

Behaviour & Attendance Policy **(incorporating Anti-bullying policy)**

Introduction

Spalding High School is committed to promoting self-discipline, respect for individuals and the environment, fairness and social inclusion. These values reflect the aims of the School and are the basis for the principles underlying our behaviour policy. The School takes a strong line on poor behaviour, especially if it impacts upon others.

Aims

Spalding High School has a genuine commitment to making education enjoyable, challenging and informative for all pupils. We aim to eliminate all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying, as well as to promote equality of opportunity, the welfare of pupils and to foster positive relationships across the whole school community. Vulnerable pupils (such as those with special educational, physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked-after children or those who may become vulnerable through events such as bereavement, divorce or separation) receive pastoral support according to their need.

Expectations and responsibilities

The school, its pupils and parents have expectations of, and responsibilities to, promoting and ensuring good behaviour and they are set out in detail in Appendix A.

The Governing Body has established this policy for the promotion of good behaviour, in consultation with the Headmistress, staff and parents and keep it under review. Governors ensure that it is communicated to parents and that its expectations are clear. They support the school in maintaining high standards of behaviour.

The Headmistress is responsible for the implementation and day-to-day management of the policy and procedure guidelines. All staff, including support staff, are responsible for ensuring that the policy and associated guidelines are followed. They also have the responsibility, both in the classroom and around the school, for maintaining the high quality learning environment which encourages good behaviour. The Education and Inspections Act 2000 empowers headteachers, to such an extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site and not under lawful control or charge of a school staff member. This includes the journey to and from school, town leave and incidents of cyberbullying or violence that originate outside of school time and off the school premises.

Parents and carers are actively encouraged to take responsibility for the behaviour of their child both inside and outside the school. By working in partnership with the school to maintain high standards of behaviour, they will have opportunities to raise any issues relating to the operation of the policy and associated procedures.

Pupils are made fully aware of the school policy, procedure and expectations. As a result, pupils have a responsibility to behave well and to report any incidents which they feel undermine the safety and security of the school community.

Implementation

The expectation at Spalding High School is that courtesy, politeness, regard for others and self-discipline shall be the norm. While there are rules, procedures and guidelines aimed at maintaining a positive atmosphere around the school (School routines - see appendix B), it is important that all pupils develop a sense of responsibility for their own behaviour. The following 12-point 'Code of Good Manners and Courtesy' has been developed, which is displayed in form rooms, in student planners and in the school brochure. It is introduced to students as part of the induction process in Y7 in PSHEE and through discussion with form tutors. It is then reinforced in a variety of ways throughout the school year at all levels.

Code of Good Manners and Courtesy

Spalding High School is a community. It is essential that all members of a community have consideration and respect for, and show courtesy to, each other.

- Say 'please' and 'thank you'.
- Refer to a member of staff by name, eg. 'Yes, Mrs Jones/Mr Smith', and not 'yeah'.
- Stand up at the start of a lesson when a member of staff enters the room, unless told not to.
- Stand up if the Headmistress comes into the room, unless told not to.

- Don't push in front of others – be prepared to let them pass first. Let a member of staff through first.
- Help others who are carrying things, eg. by holding the door open.
- Keep on the left-hand side of the corridors.
- Several areas of the school are very crowded; don't push, be prepared to give way.
- If you have done something wrong, apologise. Don't deny something you have done or lie about it.
- If you break or spill something, clear it up and report it to your form tutor or reception – don't wait for someone else to clear it up.
- Don't shout or run in the corridors or classrooms.
- Do not use coarse or unpleasant language.
- Do not litter and ensure any litter is placed in an appropriate receptacle.

Use of Rewards & Sanctions

Spalding High School has a positive and encouraging school ethos which is central to the promotion of good behaviour. Rewards are one means of achieving this. These have a motivational role in helping pupils to realise that good behaviour, whilst being the expected norm, is valued. Integral to the system of rewards is an emphasis on praise, both formal and informal, to individuals and groups both within and out of lessons. Reward systems are set out in Appendix C.

Sanctions are also needed to respond to inappropriate behaviour. A range of sanctions is clearly defined in Appendix C and their use is characterised by both fairness and consistency. It is explained to students why any sanction is being applied, what changes in behaviour are required to avoid future sanctions, and the positive choices that they have. Staff provide support for the positive actions taken by any student aiming to prevent a recurrence.

