



ATTENDANCE POLICY

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the importance of regular, punctual attendance at school is successfully communicated to our children and their parents. It has been developed in conjunction with DfE and LA guidance.

- The school is committed to maximising the achievement and progress of all pupils.
- There is a clear link between good attendance and educational achievement and progress.
- Regular and punctual attendance is vital if pupils are to benefit fully from the academic, personal and social opportunities which we offer to them within school.
- A broad and balanced education is dependent on regular attendance at school.
- The school will take appropriate action to promote and encourage good attendance.

WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF THE PUPILS:

- To attend regularly
- To be in the classroom in time for registration, appropriately prepared for the day

WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF PARENTS/CARERS:

- To fulfil their responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly and on time
- To ensure that they contact school on the first day their child is unable to attend either by telephone by 9am, note or in person, providing a reason for their child's absence.
- To contact either the class teacher or Headteacher, in confidence, whenever any problem arises that may keep their child away from school
- To inform the class teacher and seek authorisation for any forthcoming appointments and, where possible, arrange appointments outside the school day.
- To ensure the continuity of their children's education by taking holidays during the school holiday periods.

WHAT PARENTS AND PUPILS CAN EXPECT OF THE SCHOOL:

- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance
- First day contact with parents when a pupil fails to attend school without providing good reason
- Prompt action on any problems notified to school
- Close liaison with the Education Entitlement Team to assist and support parents and pupils where needed
- Notification to parents/carers of their child's attendance record

PUNCTUALITY

Registration is 09.00am for Key Stage 1 and 08.55am for Key Stage 2. A child is deemed to be late if their arrival is after these times. The register will close 30 minutes after registration and any child arriving after this time will receive an unauthorised absence mark.

A "Late Book" is kept in the school office, this must be completed by the adult bringing the child into school. This records the name, date, time of arrival and reason for lateness. Regular lateness is monitored by the school office and standard letters are sent to parents. If persistent lateness still occurs after a letter has been sent, then the Headteacher will contact the family.

ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by Headteacher as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Examples of Authorised absences include:

- Illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time
- Emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- Failure to inform school when a child is off ill and the reasons for the illness
- Arriving at school after 9.30am
- Holidays taken in term time not sanctioned by the Headteacher
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays and day trips

Parents are asked to contact the school either by telephone by 9am or in person on the first day of their child's absence. In circumstances where this does not happen, the office will phone the parent in an attempt to determine the reason for the absence. An absence is recorded as unauthorised if no acceptable explanation has been received in school.

Individual attendance rates are monitored by the Headteacher. Where a child's attendance for the term falls below 90%, the Headteacher will write to the parents to inform them of this and to stress the importance of regular attendance, unless there has been an illness/valid medical reason. If attendance does not improve then the parents may be asked to come in and discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

REWARDS AND TARGETS

*In order to encourage regular attendance throughout school, certificates for 100% attendance will be awarded in Assembly at the end of each term. A further certificate, from the Headteacher, is given to children who achieve 100% attendance for the whole school year.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.

The amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Headteacher's may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

It is the school's legal responsibility to notify the Education Entitlement Team who can issue a fixed penalty notice of £60 to each parent, for each child, (two parent family, two children = £240) Failure to pay could lead to court action.

From April 22nd 2016 NCC changed its policy on unauthorised absences. The time frame for parents receiving a fixed term penalty notice has reduced from ten to five days or 10 sessions

Fines may also be issued for children with absence rates below 85%. The school year runs from September to August.

The school recognises the important link between regular attendance at school and the educational attainment of children. For this reason, parents/carers are actively discouraged from taking their child on leave during school term time, here or abroad. Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure that all children of statutory school age (5-16 years of age) receive a full-time education.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The school is only able to authorise term time leave of absence requests in exceptional circumstances. Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances must be made in writing to the Headteacher including specific start and end dates. Once the school has considered all the relevant information and made a decision, a written response will be sent to the parent/carer within 10 school days of the leave request being received.

