

SPARKLERS FOUNDATION AND CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

Learner Attendance Policy



March 2019

Attendance & Punctuality Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Sparklers Foundation and Centre of Excellence aims to ensure that all its learners receive the agreed amount of time of education which maximises opportunities for each learner to realise his/her potential.

The centre will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with learners and their families to ensure each learner attends school regularly and punctually.

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

To meet these objectives Sparklers will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with learners, families and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

The school attendance policy will be made available and accessible to the whole school community.

Aims

- To improve the overall attendance of learners at the school.
- To ensure that attendance and punctuality is a high priority for all staff, families, learners and governors.
- To provide clear ways of working and define agreed roles and responsibilities, to promote consistency and fairness.
- To make all expectations relating to attendance and punctuality clear to all stakeholders affected by them.

Communication

All attendance related communication between school-based staff will be recorded in a clear/concise manner.

Families will be notified of attendance/punctuality issues pertaining to their child by; initial phone contact, letters, and meetings.

Methods used to inform families & learners of the link between Attendance and Achievement.

- Including information in the school newsletter.
- Providing an accessible copy of the school's attendance policy.

- Including learners attendance/punctuality information at Annual reviews
- Letters
- Family Groups
- Contacting families re attendance/punctuality at an early stage.
- Reviewing and updating the school attendance policy

Registration Procedures

The school will keep:

- An admission register, which records the personal details of every learner at the school
- An attendance register which records every learners attendance at both morning and afternoon sessions that the school is open to learners

The admissions register will include the following information for every learner:

- Full name, gender, date of birth, the date the learner was admitted to the school, the name of the school the learner last attended, and if applicable, a statement that the learner is a boarder.
- The name and address of every family and carer of the learner that is known to the school.
- Which of these families and carers the learner normally lives with; and emergency contact details of the families and carers.

Registration Procedures

1. The school will open for learners at 9.15am Mondays to Fridays except for learners who attend Breakfast Club who are admitted to the dining room at 8.45am.
2. On arrival in class for the start of the school day (9.30am Mondays to Fridays), the Teacher, HLTA or STA will conduct registration.
3. Registers close ½ hour after the start of the school day.
4. At this time the Education Administration Office will compile a list of learners who are absent and will follow up any unexplained or unauthorised absences by making telephone calls to parents.

Late Arrival and Absence for Part of the School Day

- Learners arriving after 9.30am will be marked as late in the register by the Class Teacher.
- Learners arriving after registration closes will be marked in the register as an unauthorised absence by a designated member of staff.

- A record of learners who are taken out of school for part of the day, for example to attend a medical appointment, will be kept in the main school office.

Attendance Procedure

1. All learners who are not in school by the close of registration will be regarded as being absent and be marked in the register accordingly.
2. Telephone calls will commence at close of registration to find out why learners are not in school.
3. If there is no contact from the family, telephone calls will continue everyday until contact has been achieved or until the child has returned to school.
4. If a learner is absent for three days without contact from families the designated liaison officer will advise the Education Administration Office on contacting professionals responsible for this area.
5. A meeting will need to be arranged between school and family to address the issues surrounding the absence.

Attendance and Punctuality Meetings

At the first late meeting Sparklers will discuss the following:

- Enquire as to reasons for absence or persistent late attendance.
- Identify any areas of need & offer support.
- Implement enhanced monitoring & targeted intervention for learner
- Remind family of the school's policy and expectations
- Set achievable and reasonable targets
- Utilise incentives and rewards

Term Time Holiday Absence

- Holidays in term time are discouraged by the school
- Holidays in term time are not a right, and will not necessarily be granted.
- Leave will only be granted where proper procedures have been followed.
- Special Leave will not be granted retrospectively.
- The CEO is the only member of staff who can authorise a special leave request.

Requesting Term Time Leave

1. A request for a learner to have special leave during term time must be made using a Special Leave Request Form, which is available from the school office.