An induction programme for staff upon their appointment introduces the Behaviour policy and whole-staff training & development sessions are held regularly. To develop a consistency of approach, a detailed 'planner-size' booklet has been developed for use by all staff (teaching, support and supply), which sets out the rewards and sanctions used in the school. It is the responsibility of all staff to tackle minor and occasional misdemeanours and poor attendance, but it also important that they know when, how, and to whom it should be referred.

Supporting vulnerable students

Spalding High School supports vulnerable students in a variety of ways and this is coordinated through the excellent services of the pastoral system, the SENCO and G&T coordinator, School Counsellor. Where necessary and in consultation with parents, outside agencies are used to add to the support given by the school; eg. EWO, School nurse, Social Services, Educational Psychologist, CAMHS, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, local schools, translators.

- At-risk pupils are identified in advance. Established pastoral and SEN processes are used to identify barriers that may make it difficult for them to understand and follow particular school rules. Good relationships with parents/carers and students mean that staff are alerted to those who have become, or may become, vulnerable due to life changes, eg. bereavement, divorce.
- Pastoral staff, SENCO and G&T Coordinator plan proactively how to overcome these barriers, involving parents/carers and social workers, where appropriate, in this discussion.
- Pastoral staff, SENCO and G&T Coordinator ensure that all those who teach an identified pupil know what has been agreed, using existing systems such as IEP's, Behavioural IEP's, SSP's, G&T Support Plan, Progress Card, staff briefing, staff training. Channels like these can provide easily accessible advice to staff about how to discipline and respond to particular pupils, as well as how to teach them, eg. it can be helpful for vulnerable pupils to have an agreed means of removing themselves from situations where tensions are escalating.
- Pastoral staff and SENCO aim to ensure that every vulnerable pupil has a key person in school (SENCO, Head of Year or assistant, G&T coordinator, Form tutor, FT support, LSA) who knows them well, has good links with the home, and can act as a reference point for staff when they are unsure about how to apply the disciplinary framework. Sixth form student mentors also give excellent practical and emotional support.

Anti-Bullying policy

The School's behaviour policy builds upon the excellent work which has gone on in Spalding High School over many years in encouraging good behaviour and respect for others within the whole community. We have always taken seriously our shared responsibility to prevent and tackle bullying of all kinds and to protect the wellbeing of all young people. This is done within a strong community in which diversity is valued.

Aims of policy

- To establish clearly that Spalding High School does not tolerate bullying in any form.
- To establish appropriate rules, sanctions and anti-bullying strategies.
- To give a framework for reacting to bullying incidents in a reasonable, proportionate and consistent way.
- To give specific guidance on the handling of incidents of cyberbullying.

Definition of bullying:

'Behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group, either physically or emotionally'.

It includes:

- name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive or threatening comments,
- kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings,
- cyberbullying – 'the sending or posting of harmful or cruel text messages or images, using the internet or other digital communication devices',
- producing offensive graffiti,
- excluding people from groups, spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

There is no 'hierarchy' of bullying – all forms of bullying are taken equally seriously and dealt with firmly.

Implementation of policy

We recognise that all members of staff are continuously involved in building and sustaining the ethos of the school and that common standards must prevail. The following points are of paramount importance at Spalding High School when we consider the subject of bullying.

- a) There is a clear understanding between the school community and parents that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and that it is considered a serious infringement of school policy.** Parents and school work together and students who are found to be displaying bullying behaviour are dealt with fairly, but firmly.
- b) All members of staff work as a team through a structured and well-understood pastoral system. Early detection of bullying is very important and good relationships between staff and students are fundamental in this.
- c) Students know whom to turn to for advice and help, if they find themselves or friends the victim(s) of a bully and they know that they will be taken seriously and that it will be followed up. This is done by raising awareness through classroom interactions, assemblies, PSHEE & PD, student planner information, posters in form rooms. It has been the subject of a whole-school review through the School Council.. Sixth form mentors are available every lunchtime for students to go to talk to and the SHS website.
- d) Students are given the opportunity to understand and to continue to develop their understanding of bullying behaviour, and why certain people tend to be bullies. Discussing/role playing behaviour strategies on how to cope in various circumstances where bullying might occur. This work is covered in Years 7 - 11 in their PSHEE lessons, and in PD lessons in the sixth form.
- e) A well-organised and structured staff duty system is in operation at lunch and break times, supported by senior staff. All areas of the school, both inside the building and outside are regularly visited at break and lunchtimes, especially where potential bullying might occur.

