

# SPRINGHILL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

*We strive to achieve excellence in all that we do  
as we follow the Gospel values of Jesus Christ.*



*Together we will do our best for Jesus*

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

**This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment**

Adopted by the Governing Body: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026  
Review Date: March 2027

We encourage a high level of attendance and punctuality every day. Our school target is 97% attendance.

Regular attendance at school is vital for children's education. There is a clear link between a child's attainment and well-being and their strong levels of attendance. Unauthorised absences are followed up by the school, with 6 sessions triggering a penalty notice warning letter, ahead of a fine when 10 unauthorised absences are reached. Persistently Absent (PA) children, below 90% are followed up by the Education Support Officer and discussed at our termly Attendance Audits.

**What does the law say? (Section 7 Education Act 1996):**

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure the regular and punctual attendance at school of their children. Absences from school will be unauthorised unless agreed by the Headteacher, and only in exceptional circumstances. Regular unauthorised absence from school may result in involvement by the Local Authority (Southampton City Council) Education Access and Support Service and could lead to a prosecution.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is important to us. If children are not in school regularly this can hamper their academic and social progress.

Attendance is celebrated weekly as a whole school and daily in class.

Parents are supported via Mrs Rudge, our Attendance Officer and our School Leadership Team (SLT). Their role is to liaise with families and offer support and challenge for them to improve their child's attendance. Weekly Attendance is tracked daily by leaders, weekly at Senior Leader Meetings and forms a central element to the challenge we offer when we discuss children's provision and outcomes.

**Attendance rewards:**

Attendance rewards are designed to motivate children to attend school and make the most of their time here. They are as follows:

Badges each term for those children with 100% attendance. These are reset each term to allow those with any absence to be able to achieve a badge the following term.

Children with 100% attendance for the whole year will be rewarded with a special attendance prize at the end of summer term. Children with extenuating circumstances and medical conditions will be considered on an individual basis. Children who reach the school target of 97% or above also receive a medal.

**Illness or Medical Absence**

If your child is absent for reasons of sickness, or has a medical appointment, please let the school office know promptly by telephone or in writing. If your child has a medical appointment, we thank you for a copy of the appointment letter to enable us to authorise this absence.

Guidance states that 24 hours for sickness and 48 hours for sickness and diarrhoea are required for these specific illnesses.

If no reason is given, the absence will be 'unauthorised'. 10 unauthorised sessions will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice fine. We are required to keep records of all absence.

### **Other Absence, Including Holiday Absence**

If you wish to take your child out of school for any other reason you will need to complete a 'Leave of Absence' form, providing at least three weeks' notice. This has been attached below. In line with government policy, we do not authorise leave of absence for family holidays during term time. If you take your child out of school for a holiday, you risk the local authority issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice fine or pursuing a prosecution. Fines are issued per child and per parent/carer.

The Penalty Notice will be issued by post to a pupil's home, after one warning letter. Cases of unauthorised absence include pupils caught on Truancy Sweeps, persistent late attendance after the register has closed and unauthorised holiday.

In the case of unauthorised holiday, a Penalty Notice may be issued straight away, without a warning letter.

Penalty Notices provide an alternative to prosecution under s444(1) of the Education Act 1996. Payment within 21 days of receipt of a Penalty Notice is **£80**. After this time, but within 22 to 28 calendar days, payment is **£160**. If a Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 42 days, the case will progress to Magistrates Court for the original offence of poor school attendance; this can mean a fine of up to £2,500, jail sentence up to 3 months, community orders or parenting order.

If multiple holidays are taken over a period of time, LA can request, not only a FPN fine, but can go straight to Prosecution. Can we add First Offence/First PN Second Offence/Final PN within 3 years Third (and any further offences within 3 years – Court Proceedings (refer to attached School Absence Penalty Notices 2025/2026- A Parent's Guide)

### **Examples of authorised and unauthorised absences:**

#### **AUTHORISED absences may include:**

- Child's own illness
- Emergency medical appointment
- Unavoidable hospital appointments
- Religious observances
- Close family bereavement
- School Suspension

#### **UNAUTHORISED absences:**

- Holidays
- Birthdays or similar family celebrations
- Routine medical appointments
- Day trips/ theatre visits
- Illness of parent or guardian
- Personal appointments (not medical)
- Shopping trips during school hours
- Closure of a sibling's school

#### **Medical appointments:**

Routine medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. If a child does have unavoidable medical appointment during school time, every effort should be made to prevent them from missing the whole day, it is expected that the parent collect the child

from school and returns the child back to school afterwards. The school will ask to see evidence of the medical appointment in the form of appointment card, hospital letter, email or text message.

Attendance is tracked daily for all children. All parents must report absence daily to the school office by 9:15am - all non-contact is followed up via the school office. Teachers track their class attendance and ensure it is a priority to have their children in class. Members of staff routinely call and home visit children for whom there is no contact or reason for absence. Persistent absence or 'odd days off' will be followed up by our Attendance Lead and Leadership team.

PA children are regularly monitored with the school's Attendance Lead and ESO. Additionally, these children form a group who are closely monitored re progress, attainment and SEMH needs by the leadership team.

A summary of each pupil's attendance is issued to parents at the end of each term and then a final summary for the year is issued to parents with their child's end of year attainment letter.