


# Attendance Policy

| Date of Policy | Review Date | Policy Written by: | Date Shared with Staff | Date Shared with Local School Board |
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| September 2026 | No later than two years following publication of the policy | Miss Donna Palmer (DSL &Inclusion Lead) | | |

**Attendance Policy**

The responsibility for promoting attendance at Spalding St Paul's Primary School is shared by everyone involved in the school, pupils, parents, staff and Local School Board.

Our aim is to provide full and efficient education for all of our pupils. The school believes that all pupils benefit from education in school and therefore regular attendance is essential. The school will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems affecting attendance will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

*Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child / children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities.*

Article 28 - You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can

**Our Aims**

It is recognised that:
It is the responsibility of parents / carers to ensure daily attendance at school as required by law.
All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
No pupil should be deprived of their opportunity to receive an education that meets their needs and personal development.
Situations beyond the control of pupils and/or parents may impact on attendance. We will, with the agreement and support of parents, work in partnership with external agencies to resolve these.
The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer group and to prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

**In order to achieve these aims the school will:**

Offer a safe and supportive environment, which welcomes children regardless of race, gender or ability.
Establish clear and effective procedures for administration.
Foster a climate where the school community, teachers, parents/carers, Local School Board and pupils value attendance and punctuality.
Comply with legal requirements.
Ensure any child presenting poor levels of attendance and punctuality are noted, monitored and appropriate action taken.
Have systems in place offering rewards and incentives for regular attendance and punctuality.
Keep parents/carers informed about their child's attendance through established procedures.
Support the Local School Board in taking an active role in promoting good attendance
Work in partnerships with parents/carers, the Education Welfare Service, Social Care and other outside agencies.

**Expectations**

*We expect the following from all our pupils:*
Pupils attend school regularly and achieve 97%+ attendance over the academic year, to support future success.
Pupils to attend school daily.
Pupils arrive on time and are appropriately prepared for the school day.
Pupils will tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.

*We expect the following from parents:*
Ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually between 08:40 and 08:50 through the main school gates.
Ensure that they contact the school by telephone on 01775 723326 or email enquiries@spaldintstpauls-cit.co.uk before 9.15am, whenever their child is unable to attend for everyday they are absent, unless agreed otherwise during the initial call.
Ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done their homework and have their bookbag (including their reading book and reading Record) and P.E kits etc.
Leave of absence forms are to be requested and completed in advance. Please note leave of absence will only be granted under exceptional circumstances and is at the discretion of the Headteacher.
Other planned absences/appointments must be notified before the absence is taken. Proof of appointments such as copies of appointment cards / letters will be requested.
Parents may be invited to meetings to discuss attendance concerns (where necessary),and attend parents' consultation meetings to discuss progress or problems.
Support their child and the school in achieving maximum attendance.
Contact the child's teacher or the Inclusion Team, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's performance in school or their attendance.
To avoid taking leave of absence during term time. Term time absences, especially during SATs and assessment periods, this may seriously affect the progress of your child.

*Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:*
Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
A telephone call from school will be made if the school has not received a reason for a child's absence.
Home visits will be made if telephone contact is not successful. This is to ensure we are safeguarding our children.
The school will comply with legal requirements for supporting and addressing attendance concerns, setting targets to be achieved.
Keep parents/carers informed about their child's attendance through letters of concern or letters of attendance improvement.
Attendance and punctuality will be monitored on a weekly basis, discussed with the Inclusion team if attendance concerns are arising.
Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will only share information on a need to know basis).
Support for any student's mental health and emotional well-being.
Ensure any child presenting poor levels of attendance and punctuality are noted, monitored and appropriate action taken.
Recognition and reward for good attendance.

**School organisation**

In order for the attendance policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and should convey to pupils the importance and value of education. In addition, specific responsibilities are allocated to individual staff are as follows:

*Headteacher:*
All leave of absences will be passed to the Headteacher in the first instance.
To regularly report progress on attendance to Local School Board, pupils and parents.
Set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
To oversee and demonstrate ownership of the whole policy.

