



SPRINGWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

*“Evidence shows that children with poor attendance are unlikely to succeed academically and are more likely not to be in education, training or employment (NEET) when they leave school”*

Charlie Taylor  
Government Expert Advisor, 2011

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## **RATIONALE**

The Government expects schools, colleges and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence; ensure every student has access to full time education to which they are entitled; and act early to address patterns of absence.
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age are registered at school attend regularly.
- All students to be punctual to school and to their lessons.

Springwell Community College believes that good attendance is not simply a legal requirement. The college recognises that high levels of attendance and punctuality are essential in meeting the outcomes of the *Keeping Children Safe in Education* agenda which are vitally important if students are to take full advantage of the full range of opportunities that the college offers and gain the appropriate skills that will equip them for life. The college also recognises the direct link between attendance and attainment and as such encourages high levels of attendance in order for students to fulfil their potential academically.

Springwell Community College aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which governors, staff, students, parents/carers and the Education Welfare Service (EWS) can work in partnership. The college will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

The Student Progress and Inclusion teams will encourage good attendance and liaise with home and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the college. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

**To establish systems and practices which will:**

- Create an ethos in which good attendance is recognised as the norm.
- Endeavour to monitor continually the quality of the college and classroom experience with a view to maintaining a safe, secure environment for students and a curriculum that meets their needs and positively encourages attendance.
- Raise student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance and encourage in students a sense of responsibility.
- Encourage more student involvement on attendance issues.
- Monitor and provide effective information on levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Maintain an effective partnership with the Education Welfare Service.
- Develop mutual co-operation between home and the college in encouraging good attendance and in addressing attendance issues.

- Demonstrate, through the use of rewards and sanctions, that the college recognises that good attendance and punctuality are achievements in themselves.
- Recognise, reinforce and support the key role of the Tutor in promoting and monitoring good attendance.
- Ensure that time and organisation within the college enables the Aims and Objectives of this policy to be met.

## **MANAGING THE POLICY**

### **The Role of the Attendance Coordinator (Deputy Headteacher):**

The Attendance Coordinator will have strategic oversight for attendance throughout the college. S/he will work closely with the Student Progress Leaders (SPL), in house Education Attendance Officer (EAO) and the Pastoral Administration Team (PAT) ensuring that the Attendance Policy and procedures are applied consistently and coherently across the whole college.

The Attendance Coordinator will be responsible for compiling and supplying attendance information for the College Prospectus, Governors and the DfE Absence Returns.

### **The Role of the Student Progress Leader**

The SPL will be responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring attendance within their Year. S/he will:

- Ensure that Tutors adhere to attendance policy and procedures.
- Support the work of the Tutor and PAT in ensuring that all absences are authorised in accordance with DfE guidelines.
- Work closely with the PAT, EAO, EWS and Multi Agency Team (MAT) including the Personal Advisers.
- Be responsible for communications with parents/carers on attendance issues.
- Work with the Attendance Coordinator and the EAO to regularly monitor Post Registration Truancy and poor punctuality.
- Develop a positive ethos within the Year Group that recognises good attendance and punctuality as the norm.
- Analyse attendance and absence data to ensure appropriate and timely intervention.

### **The Role of the Tutor**

The Tutor will be the key person in promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality.

The Tutor will:

- Keep an accurate, timely and up-to-date register of attendance following the current agreed procedures.
- Follow the Attendance Policy procedures when dealing with absence and punctuality.

- Maintain effective communication with the SPL on all attendance and punctuality matters concerning their year group.
- Assist students in the recording and monitoring of their own attendance and punctuality rates through Progress Statements, annual reports and target setting meetings.
- Work closely with the SPL in developing a positive ethos within the Year Group that recognises good attendance and punctuality as the norm.

### **The Role of the Pastoral Administration Team (PAT)**

The PAT will be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of attendance registers.

The PAT will:

- Ensure registers accurately reflect students in appropriate tutor groups.
- Ensure the accurate and timely completion of registers throughout the college day.
- Be responsible for initial communications with parents/carers on attendance issues.
- Assist students in signing in/out during the college day.
- Ensure FDAR is completed during the morning sessions (text message service 10 am target).
- Liaise closely with the SPLs and the EAO to produce required attendance information.

### **The Role of the Education Attendance Officer (EAO)**

The EAO will be responsible for the day-to-day management of student absence.

The EAO will:

- Monitor attendance and absence during the morning registration session.
- Undertake home visits for students with unexplained absences.
- Hold attendance and absence dialogues with students.
- Target groups of vulnerable students to improve levels of attendance.
- Hold termly College Attendance Panels.
- Undertake preventative work with students and families.
- Record evidence to be used in legal processes if necessary.

