SPARKENHOE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and draws from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

Whilst every pupil has a right to a full-time education and we have high attendance expectations for all pupils, we will ensure that the policy is applied fairly and consistently whilst considering the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In implementing this policy, we will take into consideration our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
This attendance policy is also consistent with the following school policies:

Admissions
Anti-bullying
Behaviour
Safeguarding

SCHOOL TARGETS FOR ATTENDANCE

The Department for Education (DEF) sets a whole school target every year for attendance. When this is available from the DFE it will is published on our website along with the actual attendance for previous years.
In order to achieve the best possible attendance for our school, we need the best possible attendance from our pupils. This means that we will listen, empathise and support families when children have absences, but we cannot tolerate absence that is concerning. We will consider information from parents about the reason for a child being absent but will not automatically authorise all absences. This policy sets out the school's intent and response to attendance and absences.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We want every child to:

- Attend regularly
- Attend punctually
- Attend ready and prepared to learn including wearing the right uniform and bringing the correct equipment.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Parents and pupils play a part in making our school successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all.

We expect all children registered at Sparkenhoe Community Primary School to attend every day when school is open, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. is our duty to consistently strive to achieve 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.

For our pupils to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital that they are

at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

We do all we can to encourage all children to attend, and we 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 also make the best provision we can for children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Good attendance is important because:
Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment.
For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided. Research has shown associations between regular absence from school and a number of extra-familial harms.

Roles and Responsibilities
Responsibilities of the Local Governing Body
The Local Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

Responsibilities of the school's attendance champion
A member of the senior leadership team (Senior Attendance Champion) will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the attendance policy is consistently applied throughout the school.

Person responsible for policy: **Senior Attendance Champion,** Deputy Head (Pastoral) Mrs Cooper. This person will also ensure that attendance is both recorded accurately and analysed. They will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.
If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff will discuss with parents/carers the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school.

Responsibilities of classroom staff/form tutor
• Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately.
• Promote and reward good attendance with pupils at all appropriate opportunities.
• Liaise with the attendance champion on matters of attendance and punctuality.
• Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
• Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of pupils (age appropriate)
• Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
• Arrive in school on time.
• Go to all their registrations on time.
• Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Parents will:

• inform the school on the first day of absence
• discuss with the school office/class teacher any planned absences well in advance
• support the school with their child in aiming for 100% attendance each year
• make sure that any absence is clearly accounted for by telephone, WEDUC message or email on the first days of absence and will send regular update messages every 2/3 days.
• avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
• only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.

For day-to-day messages about attendance, please contact our school office by ringing 0116 2512686, option 1, email us office@sparkenhoe.thealt.org.uk or send us a message on WEDUC.

Members of the School's Senior Leadership Team will be on gate duty every day. Parents can discuss concerns with them as necessary.

RECORDING ATTENDANCE

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The school gates open at 08:30. Pupils must arrive in school by 08:40 on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 08:40 and will be kept open until 09:10. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:00 and will be kept open until 13:30. The register will mark whether every pupil is:

• Present
• Attending an approved off-site educational activity
• Absent authorised or unauthorised
• Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

• The original entry
• The amended entry
• The reason for the amendment
• The date on which the amendment was made
• The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We open the gates for home time at 3:10 each day.

Lateness/punctuality

It is important to be on time at the start of the morning and afternoon school sessions.
Children who are late, miss out on the important initial learning activities of the day. Children who are regularly late fall behind in their learning. Their day is disrupted, as is the learning of the rest of the class, whose attention is disrupted by the arrival of latecomers.

• The school day begins at 08:40 and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time.
• All lateness is recorded daily. This information will be required by the courts, should a prosecution for non-attendance or lateness be necessary.
• Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded U. This mark shows them to be on site, but is legally recorded as an absence.
• If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence, coded M. Please be advised that, where possible, doctors and dentist's appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Ongoing and repeated lateness is considered as unauthorised absence and will be subject to legal action.

Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved.

If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem and support offered. If support is not appropriate or is declined and a child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence due to lateness recorded in any 10 week period, the school may issue parents with a Penalty Notice.

If you are 10 minutes late every day, your child will lose almost 7 days of learning a year!