*Class Teacher:*
To complete registers accurately and on time.
Attendance is recorded am and pm on Bromcom, this is then checked by a member of the Inclusion Team. A present or absent mark should be filled in for every child on their register and not leave any blank spaces.
To complete any known reason for an absence.
If unsure which code to use, refer to Inclusion team.
To refer any unexplained absence to the Inclusion Team to follow up.
To challenge suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
To notify the Inclusion Team if a child does not return from lunch.

*The schools Senior Attendance Champion*

Donna Palmer has the role of Senior Attendance Champion and can be contacted by parents on the school telephone number 01775 723327 or Donna.Palmer@spaldingstpauls-citc.co.uk
Attend's Termly Support Meetings to support the monitoring and improvement of attendance.

*Inclusion Team*
To report to the Headteacher on attendance issues.
To liaise with the Attendance Team at the Local Authority.
To analyse absence weekly and liaise with the LA over actions to be taken.
To set challenging but achievable targets to reduce levels of absence.
Monitor lateness and take action to support improvement.
To make sure all reasons for absence are recorded correctly in the register.
Will request a reason for any absence from school
To work with families and young people to improve individual's attendance.

*Local School Board Members:*
Local School Board members may be given a specific role/interest in monitoring attendance and/or policies.
Local School Board members can play a valuable role through representation

*Office Staff:*
Telephone absence slips to be given to the administrator who supports attendance.
To record on Bromcom if a child is late to school or needs to leave school before end of school day.

Log any messages that are on the voicemail from parents in the appropriate ways for recording absences (Bromcom).
When children are late challenging lateness to support improvement.

*Attendance administrator is to:*
Complete the admissions register in line with current government guidance.
Complete the daily attendance, ensuring all pupils are accounted for.
To input attendance data onto the Bromcom system using the correct codes as recommended by the DFE in their publication 'School Attendance'.
To challenge parent / carer and report any suspicious or inappropriate reasons for absence.
To provide weekly / monthly / termly & annual reports for attendance for the Headteacher & Inclusion Lead.

**Reasons why good attendance is important**
Good attendance and punctuality are vital for success at school.
Regular attendance encourages children to build friendships and develop their social skills, sharing ideas and working with their friends (linking to personal development of pupils).
Non-attendees will miss out on essential learning and other social events (linking to personal development of pupils).
The school has a proactive and positive ethos that places a high value on attendance and punctuality.

**The School's Approach to Promoting Good Attendance**
We recognise good attendance in school in the following ways:
Recording of good attendance on individual End of Academic Year Reports.
The class with the best attendance at the end of the week will receive the attendance bear and have a reward selected by the teacher
Children with attendance over 100% for year will receive a badge.
At our school we link our attendance rewards with our work on Fundamental British Values and, most specifically, our work on democracy. The class with the highest attendance has to work together to select their reward by discussing ideas about what the reward could be, whether they should take the reward or whether they should *"bank it"* and then vote and reach a democratic decision about what they do.

**Managing Absence**
Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:
Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session (9am and 1pm).
Attendance checks in the morning daily, by the Inclusion Team, and at other appropriate times, such as the end of term analysis.
First day calling for unexplained absence and Home Visits for any absence causing concern.
An 'improved attendance' letter for any pupil showing improved attendance following Inclusion Team intervention.
An Attendance Concern letter will be raised if attendance falls below 92% OR is on a consistent decline.
Identifying and supporting pupils and parents who have attendance problems, including the sharing of relevant information with a destination school or other agencies.
The Inclusion Team will arrange meetings with those parents who are concerned that their children may be experiencing difficulty in attending school and work to resolve the issues.
The Inclusion Team and the Headteacher will arrange School Attendance Panels for those children whose attendance is a cause for concern.

When an Attendance Panel doesn't show progress with attendance an Attendance Contract will be put in place.

**Responding to Non-Attendance**
When a pupil does not attend, the school needs to respond effectively.
If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone or by a home visit from the Inclusion Team.
Where there is no response or contact made, a home visit from the Inclusion Team will be arranged. If there is no response from the home visit the inclusion team may feel it is necessary to log this with Lincolnshire police on 111.
If there are Child Protection or Safeguarding concerns other professionals involved with the family will be notified.
Where non-attendance continues, the Inclusion Team will discuss with the Headteacher, and further action plan will be required.
If a pupil is missing for 10 days and we do not know where they are, we will report them to the Local Authority 'Missing from Education'.

