

## Attendance Addendum: COVID-19 September 2021

This addendum goes alongside our current Attendance policy.

Attendance is mandatory and all students are expected to attend school fully. It is the parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is registered.

The local authority has the power to fine parents for unauthorised absence from school where:

- There is persistent absence from school
- Holidays are taken during term time

The reinstated law and regulations state parents must ensure their child attends school regularly and they are committing an offence if they fail to do so. Whilst we understand that there may be some nervousness and anxiety around children returning to school, we hope that parents, carers and students are reassured by the plans that have been shared regarding the full reopening in September. These are based on a thorough risk assessment and follow relevant guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health England. As new guidance is published, these plans may well evolve to ensure the health and safety of the whole school community: students, staff and families.

At Springwood High School we recognise and are mindful of the impact that Covid-19 will have had on our pupils and their wider family and community. We will therefore be taking a balanced approach when dealing with attendance matters and will work closely with the Local Authority's Attendance Team.

By working closely with the LA's Attendance Team, we will try to ensure a consistent approach to managing attendance concerns. We are committed to supporting our pupils and their families to secure a positive return to regular attendance for all our pupils. We believe that the key to facilitating good school attendance is:

- clear communication with our families
- where concerns arise, early intervention and targeted support plans based on individual pupil needs
- use of appropriate statutory tools to ensure school attendance where appropriate

### **Support**

Our aim is to support all students to attend every day. Where there are concerns with attendance, usual support mechanisms will be offered by the pastoral year team and the attendance team. It is important that parents/carers discuss any concerns fully with staff at the school so that plans can be made to improve attendance for the child. Should you have any concerns please communicate these to your child's pastoral manager and Head of Year in the first instance.

### **Recording absence related to Covid-19 during academic year 2021 to 2022**

Although school attendance is compulsory from the start of the autumn term, there will be some circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to Covid-19. Parents will not be penalised for a child's absence that is related to Covid-19.

The table below shows the national codes which all schools are required to use to record and monitor attendance and absence when absence is related to Covid-19:

Code	Reason
X	absence accrued when pupils are awaiting the result of a PCR test, having tested positive with an LFD test or has symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19)
I	Absence accrued following a positive test should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

All other absences will be unauthorised and may lead to further attendance procedures such as fixed penalty notices as outlined in our Attendance Policy.

### **Self-Isolation**

If a pupil tests positive, they should continue to self-isolate for 10 days from the onset of their symptoms, date of the positive test, or as advised by Test and Trace. They should only return to school if they do not have symptoms other than a cough or loss of sense of smell or taste (anosmia). This is because a cough or anosmia can last for several weeks once the infection has gone.

In all cases of self-isolation, parents must inform the school immediately about the outcome of a test. In line with Department for Education guidance, we will not require evidence of negative test results or other medical evidence before admitting children or welcoming them back after a period of self-isolation. Under current guidance, shielding for even the most vulnerable members of society has been paused meaning that **ALL** students should attend. Parental worries or fears are not a valid reason for children to not attend school.

**For additional information please check the following links:**

Dfe Guidance for parents -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

NCC guidance for parents –

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/behaviour-and-attendance/attendance/school-attendance/coronavirus-school-attendance>