if appropriate

If further interventions are required because there has been no improvement in attendance:

Stage 2
Meeting 1– Attendance Lead and/or Student Welfare Officer meeting.
- This meeting will require parents/carers and the student to meet with the class teacher who will set targets and agree a plan to improve attendance.
- The improvement plan will be put into action and monitored
- This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded.

If further interventions are required because there has been no improvement in attendance:

Stage 3
Meeting 2 - Senior Leader and Attendance Lead meeting.

- This will require parents/carers and the student to meet with the senior leader on site with responsibility for attendance
- New targets and a plan will be agreed at this meeting
- The improvement plan will be put into action and monitored
- This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded

If further interventions are required because there has been no improvement in attendance:

Stage 4

Meeting 3 – Head Teacher and Senior Leader

Head Teacher and Senior Leader will meet with the parents/carers and the student.

- This meeting will be a discussion on how prosecution for non-attendance can be avoided
- New targets and a plan will be agreed at this meeting.
- The improvement plan will be put into action and monitored.
- This will be reviewed after an agreed period of time and successful outcomes will be measured and recorded.

If further interventions are required because there has been no improvement in attendance:

Stage 5

- Processes required for prosecution will be implemented, including the involvement of appropriate agencies.
- Prosecution will be authorised by the Head Teacher if appropriate evidence supports this.

Springfield staff will work with parents/carers from the first day of absence to ensure that any underlying issues are addressed in a timely manner with the relevant services. Working together with parents/carers is essential to ensure good attendance and only when this working relationship is effective can we manage any issues. If there are sufficient concerns and a student is not seen or a parent/carer cannot confirm their whereabouts a 101 call will be made to inform the police.

If the non-attendance continues we will continue to communicate with parents/carers and mainstream schools. In a small number of cases if there are no unmet needs that staff can work to address, we would discuss with all stakeholders whether our school is the correct provision to meet needs. All related agencies would be consulted and a joint decision would be made in the student's best interest.

7. Students on part-time timetables

At Springfield all teaching and non-teaching staff have responsibility for the care of pupils who are struggling to access learning. We recognise however, that at certain stages in a child or young person's school life they may struggle to access the typical

provision offered as a result of their Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Even when the curriculum is reasonably adapted in line with best teaching and learning practice and the young person is appropriately supported within our usual systems, there are occasions when a pupil may still struggle to access full time education.

In these instances, the Head Teacher may consider that a personalised timetable is an appropriate means of supporting the young person up until the point when they are better able to access full time education.

Examples of when this is appropriate may include:
• At transition points – into or between settings
• When the child or young person has repeated or prolonged episodes of crisis when in school
• When a risk assessment shows that their behaviour poses a significant health and safety risk to themselves, other students or staff which cannot be reasonably managed
within the usual day
• When their behaviour causes repeated and significant disruption to the education of other students

If the Head Teacher considers a personalised timetable is appropriate, a clear plan for this should be completed. This plan and the reasons for it, will be communicated to parents and carers along with the arrangements for its regular review.

The aim of any change in timetable will always be to support the young person so that they can return to full time education as soon as possible. The duration will however, depend on the needs of the individual but will remain in place for the shortest time necessary.

8. Children missing in education (CME)

Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving a suitable education otherwise than being at a school (for example, at home or in alternative provision). Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) later in life. All pupils at risk of CME are reported to the Local Authority in line with relevant guidance within agreed timescales. There are many circumstances where a child may become missing from education. It is vital that local authorities make judgements on a case-by-case basis. This may include children from the following vulnerable groups below (this list is not exhaustive):
● Students at risk of harm/neglect
● Children of Service Personnel
● Missing children and runaways
● Children and young people supervised by the Youth Justice System
● Children of new migrant families
● Children of Gypsy, Roma Traveller Familie
Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable

education. Effective intervention should be at the earliest opportunity in the lives of vulnerable children to help prevent poor outcomes.

Action the Centre Will Take Regarding CME

At the Springfield Centre we appreciate that the Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to ensure that all children and young people of compulsory school age receive suitable and appropriate education. The school will support the Authority in ensuring that this duty is carried out effectively. There are specific duties in respect of Children Missing Education (CME) and there are strict guidelines in respect of both the definition of CME and the legalities of deleting a pupil from a school roll. We understand that it is essential that the DSL contact the Wakefield Education Welfare Service and complete a CME referral to inform them where any student has been absent for 10 consecutive days without a reason being provided for the absence. In line with Wakefield Education Welfare Service CME guidance for schools (September 2020) and Department for Education Children Missing in Education Guidance The Springfield Centre will make reasonable enquiries to locate the child in line with the Centre's duty under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004.

Reasonable enquiries to find the child include
• Checking with all members of staff who the child/young person may have had contact with
• Checking with the student's friends, siblings, and known relative
• Checking with other professionals who may be involved or have had contact with the pupil or family
• Making telephone calls to any numbers held/identified including emergency contacts
• Sending a letter to the last known address
• Carrying out home visits at different times to check who is at the home address and other known addresses and check with neighbours and known friends
• Asking for the address the family is moving to
• Requesting copies of flight information if appropriate

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive and each case will be considered on its individual merits ensuring all the facts of the case have been taken into account. Additional enquiries to those above may be necessary. If there is reason to believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, The Centre will make a referral to Children's Social Care and Police if appropriate.