Reporting of incidents

There are a variety of ways in which a student is able to report an incident of bullying:

- by talking directly to any member of staff;
- by reporting it to a student mentor;
- by using the concerns postbox outside pastoral offices

Parents are also encouraged to alert pastoral staff to worries or concerns they may have.

When a bullying incident is reported, staff (or student mentors, after training and according to a clear set of guidelines) will act upon the report:

- giving reassurance that the person has done the right thing by telling someone
- listening to the views of all sides involved, and taking a written record of events
- informing relevant form tutors and/or year heads (who will contact parents)
- taking steps to try to ensure that the bullying stops
- imposing sanctions against the bully/ies where appropriate
- taking steps to change the bully/ies attitude and behaviour, as well as ensuring access to any support that is required
- providing support for the victim and monitoring the situation over the following weeks.

Cyberbullying incidents

All of the above information refers equally to incidents of cyberbullying. However, there are key steps to take in addition when dealing with this form of bullying. It may consist of inappropriate text-messaging, instant messaging and e-mailing; recording of offensive or degrading images and posting them on to social networking sites; receiving offensive or degrading images by phone or via the internet; setting up of websites dedicated to be hurtful to individuals. It can be a very serious matter and can constitute a criminal offence, resulting in exclusion from the school.

Supporting the pupil being cyberbullied:

- ensure the pupil knows not to retaliate or return the message
- by helping or encouraging the pupil to save relevant evidence eg. by not deleting the message, by taking screen capture shots and noting web addresses. Network Manager can help with this.
- by checking they understand how to stop it happening again, eg. changing contact details, blocking contacts or leaving a chatroom.
- if it is known who is responsible, by taking steps to ensure that they remove the content. Senior management or senior pastoral staff will be involved and students will be asked to reveal a message or content on their phone to establish if bullying has occurred. Disciplinary measures will be taken against students who refuse to comply.
- by contacting the networking site or provider and making a report to get the content taken down and the user blocked
- in cases of threats or illegal content, the Police will be contacted and they will decide what needs to be kept for evidential purposes.
- work in conjunction with parents/carers.

Posters and information are displayed in classrooms, advice on net-safety is given in ICT lessons.

The school's acceptable use policy (rules which students have to follow to use ICT in school) is issued to all students annually in planners and is reinforced in ICT lessons.

Mobile phones are allowed in school, but they must be switched off between 8.55am and 3.45pm and locked away in lockers. Phones will be confiscated for a period of 24 hours if found to be switched on, or in use.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 empowers all members of school staff to impose disciplinary penalties for inappropriate behaviour. It also empowers headteachers, to such an extent as is reasonable, to regulate the behaviour of pupils when they are off the school site and not under lawful control or charge of a school staff member (this is particularly pertinent to regulating cyberbullying)

Appendix A: Expectations and responsibilities.

