

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Spen Valley High School seeks to ensure that all its students receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each of them to realise his/her true potential.

The school strives to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with students and their families to ensure each student attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of students to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those students and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Spen Valley High School has an effective and efficient system of communication with students, parents/carers and appropriate agencies which provides mutual information, advice and support.

Spen Valley High School is a member of the Spenborough Cooperative Trust and as such we hold the same policies with regard to term time leave of absence and referral to the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer.

Aims of this policy

1. To improve the overall percentage attendance of students at school by:

- applying the Attendance Policy consistently.
- promoting the importance of good attendance and punctuality to students, staff and parents/carers, ensuring that all understand the link between attendance and achievement.
- monitoring, evaluating and reviewing progress in attendance through measurable outcomes that inform future planning for improvement.
- identifying those students who are classed as, or are in danger of becoming, Persistent Absentees, and to implement a range of strategies to improve their attendance.

2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school, ie students, parents/carers, teachers and governors by:

- publishing attendance procedures in the staff handbook and on the school website.
- Issuing parents/carers with a “quick guide” to attendance matters on an annual basis.
- producing regular reports to governors.
- Highlighting the importance of attendance at Year 6 Parents/carers’ Evening and other presentations to parents/carers.
- publicising attendance achievements and information in school.
- displaying attendance information at focal points – form rooms, corridors etc.
- discussing attendance issues and prioritising individual or groups of students with the Attendance and Pupil Support Officer (APSO) and in Pastoral Officer meetings, intervention meetings, year group meetings, SLT meetings and in relevant staff meetings.
- developing the reward systems to recognise and reward attendance.

- 3. To develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks by:**
 - maintaining unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
 - making automated telephone contact with parents/carers, on the first day of absence.
 - ensuring clearly defined late registration procedures.
 - responding swiftly to lateness (in respect of both students and parents/carers).
 - defining clearly the roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure.
 - Holding scheduled meetings between the APSO, Pastoral Officers, Attendance Officer and the Deputy Headteacher.
 - having clear and shared understanding of procedures regarding referral to the APSO.
 - reviewing attendance routines and procedures regularly.
 - being familiar with the APSO's referral and recording system and ensuring that the APSO has a clear understanding of the school's procedures and priorities.

- 4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and students by:**
 - highlighting attendance in lessons, assemblies and tutorials.
 - having staff available to talk to students regarding attendance issues such as learning Support staff, Pastoral Officers, Achievement Coordinators, APSO, Connexions, mentors.
 - publicising the support offered by school and the Local Authority.
 - providing accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents/carers.
 - involving parents/carers from the earliest stage.
 - offering support to those parents/carers identified as having a need.

- 5. To maintain a systematic approach for gathering and analysing attendance related data by:**
 - continuing to develop the computerised registration system.
 - ensuring that the Attendance Officer receives regular training in the use of SIMS as the Attendance module is developed further.
 - identifying as early as possible, patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

- 6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school by:**
 - initiating automated first day absence contact whenever possible.
 - developing the use of a range of standardised letters that are sequenced.
 - promoting an expectation of absence letters/telephone calls from parents/carers.
 - providing information in a user-friendly way.
 - encouraging all parents/carers to come into school to discuss issues which may affect attendance.
 - Informing parents/carers of the expectations around term time absence.

Term time leave of absence will only be authorised by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances. Fixed Penalty Notices may be issued to those parents/carers who take students out of school where permission has not been granted in advance by the Headteacher. These notices carry a fine of £60 per parent per child if paid within 28 days or £120 per parent per child if paid after 28 days. Failure to seek permission in advance of the absence or repeated withdrawal of a child for term time leave of absence will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued. Failure to pay the fine(s) may result in prosecution.

Should a child be removed from school for a leave of absence lasting more than three weeks then the child's name may be removed from the school roll. This will necessitate the parent/carer having to apply for a place at the school when the absence ends.

Please note that the following members of the Spenborough Cooperative Trust have the same policy for term time leave of absence:

**Heckmondwike Primary School
Fairfield School
Headlands School
The John Curwen Cooperative Primary Academy School
Littletown School
Roberttown School**

7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions by:

- identifying finance for a system of rewards and consulting with students about how this should be spent.
- actively promoting attendance with associated rewards and effective sanctions.
- ensuring fair and consistent implementation.
- making use of imaginative and immediate sanctions.

