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# NORTHFIELD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Date adopted</b>	<b>June 17</b>
<b>Signed by Chair of Teaching &amp; Learning Committee</b>	
<b>Member of staff responsible for monitoring</b>	<b>Assistant Headteacher</b>
<b>Review frequency</b>	<b>Biennial</b>

Date	Changes made	Agreed by	Authorised for use by	Date of review

Location:

## **Attendance Policy**

This policy has been developed in consultation with governors, teachers, County Attendance Officers, parents and guardians. It also draws reference from:

### **Education Act 1996**

### **The Education (pupils Attendance Records) Regulation 1991**

### **The Education( Pupil Registration)Regulations 1995 (amended 1997)**

It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the schools commitment to attendance matters. It outlines the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

Northfield School expects good attendance from its pupils, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. We rely on our partnership with parents to ensure that this is achieved.

We would ask parents to help the school by notifying us of all absences on the first day if possible, but always to ensure that any absence is covered by a note on your child's return to school. Any absence which is known in advance, e.g. doctors appointment, should be notified to the school in writing beforehand. If absence from school is unavoidable, due to special family circumstances, it may be appropriate for the school to provide a home learning pack.

Our school day starts at 8.50am. Registers are marked shortly after this. Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent initially. If they arrive before 9.20am this will be changed to present but late. Any pupil arriving **after** this time will be marked as '**U**' unauthorised absence and will require a **written explanation** from the parent or guardian.

All schools must now show the difference between authorised and unauthorised absence. This is a government requirement.

#### **Authorised absence can be:**

- Sickness
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours.  
*It would not be expected that this would take a whole day, but part of a morning or afternoon session.*
- Days of religious observance.

Should an explanation be deemed unsatisfactory then the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised**.

**Examples of unauthorised absence:**

- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives.
- Going shopping or having haircut.
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about, either by letter or telephone.
- Any family holiday which is taken in term time

**Request for holidays in term time**

Holidays during term time are not permitted. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school may consider authorising absence in very exceptional circumstances but parents must apply in advance for permission.

**Monitoring attendance**

Any concerns will be brought to the attention of the school's **County Attendance Officer**.

*Under the education related provisions of the Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2003, local authorities and schools now have the powers to issue penalty fines to parents or carers of children who are absent from school. Penalty notices can also be issued in cases of truancy and the whereabouts of excluded pupils.*

*Where it is considered that a person is committed any of these offences, a penalty notice may be issued.*

### **First Day response**

If a student is absent from school and we have not been informed, either by telephone or letter, a phone call home will be made to establish the reasons for the absence. This will happen on the **first day of your child's absence from school**.

For pupils living in the Oxford area, if they have a medical/ dental appointment, we do not expect them to take a full day off school. If they have a slight illness e.g: headache, stomach ache etc, a date for a likely return to school will be asked for. If the reason given does not warrant an authorised absence, you will be informed as to the reasons for this and advised on how to avoid unauthorised absence in the future. It will also be explained that a major factor in making these calls is to ensure that the child concerned is safe. All phone calls are made with the utmost consideration of the needs and feelings of the recipient and politeness is a primary factor. However, it is also fair to say that a certain amount of firmness will be used when dealing with absences.

Registers will be checked every morning for any unplanned absences; if we have not received a phone call from parents/carers then a call will be made to them. Reasons given will be written down and a running log kept of this information. If we are unable to make contact by telephone, a letter will be sent home requesting an explanation for the absence. Any pattern of regular absentees will be identified and support will be offered by the school in finding solutions for raising attendance. Many problems such as bullying or family difficulties can be detected early and support given to students and parents to address these issues swiftly.

*Failure to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil is already a criminal offence for parents. Provisions under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 place a duty on parents to ensure that if their child is excluded from school that he/she is not found present in a public place during school hours, without reasonable excuse, during the first five days of any exclusion. If a child is found in such circumstances, the LA or school can issue a penalty notice to the parents.*