



Attendance Policy

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Revision and Approval History					
Author	Summary of changes	Issue	Date Applicable From	Approved by	Date of Next Review
A Howard	New document. Replaces the Admission & Attendance Register Policy (issue 7, November 2025), which is superseded and withdrawn. Rewritten as an attendance policy meeting the requirements of Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026 edition).	2026/27	[insert on approval]	Govs	[insert on approval]
Equality Impact					
Statement We welcome feedback on this document and the way it operates. We are interested to know of any possible or actual adverse impact that may affect any groups in respect of any of the equalities act 2010 protected characteristics. The person responsible for equality impact assessment for this document is the Director of Equality and Diversity. This document has been screened by the Equality Team and the impact has been assessed as:					
Screening ☐ Not applicable ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ High					



1. Purpose

- 1.1. This is the attendance policy of Spring Brook Academy, required by the Department for Education's statutory guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026 edition). It sets out what we expect, how we record and monitor attendance, how we support pupils and families when attendance falls, and when the law may be used.
- 1.2. It replaces the Academy's Admission & Attendance Register Policy, which is withdrawn. The rules governing the admission register, what it contains, and when a pupil may be added to or deleted from it, now sit in the Admissions Policy, so that each policy has one job. This policy covers the attendance register and everything that follows from it.
- 1.3. The policy is published on the Academy website, provided to parents and carers when their child joins, and brought to their attention each year. It is reviewed annually, with the views of pupils, families and staff sought as part of that review.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to every pupil on roll at Spring Brook Academy, across the Lower phase (Key Stages 1 and 2) and the Upper phase (Key Stage 3), and to all staff, governors and volunteers.
- 2.2. It should be read alongside the Academy's Admissions Policy, Relationships Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, SEND information report and Local Offer, and the Trust's data protection policies.

3. Legislative and statutory framework

- 3.1. This policy has been written with regard to the following, as in force in the 2026/27 academic year. Where a document is updated, this policy is read as referring to the current edition.
 - Education Act 1996; including section 7 (duty of parents to secure education), section 444 (offence where a child fails to attend regularly) and section 576 (meaning of 'parent').
 - The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024; in force from 19 August 2024, revoking and replacing the 2006 Regulations and their amendments.
 - Working Together to Improve School Attendance (DfE statutory guidance, July 2026 edition).
 - Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026; including section 37 (local authority consent for withdrawal of certain children from school) and the provisions on school attendance orders and registers of children not in school.
 - Education Act 2002, section 175; safeguarding duty.
 - Equality Act 2010; including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
 - Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition) and Children Missing Education (DfE statutory guidance).
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.



4. Our approach to attendance

- 4.1. Every pupil at Spring Brook Academy has an Education, Health and Care Plan in which Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health is the primary need. For many of our pupils, attending school is itself the hardest thing they do. That does not lower our ambition. The statutory guidance is explicit that a pupil with SEND has the same right to an education as any other pupil, and we hold the same expectation for attendance while recognising that the support needed to achieve it is often greater.
- 4.2. We treat poor attendance as a signal rather than a failing. Behind it there is usually an unmet need; anxiety, a sensory or relational barrier, something happening at home, a change the pupil has not been able to absorb. Our first response is to understand it. This is the same relational approach set out in the Relationships Policy, applied to the question of whether a child can get through the door.
- 4.3. Support comes first and enforcement last. The sequence we follow, and which the statutory guidance expects of us, is: expect high standards; monitor the data; listen and understand the barriers; facilitate support; formalise support; and only then consider enforcement.
- 4.4. Attendance is a safeguarding matter. A pupil who is not in school is a pupil we cannot see, and absence is often the first visible sign that something has changed at home. Attendance concerns and safeguarding concerns are handled together, not in separate conversations.