The EAO under the direction of the relevant SPL will:

- Undertake specific work with students identified as having attendance issues.
- Instigate Single Assessments on students/families whose main concern is attendance.
- Look for patterns of absence with key students.
- Undertake safe and well checks on vulnerable children or children missing from education.

## **INVOLVING PARENTS/CARERS AND STUDENTS**

### **Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. A parent/carer means<sup>1</sup>:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child/young person.

The college will inform parents/carers through the College Prospectus, Home/College Agreement, the college website, information guides and newsletters, of the importance of good levels of attendance and punctuality and of their role in achieving this.

Parents/carers will be given information on:

- What constitutes justifiable absence
- Procedures for informing college of absence
- The role of the Education Welfare Officer
- Responses to be made by the college, to the EWS in the case of absence, truancy and persistent lateness
- The role of the Pastoral Administration Team in respect of First Day of Absence Response and Exceptional Leave in Term Time systems.

Parents/carers will be informed of their child's levels of attendance and punctuality through their child's Progress Statements and annual College Report. Each term, the parents/carers of students who fall below 90% attendance or who gain 5 or more late marks in that term, will be contacted by the SPL. Parents/carers will be informed if their child falls into the category of Persistent Absence or if their child is close to falling into such a category.

### **Students**

Student awareness of the necessity of good attendance and punctuality will be highlighted in assemblies and during tutor group periods. Consistently good attendance and punctuality will be celebrated. Students with inconsistent and poor attendance and punctuality will be encouraged to set targets for improvement during target setting meetings following Progress Statement and Annual Reports. Meetings with the EAO will be held with specific students whom concerns are held about attendance levels or absences. Each week the attendance rates of each year group will be displayed on the Year Group noticeboard, attendance notice board and the plasma screens in each pod along with the best performing tutor groups.

### **REWARDS**

Good and improved attendance will be recognised and rewarded. For every week of 100% attendance students will automatically receive kudos points. These will also be awarded for each

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<sup>1</sup> As set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996.

term completed with 100% attendance. Students with 100% attendance in a term will receive a certificate in achievement assembly and will be entered into a prize draw for gift vouchers. Students who maintain 100% attendance for the whole year will receive a certificate, will be rewarded as part of the achievement assemblies and will be entered into a whole college 100% attendance prize draw. Where possible these students will be invited to attend the college Achievement Evening.

Students who improve their attendance in line with targets set will also be recognised and rewarded. Should a tutor group achieve 100% in any one week the tutor group will receive a certificate for display on their own noticeboard. At the end of each seasonal term an attendance trophy will be awarded to the highest attending tutor group in each year group. The rewards system will be constantly reviewed.

Students who complete five years with 100% attendance receive a £50 gift voucher of their choosing.

## **RESPONSE TO ABSENCE**

### **Registration**

We are legally bound to register students' attendance at the beginning of each morning session and at some time in the afternoon session. All Tutors will register their tutor group during the timetabled registration periods in line with the current procedures attached to the Management Information System (MIS) in use at that time.

### **Authorised Absence Pass**

The college will support the Local Authority Truancy Watch Scheme as operated by the EWS. Students who need to leave college during the day must report to Student Services where they will be issued with an Authorised Absence Pass. Students in Key Stage 3 and Year 10 are to be collected from main reception by parents/carers.

### **Post Registration Truancy**

To discourage post registration truancy and to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students an electronic registration will take place in every lesson during the college day. In addition to this the SPL and EAO, along with the Attendance Coordinator will, at intervals, check all lessons across year groups to monitor students who have left the site without permission.

### **Persistent Absence**

Persistent Absence (PA) is defined, by the Government, as those students who have an absence rate of 10% or more (Sept 2015). This means that any students who attendance falls below 90% will receive targeted support and attendance targets, an EWO referral and contact will be made with parents/carers immediately. The SPL, EAO and Attendance Coordinator will monitor PA on a weekly basis.

### **The Education Welfare Service (EWS)**

Springwell Community College recognises the importance of a good working partnership with the EWS.

In order to ensure an effective partnership the college will:

- Follow referral procedures as recommended by the EWS.

- Arrange for the **EWS** to support students with an attendance rate of less than 90% and facilitate a review process after a set period of time.
- Work synergistically with the EWS with regard to the Fast Track to Prosecution initiative and Attendance Panels.

### **Student Support**

Springwell Community College recognises the need to support students during and after long-term absence of any kind.

With this in mind the college will:

- Initiate a Long Term Absence Protocol after three weeks of continual absence.
- Endeavour to arrange and give full support to Out of School Tuition when applicable.
- Consider all strategies, in partnership with the PAT and the EAO, to encourage the return of students to college. This may include negotiated and personalised learning timetables and referrals to DCCs School Medical Officer.
- If necessary, involve the support of the college's Learning Support Faculty, the Personal Advice Service and the Multi Agency Team.
- If necessary, instigate a Single Assessment.
- Ensure that there is a positive atmosphere within tutor groups and lessons in which students are welcomed back into college.
- Encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in re-entry programmes. This may entail special procedures for students who do not attend regularly.