Sickness

If a child is vomiting or has diarrhoea, school would advise that they remain at home for 24 hours from the onset of the symptoms. This may be extended to 48 hours should there be an outbreak of sickness in the school. If a child is absent from school, please phone in to inform school by 9am on the first day of absence and keep school regularly updated during any prolonged absence. Although the school operates a system where the parents of an absent child are contacted to ascertain the reason for the absence it is the parent's responsibility to inform school of the reason for the absence. If a child is absent for a long period or has regular absences, then a doctor's note may be requested before any absences are authorised.

REINTEGRATION INTO SCHOOL AFTER ABSENCE

The school will endeavour to support pupils returning to school after a long period of absence. School staff will liaise closely on this issue and employ appropriate reintegration strategies, incorporating Pastoral Support Programmes and Individual Education Plans as required.

Children in Public Care will be supported, following significant disruption to their education, by implementing a Personal Education Plan. Pupils could be referred to the Education Support Team for Looked After Children for support with reintegration, where appropriate.

ATTENDANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Headteacher will:

- Develop, monitor and review the attendance policy
- Produce and distribute attendance information for parents/carers
- Set and monitor targets for improving attendance within the school, including improving attendance within the School Improvement Plan
- Evaluate targets in conjunction with other members of staff
- Support all staff in their work related to attendance
- Collate attendance data for the DfE, LA and Governors
- Liaise with the LA over attendance targets and school strategy
- Identify individual pupils with known punctuality/attendance problems and ensure these pupils are monitored closely
- Refer pupils to the LA when attendance gives severe cause for concern and be aware of strategies being used with these pupils and their families, and ensure support for these strategies in school
- Liaise with other partner agencies and services towards improving and developing strategies to raise levels of attendance

Class teachers will:

- Complete registers accurately and return as soon as possible to the school office
- Have regular discussions with pupils about the importance of regular attendance and punctuality
- Collect and store reasons for absence from pupils, e.g. absence and appointment notes
- Monitor individuals, as well as whole class attendance, in line with school's procedures
- Identify trends in the attendance of individual pupils and respond appropriately
- Liaise regarding any queries surrounding absence, e.g. no note, odd reasons

Administrative Staff will:

- Telephone parents on the first day of absence when pupils are absent without notification (P Forster)
- Communicate the reason for absence to the relevant member of staff
- Complete statistical returns for the DfE, LA
- Produce termly printouts of those pupils with 100% attendance and those with less than 90% attendance.

The Governing Board will:

- Receive information from the Headteacher on attendance
- Be involved in setting school targets on attendance
- Contribute to plans in response to where attendance is a cause for concern
- Support the school in its efforts to raise attendance

Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

Request for leave for.....

Following your recent letter regarding term time holidays, I regret that I am unable to authorise this absence.

Under new legislation, schools are now only allowed to authorise leave of absence if satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the harm caused to a pupil's education by missing school.

The school's attendance policy makes it clear that if a holiday is taken in term time which has not been authorised, they are referred to the Local Authority who may issue you with a Penalty Notice.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

Appendix 2 – Unauthorised - more than 5 days

Dear.....,

Re: DOB

Government guidelines prevent Headteacher's from granting any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. A family holiday during term time does not fall into the category of "exceptional circumstances".

The criteria for issuing Penalty Notices for unauthorised term time absence is 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days in a 6-week period)

I understand you have requested a leave of absence between and which is within the school's term time. This request has been declined and will be coded as unauthorised.

I am required by The Local Authority (LA) to refer the matter to the Educational Inclusion and Partnership Team for consideration of further action and as such I need to make you aware that the outcome could be a Penalty Notice, payable direct to the Local Authority. The Penalty Notice is £120 per parent/adult for each student to be paid within 28 days, decreasing to £60 if paid within 21 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority may instigate legal proceedings under section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. If found guilty of an offence under this Act, parents will receive a criminal record and could be fined up to £1000.

I realise that the vast majority of parents do not take family holidays in term time as they recognise the significant impact this can have on their child's education. The LA support the government's stance on trying to reduce the amount of school missed due to holidays and we hope that you will continue to support us by not planning a leave of absence during term time.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Request for leave for.....

Following your recent letter regarding term time holidays, I confirm that I am able to authorise this absence.

Under new legislation, schools are now only allowed to authorise leave of absence if satisfied that exceptional circumstances exist which outweigh the harm caused to a pupil's education by missing school. In this instance I am satisfied that your request meets these criteria.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher