

# Attendance Policy

North Cestrian School



## INTRODUCTION

North Cestrian School (NCS) recognizes that regular attendance is essential if students are to maximize their full potential. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is supported by our policies on child protection and safeguarding policy and behaviour policy. All NCS staff will work with students and their families to ensure that each student attends school regularly and punctually.

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#### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

#### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the head teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

#### **3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

#### **3.3 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher and Pastoral Director
- Works with education welfare officers / Trafford Local authorities / social services and other external agencies to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Home Visits to engage with student and parents and ensure pupils are safe.

#### **3.4 Class teachers/form tutors**

Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the attendance officer.

#### **3.5 School office staff**

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

### **4. Recording attendance**

#### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent
  - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- Any amendment to the attendance register will include:
- The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30am on each school day.

The register for the AM registration session will be taken at 8:35 am and will be kept open until 9:30 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 12:20 pm and will close at 13:00 pm

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

**The pupil's parent/carer must contact the school by 9:00am on the first day of any absence and each subsequent day pupil is absent unless we have been given a specified return date as part of the reason.**

Please report absence by calling school office on 0161 928 1856 or emailing [absence@northcestrian.co.uk](mailto:absence@northcestrian.co.uk)

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent / carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorized

If a child's absence has not been reported by 9:30am on any given day the following contact will be made: text messages will be sent to primary contacts listed on the pupil record. If these have not been responded to, a phone call will be made, followed by an email.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and provide evidence of appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Punctuality is of the utmost importance, and lateness will not be tolerated.

#### 4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason. Parent/carer may be invited to attend a meeting with attendance officer and form tutor or head of key stage.
- If we do not receive a reason for absence and cannot contact parents' the attendance officer will arrange a home visit
- We will ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- If a pupil stops attending school, we will notify Trafford Pupil Absence Officer
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

#### 4.6 Reporting to parents

We report your child's attendance termly on data capture reports. You can also view your child's attendance via the **ARBOR** app.

### 5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

#### 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The head teacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the head teacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart. NCS will authorise a maximum of two religious' days per academic year. Requests for religious days should be made in advance by completing leave of absence form which is found on school website.
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees

(occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

- Funeral of close family member– request should be made in advance by completing leave of absence form which is found on school website.

## **5.2 Reducing persistent absence**

If pupil is at risk of persistent absence the attendance officer will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to tutors and key stage leaders (including special educational needs coordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads) for monitoring and evaluation purposes
- If Pupil's absence drops below 93% - a letter will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen below the school target of 95%
- Monitor pupil's attendance and meet with pupils to discuss absence, patterns, barriers and problems.
- Establish action plans to remove barriers, provide additional support and set targets.
- Make regular contact with parents/carer to discuss progress
- Arrange parents/carer's attendance meeting with attendance officer and form tutor or head of key stage
- Engagement with local authorities and other external agencies
- Issue fixed penalty notices

## **5.3 Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## **6. Promoting Good Attendance / Punctuality**

A regular cycle of activities will take place to promote good attendance/punctuality e.g., targeted assemblies, one to one discussion with pupils and parents, mentoring, attendance clinic and attendance meetings

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a daily basis. If a pupil's absence goes above 3 days, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

- Attendance officer will make regular communication with form tutors and head of key stage leader where pupil attendance is cause of concern
- Contact will be made with parents/carer on each day of absence for any absence not reported
- Pupil attendance cause for concern – Form Tutor/Attendance Officer will speak to pupils to discuss any issues or problems to ascertain how school can help to improve their attendance. Attendance Officer will make phone call home, if applicable.
- Pupil absence drops below 93% - a letter/email will be sent home raising concerns that attendance has fallen below the school target of 95%  
The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.
- If a pupil's attendance drops below 90% - a letter will be sent inviting parents to attend an attendance meeting with attendance officer and key stage leader.

**Attendance will be monitored and if attendance does not improve parents/carers could be at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice.**

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the attendance officer and the pastoral director. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Definition		Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/ dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national

		emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Approved by:

Pastoral Director /  
Head Teacher and  
Governing body

Date: 27/05/22

Last reviewed:

09/22

Next Review:

09/23