Regular attendance at school promotes well-being. It gives children the best chance of learning and reaching their potential. Pupils should attend school every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Good attendance and punctuality are important because children:

- Get on better with learning and other children.
- Cope better with school routines, work and friendships.
- Find learning easier because they do not miss out.
- Are more successful moving between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.
- Are known to be safe and well.

Research shows a direct link between high attendance and doing well at school.

All children have a right to an education. Missing school or being frequently late for school means children miss out on vital lessons and learning time.

The table below shows how having days off impacts on attendance:

Attendance (%)	Days missed	Weeks missed	Lessons missed
100%	0	0	0
95%	9 ½	2 (approx.)	40
90%	19	4 (approx.)	80
85%	28 ½	6 (approx.)	120
80%	38	8 (approx.)	160
75%	47 ½	9 ½ (approx.)	200
70%	57	11 ½ (approx.)	230

If children have 80% attendance for 5 years, that is the equivalent to missing a whole year of school.

REPORTING ABSENCE

First day absence

A child not attending school is considered a **safeguarding matter**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

If your child is absent, you must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence as detailed above.

If your child is absent and we have not received a message from you, we will:

• telephone or WEDUC message you on the first day of absence– this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular school attendance.

• invite you in to discuss the situation with our Senior Attendance Champion/pastoral leaders/ Family

Support Worker
Where a child is on a child protection plan, a child in need plan or is looked after, contact will be made with the relevant social worker on day 1.

Third day absence
Parents must ring in on the third day of absence to speak to the office and not just inform the school via email or WEDUC.
Please note: If your child is not seen and contact has not been established with any of the named parents/carers, after three days of absence the school we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends, wider family. At this point we may carry out a home visit to ensure the well-being of the child.

Tenth day absence
We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing. Children's Services staff will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. It would be helpful if you could ensure that we always have an up-to-date contact number.

Continued or ongoing absence
If your child misses 10% (three weeks/sessions) or more schooling across the school year, for whatever reason, they are defined as persistent absentees. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in his or her learning. Research shows these gaps affect attainment when attendance falls below 95%. As such, we monitor all absence thoroughly and all attendance data is shared with the local authority and the Department for Education.

Any student who is persistently absent will be monitored and put on an action plan, if required. A member of the Pastoral team will meet with students, and their families whose attendance cause concern.
Where necessary, home visits are made to discuss ways attendance could be improved and the barriers that may need removing:
This could include:
• Agreeing an attendance support plan
• Signing a home/school contract
• Signposting to outside agencies
In situations of persistent truanting, a parent / carer may be fined.

A welcome back
It is important that on return from an unavoidable 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 with any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leaves of absence have a big impact on individual children's education and also have a big impact on the school's overall attendance. All requests for leave of absence need to be made to the school BEFORE you book any tickets. Please contact the school office and request a meeting with the **Senior Attendance Champion,** Mrs Cooper. An appointment will be made where an application form will be completed. We will then confirm the outcome of the application in writing.

Government legislation means that:

- Schools are not allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school during term time for a holiday.
- Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are exceptional circumstances and holidays are not considered exceptional.

- Evidence will be required to support requests for leave.
- Penalty Notice fines will be issued by the Local Authority for unauthorised term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days (4 days when the absence is continuous to a school holiday) and may be issued for fewer days where this has happened before.
- If an absence is taken without authorisation, the following will apply:
    - For a first unauthorised absence in a 3 year period, a penalty notice of £160 per child, per parent (discounted to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days) will be issued.
    - For a second absence within a 3 year period, the fine will be £160 per child, per parent.
    - For repeated absences, your case may be referred by the Local Authority directly to the Magistrates Court.
    - If there are 20 or more days of absence, your child may be removed from the school roll resulting in you having to reapply for a school place.
    - If there are 20 or more school days of absence due to holidays or trips away, this may result in cases proceeding straight to the Magistrates` Court.
    - If your child has other unauthorised absences, of 10 or more half days in a period of 10 weeks, then you can also be fined as above. This includes absences where you have not informed the school why your child is away.
- Reminders of absence procedures and extended absence procedures will be sent to parents /carers on admission to school and at least annually. See appendix 6 for examples of leaflets sent to parents / carers.

Understanding Types of Absence

Pupils are expected to attend school every day for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence.

There are two main categories of absences:
• authorised absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence or given approval in advance for such an absence.
If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised.

• unauthorised absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave absence from school after a parent's request. This includes:
• parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings
• truancy before or during the school day
• absences which have not been explained.