8. To promote effective partnerships with the Attendance & Pupil Support Service and with other services and agencies by ensuring that Pastoral Officers:

- liaise with the APSO Service and other agencies.
- give priority to timetabled meetings with APSO.
- carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- gather and record relevant information to assist the work of the APSO.
- arrange multi-agency meetings as appropriate.
- establish and maintain lists of named contacts within the local community, eg Community Police Officer, YISP, ASBU etc.
- encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.
- initiate a CAF when necessary.
- work with the Local Authority on the Persistent Absentee agenda.

9. To recognise the needs of the individual student when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence by:

- being sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning students.
- involving/informing relevant staff involved in the reintegration process.
- providing opportunities for counselling and feedback.
- considering peer support and mentoring.
- involving parents/carers/carers as far as possible.
- agreeing a timescale for review of reintegration plan.
including the APSO, parents/carers and students in the reintegration plan.

Responsibilities

Subject Teacher

- to keep an accurate record of student attendance and punctuality for every lesson.
- to complete the register within 15 minutes of the start of each lesson and within 5 minutes of the start of Periods 1 and 6.
- to be aware that parents/carers have real time access to attendance information via FROG and to be aware of the implications this may have if registers are completed inaccurately or late.
- to make follow up contact with parents/carers where an error has been made in registering a child so that a parent/carer contacts the school to question the error.
- to follow up with the Form Tutor where a student does not attend a lesson but is marked present for the previous lesson .

Form Tutor

- to promote the need for, and encourage, good attendance and punctuality through tutorials.
- to follow up absences by requesting information from parents/carers and clearing unauthorised absences on a weekly basis (in SIMS).
- to check, on a weekly basis, that am and pm registers have been completed accurately and to correct any errors.
- to discuss initial concerns re attendance and punctuality with the student, parent and relevant Pastoral Officer.

Pastoral Officer

- to promote and encourage good attendance and punctuality as often as possible.
- to organise the publication and presentation of attendance certificates on a half termly basis.
- to have a regular, scheduled meeting with the APSO and to refer students who are giving, or are likely to give cause for concern re attendance and/or punctuality.
- to make referrals to the APSO for those students with less than 85% attendance or those who are identified as likely to reach the threshold for Persistent Absenteeism or those who have sporadic attendance patterns.
- to identify early those students whose attendance gives cause for concern from a Safeguarding point of view and to discuss these concerns with the Designated Senior Person.
- to ensure that notes are kept after each meeting with the APSO and that these are circulated to Form Tutors, Achievement Coordinators and the Deputy Headteacher.
- to seek written feedback from the APSO following referrals.
- to check registers weekly and to ensure that tutors in their team clear absences promptly.
- to keep the relevant staff informed of issues surrounding attendance.

Achievement Coordinator

- to promote and encourage good attendance through assemblies and other forums.
- to ensure that students and parents/carers within their cohort are aware of the links between poor attendance and low levels of attainment.
- to liaise with the relevant Pastoral Officer with regard to concerns about attendance.
- to be mindful of attendance issues when organising mentoring sessions and in other intervention work.

Deputy Headteacher

- to oversee all attendance procedures.
- to ensure that procedures for the use of SIMS Attendance are clearly presented in the Staff Handbook.
- to arrange relevant training, when identified, for staff.
- to agree the SLA with the APSO and his/her manager.
- to deal with any requests from parents/carers regarding term time leave of absence.
- to prepare the paperwork associated with the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices.
- to monitor the completion of lesson registers and to highlight concerns with those staff who do not complete registers on time.

Attendance Officer

- to be responsible for the automated attendance call system, to monitor parent/carer responses and to pass information to the relevant member of staff.
- to produce statistical analyses of attendance data as requested.
- to ensure that all staff complete registers by reminding staff who have not completed them within the given deadlines.
- to enter the relevant codes (such as those for work experience, holiday, study leave) where these are known in advance and to check that these are not amended by members of staff.
- to monitor requests for term time leave of absence.
- to monitor the attendance of individuals or groups of students where there are known attendance issues.

Office Manager

- to ensure that there is adequate cover in the event of the absence of the Attendance Officer.