5. Expectations

- 5.1. Pupils are expected to attend every day that the Academy is open to them, on time and ready to learn, unless they are too unwell to attend or the absence is otherwise authorised under this policy.
- 5.2. Parents and carers are expected to ensure their child attends regularly and punctually, to contact the Academy on the first morning of any absence and on each subsequent day, to provide a reason for the absence, and to work with us where attendance becomes a concern.
- 5.3. The Academy is expected to make attending possible: to know each pupil well, to remove the barriers within our control, to make reasonable adjustments, and to make contact quickly and kindly when a pupil does not arrive.
 - 5.3.1. Session times. The Academy day is organised into a morning and an afternoon session. Session times for each phase are published on the Academy website and in the information provided to families on admission.
 - 5.3.2. Punctuality. Arriving late disrupts the start of the day for the pupil and for the class. Pupils arriving after the register has been taken but before it closes are recorded as late. Pupils arriving after the register closes are recorded as absent, and that absence is unauthorised unless there is a reason that would have authorised it anyway.
 - 5.3.3. Leave of absence in term time. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave is granted only where the Headteacher judges the circumstances to be exceptional, and each request is considered on its own facts. We do not operate blanket rules under which leave is either automatically granted or automatically refused.
 - 5.3.4. Illness. We do not routinely ask for medical evidence to authorise absence for illness. Evidence may be sought where there is genuine doubt about the reason given, or where a pupil has complex, long-term



- or frequently recurring health needs — and in that case the purpose is to understand what provision the pupil needs, not to check the register.
- 5.3.5. Transport. Many of our pupils travel on local authority transport. Where transport normally provided is not available and the pupil cannot reasonably get to school by other means, the absence is recorded under the appropriate unable-to-attend code and is not treated as the family's responsibility.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- 6.1. The Trust and Local Governing Board approve this policy, hold leaders to account for attendance, and receive attendance data at least termly, including for the cohorts identified at paragraph 9.3.
- 6.2. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for the consistent application of this policy across both phases and for the culture of attendance within the Academy.
- 6.3. The Senior Attendance Champion is the senior leader with strategic oversight of attendance. The role sets the vision, maintains the systems that all staff follow, leads the analysis of attendance data, and is the point of contact for families, the local authority and other agencies on attendance matters.
 - 6.3.1. Senior Attendance Champion: James Hopkins, assistant Head.
- 6.4. Heads of Site lead the day-to-day implementation of this policy in their phase and make the decisions reserved to the Headteacher role where delegated to do so, including decisions on leave of absence.
- 6.5. The pastoral team and the EHCP Coordinator carry out first-day contact, maintain the attendance records, arrange attendance support meetings, and liaise with the local authority.
- 6.6. Class teams take the register accurately and on time, notice and report changes in a pupil's pattern of attendance, and contribute what they know about the barriers a pupil faces.
- 6.7. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is involved wherever absence raises a safeguarding concern, and in every case where a pupil with a social worker, a looked-after pupil or a pupil on a child protection plan is absent without explanation.
- 6.8. Parents and carers contact the Academy on each day of absence, engage with the support offered, and tell us when something has changed at home that may affect their child's attendance.
- 6.9. Pupils attend, tell a trusted adult when something is making attendance hard, and take part in the plans made to support them.

7. Registers

- 7.1. The Academy keeps an admission register and an attendance register. Both are kept electronically, as the 2024 Regulations require.
- 7.2. The attendance register is taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Registers are taken at the same time for all registered pupils.
- 7.3. The register remains open for no longer than 30 minutes, and the same period applies to every session. A pupil arriving within that period is marked late; a pupil arriving after it is marked absent.
- 7.4. Where the reason for an absence is not known when the register is taken, the absence is recorded as unauthorised and the code is corrected as soon as the reason is established, and in any event within five school days.



- 7.5. Where an entry is amended, the record retains the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date it was made and who made it.
- 7.6. Every entry in the admission register and the attendance register is preserved for six years beginning with the day the entry was made. Back-up copies are preserved for six years after the end of the school year to which they relate. The previous policy stated three years; this was incorrect and has been corrected.
- 7.7. The content of the admission register, and the grounds on which a pupil may be added to or deleted from it, are set out in the Admissions Policy.
- 7.8. The registers are available for inspection by Ofsted inspectors and by authorised officers of the local authority, who may take extracts. The Academy makes the returns required by the local authority — including new pupil, deletion, attendance and sickness returns — and shares daily attendance data with the Department for Education through its management information system.