A school can, if needed, change an authorised absence to an unauthorised absence and vice versa if new information is presented. An example of this would be where a parent states a child is unwell but on return to school there is evidence they have been on holiday.

If the authenticity of an illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this. Parents can see their child's attendance on the WEDUC app.

SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE

Promoting good attendance

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. Our attendance leaflet contains 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.

To help us all to focus on this we will:
• provide information on all matters related to attendance on our website
• report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
• to share current attendance through the WEDUC app
• celebrate good attendance by sharing individual attendance levels with the pupils and by sharing class totals with parents and pupils in our awards assemblies.
• reward good or improving attendance through class competitions and certificates

My child is trying to avoid coming to school. What should I do?

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents/carers and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Contact your Mrs Cooper or your child's class teacher immediately and openly discuss your worries.

Your child could be avoiding school for a number of reasons – difficulties with school work, bullying, friendship problems, family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend school and work together to tackle the problem. In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with another professional.

What can I do to encourage my child to attend school?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/her education.

School strategies for supporting attendance

As a school we encourage good attendance through a range of strategies including:
• Letters to parents to stress the importance of good attendance
• Ensuring that good attendance is high profile in school through sharing weekly data in celebration assemblies and with class teachers
• Talking to children and families at the school gate

When attendance falls below expected levels for the school the following early interventions will take place:
1. Courtesy letter to inform that attendance has fallen below the schools target
2. Medical Letter (if absence is due to consistent illness)
3. Second letter of concern as their attendance has continued to fall and is now being monitored by school and the attendance team
4. Tutor/class teaching weekly monitoring
5. Pupil attendance matters meeting

LEGAL MEASURES FOR TACKLING POOR ATTENDANCE

Penalty Notices for non-attendance and other legal measures

In education law, parents/carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular

attendance of their child of compulsory school age at the school at which the child is registered, unless the absence has been authorised by the school.

Legal measures for tackling persistent absence or lateness
Sparkenhoe Community Primary School will use the full range of legal measures to secure good attendance.
Legal measures will only be considered when there is unauthorised absence and:
1. the child or family do not require the support from any agency to improve the attendance
2. the child has 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence and parents are complicit in the child's absence.
The following legal measures may be used for pupils of compulsory school age who are registered at a school:
• Attendance contracts set at Attendance Planning Meetings
• Penalty Notices
• Education Supervision Orders
• Prosecution

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the Headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
• a number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
• one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
• where an excluded child is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
• if the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

USE OF DATA / SHARING ATTENDANCE INFORMATION WITH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

We celebrate attendance in awards assemblies, certificates are awarded to classes with the highest attendance each week.

Letters are sent to parents where attendance is or has started to be a concern.

Attendance is published in WEDUC, you can see your child's levels of attendance there.

We send out regular updates on the school's current overall attendance on WEDUC.

Where a child's attendance is below 95%, parents will be informed that it is being closely monitored.

Where a child's attendance is below 90%, parents will be informed and notified that further absences will not be automatically authorised. The school's Senior Attendance Champion will consider each absence carefully.

Where attendance is an on-going concern, our Senior Attendance Champion will consider if an Attendance Support Plan is needed and will discuss this with parents.

We will meet with families where there are concerns, we will listen, review and work with families to ensure that the support we offer is effective.

Where a child's attendance is monitored on an Attendance Support Plan we will share any improvements in attendance with the pupil and parents. This might be in a review of the plan, a face to face meeting or a letter.

Pupils' attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a learner's attendance is a cause for concern in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. On a regular basis the Senior Attendance Champion will provide the following data:

Data	Regularity	Provided to
Daily registers	Daily	Class Teacher
Weekly Registers	Weekly	Class teacher
Individual learner % attendance data	Weekly	Class teacher / pupil
Weekly class attendance	Weekly	Parents / pupils
3+ day absence	Weekly	Senior Attendance Champion
Less than 95% attendance lists	Weekly	Senior Attendance Champion
Class % attendance	Weekly	Senior leadership team, pupils, parents
Persistent absence / severe absence pupils.	Weekly	Senior Attendance Champion / Senior Leadership Team
Attendance data broken down into key groups i/c PA and SA	Monthly	Senior Leadership Team

School registers are legal documents. We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least three years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups. Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if their attendance is a cause for concern.

