

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 2017

Review date: September 2019

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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:

1. 10 consecutive sessions¹ 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
2. 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.

¹ Please note that the school day consists of 2 sessions.

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 or 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



Absence Procedures at Spixworth Infant School

Registers

At Spixworth Infant school we open the doors at 8.55am. We expect your child to be on the premises at this time. Registers are marked by 9.05am and your child will be marked late if they are not in by this time.

Lateness

At 9.20am the registers will be closed. Any pupil arriving after this time will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will be marked as 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.

This could mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00pm.
The registers will close at 1.20pm.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Headteacher and/or Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at anytime if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

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

If a child is absent parents must:

- Contact us before 9.20a.m. on the first day, and, if appropriate, each subsequent day, of absence and speak to the secretary or leave a message on the answer phone.
- Or, call into school and report to the office,

If a child is absent we will:

- Telephone parents on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- We may contact other emergency contacts for a pupil if we cannot contact parents/carers.

Continuing Absence

- Invite parents in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Headteacher if absences persist.
- Refer the matter to the Pupil Attendance Officer if attendance moves below 90%.

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 Staff for the local area. [*This is a legal requirement*]. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

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

Within the school it is the responsibility of all staff 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 as soon as possible.

At Spixworth Infant school we work in partnership with parents/carers to enable all pupils to have the best attendance possible.

We rigorously monitor the attendance of every pupil and we;

- make early contact with families if we have concerns about a pupil's attendance
- take advice from our attendance officer
- liaise with Spixworth Junior School and Sprowston High School
- can set up a Family Support Process
- use the fast track attendance system when necessary

Persistent Absence [PA]

All pupils whose attendance level falls below 90% maybe subject to an action plan (when appropriate) 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 and include the systems as detailed above.

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:

- Half termly attendance certificates for individual pupils achieving attendance above 96% (our school attendance target) and 100% attendance
- Class certificates in weekly assemblies for the class with the best attendance for the week.
- End of year certificates for 100% attendance for staff and pupils.
- Display of our current attendance data and target around our school.
- Regular attendance information in texts to parents/carers

Record preservation

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

Register Security

Registers or attendance marking sheets if used must be safely stored. Registers are located in the school office when not being used during morning and afternoon registration periods.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets is established and the school will make use of the attendance data available on the "RAISEONLINE" system, when setting its target. Targets will relate to national averages.

Absence Rates and Targets.

For 2017-18 we set our absence target to 4% or below (= 96% attendance.)

Mr Neil Campbell is the named governor for attendance.

Action Plan

Objective	When	How	Who	Monitoring and Evaluation of impact
This attendance policy has been adopted by Spixworth Infant School.	From September 2017	GB agrees	HT	GB HT LA
Regular reminders to parents about acceptable attendance provided.	In texts at regular intervals. Through school display In assemblies	HT to publish information	HT and administrative staff	GB HT
Early referral to Attendance Officer for attendance issues	Ongoing	Through email or phone call	HT	GB HT AO
Use text service to parents to remind about 1 st day calls to school absence line	Ongoing	HT to liaise with administrative staff and class teachers about families requiring reminders	HT and administrative staff	GB HT
Ensure teaching staff are aware that close time for registers is 9.20am and 1.20pm.	Ongoing	Class teachers to close registers after 9.20am and 1.20pm.	HT	GB HT

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.