8. Attendance codes

- 8.1. The Academy uses the national attendance codes. The main codes are set out below; the full set and the detailed rules for their use are in the statutory guidance.

Code	Meaning	Counts as
/ \	Present at school (morning / afternoon session)	Present
L	Arrived late, before the register closed	Present
B	Off-site educational activity, attended in person	Approved activity
D	Dual registered at another school	Approved activity
K	Education provision arranged by the local authority	Approved activity
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved activity
P	Sporting activity	Approved activity
J1	Interview for employment or another educational institution	Authorised absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
M	Medical or dental appointment	Authorised absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
C	Leave of absence granted in exceptional circumstances	Authorised absence
C1	Leave for a regulated performance or employment abroad	Authorised absence
C2	Agreed part-time timetable	Authorised absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded, no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by the Academy	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason not yet established (must be amended once known)	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived after the register closed	Unauthorised absence
Q	Unable to attend — no access arrangements in place	Unable to attend
Y1	Unable to attend — transport normally provided is unavailable	Unable to attend
Y2	Unable to attend — widespread disruption to travel	Unable to attend
Y3	Unable to attend — part of the premises closed	Unable to attend
Y4	Unable to attend — whole site unexpectedly closed	Unable to attend
Y5	Unable to attend — pupil in criminal justice detention	Unable to attend
Y6	Unable to attend — in line with public health guidance or the law	Unable to attend
Y7	Unable to attend — any other unavoidable cause	Unable to attend
X	Not of compulsory school age, not required to attend	Not counted
Z	Prospective pupil, not yet on the admission register	Not counted
#	Planned whole-Academy closure	Not counted



- 8.2. Code C2 is used where a pupil is on an agreed part-time timetable. It is never used to record absence arising from behaviour, and a part-time timetable is never used to manage behaviour (see paragraph 9.7).
- 8.3. Code E is used where a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision has been made. Where provision is made, the pupil is recorded against that provision.

9. Promoting and supporting attendance

- 9.1. First-day contact. Where a pupil is absent and we have not heard from home, we make contact on the first morning. If we cannot reach anyone, we continue to try, and we escalate to a home visit or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead where the circumstances warrant it.
- 9.2. Monitoring. Attendance is monitored weekly by the pastoral team and analysed half-termly by the Senior Attendance Champion, who reports to the Senior Leadership Team and to governors. Analysis includes benchmarking against local, regional and national figures.
- 9.3. Cohorts. We analyse attendance for the groups the guidance identifies, which for this Academy include: pupils by phase and pathway; looked-after pupils and those with a social worker; pupils eligible for free school meals; young carers; pupils by ethnicity and sex; pupils receiving alternative provision; and pupils on part-time timetables or adapted curriculum plans.
- 9.4. Thresholds. A pupil missing 10% or more of sessions is persistently absent. A pupil missing 50% or more is severely absent. Both are triggers for a conversation and a plan, not for a sanction.
- 9.5. Attendance support meetings. Where a pupil is persistently or severely absent, or at risk of becoming so, we offer a meeting with the pupil and their family to understand the barriers and agree what will change. The outcome is recorded, shared with the family, and reviewed on a named date.
- 9.6. Reasonable adjustments. Where a pupil's disability or SEMH need is a barrier to attendance, we make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. Adjustments are agreed with the pupil and family, recorded, reviewed regularly, and — where the pupil has an EHCP — aligned with the plan and discussed with the local authority so that provision and practice do not drift apart.
- 9.7. Part-time timetables. A part-time timetable is a temporary measure with a clear purpose, a review date and an end date, agreed with the parent the pupil normally lives with, and aimed at a return to full-time provision. It is never used to manage behaviour. Where it forms part of an adapted curriculum plan under the Relationships and Positive Behaviour Policy, the requirements of both policies apply.
- 9.8. Phased returns. A planned, time-limited phased return is used where a pupil has been absent for a prolonged period, with the same safeguards as a part-time timetable.
- 9.9. Emotionally based school avoidance. Where absence is driven by anxiety, we work with the pupil, the family and, where involved, CAMHS, the educational psychologist and other professionals to build a graduated return. We do not treat anxiety-based absence as a behaviour matter, and we do not use penalty notices in response to it.
- 9.10. Remote education. Remote education is a last resort. It is used only where attending in person is not currently possible, only as part of a plan to return