School attendance data is collected daily by the Department for Education and the Local Authority.

BEFORE SCHOOL CARE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Before School Care is available from 7.30 am until classes start at 8.30 am. Children get a healthy breakfast which ensures they are ready for the school day.

We also run a free Breakfast Club which is available to ALL children. This is from 8.00 am until 8.30 am.

After School Care is available from 3.10 pm until 5.15 pm.

Charges for these services are available on the school website.

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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.

Schools now have to share schools' attendance data with the department of Education on a daily basis. This is done electronically via the WONDE system.

We monitor attendance on an individual pupil level and a school level to identify when issues arise. Where there are concerns, action is taken as outlined in this policy to improve attendance.

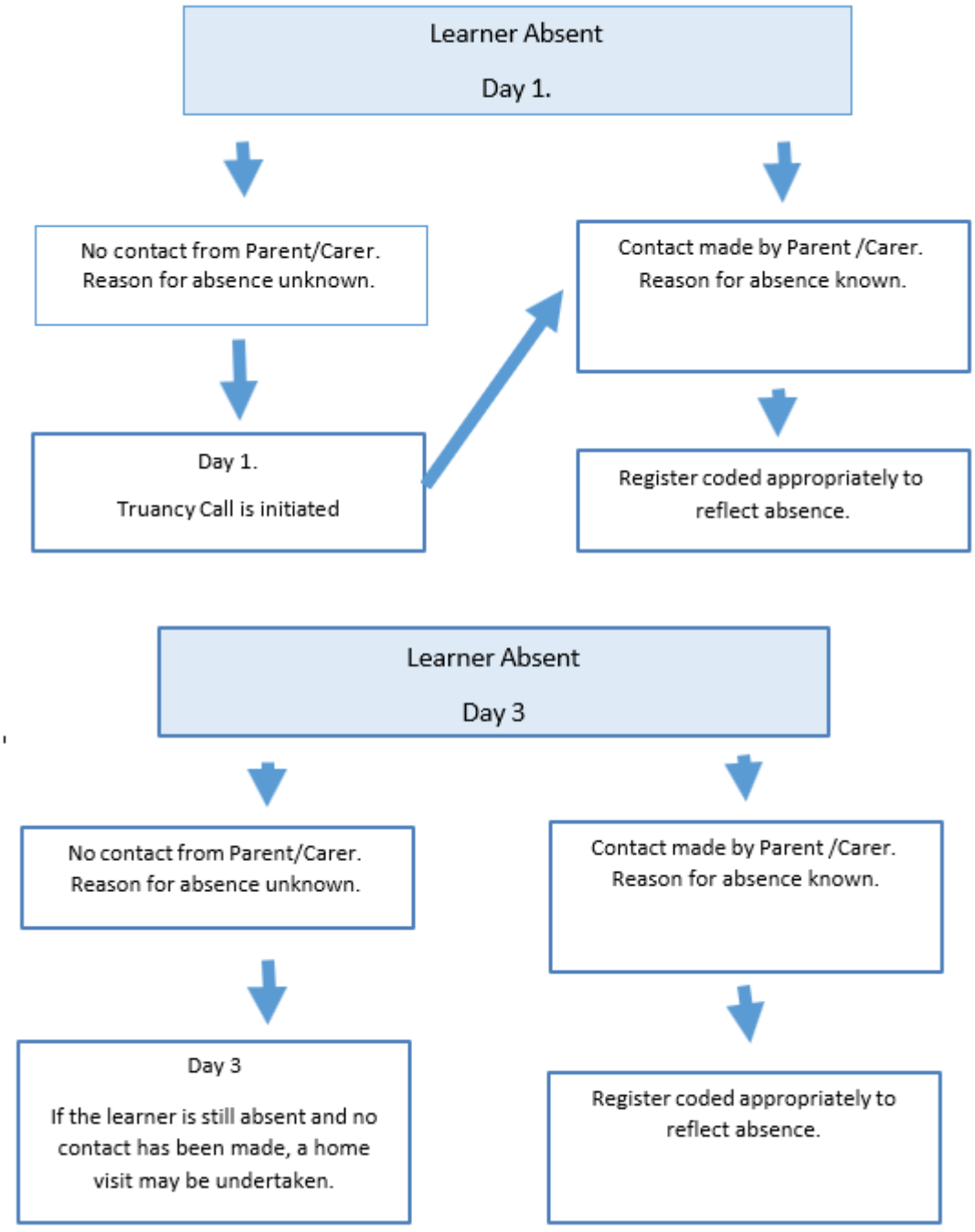
Class teachers, office staff together with the Senior Attendance Champion, will be responsible for monitoring attendance in each class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there are concerns about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-

term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be monitored by the Senior Attendance Champion, who will arrange contact with the parents or carers.

