



SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Person responsible for policy: Deputy Head (Pastoral)

INTRODUCTION

We expect all children who attend Sparkenhoe Community Primary School to attend every day when school is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate support for families when needed. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2016, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

DEFINITIONS

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence or religious observance (only 1 day will be authorised for each religious festival).
- Explaining an absence or ringing the school does not automatically mean the absence is authorised. Repeated odd days off for illness are monitored by the school's attendance officer (Mrs Cooper) and the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who may require proof of illness before an absence is authorised.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences reported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence. Parents of children who have low attendance will be required to provide proof of illness to the school to have the absence authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school or a parent.
- An absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school and no reason is given to the school.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.
- Requests for absences for holidays during term time need to be made to school BEFORE tickets are booked. Requests for absences will always be refused unless substantial evidence for the absence is provided.



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IF A CHILD IS ABSENT

If a child is ill or going to be away from school, parents should ring the school office. If no phone call is received then a text message will be sent or a phone call made by school where possible. If no reply is received and no reason given for the absence, then the absence may be unauthorised. Parents must keep informing the school if their child continues to be ill.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher will take immediate action by notifying the school office. A group call text will be sent. If there are concerns about the safety of a child, the EWO and/or the police will be called to conduct a home visit.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

See Extended Absences policy.

REPEATED UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem in conjunction with the Educational Welfare Service. The child's attendance will then be monitored and if there is no improvement the EWOs can and will take the parents to court.

PERSISTENT ABSENTEES

These are children whose attendance is below 90%. All these children are monitored and if attendance does not improve, the parents will be invited to a meeting with the school attendance officer and the EWO. All absences after this meeting will be monitored and only if proof of illness - doctor's letter, prescription, appointment, medication - is shown will the school authorise the absence. Referral to the school nurse or doctor will be sought for a child with ongoing health issues.

PUNCTUALITY

Children who arrive in school after the registers close at 8.45 am, are recorded as late. Any children who arrive after 9.15 am are U coded which means they are marked absent for the morning session. As part of the normal monitoring of attendance, parents are contacted where children are often late. School and parents work together to improve the situation.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will receive a termly report from the head teacher via the Headteacher Report. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

Class teachers, together with the attendance officer, will be responsible for monitoring attendance in



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each class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.

This policy was agreed by the Governing Board on 23/05/2022