

Attendance Policy

North Primary School and Nursery is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience to all its pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a School, we will organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede full attendance will be identified and addressed as quickly as possible.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there are concerns about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Rights and Responsibilities: school, parents, pupils

The School

Whatever the weather, staff will do everything in their power to ensure the school is open every day and with full staff attendance.

Every day is important at North – lessons are planned for every week and every day of the school year. The end of half-terms and terms are also important days for the school community.

We expect pupils to attend school regularly, on time and properly equipped and ready to learn.

We will encourage good attendance and will communicate with parents as soon as possible if there is a problem with attendance or punctuality.

We will work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve issues, which affect attendance or punctuality as quickly as possible.

We will include in reports to parents on achievement, pupil's attendance annually.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child(ren) regularly and punctually attends school, adequately dressed, equipped and in an appropriate condition to learn.

Parents are responsible for immediately informing the school of the reason for any absence by telephone call on the first morning of any absence.

If attendance problems do develop, the school expects parents to work actively with school staff and the Education Welfare Service, to solve them.

The headteacher may grant leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Any application will be considered against the pupil's attendance record, family circumstances and timing with regard to assessments and examinations. Failure to do so could result in referral to the Education Welfare Service who may issue a Penalty Notice of £120 (£60 if paid in 28 days) to each parent for each child taken out of school.

The pupil

Pupils will ensure that they attend school regularly and on time.

Pupils can expect to receive assistance following periods of absence in order to catch up.

Every Family is expected to sign the Home School Accord upon starting school. This document clearly sets out the rights and responsibilities of all staff, parents and pupils.

Registration

A manual registration system is used.

Manual registers must be marked in ink and where an alteration is necessary this must be clearly identified showing both the original entry and change. Correction fluid must not be used.

Registers will be returned to the school office at the end of the registration period for safety and will be secured but accessible in case of an emergency.

All notes from parents regarding a pupil's absence will be stored on the pupil's file.

School will complete accurate registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session within 10 minutes of the start of the sessions.

Registration begins at 8.55am and 1.25 pm each school day and registers will be closed 30 minutes after these times.

If a pupil arrives after the junior and infant entrances have closed, they should report to reception to be entered into the late record book.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed, without an acceptable reason, will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for that session.

Use of Symbols

The register is a legal document and must be marked accurately, recording pupils attendance or absence and in the latter case if authorised or unauthorised, using the approved DfE codes.

A certified extract of the register can be used as evidence in legal proceedings against parents for failing to ensure their child's regular attendance or in seeking an Education Supervision Order in respect of a pupil.

Registers will be kept for 3 years following completion at the end of the academic school year.

Staff Roles

The head teacher is responsible for attendance issues and will check the registers on a regular basis to identify any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The head teacher will meet regularly with the Office Manager to discuss any attendance/punctuality concerns.

The administrative team are responsible for ensuring that registers are kept safely and are available for inspection to relevant professionals.

The administrative team are responsible for logging attendance information onto the computerised system.

The class teacher is responsible for taking the register daily, once for the AM session and once for the PM session.

The class teacher is responsible for register maintenance of their own class register. Including the following:

- ◆ using the correct colour ink
- ◆ ensuring that symbols used are appropriate
- ◆ not using correction fluid
- ◆ ensuring all mistakes are amended with the original information still clear and corrections clearly marked
- ◆ ensuring the registers are neatly kept allowing for ease of reading at all times but especially in an emergency situation – i.e. during a fire procedure

The Head will ensure that all staff are aware of the registration process and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law.

Procedure for following up absence or lateness

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to contact the school on the first morning of the child's absence. Office staff complete register checks every day. A phone call will be made in the event of unexplained absence.

If phone contact has not been made and a written explanation is not provided then a letter will be sent home (absence letter 1, Appendix B)

If the above actions do not elicit an explanation, a further letter will be sent (absence letter 2, Appendix B) to the parents/carers.

If this second letter does not elicit an explanation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where the school has concerns about a particular period of absence or a pattern of absence a meeting with the parent/carers will be called by the Headteacher. If this does not resolve the matter a formal referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer, and a formal intervention planned.

If the pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks, in exceptional circumstances there will be provision to allow the pupil to ease back into the school system. In the event of a pupil returning after a long term absence then an individual reintegration programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible.

Where a pupil is persistently late the school will write to the parent/carer inviting them to a school based meeting.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

PARENTS MAY NOT AUTHORISE ABSENCE, ONLY SCHOOLS CAN DO THIS.

Absence for the following reasons could be authorised

- ◆ Sickness
- ◆ Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- ◆ Days of religious observance
- ◆ Exceptional family circumstances i.e. bereavement
- ◆ If permission for absence has been granted in advance by the head teacher
- ◆ Transport arranged by the LA has failed to arrive where the pupil lives beyond statutory walking distance

Absence may be recorded as unauthorised when due to:

- ◆ Shopping
- ◆ Haircuts
- ◆ Missed bus
- ◆ Slept late
- ◆ No uniform
- ◆ Looking after brothers or sisters or unwell parents
- ◆ Birthdays

- ◆ Unapproved holidays

It may be necessary for the school or Education Welfare Officer to ask the parent/carer to provide the school with written evidence of reason for absence e.g.

- ◆ Appointment cards/letters
- ◆ Medical certificate
- ◆ Letter from GP

If there is an extensive period of absence due to medical reasons the school or the Education Welfare Officer may ask for the permission of the parent/carer to contact the child's GP to confirm that the medical condition prevents the child from attending school and to establish a possible return date for the child.

Strategies for Promoting Attendance and Punctuality

Strong home-school links, good pastoral care and a good curriculum promote good attendance.

Attendance statistics will be collected and used to inform pastoral and curriculum practices.

Expectations are made clear to parents with regard to attendance and punctuality in the Home School Agreement, School prospectus and annual report from the governors.

Opportunities to maintain awareness through newsletters, parents' evenings and pupil reports will be used.

Parents, pupils and staff will be regularly reminded of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

Pupils with a known attendance problem being admitted to school will be interviewed with the parents and will be set targets for improvement.

Parents will be kept regularly informed of all concerns regarding attendance and punctuality.

Pupils who have been absent for an extended period of time will be reintegrated back into school through a structured and individually tailored programme.

All issues, which may cause a pupil to experience attendance difficulties, are to be promptly investigated by the school.

This policy will be reviewed to its effective implementation by the Curriculum Committee on an annual basis and updated as appropriate.

Date of Review: 15.05.17