**Persistent Absence**
In England, good attendance at school is 96.3%+ for the academic year. Lincolnshire County Council class persistent absence as 15% of a half term and then also of the academic year (28 days/ 56 sessions), including both authorised and unauthorised absences combined.
If a child's absence is a cause for concern and falls close to or below 85% in any half term, a meeting will initially be requested with the parent and then a School Attendance Panel will be called to ensure that the school and the family are actively working together to address the issue. An action plan will be drawn up and agreed by both parties and a timescale for improvement will be set. If attendance does not improve and attendance continues below 85%, further warning notices will be issued and further action will be taken, possibly resulting in court action being taken.

**Strategies for persistent absentees**
Attendance is monitored every week to explore patterns of absence. At the end of each term attendance is monitored and the following letters could be sent out to parents.

Escalation of Intervention If a pupil's attendance falls below 92% (GREEN STAGE)
The senior member of staff responsible for attendance will consider the reasons for lateness. Periods of proven/non-contested illness will be discounted within the percentage and then the following will happen:
A letter will be sent home to the parents (Attendance Letter 1)

Escalation of Intervention If a pupil's attendance falls below 90% (AMBER STAGE)
The senior member of staff responsible for attendance will consider the reasons why attendance has not improved. Periods of proven/non-contested illness will be discounted within the percentage and then the following will happen:
A letter will be sent home to the parents (Attendance Letter 2)
Parents may be invited into school to discuss their child's attendance with the senior member of staff responsible for attendance.

If a pupil's attendance falls below 85% or fails to improve after letter 1 and letter 2 (RED STAGE)
A letter will be sent home to the parents, and they will be invited in to school to discuss their child's attendance with the senior member of staff responsible for attendance. (Attendance Panel). The Headteacher may be invited to this meeting.

Parents will be invited into school to ensure that they understand the significance of such poor attendance.
An attendance action plan will be agreed with both the parent and pupil.
Targets will be set to improve the attendance, and the attendance will be monitored
The possibility of a Penalty Notice will be discussed.
Outside agencies may be involved – Social Services, Early Help.
Should the school deem it necessary then the Local Authority will be informed.
Further absences may only be authorised if evidence is provided.
If attendance does not improve and attendance continues below 85%, further warning notices will be issued and further action will be taken, possibly resulting in court action being taken.
Attendance Contract meetings will be used where an Attendance Panel has not made the progress in improving the attendance that is necessary.

Where voluntary support has not been effective and/or has not been engaged with we will work with the local authority to:
• Put formal support in place in the form of an attendance contract or an education supervision order.
• Issue a Notice to Improve and/or penalty notice where support would not be appropriate or has not been successful or engaged with and it is likely to change the parents' behaviour.
• Intensify support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns, especially where absence becomes severe (below 50% attendance).
• Prosecute parents where all other routes have failed or are not deemed appropriate. This could include making the case for a community or parenting order where the parent is convicted to secure engagement with support.

**Medical Issues**
Pupils with on-going long-term medical issues will also have their attendance monitored, but their absence for medical appointments will be considered. The school may request the support from the Children and Young Person's Nursing Team.
The school will require evidence from a child's doctor or medical specialist, along with copies of appointment letters etc. The school may request permission to contact these professionals for more information about a child's health and medical needs, in order that absence can be minimalized. If there is a hospital appointment booked for a morning or afternoon, we will expect you to attend school for the other sessions, *having a hospital appointment does not enable you to automatically have a whole day off school.*
If the school or the Nursing Team request that referrals are made to specialists, a timescale of actions will need to be agreed. Authorised absence for medical matters is normally granted for pupil illnesses. Medical appointments are to see: specialists, paediatricians, therapists (e.g Physiotherapists/Speech and Language) & hospital professionals.
*Please note that this DOES NOT include optician and dental appointments under routine procedures and check-ups - these must be made out of normal school hours.*

**Absence during term time/ holiday requests**
'Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that

*Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.'*

‘Exceptional’ in this context is being of unique and significant emotional or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. This interpretation will have different parameters from one case to another, and whilst it will be important to look at the whole situation in making decisions about any individual request, the normality will be that requests will be refused.

If Parents wish to make a holiday request, then they must write a letter to the Headteacher, at least one month prior to the date of departure. A meeting will then be arranged, which you will need to attend. You will be informed of the final decision both verbally and in writing.

Only in exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Headteacher, will the absence be authorised. If the decision by the parents is to still intend to take their child/ren on holiday, a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning letter/ notice may be issued.

If a pupil is removed from school for an unauthorised holiday, the School and the Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice, under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, which carries a fine. Non-payment of this fine can result in prosecution on the grounds that the parent is failing to secure their child’s school attendance.

**Liaising with External Agencies**

Poor school attendance may be a symptom of a wide range of institutional, community, family or individual circumstances. Many of these circumstances will demand expert support beyond the remit of the school. It is therefore vital that strong partnerships are established with all agencies that work with children and young people.

Other Agencies that can be used where appropriate in individual cases are:
Educational Behavioural and Support Services (BOSS).
Educational Psychologists/ CAMHS-Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service.
Special Educational Needs and Disability Service.
Social Care or the Early Help Team.
Local Police or PSCO’s.

**Reintegration following absence or Part time timetable**

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have

In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil’s best interests, there may be a need for a school to provide a pupil of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending school or another setting full-time and a part-time timetable is used to help the pupil access as much education as possible. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a pupil’s behaviour.

Pupils may require other support plans relevant to their individual needs.

**Identifying children at risk of missing education - Children missing in education:**
As outlined in 'Children Missing Education' (September 2016), a child at risk of missing education is defined as;
*Children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school.*

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a duty on all Local Authorities in England and Wales for them to make arrangements to identify children missing education in their area.
The duty applies to all children of compulsory school age, in any school, who are not on a school roll and are not receiving a suitable education. As part of its attendance strategy and duty, the Local Authority seek to identify all children who are missing education or at risk of missing education. As a school we must support this process.

Modified or Reduced timetable:
Any child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is subject to a modified/reduced timetable for more than one school term is at risk of missing education. The Local authority will identify children who meet these criteria based on the data we provide through the school census. If our school has children who meet the criteria, we will receive an email requesting information regarding the attendance of these children. The local authority will then track the attendance of these identified children through to the next census to monitor improvements.

**Elective Home Education (EHE):**
A parent must inform the school in writing if they wish to EHE their child. As soon as a school is informed in writing that a child is to be withdrawn to be electively home educated, they need to phone 01522 782111 and liaise with the EHE Co-ordinator.

Schools are reminded that a child should not be assumed to be electively home educated until a letter has been received from the parents informing them of this decision. This letter must be sent to the Inclusion and Attendance team via EHE@lincolnshire.gov.uk.

There have been some recent cases of parents assuming that a tutor will be provided if they choose to electively home educate their children. Schools should ensure that parents/carers are fully aware of their responsibilities to home educate their child if they choose this route.]

**Legal Action**

School and the Local Authority will work together to make use of the full range of legal interventions to support pupils who are persistently absent.
Headteachers and the Local Authority have regard to their Safeguarding duties as set out in the Statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Local Authorities have the power to prosecute for non-attendance.

**Penalty Notices**

A penalty notice is an out of court settlement which is intended to change behaviour without the need for criminal prosecution. If repeated penalty notices are being issued and they are not working to change

behaviour they are unlikely to be most appropriate tool. Therefore, from autumn term 2024, only 2 penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3 year rolling period and any second notice within that period is charged at a higher rate:

• The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
• A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
• A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

**Court prosecution**

This would be sent for prosecution in a Magistrates Court. If found guilty a parent could be fined up to 1,000.

Prosecution of offences is a matter within the discretion of the local authority and a decision will be taken in line with the LA prosecution policy for these matters and proceedings, where commenced, will be issued by the LA.
If a prosecution is brought and the parent is found guilty or pleads guilty then a conviction for an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 or for an offence under Section 103 of the Education and inspection Act 2006 both carry a fine of up to a maximum of £1000 and in addition the LA will seek to recover costs in respect of bringing the proceedings. Further, a successful prosecution will result in a parent having a criminal record which could be disclosed should they apply for a position where a DBS check (formally known as a CRB Criminal Records Bureau Check) is required.

**Appendix**

Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026