This policy is a working document and will be reviewed at least annually.

This policy was agreed by the Governing Board November 2026

APPENDIX 1


Learner Absent
Day 1.
No contact from Parent/Carer.
Reason for absence unknown.
Contact made by Parent /Carer.
Reason for absence known.
Day 1.
Truancy Call is initiated
Register coded appropriately to
reflect absence.
Learner Absent
Day 3
No contact from Parent/Carer.
Reason for absence unknown.
Contact made by Parent /Carer.
Reason for absence known.
Day 3
If the learner is still absent and no
contact has been made, a home
visit may be undertaken.
Register coded appropriately to
reflect absence.

APPENDIX 2

Attendance – graduated response

Expect

School follows attendance policy - whole school approach to encourage good attendance.

Monitor

School undertakes careful monitoring of all pupils' attendance and intervenes early.

Listen, Understand, & Facilitate Support

School escalation process. Casework for individual pupils / families. Thorough assessment and planning, involve school colleagues or external services as identified necessary (with consent where required). Review. EWS referral checklist where voluntary support has not been successful or engaged with.

Formalise Support

School request EWS involvement – share checklist. (Consent not required.)
EWS response – usually either attendance panel meeting or advice to the school re alternative course of action.
If panel held and contract in place, school monitor. If unauthorised absence continues, school request further EWS action. New in August 2024 – LA Attendance contract meetings / Notice to Improve letters,
If agreed, EWS issue Final Warning, or Interview under caution paperwork (EWS decision based on all available information), and EWS monitor attendance with school.
EWS consider Education Supervision Order throughout process.

Enforce

Penalty Notice or court action (decision made by EWS based on all available information.)

APPENDIX 3

Other Types of Absence

Religious observance
Where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.

Removal of a Child from School

If your child is leaving our school (other than when transferring to a secondary school at the end of year 6 parents are asked to:

1. Give the attendance team comprehensive information about their plans, including any date of a move and your new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to our school in writing. Where children are not allocated a new school straight away, they stay on our school register and we will keep in touch with families to find out what is happening.

If children are not allocated a new school in a timely manner, then the case will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer as a Child Missing in Education.

2. If children move abroad, we will need details of where they are going and will need to see details of any flights or transport arrangements.

3. Arrange a meeting to discuss home education. We strongly discourage parents from this option and would aim to work with you to keep your child in school. Id a child is on a Child Protection Plan then parents cannot remove a children school for home schooling without authorisation form Social Services.

If pupils leave and we do not have the above information, then your child is considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to then carry out investigations to try and locate your child, which includes liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Absence through child participation in public performances, including theatre, film or television work and modelling

Parents of a child performer can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance. They must contact the headteacher to discuss the nature and frequency of the work, whether the child has a valid performance licence and whether education will be provided by the employer during any future leave of absence. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Any absence recorded as part of a child's participation in a public performance is recorded as C, an authorised absence.

Absence through competing at regional, county or national level for sport

Parents of able sportsmen and women can seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in regional, county, national and international events and competitions. It is, however, down to the headteacher's discretion as to whether to authorise this and they will wish to discuss with you the nature and frequency of the absence and how learning will continue if absence occurs. Permission for your child to leave early or arrive late to attend coaching and training sessions is also at the discretion of the headteacher and is not likely to be approved if it is a regular event, unless the sports club or association is providing an education tutor as part of their coaching.

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller and Showman families

Absence of a child from a Traveller family that has left the area may be authorised if the absence is for work purposes only and it is believed that the family intends to return. To ensure the continuity of learning for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. That means that a school cannot remove a Traveller child from the school roll while they are travelling. When the Traveller is away, the home school holds the place open and records the absence as authorised through the T code. Distance learning packs for Traveller children are not an alternative to attendance at school.