| SCHOOLS | |
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| Expectations | Responsibilities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make clear the school's statutory power to discipline pupils and that pupils and parents/carers will need to respect this. • To enforce their school behaviour policy – including rules and disciplinary measures. • To expect pupils and parents'/carers' cooperation in maintaining an orderly climate for learning. • To expect pupils to respect the rights of other pupils and adults in the school. • Not to tolerate violence, threatening behaviour or abuse by pupils or parents/carers. If a parent/carer does not conduct himself/herself properly, a school may ban them from the school premises and, if the parent/carer continues to cause nuisance or disturbance, they may be liable to prosecution. • To take firm action against pupils who harass or denigrate teachers or other school staff, on or off premises – engaging external support services, including the police, as appropriate, period exclusion. • To take all reasonable measures to protect the safety and well-being of staff and pupils, including preventing all forms of bullying and dealing effectively with reports and complaints about bullying. • To ensure staff model good behaviour and never denigrate pupils or colleagues. • To promote positive behaviour through active development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills. • To keep parents/carers informed of their child's behaviour, good as well as bad, to use appropriate methods of engaging them and, where necessary, support them in meeting their parental responsibilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maintain high standards of behaviour To ensure the whole school community is consulted about the principles of the school behaviour policy. • To establish and communicate clearly measures to ensure good order, respect and discipline. • To ensure the school behaviour policy does not discriminate against any pupil on e.g. grounds of race, gender, disability or sexual orientation and that it promotes good relations between different communities. • To ensure teachers' roles in school discipline matters are consistent with the National Agreement Raising Standards and Tackling Workload agenda, so that there is due recognition of the enhanced roles of support staff and not all responsibilities are focused on teachers. • To ensure staff are clear about the extent of their disciplinary authority and receive necessary professional development on behaviour strategies. • To support, praise and, as appropriate, reward pupils' good behaviour. • To apply sanctions fairly, consistently, proportionately and reasonably – taking account of SEN, disability and the needs of vulnerable children and offering support as appropriate. • To make alternative provision from day 6 for fixed period excluded pupils, and where appropriate, to arrange reintegration interviews for parents at the end of a fixed period exclusion. |

| PUPILS | |
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| Expectations | Responsibilities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to the development of the school behaviour policy. • To be taught in environments that are safe, conducive to learning and free from disruption. • To expect appropriate action from the school to tackle any incidents of violence, threatening behaviour, abuse, discrimination or harassment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To follow reasonable instructions by school staff, obey school rules and accept sanctions in an appropriate way. • To act as positive ambassadors for the school when off school premises. • Not to bring inappropriate or unlawful items to school. • To show respect to school staff, fellow pupils, school property and the school environment. • Never to denigrate, harm or bully other pupils or staff. • To cooperate with and abide by any arrangements put in place to support their behaviour such as Pastoral Support Programmes or Parenting Contracts. |

| PARENTS | |
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| Expectations | Responsibilities |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to the development of the school behaviour policy. • To be kept informed about their child's progress, including issues relating to their behaviour. • To expect their children to be safe, secure and respected in school. • To have any complaint they make about their child being bullied taken seriously by the school and investigated / resolved as necessary. • To write to the head teacher / governors if they believe the school has exercised its disciplinary authority unreasonably (see Complaints Procedure). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support the school's behaviour policy and the disciplinary authority of school staff. • To help ensure that their child follows reasonable instructions by school staff and adheres to school rules. • To send their child to school each day punctually, suitably clothed, fed, rested, and equipped and ready to learn. • To ensure school staff are aware of any SEN-related or other personal factors which may result in their child displaying behaviours outside the norm. • To be prepared to work with the school to support their child's positive behaviour. • To attend meetings with the head teacher or other school staff, if requested, to discuss their child's behaviour. • To adhere to the terms of any Parenting Contract or Order relating to their child's behaviour. • If their child is excluded from the school, to ensure the child is not found in a public place during school hours in the first five days of exclusion and, if invited, to attend a reintegration interview with the school at the end of a fixed period exclusion. |

Appendix B: These routines are displayed in each form room.

SCHOOL ROUTINES - SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL

1. Around the school

- Members of the school community are expected to respect the school environment and other people's property.
- Pupils must keep to the left in corridors and on stairs, waiting quietly to enter form rooms and leaving sufficient space for others to walk by.
- Do not write on white boards at break and lunchtime.
- Pupils are not encouraged to bring electronic devices to listen to music to school. They may be used at lunchtime, but pupils are responsible for them.
- Mobile 'phones are to be switched off between 8.55 and 3.45pm whilst pupils are on the School premises.
- Neither tippex nor aerosols should be brought into school
- Do not leave valuables in pockets or bags in the cloakroom; lock them in your locker.
- Pupils in Years 7&8 should not be in other people's form rooms at break or lunchtime, unless this has been previously agreed with Head of Year. Pupils in Years 9-11 should not be in the form rooms of younger pupils.
- Packed lunches and drinks may be eaten in form rooms at lunchtime. If form rooms are left in a mess, the privilege to eat there will be withdrawn.
- Pupils may eat outside, but should stay in the designated areas. **Do not** eat in the corridors or when walking around the school.
- In the Dining Hall, dirty plates, cutlery and all rubbish is to be cleared from tables in the canteen after eating.
- Parties are only allowed in form rooms with special permission.
- Do not sit behind the gym at break or lunchtime.
- Put litter into dustbins provided.
- Smoking is forbidden on school premises/site, or at any time when a pupil is in uniform.
- Chewing gum is forbidden in school.

