



SPRINGS BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

POLICY ON LEARNER ATTENDANCE

LEGAL BASIS

South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996:

- 3 (1) "Subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which the learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever occurs first."
- (6) "Subject to this Act or any other applicable law –
- any parent who, without just cause and after a written notice from the Head of Department, fails to comply with subsection (1), is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months; or
- any person who, without just cause, prevents a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance prevents him from attending a school, is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months."

PREAMBLE

Not only does all learners have a right to attend school regularly, but their attendance is compulsory by law. As such, learners have no option, but to attend school daily, the parents are compelled to see to it that their children in fact are abiding to said law and educators are accountable for monitoring and recording the same, as well as dealing with any deviation thereof.

PREMISE

A disciplined and purposeful environment is one where learners routinely attend school and where they are punctual.

Regular and punctual attendance is a prerequisite for learner academic performance.

EXPECTATION / RESPONSIBILITY / ACCOUNTABILITY

1. LEARNER:

Not only do parents and educators expect learners to attend school regularly, but the learners themselves have a responsibility to do so.

Learners are furthermore expected to arrive at school before the official daily commencement of school and by law, may not leave school early (before the end of the official school day), without the permission of the Principal or his delegate – it is by request of a parent only and in writing.

Punctuality is of utmost importance and all learners must be in time for each lesson/period.

2. PARENT:

The onus is on the parent to make sure that his son attends school regularly, is on time for school daily and does not leave school early without a valid reason

Informs the Principal in writing if and when his son cannot attend school, or was unable to attend.

The reason must be valid and must be in the form of written communication on the day the learner returns to school.

If the learner has a medical or any other condition, that prevents him from coming to school for longer than 3 days, the parent/s must contact the school within the mentioned 3 days and inform the Principal/representative of the situation.

If a problem might exist as to why the learner is not punctual or is absent without leave, then in such a case the parent/s must cooperate with the school to resolve the matter.

If and when it is required that a learner must leave school early, the parent will give a written request to the Principal and if the parent is not picking up the learner, he/she must clearly state who will pick up the learner in their absence.

3. EDUCATORS:

The educators must adhere to the "Attendance Policy" and have a legal duty to not only monitor and record the attendance of the learners (every period, daily, weekly), but also to inform the parents of the learners' absence and punctuality and if necessary, to attempt to resolve the same.

4. GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

As per SASA, the GDE has a legal responsibility and duty to assist the various schools, in an attempt to improve the learner attendance.

The District should have a policy of "warning" letters before reporting a parent/s to the HOD for legal action and a possible fine or imprisonment of a specific parent.

5. SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY:

Rules dealing with punctuality and regular attendance of learners, as contained in the Code of Conduct, are regulated by the SGB and said body will preside in the Disciplinary hearings.

ADMINISTRATION

There are four (4) different kinds of registers:

1) Temporary registers (SBH46)

Used in the first ten (10) days of the school year only, and is used to draw up the official "class register."

2) Class register (SBH27)

This register is a permanent register and is marked weekly by the Homeroom educator, using the information as contained in the "Travelling register" (Monday, or first day of the week). It is kept by the Homeroom educator before presenting it to the Grade Head to control (Tuesday, or second day of the week).

3) Travelling register (SBH7)

Said register accompanies the class for every period of every day. The class captain carries the travelling register with him and presents it to every subject educator to sign.

4) Latecomers register

Names of learners that arrive late in the mornings are recorded in this register.

Note –

- Mentioned registers are legal documents and must be treated as such, if required the same can and will be used as evidence in a court of law.
- In view of the abovementioned fact no tippex or any other correcting fluid is allowed. Mistakes are indicated by drawing a neat ink line through the error, it is initialled and the correct entry is then made.
- Being a legal document, please use a black pen.

1. TEMPORARY CLASS REGISTER

A. GENERAL

- a. A temporary class register will be used in the first ten (10) days of the first term only.
- b. It is used in the place of the official class register and till such time as the learners in a specific class have stabilised.

B. ORGANISATION

- a. Administrative office will issue the Homeroom educator with a list with the learner's name in a specific class.
- b. No names may be added or deleted without a letter of instruction from the Administrative office.
- c. Said register will be maintained in the same manner as the official class register in terms of this policy.

Note –

- The temporary class register is an official document and may be used in a court of law.

2. TRAVELLING REGISTER

A. GENERAL

- a. The Homeroom educator must appoint a responsible class captain/monitor.
- b. The class captain will carry the travelling register with him to every class/period.
- c. Pupils that are not in the class and/or learners that have to leave early or arrive late, or for some reason are not in class, shall be reflected on this register.

B. ORGANISATION

- a. The Administrative office prepares the new travelling register on a weekly basis.
- b. The name of the class captain and the class itself, must appear on the form.
- c. The class captain hands the Travelling register in to the Administrative office every day at the beginning of the last period and after roll call has been taken for that period.
- d. The class captain then collects the travelling register daily before school starts, from the Administrative office.
- e. New Travelling registers are issued on Monday mornings, which will be used for the week.
- f. The class captain carries the Travelling register with him and every period gives the travelling register to the new subject educator.
- g. The subject educator physically counts the learners and records his findings on the Travelling register.
- h. The class captain is in charge of the Travelling register and if need be, must account for every period that an educator did not sign for a specific period.
- i. The class captain will inform the subject educator which learners are absent/AWOL.
- j. If a learner has permission to leave early (has a letter written by the parent), or a learner is feeling sick and is seeking permission to leave school, it is the responsibility of the class captain to take the learner to the Principal or his delegate, to have the learner signed off on the Travelling register.

Note –

- Learners that are not in a specific subject/class for any reason, must be reflected on the Travelling register.
- If a class captain is absent, the vice-captain must fetch the travelling register in the morning and carry the same for the day.
- The grade head will distribute the “old” Travelling register to the relevant Homeroom educator, for completion of the class register on a Monday.

3. CLASS REGISTER

A. GENERAL

- a. A learner may not be removed or added onto the Class register without a note from the office or grade head.
- b. Check the spelling of the learner’s name, his birth date and address, against his personal file/Identity document/Birth certificate.
- c. A weekly check on change of address is necessary – when doing this, also check for the cell phone contact numbers.
- d. The learner’s personal information is placed alphabetically on the first page of the register. Divide ‘Parents’ Name’ and have father’s initials (Mr) on one side and mother’s initials (Mrs) on the opposite side – in pen.
- e. Write the addresses and telephone/cell numbers in pencil.
- f. Please complete:
 - Date heading at the top of the page.
 - Names of learners alphabetical – on left hand side of the page. Surname first, followed by the first name and then the rest of the initials.
 - Signature at the bottom of the page.
- g. Each new term on a new page and third term use a double page.
- h. An educator may work in pencil while capturing the information during the week – it is in case of possible latecomers, but such work must be inked in (weekly) before giving the register to the Grade head on Tuesday.
- i. Please use the correct columns at the bottom of the page.
- j. It is not necessary to work out percentages, but the “cumulative totals” may be completed.

B. ORGANISATION

- a. On Monday morning the Grade Head distributes the relevant Travelling registers to the Homeroom teachers and also gives him/her the class register to complete for the previous week.
- b. Using the Travelling register, the Homeroom educator records the absentees for the previous week – records absence only and returns the class register to the Grade Head on the Tuesday.
- c. Absentee notes
 - It is expected that the learner supply a note written by his parent or the doctor, explaining his absence on the day he returns to school and hands this to his homeroom educator – be strict and insist on this.
 - Indicate absences with a small “a” on the register, but leave the absence column blank if the learner was present.
 - Above the “a”, indicate with a dot, if the learner did bring in a note e.g. à.
 - Where truancy is expected (pattern of e.g. absence on Fridays and/or Mondays or more than 4 days in one term) – immediately report the suspicion to the Grade head and he/she must investigate the matter.
 - Homeroom educators must file the absentee notes in the relevant learners’ personal files.
 - All the registers are subject to inspection from the Education Department.

4. DAILY ABSENT REPORT

A. GENERAL

- a. Abovementioned is not a specific register, but is in addition to the Travelling register and/or official class register and is communication with the parent.

- b. It is an attempt to (1) monitor on a daily basis who is absent/present, (2) inform parents immediately if their son is absent from school (3) used as a backup on queries and (4) establish if learners are bunking.

B. ORGANISATION

- a. In the Homeroom period of the day, or during the first teaching period (if there is no homeroom period) the specific educator completes an "Absentee report form" on the learners that are physically not present in his/her class at the end of that period.
- b. The form containing the names of learners absent or a nil return in the case where no one is absent, is sent to the Administrative office.
- c. The Administrative office will compare the Daily absentee report form with the latecomers register and then send sms's to the parents of learners that are absent.
- d. Daily absentee forms are available from the Administrative office.
- e. Parents are encouraged to contact the school if the information is incorrect.

Note –

- Accuracy is vital, as incorrect information can create unnecessary fear for the learner's safety and then generates tension and/or ill feelings, that parents could have towards the school.

5. REGULAR ABSENTEEISM / ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE

- a. When a learner displays a pattern of absenteeism, there is a reason to suspect he is bunking/AWOL.
- b. Educators must check the authenticity of the notes from parents against the personal file.
- c. Homeroom educators must be strict with learners not bringing absentee notes after being absent.
- d. Learners that contravene absentee regulations, must immediately be reported to the Grade head.
- e. It must be noted that if a learner is absent for three consecutive days without an explanation, the Homeroom teacher must phone the parents to inquire what the reason might be.
- f. A learner that is absent for 4 or more days in any one term, should raise suspicion.
- g. **Follow up:**
Grade Head investigates and if there is substance to the suspicion he/she reports the matter to the Deputy Principal.
Deputy Principal contacts the parents and make an appointment for them to see the Deputy Principal (learner that is of compulsory school going age):
 - emphasise the importance of regular attendance
 - inform the parents of their legal responsibility and the implications (see section 3 of SASA)
 - learner has to be made to understand that not only does he have a right to attend school, but he has a legal obligation.
- h. Despite the intervention, attempts a learner persists in being absent then:
 - Inform the District office to assist in the matter. They could either report the matter to ESS and/or give the parent a letter or warning
 - Inform HOD for legal intervention
 - Elicit intervention from social services
 - After 10 consecutive days absence – cancel learner's enrolment/Deregister learner from school

Note –

- Keep a record of all correspondence with the parent – including telephonic correspondence.
- Inform the parent and learner of the date and reason why his enrolment was cancelled.
- If the learner is of compulsory school going age, inform District office (IDSO) of the date and reason for mentioned cancellation.

6. LATECOMERS REGISTER

A. GENERAL

- a. Record the names of learners arriving late for school.

B. ORGANISATION

- a. The educator enters the names of the latecomers into the “latecomers” register (name and grade).
- b. All the gates are locked and a specific educator does duty at the main gate.
- c. Educator also signs the “punctuality” record of the learners in their diary to indicate the learner was late on a specific day.
- d. The latecomers register is submitted to the Administrative office.
- e. The latecomers register is to be collected from the Administrative office.

Note –

- The latecomers register is compared with the learners being reported absent for a specific day.