



# Attendance Policy – September 2022

“Everyone who works with children should do what is in the best interests of the child.”

Article 3 United Nations Rights of the Child

## Rationale

Springfield School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. Regular and punctual attendance is vitally important in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. We will take appropriate action to ensure that all pupils achieve the maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may hinder full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

Jersey Education Law states that parents/carers should *‘ensure that the child receives a full-time education appropriate to the child’s age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school at which the child is a pupil or otherwise, in accordance with Article 13 of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999.’*

## Aims

- To support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- To ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- To enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- To make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- To ensure attendance meets CYPES targets

## Procedure

Class teachers take the registers twice daily, once at 8.30am and again at 1.00pm. Children who are absent or late for school are noted using the correct codes on SIMS. The school secretary checks all school registers twice daily. Any pupil who is not in school and we are unaware of the reason for absence is highlighted. The school secretary contacts class teachers to check if they have a reason for absence, if no reason received, contacts parents/carers to ask for confirmation. If there are any concerns with the response, the head teacher is informed who will then inform the school EWO if appropriate. Reasons for lateness and illness are recorded.

If your child is ill, we ask you to contact the school as soon as possible. We ask our parents to follow this procedure every day, not just the first day of absence, (except when your child is admitted into hospital or has a long term illness).

If an acceptable reason for absence is given the absence may be marked as “authorised”. If no reason for absence has been provided then the absence will be “unauthorised” (*the school is*

*under no obligation to accept the reason given for absence when there is doubt as to its validity, schools can record the absence as unauthorised).*

Please ensure that, unless absolutely necessary, any medical or dental appointments in respect of your child, are made outside school hours. Parents should ensure that wherever possible, children return to school following such medical appointments.

We ask our parents/carer to provide the school with up to date contact details and telephone numbers on a regular basis, in case of an emergency. We ask our parents that they are contactable should their child be taken ill during the school day. If a child is taken ill during the school day, the parent will be notified and should then arrange to collect their child from reception.

We will keep under review all children whose attendance falls below 95% and keep under consideration reasons given for the absence. The head teacher monitors attendance regularly and writes to parents whose children's attendance has fallen below 85% on a termly basis.

If necessary, the school will discuss low attendance with parents and if needed, initiate an attendance plan. This is monitored over two weeks and can be repeated if suitable. Following this, a referral can be made to the Education Welfare Service for their involvement and support.

### **Punctuality**

Children can arrive at school from 8:15 am and can enter classrooms from this time.

Children need to be in class and ready for registration by 8.30 am (After this time they are marked as 'Late'). After 8.45 am, they are marked as 'U' meaning late after close of registers.

We have a Breakfast Club, which provides supervision from 7:30-8:15am.

We monitor punctuality closely. Children arriving at school late are monitored and where patterns of lateness or regular lateness occurs the following actions occur:

Cumulative actions to support good punctuality:

1. Class teacher discussion with parents
2. Head teacher discussion with parents
3. EWO discussion of the case at school meeting
4. Letter to parents from Head teacher
5. Attendance Plan in place
6. Referral to EWO
7. Attendance Panel

We make every effort to engage with parents/carers over attendance and in doing so, where appropriate, introduce an Attendance Plan (Appendix 1). Review dates should be agreed with a view to improvements being made. Where there are no significant improvements, and when we have exhausted all our strategies and absence and/or punctuality continues to deteriorate, schools should engage with parents/carers to agree to the support of the Education Welfare Service. A Request for Involvement (RFI) form will then be completed and the EWO becomes actively involved.

## **Welfare Concerns**

In such cases where the welfare of the child is of a concern, we make every effort to engage with the parents/carers with a view to the situation improving. If this is not the case, we will consider an 'Early Help' assessment. The outcomes of this assessment will determine the needs of the family, which will in turn dictate the need of internal/external and third sector services. The EWO may or may not be required to be part of the assessment and/or outcomes.

## **Parents/carers Responsibilities**

Parents/carers are required by law to ensure that all children of compulsory school age (aged 5 to 16) receive a full time education either by registering a child at a school or be arranging an alternative to school in line with the Education Department's Policy.

These responsibilities extend beyond ensuring regular attendance and punctuality, it requires parents/carers to make certain that each child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed with the correct equipment and prepared for learning.

Parents/carers can support their child/ren by keeping requests for absence to a minimum. It should not be automatically assumed that schools will agree to absence requests. Nor should unjustified absences from school be condoned. If a student is unable to attend school for whatever reason, parents/carers are responsible for notifying the school on the first day of absence and to keep the school updated on subsequent days.

Parents/carers should work in partnership with schools in all matters concerning their child/ren's education by actively supporting school policies on attendance, punctuality, behaviour and homework.

Parents/carers should avoid taking their child/ren out of school for holidays during term time. Such absences can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is at the discretion of the Head teacher to grant leave, only in exceptional cases.

## **Leave of Absence**

The Department for CYPES and Springfield School do not, at any time, support leave during term time, however, in exceptional circumstances the head teacher has the discretionary power to grant leave in accordance with the Department for CYPES Attendance Policy.

If parents are forced to take their child out of school during term-time they must request leave of absence by completing an 'Authorised Absence Request Form' prior to any booking being made.

We will write back and complete our section of the absence form, informing you whether or not permission has been granted.

Each case is considered carefully taking into account:

- The age of the child;
- The time of year;
- The nature and purpose of the trip;
  - Family circumstances;
- Attendance pattern of the pupil;
- Previous requests.

We also refer to department guidance for exceptional circumstances. Whilst each case is unique, this guidance strives for consistency across all schools.

Parents do not have the automatic right to withdraw their child/ren from school for a holiday and must request permission in advance from the Head teacher.

Furthermore, parents must make a strong case to justify taking pupils out of school during term time as the absence can seriously disrupt continuity of learning. It is expected that parents will support their child's education by arranging holidays to coincide with school holidays. Teachers will not provide work for holidays in term time.

Where a pupil is absent for longer than the agreed time, s/he should be marked as taking unauthorised holidays. The same applies to those parents/carers who remove their child/ren from school without permission. Parents/carers who wish to take their child/ren out of school for longer than four weeks will have to re-apply for their school placement. It should not be considered that a pupil has the automatic right to return to the school.

**Appendix 1**



This attendance Plan should be developed following initial consultations with the parent/carer, the school setting and other agencies as appropriate

**ATTENDANCE PLAN**

|                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Date of Plan:</b>                  |                           |
| <b>Name:</b>                          | <b>D.O.B:</b> <b>Yr.:</b> |
| <b>School:</b>                        | <b>School Contact:</b>    |
| <b>Education Welfare Officer :</b>    |                           |
| <b>Parents/Carers:</b>                | <b>Tel:</b>               |
| <b>Address:</b>                       |                           |
| <b>Agreed Plan:</b>                   |                           |
| <b>Pupil:</b>                         |                           |
| <b>Parents/carers:</b>                |                           |
| <b>School:</b>                        |                           |
| <b>Education Welfare Officer:</b>     |                           |
| <b>Other Agency (as appropriate):</b> |                           |

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| <b>Agreed Target Dates:</b> |
| <b>Review Date:</b>         |

**Signed: Parents/carers**

.....

**Pupil**

.....

**Education Welfare Officer**

.....