2. Town Leave

- Town leave is from 12.40 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. Monday to Thursday.
- Pupils in Years 8-10 may have one town leave per week. Pupils in Year 11 may have two per week.
- Pupils must remain in at least a pair.
- Pupils may eat in establishments provided for that purpose, but not in the street or in other shops.
- Good manners, smart appearance and sensible behaviour are expected from students on Town Leave.

3. Travelling to and from school

Pedestrians and cyclists should be careful to observe the Highway Code and general rules of good manners. Special attention is drawn to the following:

- Pedestrian Crossings - great care should be taken not to cross in front of fast moving traffic. Pupils should always cross quickly when the road is clear.
- Cyclists should leave school by the Matmore Gate exit. Cyclists should not cycle two abreast, nor beside a pedestrian. They should dismount before crossing the road into the school ground.
- Great care should be taken by cyclists when carrying musical instruments. A cycle helmet must be worn and it must be left securely fastened to the bicycle during the day.
- Pupils waiting for buses should wait on the grass inside the bus gate until their bus arrives. They should not crowd forward to the edge of the pavement when the bus approaches.
- If a pupil travels by bus, it would be helpful to keep a record of the season ticket serial number. This is required if the ticket is lost.
- **Punctuality:** All pupils are expected to arrive punctually i.e. pupils from town before 8.55 a.m. and those travelling by bus must come straight into school on its arrival.
- **The front door** is used by Staff and Sixth Form only.

4. First Aid

If a pupil in Years 7 to 11 feels ill, she should inform a member of staff who will either take her, or send her, with another pupil to the medical room. Once there, no visitors are allowed. Sixth Formers should inform Mrs Campbell if they are unwell.

Appendix C: Rewards and Sanctions Policy

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| REWARDS Excellents Awarded by subject staff in line with department policy or by form tutors. | Students record excellents in school planners and work towards individual bronze (15 excellents), silver (30), gold (50) and platinum (75) awards. Excellent totals for forms contribute to house points. |
| Community Award Staff may nominate (on a slip, available in staffroom) a student or group of students who have given commitment to school or the community in some way, e.g. providing music for assembly consistently, charity work, etc. | Students receive Community Awards, usually in assembly from the Headmistress or Deputy Head. Letter is sent home. |
| Certificates of Merit A meeting is held in July to decide which students will receive these. They may be awarded for Academic achievement, Effort and/or Progress, Contribution to school/form life, sport, drama etc. | Students receive these awards at the relevant Prizegiving |
| Academic Prizes A form prize is awarded each year, decided by form tutors in July | Awarded at Prizegiving |
| Special Prizes Subject prizes and other special awards are also decided by relevant staff in preparation for Prizegiving. | Awarded at Prizegiving |
| Election to office Form captains, School council reps, green reps, PSHEE reps. <u>Sixth Form:</u> Prefects, House captains, Sports Captains, Music captains. | Elected by forms. Form Captain and Deputy –every 2 terms, School council-annually in September, PSHEE and green-termly |
| Individual interviews At year 9, 10, 11, 12 &13 We recognise achievements of students and offer individual support and advice. | By Pastoral staff and SLT |
| Achievement Certificates | Awarded in Achievement Assemblies |