### **Holidays/Leave of Absence**

- Springwell Community College is obliged to enforce the amendment made to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which came into force on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2013**.
- The regulations state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a consequence of these changes we will no longer be able to approve requests for leave of absence for reasons that are not considered to be special or exceptional such as.
- All holidays and leaves of absence that are believed to be holidays, taken during term time, will incur unauthorised absences for the student. These remain on the student's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service. Parents/carers could be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action by Derbyshire County Council.
- If a parent/carer needs to take their child out of college for an exceptional circumstance during term time, an application should be made (at least 2 weeks in advance). The appropriate form can be collected from Student Services. Each application will be considered on an individual basis and should be supported by appropriate documentation.

- Derbyshire County Council have released a statement suggesting different levels of attendance that will be considered prior to a fixed penalty notice being issued. Springwell Community College will continue to refer all unauthorised absences, as a result of holidays in term time, to the Local Authority for consideration.

### **Parental Responsibility Measures for School Attendance**

- Local authorities and all schools have legal powers to use parenting contracts, parenting orders and penalty notices to address poor attendance to school.
- If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at a school at which they are registered the parents/carers may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority.
- Penalty notices are fines imposed on parents/carers and are an alternative to the prosecution of parents for failing to ensure that their child attends school. Penalty notices of £120 can be issued to each parent/carer liable for the attendance offence or offences. Penalty notices can also be used where the student's absence has not been authorised by the college.
- Only local authorities can make decisions on whether parents should be prosecuted for school attendance offences. All schools (including academies) have a duty to refer regular absence (authorised or unauthorised) to the local authority.

### **Children Missing From Education**

- All schools/colleges have a duty under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004 to work in partnership with the local authority with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in the authority's area.
- Section 175 of the Education Act puts a duty on all schools to exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes identifying children who are not receiving education.
- Where a student has not attended college for three consecutive days, and the college is not aware of a genuine reason why, a safe and well check by the Police/EAO will be requested. This is in order to safeguard students.
- Any child who is classed as 'missing from education' will be reported to the EWS/Local Authority for further investigation/support.
- Any student previously classed as either 'missing from education' or at risk of 'missing from education' will be offered a re-integration package and holistic support by the college.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Attendance Registration: guidance notes for staff**

We are legally bound to register students' attendance at the beginning of each morning and at some time during the afternoon session. At Springwell Community College, registration will take place in tutor groups at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

#### **SIMS Electronic Registration**

The college uses the SIMS Attendance Module which utilises staff laptop computers logged onto the college MIS. It is vital that the SIMS procedures are followed rigorously and information transmitted to the server before 8:55 am and 2:00 pm for the morning and afternoon sessions. In the event of any system malfunction, a paper copy of the registration must be sent to the Pastoral Administration Team at Student Services. The ICT issue must be logged with the Dell Helpdesk, ([helpdesk@dell.com](mailto:helpdesk@dell.com)) with an email sent to the SPL to highlight the issue. This procedure is vital with regard to student safety in the event of fire or truancy.

It is necessary for each Tutor to maintain a Register Folder in which absence notes can be stored and communications between home and college can be administered. There will be space in each tutor room in which pastoral information and the register folder can be stored. Absence notes should be signed and dated on the day of receipt. These notes should be stored safely and passed on to the relevant SPL at the end of each term.

#### **First Day of Absence Response (FDAR)**

On the first day of a student's absence, if the Tutor or PAT is unaware of reasons why the student should be absent, a First Day of Absence Response is made in the form of a text message to the student's parents/carers. The PAT will use lesson by lesson registration and the late arrival book before sending text messages before 10 am each day.

The PAT will then record responses from parents/carers and the appropriate code and reason for the absence will be recorded on SIMS. This information will be instantly available to the Tutor via the SIMS attendance module.

In certain circumstances, the PAT will need to pass this information directly to the SPL for authorisation of the absence. A list of students who are on either Fast Track to Prosecution, Attendance Panel, Looked After Children or students who are referred to the EWO/EAO will be logged with the PAT. In these cases only the SPL will authorise the absence.

If a response is not received from the FDAR text message then the PAT will follow this up with telephone calls. These will be made in order of priority with vulnerable groups being addressed first.

#### **Absence Data**

Every week, on Tuesday at the latest, the PAT will supply each SPL with two copies of relevant absence data, in time for the Wednesday morning Year Group Meeting. This data will list all students who have been absent and have not supplied an absence note. The Tutor should mark the appropriate code for that absence either directly onto SIMS or by returning the Absence Data sheet to the PAT. At the end of each term, the PAT will supply each SPL with a list of students who still have outstanding unauthorised absences.