APPENDIX 4

Penalty Notice Fines for School Absence

Fines are issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices.
This poster explains when a fine can be issued for unauthorised absence that occurs from August 2025 onwards. Fines issued for absence that happened from August 2024 onwards count towards the escalation process.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child who was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in **each** parent receiving 3 **separate** fines.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for:

- term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days
- or 4 days where the absence immediately *precedes/includes a 5th day which is a school closure day (e.g. school holiday / INSET / enforced closure) or **any** form of absence*
- or for fewer days where this has happened before

10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10-week period.

Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days. (No option to pay at £80 level)

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will usually proceed to the Magistrates' court. Magistrate's fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate and may impact on **job applications and travel abroad**.

Court prosecutions: Penalty Notices will not automatically be issued. Parents are advised that where the LA considers that a Penalty Notice is not appropriate due to the level of concern about a child's absence, prosecution action may be taken.

By law, all Penalty Notice payments go to the local authority and not to schools.

APPENDIX 5

We use the following Attendance bands when talking to parents

Band 1a	Excellent	97%- 100%
Band 1b	Good	95%-97%
Band 2a	Attendance is monitored	93-95%
Band 2b	Cause for Concern	90-93%
Band 3	Unacceptable	85-90%
Band 4		65-85%
Band 5		<65%
Band 6		<50%

APPENDIX 6

Sparkenhoe
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE INFORMATION
Including our ABSENCE policy
2026 - 27

Together we can…
improve attendance

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Attendance

School is an important part of the lives of children and young people. It is where they begin to develop new skills, make friendships and it helps prepare them for their future. When a child misses school, they can miss out on these vital opportunities and their learning and friendships may suffer.

Pupils should attend school every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Good attendance and punctuality are important because children:

- Get on better with learning and other children.
- Cope better with school routines, work and friendships.
- Find learning easier because they do not miss out.
- Are more successful moving between primary school, secondary school, higher education and employment or training.
- Are known to be safe and well.

Research shows a direct link between high attendance and doing well at school.

All children have a right to an education. Missing school or being frequently late for school means children miss out on vital lessons and learning time.

The table below shows how having days off impacts on attendance:

Parents and carers have the legal responsibility to ensure that a child attends school regularly.

Attendance (%)	Days missed	Weeks missed	Lessons missed
100%	0	0	0
95%	9 ½	2 (approx.)	40
90%	19	4 (approx.)	80
85%	28 ½	6 (approx.)	120
80%	38	8 (approx.)	160
75%	47 ½	9 ½ (approx.)	200
70%	57	11 ½ (approx.)	230

Being on time

Arriving at school on time is as important as attendance.
The school gates open at 08:30am and close at 08:40am. Children should be in school by this time as registers are taken at 08:45am. Children who are late miss out on the important initial learning activities of the day. Children who are regularly late, fall behind in their learning. Their day is disrupted, as is the learning of the rest of the class, whose attention is disrupted by the arrival of latecomers.

If you are 10 minutes late every day, your child will lose almost 7 days of learning a year!

Parent/Carer responsibilities

If your child is not coming to school

- Ring us on 0116 2512686 (option 1) on the first day of an absence to leave a message about an absence.
- or message us on our WEDUC app.
- We need to know details about what is wrong with your child, not just that they are ill.
- If your child is ill for several days, we may ask for medical evidence (copy of prescription or appointment card).
- If your child vomits, or has diarrhoea, they must stay away from school for 48 hours after the last time they were ill.

School's responsibilities

- We will contact parents on the first day of an absence if we have not been contacted by you first.
- We will write to you if we have any concerns over attendance, punctuality or not knowing where your child is.
- We ask for evidence of absences, especially where attendance is low.

If you have any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, we will do our best to support you and find a solution to the problem. The Educational Welfare Officer will be involved with persistent absentees.

Illness

- If your child is ill, you must ring the school office first thing in the morning and leave a message – 0116 251 2686 (option1) or message us on our WEDUC app.
- Please clearly state the name of your child, their class and exactly what is wrong with them. It is not enough to just say they are ill.
- If you do not contact us, we will send a message by our WEDUC app, or text or email you to ask where your child is.
- If we still have no information from you, we will ring or make a home visit.
- If your child is ill for several days, we may ask for medical evidence (copy of prescription or appointment card).
- If your child vomits, or has diarrhoea, they must stay away from school for 48 hours after the last time they were ill.
- **If your child has a lot of time off for minor illnesses without providing acceptable medical evidence, you may be fined for the absences.**

Appointments

If your child has an appointment during school time, we need to know before your child takes the time off school. We will need to see evidence of the appointment.