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| <p>Certificates of Excellence (15, 30, 50 & 75 excellents) Certificates of Achievement (for consistent effort throughout term in individual subjects, etc).</p> | |
| <p><u>DISCIPLINE AND SANCTIONS</u> <u>Use of incident forms:</u> <u>Incident forms are used as an information system to alert HoDs, tutors and pastoral staff of problems with individuals. They are not a sanction in themselves and appropriate action should follow.</u> Incident forms should be completed by staff and <u>it should be clearly indicated whether they are for 'Action' or 'For Information only'</u>. Forms should be passed to the form tutor in the case of behavioural incidents and to the Head of Department in the case of work related incidents. Either the form tutor or the HOD will take appropriate action if necessary, make note of the action and outcome on the incident form and pass it through the chain indicated at the top of the incident form to the Pastoral Head for noting , recording on SIMS and filing in pupil's file.</p> | <p><u>Responsibility to initiate/oversee:</u> <u>Subject staff</u> take initial responsibility or action. <u>HoDs</u> become involved where work related incidents are building up. <u>Pastoral staff</u> become involved when work related incidents are persistent or build in a number of subjects. <u>Form tutors</u> take action in the first instance with behavioural problems. <u>Pastoral staff</u> take action over serious behavioural problems.</p> |
| <p><u>SANCTIONS</u></p> | |
| <p><u>Seeing girls</u></p> | <p>Subject Staff /Form tutors/ HoDs or Pastoral staff</p> |
| <p><u>Cancelling town leave</u></p> | <p>Form tutors/ Pastoral staff,</p> |
| <p><u>Contacting parents</u></p> | <p>Pastoral staff,/HoDs,/ SLT</p> |
| <p><u>Detentions</u> Uniform detention - sheet to be filled in on staff board. Subject detentions Formal Lunchtime Detention Names must be on board in staffroom by Wednesday & Friday break. For behaviour or work related incidents. Letter home. After School Detention. Letter home.</p> | <p>Pastoral teams Tuesdays Conducted by individual departments Subject Staff/HoD SLT: Thursday & Monday Automatic after 3 lunchtime detentions or at Head's/Pastoral staff's discretion-Letter home.</p> |
| <p><u>Isolation (Internal exclusion)</u> Student will work in isolation outside Headmistress' office for an agreed period of time.</p> | <p>Head,/ Deputy/ SLT/ Pastoral teams,/HoDs</p> |
| <p><u>Exclusion</u> For very serious incidents.</p> | <p>Head's discretion – may be fixed term or permanent.</p> |
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| <p><u>SUPPORT MECHANISMS</u> <u>Progress Card</u> <u>This is designed for those pupils whose progress over several subjects has been unsatisfactory and who have not responded to meetings with the Head of Lower/Upper school or assistants.</u> It is operated initially by the Pastoral Head and parents are notified of its initiation. Targets are agreed and set with pupils. Comments should be obtained in all subject lessons each day and an effort grade should be given. Pupils see HoY at start of lunchtime to check progress. Space is provided for comment by the form tutor and the Pastoral Head and the card should go home to parents for their comment. It is returned to school for further use.</p> | <p>Pastoral staff initiate after reports or monitoring process Failure to complete Progress card/ poor comments will lead to further sanctions e.g. detentions, kept after school, isolation.</p> |
| <p><u>Pupil Support plan</u> Similar to above, but used for behaviour/organisational issues in a number of subjects. Targets set and monitored in small steps</p> | <p>Pastoral staff contact parents.</p> |

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students should come to school every day. All absence is at the discretion of the School and not of parents.

Parents have a duty to make sure that their daughter/son attends School. The School is committed to working with parents as the best way of ensuring as high a level of attendance as possible. There is a strong link between full attendance and excellent achievement. Research shows that persistent absence can have a very negative impact on the grades achieved at GCSE and A level.

Regulations regarding absence.

Students should only be absent if it is completely unavoidable. Allowing a pupil to be absent from school without good reason is against the law and parents can be fined up to £1000. The School, not parents, is required to classify every half-day absence as either *authorised* or *unauthorised*. This is why written information about the cause of each absence is always required.

- **Authorised absences** are those mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason: illness or other unavoidable reason, or where leave of absence has been granted.
If a student is unfit for school, parents/carers should contact us on the **first day**, by telephone. If a student is absent for more than three days, we would like parents/carers to keep us informed of their condition and of when they are likely to return to School. When the student returns, the parent/carer must give a written explanation of the reason for the absence on an absence slip in the Student Planner. This must be written and signed by a parent/carer for each period of absence. (This system is being introduced in September 2014. Currently, a 'cheque-book' of absence slips are made available to parents). Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the School each time.
- **Unauthorised absences** are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no leave of absence has been granted. This includes keeping pupils off school for trivial reasons, for truancy, for absences which have never been properly explained and in cases where pupils arrive too late to get an attendance mark. Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not genuinely unavoidable. Pupils should never be kept off school for reasons such as shopping, concerts, caring, or as a 'treat'.
- **Lateness**
Pupils must attend on time to be given an attendance mark for a session, unless the lateness is unavoidable (e.g. a bus running late). Parents are expected to ensure that their daughter/son is present at registration. Arriving more than 15 minutes after the start of the session without good reason will be classified as unauthorised absence.