the pupil to school, and only after reasonable adjustments have been considered.

- 9.11. Young carers. We identify young carers, monitor their attendance separately, and refer to early help or for a needs assessment where the caring role is affecting their education.

10. Working with the local authority and other partners

- 10.1. We work with the local authority's attendance service, and take part in Targeting Support Meetings in line with our safeguarding duties. We do not decline to meet.
- 10.2. Where voluntary support has not worked, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate, formal support may be put in place with the local authority; an attendance contract, or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- 10.3. Penalty notices. The national framework requires a penalty notice to be considered where a pupil has accrued 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A first notice is £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. A second notice within three years is £160 with no reduction. A third offence within that period cannot attract a further notice and is referred for consideration of prosecution under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.
- 10.4. Reaching the threshold requires us to consider a penalty notice; it does not require us to seek one. In a school where every pupil has an EHCP with SEMH as the primary need, absence is very often a consequence of the pupil's disability, and a fine on the family will not change it. Where we decide not to pursue enforcement, we record the reason, and we continue with the support route. Where we do pursue it, the decision is taken by the Executive Headteacher with the Senior Attendance Champion and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

11. Children missing education and removal from roll

- 11.1. The grounds on which a pupil's name may be deleted from the admission register are set out in the Admissions Policy. A pupil's name is never removed in order to avoid exclusion procedures.
- 11.2. Consent is required before a pupil here can be home educated. Section 37 of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 requires local authority consent before a child who attends a special school is withdrawn from the register for elective home education. Spring Brook Academy is a special school, so this applies to every pupil on roll. The same requirement applies where a child is subject to section 47 enquiries, is on a child protection plan, or was on one within the previous five years.
- 11.2.1. Where a parent tells us they intend to home educate, we notify the local authority, explain the consent requirement to the family, and do not remove the pupil from the register until the local authority has given its consent.
- 11.3. Where a pupil has been absent for a continuous period and we cannot establish where they are, we follow the joint procedures with the local authority for children missing education, including the reasonable enquiries required before any removal from roll, and we make a referral to the local authority.
- 11.4. Where a pupil is dual registered, their name is not removed from our admission register without the consent of the local authority.



12. Attendance and safeguarding

- 12.1. Unexplained or unexpected absence is treated as a potential safeguarding concern, and more so where a pupil is looked after, has a social worker, is on a child protection plan, or is known to be a young carer or at risk of exploitation.
- 12.2. Attendance data is reviewed as part of the Academy's wider safeguarding monitoring, and patterns of absence are considered alongside other information held about a pupil rather than in isolation.
- 12.3. This policy is read with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

13. Data protection

- 13.1. Attendance information is personal data and in some cases special category data. It is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR, shared only with those entitled to receive it, and retained for the periods set out at paragraph 7.6.

14. Monitoring, evaluation and review

- 14.1. Attendance performance is reported to the Local Governing Board at least termly, with analysis by cohort and benchmarking against local, regional and national figures.
- 14.2. Attendance is a measure within the Academy's self-evaluation and school improvement planning, and the priorities and targets in this policy are kept consistent with the current School Evaluation Form and School Improvement Plan.
- 14.3. This policy is reviewed annually, and sooner in response to changes in legislation or statutory guidance, to the Academy's attendance data, or to feedback from pupils, families and staff.
- 14.4. This policy is monitored through the Trust's accountability framework.