Children must not take time off school for non-medical appointments, unless they have been discussed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.



Children need to be in school as much as possible. They should only stay at home if they are really unwell. The NHS and the Chief Medical Officer says that it is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses, including general cold symptoms like a cough, runny nose or sore throat. When children are ill we will be regularly asking how soon they will return and offering support to get them back to school as soon as possible.

We will ask you to explain exactly what illness your child has. It is not enough to just tell us they are ill, or that they have a cough. We need more information to help us decide if we will authorise the absence. If we are not sure why your child is not in school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Medicine in School

If your child has medical needs that requires them to have medicine given to them in school time, whether that be a long term need or a short term need, please come and talk to us.

- If your child has antibiotics that they need to take 4 times a day and they are well enough to come to school, we can give a dose during the school day.
- If your child needs other, prescribed medication during the school day, we can arrange to give it to them.
- If your child needs pain medication during the school day, this can be arranged after a discussion with Mrs Cooper.
- If your child has asthma, we need their inhaler in school at all times.
- If they have an adrenaline pen for allergies, we need one in school at all times.

To ask for medicine to be given to your child in school, please talk to the office staff who can make an appointment with Mrs Cooper, or help you to complete the necessary forms.
Please call 0116 251 2686

Absences from school

To request an absence in term time, you will need to see Mrs Cooper.
Please call 0116 251 2686 to make an appointment BEFORE you book any tickets.

Government legislation means that schools are not allowed to authorise requests for children to be taken out of school during term time for a holiday.
Requests for leave can only be granted by schools if there are 'exceptional circumstances' and holidays are not considered exceptional.
Requests for leave must be made to the school BEFORE you book any tickets.
Evidence will be required to support requests for leave.
If an absence is taken without authorisation, the following will apply:
Consecutive days of term time leave **Penalty Notice** fines will be issued for:

- Term Time Leave of 5 or more consecutive days.
- Term Time Leave of 4 days where the absence immediately precedes/includes a 5th day which is a school closure day (e.g. school holiday / INSET / enforced closure).
- Term Time Leave of fewer days where this has happened before.
- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period Fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10-week period. This includes absences where you have not informed the school why your child is away.
- For an absence longer than 20 days, your child could be removed from the school roll resulting in you having to reapply for a school place.
- Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child who was absent.
- **The first time a Penalty Notice** is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days. Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- **The second time a Penalty Notice** is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be: £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days. (No option to pay at £80 level)
- **The third time** an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will usually proceed to the Magistrates' court. Magistrate's fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child. Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate and may impact on job applications and travel abroad.
- Court prosecutions: Penalty Notices will not automatically be issued. Parents are advised that where the LA considers that a Penalty Notice is not appropriate due to the level of concern about a child's absence, prosecution action may be taken.

By law, all Penalty Notice payments go to the local authority and not to schools.