Rules on the granting of 'Leave of Absence'

From September 2013, the Department for Education (DfE) regulations have changed in regard to absence. Any student with a level of absence in excess of 15% is regarded as a 'Persistent Absentee' by DfE. Permission to grant leave of absence continues to rest with the Headmistress and not with parents, but we are encouraged to refuse all requests for absence unless they are totally unavoidable.

Headteachers are no longer able to grant leave of absence, "...***unless there are exceptional circumstances***". (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013).

Although at SHS we have always strongly discouraged holidays in term time, it is now very unlikely that permission will be granted for **any** holidays during term time. **Please do not book a holiday in term-time and then request leave of absence, as it will almost always NOT be granted.** You are also encouraged to book all medical/dental appointments, wherever possible, outside of School hours or during the school holidays (please check our holiday dates on the School calendar). Any absence that is not acceptable to the School is recorded on a pupil's file as "unauthorised". The DfE amendments have also strengthened the procedures for the issuing of penalty notices (fines) for non-attendance.

Should you have to request a leave of absence, please put your request, in writing, to the Headteacher at least two weeks in advance, earlier if possible. Making a request does not authorise an absence.

Leave of absence will never be granted at times of either School or external examinations. Any absence at this time which is not totally unavoidable will be regarded as unauthorised and no exception will be made for any exams to be rearranged – this is not possible in any event in the case of external examinations.

We are still allowed to sanction absence for anything which could be classed as an educational absence, eg. sporting fixtures, acting or playing in drama or music events, etc.

If problems arise.

Occasionally, some pupils need encouragement to attend regularly. Any problems are best sorted out between the School, the parents/carers and the pupil. It is never better to cover up an absence or give in to pressure to excuse pupils from school. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may well make things worse. If problems do arise, the School would expect parents/carers to contact the school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving the problem together. This is nearly always successful.

If problems cannot be sorted out this way, the school may refer the problem to Children's Services at LCC and/or the Education Welfare Officer. If other ways of trying to improve attendance fail, this service can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an education supervision order on the pupil.

Spalding High School has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. You will receive information about your daughter's attendance in her annual report and at any other time when the school has concerns about her attendance rate. Excellent attendance is rewarded each year with certificates and a reward scheme supported by local businesses. Any suggestions from parents/carers and pupils about how to encourage attendance are especially welcome.

What students can do during and after a period of absence

If a student has been absent from school it is her/his responsibility to catch up with the work that has been missed. Staff will provide help and support where needed and it is important that your daughter/son approaches staff to find out what copying up is required.

Absence from school can cause a number of problems for pupils. For example, she/he:

- will have missed vital explanations given in lessons,
- will have missed the instructions and advice offered when homework is set,
- may find lessons harder to follow when she/he returns to school because of gaps in her knowledge,
- will need to find the time to copy up in addition to doing her/his normal homework.

It is important that your daughter/son tries to keep in touch with school work even when she/he is absent. For example she/he could:

- telephone a friend who may be able to collect work on her/his behalf, make a note of the homework set, photocopy notes made in class or collect worksheets/handouts.
- ask someone to send the books she/he needs – her/his form teacher could arrange for this to be done.
- do some private reading/coursework – it is particularly important for Upper School and Sixth Form pupils to keep up to date.

Requesting work from school

In exceptional circumstances, when absence is for a prolonged period, it may be possible for the School to provide work in some subjects at parental request. This is a complex procedure as so many staff need to be consulted, so **notice of at least three days** is required to provide work.

In some subjects oral explanations are vital so meaningful work may be very difficult to set. It also becomes increasingly difficult to set work in any subject where new topics are covered.

When work is sent home in these situations, parents need to ensure that the completed tasks are returned to school for marking, so that an element of continuity can be ensured.

Absences known about in advance

In the case of planned absence, the student is responsible for asking for work from the subject teachers concerned.

Notice of at least one week should be given.

Please note: work will not be set for a student taking a holiday during school time, even if they have been given leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances.

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