

North Primary School and Nursery
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Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the summer staff and governors have been reviewing the year. Reading the yellow report slips is very informative and rewarding. As a headteacher, I love reading your comments which are full of respect and gratitude for the teaching staff, the jobs they do and the difference they make. Some of the replies are written by parents who have had a number of children pass through North. Here is one –

Dear Mr. Garnett,

I just wanted to thank you and the whole team at North for everything you have done for our children over the past ten years.

They have all loved their time and they have all flourished. I think they have enjoyed opportunities they might never have had elsewhere....

You and your team should be very proud of all you have achieved.....

One of the other jobs we do is analyse attendance data. That has produced some interesting results which I want to share with you.

Our overall mean average is 95% which is lower than previous years (the median average is 96% for those of you interested in statistics.). There are a variety of reasons for this including childhood illnesses which can vary in impact from year to year. And some of our children have medical conditions which will affect attendance. These circumstances cannot be helped. But what is clear is that a larger number of our children had lower attendance figures last year: 34% of children had attendance lower than 95%. As I explained to the children in assembly on the 7th, no matter how hard they try in school, no matter how brilliant the lessons are, how varied the clubs are and how precise the individual and group support is, if the children are not in school they are not going to be able to benefit fully from this wonderful provision.

Most of the children made good or accelerated progress last year. Teachers are putting things in place to ensure those who did not make good progress last year can make accelerated progress this year.



Obviously that provision can only be effective if the children have regular attendance – and good punctuality which is equally important.

Here is the distribution of the attendance figures for last year and what it means in real terms -

Attendance Rate	No. of Children	Days of absence	Learning Hours Lost	Local Authority Descriptors
100%	23	0	0	Excellent
99%	41	2	10	Excellent
98%	62	4	20	Good
97%	52	6	30	Good
96%	57	7.5	37.5	Good
95%	48	9.5	47.5	Regular
94%	36	11	55	Cause for Concern
93%	22	13	65	Cause for Concern
92%	24	15	75	Cause for Concern
91%	13	17	85	Cause for Concern
90%	9	19	95	Unsatisfactory
89% -87%	28	at least 21	>105	Serious Cause for Concern
86	28	27	135	Serious Cause for Concern
85% and below	28	at least 28.5	>142.5	Critical

If your child(ren) year on year has good or better attendance – thank you. We will be monitoring the attendance of those children whose attendance was lower than 95% last year. Questions that we consider are:

- What are the reasons for the absences?
- Is there a pattern to the days?
- How is the child doing in school?
- Is there a history of low attendance?

We may well decide to hold meetings with either the classteacher or the headteacher to discuss the situation. Agreement is reached on how attendance will improve. Persistent absence may lead to the involvement of the Children Missing in Education Service (formerly known as Educational Welfare). This may lead to more serious consequences if attendance does not improve significantly over a sustained period of time.

Please note, following the High Court ruling about the Isle of Wight case, the guidance for headteachers regarding authorising leave has not changed. I will only authorise requests in exceptional circumstances.

I hope you have found this letter informative.

I wish all our families good health and a very successful 2017-2018.

Yours sincerely

Alan Garnett
Headteacher