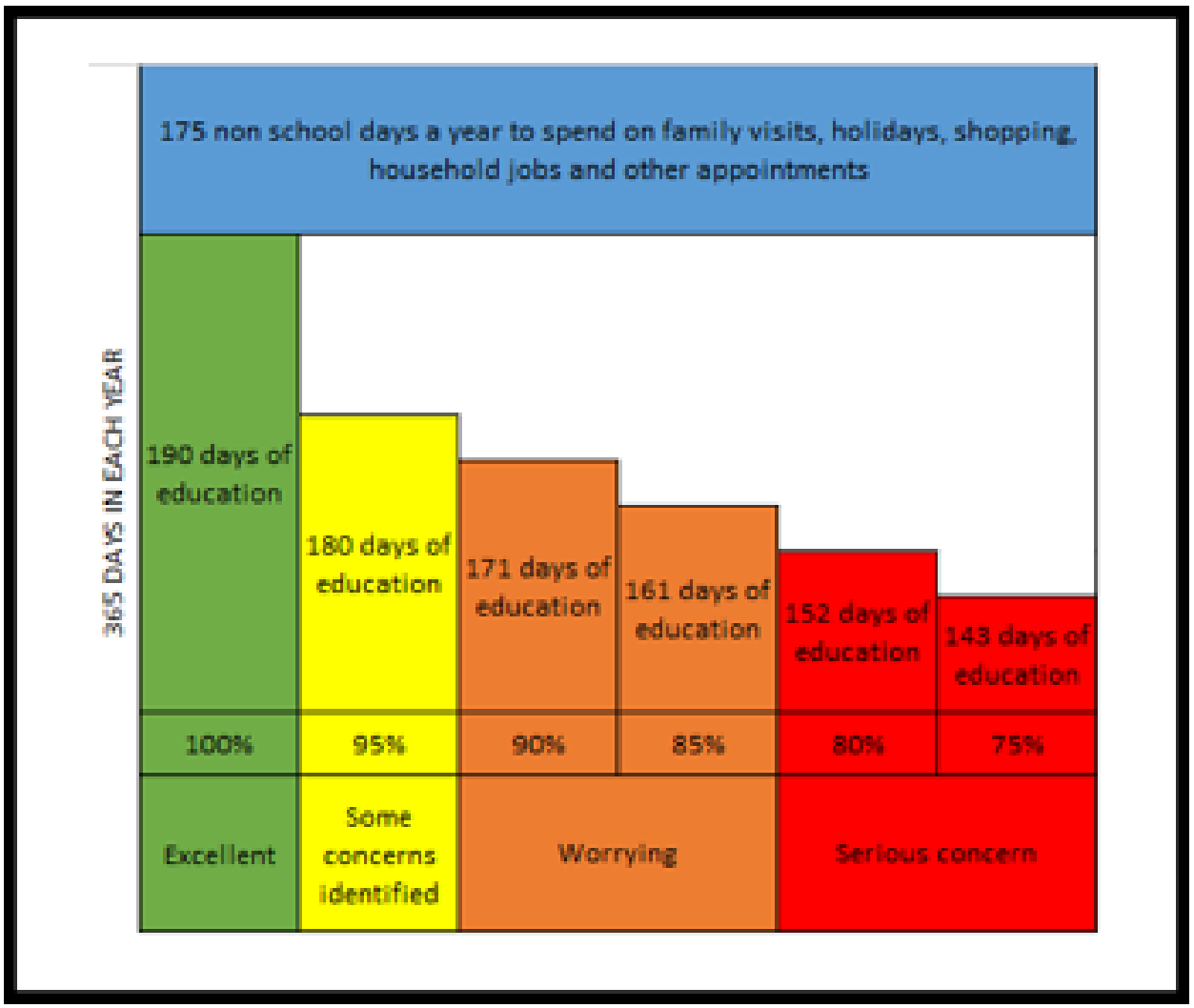
Should I keep my child off school?

Yes, until...

- Chicken Pox (Until all blisters have crusted over).
- Vomiting and Diarrhoea (Return 48 hours from the last episode).
- Flu-like temperature (Until they no longer have a high temperature).
- Impetigo (Until their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics).
- Measles (4 days after the rash first appeared).
- Mumps (5 days after the swelling started).
- Scabies (Until they've had their first treatment).
- Scarlet Fever (24 hours after they started taking antibiotics).
- Whooping Cough (48 hours after they started taking antibiotics).

No, but inform your child's class teacher of:

- Cough
- Sore throat (keep off school if accompanied by a high temperature)
- Earache
- Head lice
- Hand, foot and mouth
- Threadworms
- Glandular Fever
- Slapped Cheek
- Tonsilitis
- Conjunctivitis
- Cold sores



10 tips for parents to help ensure their child attends school regularly:

- Help your child to get their book bag ready the night before school.
- Make sure their uniform is ready for the following day.
- Make sure your child goes to bed at a reasonable time.
- Set the alarm clock early enough to allow plenty of time to get ready.
- Make sure your child has some breakfast – unless attending breakfast club.
- Leave for school with plenty of time to spare so your child is not late, remember **gates shut at 8:40am**.
- Check to make sure they have everything they need – book bag, water bottle etc.
- If your child is having any problems with their work, speak to

The role of the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is a member of the Local Education Authority Team who have responsibility for promoting, encouraging and enforcing regular school attendance. The EWO is in regular contact with our Attendance Officer to look at attendance, patterns of absence and lateness.

Any concerns, please contact us on 0116 251 2686