9. Attendance Rewards

We understand how important it is that students attend and are punctual every day. We work to ensure that our students understand this also and that they attend school because they are aware of the benefits to them.

Our reward system is in place to further motivate students and to demonstrate the benefits of school attendance. The rewards available could include:

- Regular postcards and phone calls home to ensure parents/carers are kept informed
- Half termly reward assemblies. This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate success as a whole school.
- Reward points that equate to financial benefits that students can use, under staff supervision to purchase items. This promotes their ability to budget and consider other people as the rewards are often used to make charity donations and to support other causes.
- Promoting competition by comparing the attendance of the groups and rewarding the winning group.
- Termly reward trips that the students have identified as of value to them and will motivate them to keep attending.
- Invite parents/carers to celebrate success in school half-termly at assemblies.
- Considering personalised motivational strategies that will work for individuals.

Appendix 1 – Daily Attendance Procedure

Attendance		
Time	Action	Staff
0830-0900	● Inclusion team greets students in reception area ● Wanded and hand in items and sign in via an online system. ● Reception staff update registers as pupils arrive on site. ● Breakfast in social area with LSA's	Inclusion Team/Reception LSA
0900	● Tutor / LSA escorts students to the classroom at 0900	Form Tutor / LSA
0905-0930	● Inclusion team remain available to greet in reception until 0930 ● Anyone arriving between 0900-0930 to be escorted straight to class by the Inclusion team and Reception staff update registers/arrival time.	Inclusion Team / Reception
	● Absence texts sent to parent/carer (on system) at 0930 by Reception staff	Reception Staff
0930	● Inclusion Team back to their respective rooms and prepared to welcome late arrivals	Inclusion Team

Late arrivals (after 9:30am):
● Student arrives at reception to sign in.
● Reception signs student in and marks attendance
● Reception sends text message home that student has arrived in school
● Inclusion Team radioed to see student
● Student wanded and any items handed in. Items stored in Room 1.
● Inclusion Team escort student to lesson.
● Class teacher receives student.

Appendix 2 – Absence Response flowchart for Springfield

Days Absent	Contact Made	Contact not made	Additional action
1	Phone call made to parent/carers by class staff member and contact entered onto Integris/CPOMS. If there is no reason for absence, arrangements are made to collect student.	Text message sent to parents/carers asking them to contact PRU. Class staff to follow up phone calls at the end of the day. If contact is made, staff will establish the reason for absence and a return date.	Any students at section 17/47/LAC – contact will be made to the social worker or refer and respond team if parents are not contactable. Attendance Lead needs to be informed if absence is a repeat occurrence. Consider placing the student on the Attendance Monitoring Programme based on the number of occasions and days absent.
2	Phone call made to parent/carers by a class staff member and contact entered onto Integris/CPOMS. If there is no reason for absence, arrangements are made to have students return to school.	Contact not made on day 1 or day 2: further text message sent. Attendance Lead informed to discuss further action. Attempt to contact extended friends and family.	
3+	Daily phone calls to receive updates on absence. If absence seems questionable then arrangements to be made for students to return to school.	Contact not made on day 1, day 2 or day 3: further text message sent. Attendance Lead informed to take further action. Attempt to contact extended friends and family. Home visit made by a staff member. Begin Child Missing in Education process when necessary.	

Appendix 3 - Attendance Rewards

Students have the opportunity to earn extra rewards for attendance by ensuring that they attend the full duration, arriving on time to each lesson and leaving at the end of the day.

To celebrate achievement, we reward our students half termly for:
- 100% attendance
- Best overall attender
- Significantly improving their attendance
- Reaching an attendance target

Percentage	Half termly
100%	2000 points
Best overall %	1000 points
Improvement	100 points
Target	Varied

Rewards conversion
Convert credits to cash to enable students to spend money as a reward. As part of this process, the student is expected to work with a staff member in converting their reward. This could be buying something online or visiting a local store. The student should be actively involved in the process to support the development of their life skills.

500 points	1000 points	2000 points	4000 points
£5 voucher	£10 voucher	£20 voucher	£40 voucher

Appendix 4 – Attendance Monitoring Programme: Improvement Plan

The purpose of the Student Attendance Improvement Plan is to identify the reason(s) for a student's low attendance, document the previous steps taken by the school, and agree the plans necessary to improve the student's future attendance. Review dates are a maximum of 4 weeks.

Student Name		Parent/Carer Name	
Stage (2,3,4)		Date of Plan	
Current Attendance			
Current barriers/reasons for attendance			

Actions			
Staff	Parent/carer	Student	Other
Attendance Target		Review Date	
Staff sign		Student sign	
Parent sign		Head Teacher sign	