<b>Attendance Codes</b>			
<b>Code</b>	<b>College Meaning</b>	<b>Statistical Meaning</b>	<b>Physical Meaning</b>
/	Present (AM)	Present	In for whole session
\	Present (PM)	Present	In for whole session
U	Late (after reg closed)	Unauthorised Absence	Late for session
B	Educated off site	Present	Out for whole session
C	Other authorised circumstances	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
D	Dual Registration	Present	Managed Move to another college
E	Excluded	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
F	Extended Family Holiday Agreed	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
G	Family Holiday not agreed	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
H	Annual family holiday (agreed)	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
I	Illness	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
J	Interview	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
L	Late (before reg closed)	Present	Late for session
M	Medical / Dental	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
O	Unauthorised circumstances	Unauthorised Absence	Out for whole session
P	Approved sporting activity	Present	Out for whole session
R	Religious observance	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
T	Traveller absence	Authorised Absence	Out for whole session
V	Educational visit	Present	Out for whole session
Y	School Closure	Not counted	Out for whole session
W	Work experience	Present	Out for whole session

## Late Arrival

DATE	TIME	NAME OF PUPIL	REF.	REGISTER CLASS	REASON GIVEN FOR LATE ARRIVAL	SLIP NO.
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### LATECOMERS SLIP

TO THE CLASS TEACHER	
The above named pupil has been recorded as late. Please admit to his/her lesson and sign indicating time of arrival.	
	Time Of Arrival
PERIOD 1 .....	
PERIOD 2 .....	
PERIOD 3 .....	
PERIOD 4 .....	
PERIOD 5 .....	

NOTICE TO THE PUPIL	
This Latecoming Slip is to be signed by your Subject Teacher. Make sure you return this slip to your Form Tutor at your next registration.	
ATTENDANCE ACKNOWLEDGED BY:	
AUTHORISED LATE	YES/NO

NO. 044606

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS FORM IS A SERIOUS BREACH OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

- When arriving late all students must first attempt to attend registration where the late arrival can be dealt with by their Tutor.
- If the tutor group has gone into assembly or if lessons have begun, then the student should go to Student Services first and then to lesson or assembly.
- The PAT or reception staff will issue the above slip that instructs students to present the slip to their subject teacher. This member of staff will indicate the time of arrival to that lesson and thereby highlight any delay between leaving the office and arriving at their lesson.
- The student is then instructed to present the slip to their Tutor at the next registration session.

## Sanctions

To discourage regular lateness, the SLT will perform a 'late on the gate' duty each morning. Any student arriving more than 2 minutes late (08.42) will be issued with a same-day 40 minute lunchtime detention.

## Monitoring Student Absence:

- All absent students must bring a note to their Tutor on the day of their return unless a parent/carer has telephoned or text to explain the absence or if the PAT has made contact and given the Tutor a valid reason for absence.
- To encourage absence notes being brought into college more quickly, Tutors are asked to follow the following procedure:-
  - Students are given 3 days to bring a note (phone call is acceptable or a note in the student's planner).
  - If a note is not received on the 3rd day, the Tutor will ask the Pastoral Admin Team to send a letter to the parent/carer asking for reasons for the absence.

If no note is received on the 5th day then the Tutor/PAT will refer the student to the SPL. With the above system in place, students should not be allowed to go for long periods of time with unexplained absences.

- To enable Tutors to monitor absence efficiently, all Tutors will receive an up-to-date register summary every week at the weekly Wednesday morning meeting.

### Authorised Absence Pass

This pass is for students who have to leave college part way through any session to attend unavoidable and essential appointments e.g. the Doctor, Dentist, etc.

Date	Pupil's / Student's Name	Year / Form	Reason for Absence	Time Out	Person Authorising Absence
<b>AUTHORISED ABSENCE PASS</b>					
The above pupil is authorised to be out of school on the date and time specified above					
<b>SPRINGWELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE</b>					
MIDDLECROFT ROAD STAVELEY CHESTERFIELD DERBY S43 3NQ					
			TEL NO 01246 473873		
<b>No. 030638</b>		This pass must be returned to the school office			

To be given a pass:

- Students must have a note requesting leave of absence from a parent/carer or an official appointment card.
- Students must gain a signature on the note from their Tutor or SPL.
- Without such authorisation the office staff will not issue a pass.
- This procedure also provides the office with a list of students who have “signed out” of college with our permission.
- This pass will be accepted by the EWS if presented during a Truancy Watch Scheme.
- Parents/Carers of students in Yr7-10 will be expected to collect their child from the college reception so as to safeguard their wellbeing.