2. Each special leave request is considered on an individual basis, using the criteria laid out below.
3. All applications for special leave in term time must be made at least 7 days in advance by the family, carer(s) or corporate parent that the learner normally resides with.
4. If the school does not authorise the special leave request and the learner is subsequently absent from school, the absence is marked as unauthorised.
5. The additional period of absence will be marked as unauthorised (unless there are unavoidable reasons).
7. A special leave request for a period longer than two weeks is seen as exceptional.

Criteria Used to Authorise or Deny Special Leave

- The amount of time requested
- The age of the learner
- The learners general absence/attendance record
- The length of the proposed leave
- The learner's educational needs
- The general welfare of the learner
- The circumstances of the request
- The purpose of the leave
- The frequency of the activity
- When the request was made

The CEO is the only member of staff who can authorise a special leave request during the school term.

Re-integration

Learners who are returning to school after a period of absence will be supported to reintegrate to Sparklers.

Strategies

The following strategies will be used by the school to address attendance and punctuality issues:

- Breakfast club
- Maintaining clear and effective policies and procedures
- Making the school's attendance policy available to families, staff and learners in accessible formats.
- Targeted interventions by the learning mentor

Resources

In order to achieve and maintain good levels of attendance the school will utilise the following:

- Registers
- To ensure that all attendance and punctuality statistical information is recorded in a clear way and is readily accessible. All attendance/punctuality records will be kept for three years (at least).
- To keep a record of all learners who arrive after school starts, in order to inform parents and to be used to determine learners in need of targeted intervention.

A designated member of staff will contact families of every learner who is not present at school by close of registration on the first day of absence. All information re first day calls will be recorded and logged appropriately.

A document publishing basic information about the school will be made available to parents/carers. This document will contain key information relating to the school's ethos and policy regarding attendance and punctuality.

Roles & Responsibilities

- A designated director will participate in reviewing the school attendance policy at least once a year.
- Attendance will be discussed at every governors meeting.
- Will ensure that an appropriate budget will be allocated to enhancing the school's ability to address attendance and punctuality issues.

Vice-Principal - Inclusion and Achievement

- Will conduct register checks on all registers at least once a term.
- Will inform governors of attendance progress.
- Will meet with individual families at the appropriate staged meetings.

Teachers

- Responsible for taking and maintaining daily registers in line with relevant legislation.
- Obtaining written explanations for absence (medical notes etc).

Families

- To ensure their child is present and on time at school everyday.
- To ensure their child is collected from school on time everyday.
- Ensuring explanations are given to class teacher/office staff for all periods of absence.
- Attending all meetings regarding their child's attendance.

- Notifying school of child's absence by close of registration on the first day of absence.
- Make written requests for special leave during term time.
- To adhere to the school's policy's, decisions and contracts.

External Agencies

External agencies' involvement will be sought for the following reasons:

- To provide support for parents re attendance and/or punctuality.
- To seek advice/information regarding legislation or good practice.
- To initiate parent penalty notices/prosecution procedures.
- Referrals to external agencies will be conducted by the school's (designated liaison officer) in the following instances:
 - In accordance with relevant legislation and statutory provisions.
 - Individual targets not met or home school agreements/contracts breached.
 - No improvement in attendance performance within specified time.
- To seek advice/information or support.
- Before taking a learner off the school's admission's register.
- When a home school agreement/contract has been breached.
- If there are attendance patterns that may cause concerns relating to child protection issues.

Where other agencies are already involved with a family, a decision to make a referral may be made at an earlier stage in the interest of safeguarding children.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school attendance policy will be reviewed and evaluated annually. Evaluation of the school's policies and procedures will be conducted by taking into account:

- The views and feedback from; parents, learners, partners and external agencies.
- Statistical data (spreadsheets, charts, graphs).
- The attainment levels across the school
- The school's performance in meeting the targets set across the school at the beginning of the academic year.

Links to other documents

The attendance policy and procedures links with the following other

school documents:

- Equal Opportunities and Respect for All Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Insurance Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Inclusion Support Policy

Date Policy Reviewed