



## **Attendance & Truancy**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Nominated Governor</b>
<b>December 2016</b>	<b>December 2019</b>	<b>Executive Head</b>	<b>Standards committee</b>

We believe this policy relates to the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2005
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) Regulations 2007
- Education (School Attendance Targets) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Advice on School Attendance (DfE)
- Improving Attendance at School (DfE)

We believe that children cannot learn if they are absent from school. Therefore, we aim to ensure that all our children take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them and to raise standards by promoting regular attendance and punctuality of pupils.

We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance.

We expect all school personnel to support and promote excellent school attendance by acting as role models and to work hard to provide a learning environment in which all pupils are eager to learn, feel valued and enjoy coming to school. School personnel have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality.

Sometimes a pupil's absence or lateness may not be their fault and in these circumstances it is our policy to be supportive of the child and not to make them feel guilty or inadequate. Also, at times we have to give allowances for religious beliefs and individual family circumstances.

We believe it is essential to regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and its links to pupil attainment. The Education Act 1996 clearly states that the prime responsibility of parents/carers is to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

### ***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

We believe truancy is a matter that we treat very seriously as we feel pupils are not only losing valuable learning time but they are putting themselves at serious risk as the school and their parents are not aware of their whereabouts.

We believe it is essential to have a strong working relationship with the Education Welfare Service which provides support for pupils and their families in order promote good pupil attendance and to reduce truancy.

We are aware that leave of absence can only be granted to a pupil only in exceptional circumstances and the school will not authorise the taking of holidays in school time.

We will exercise a consistent approach and ensure equity for all pupils.

We aim to be judged at least good in all school inspections by ensuring that standards for all pupils are higher than schools of a similar size and that standards continue to improve faster than the national trend. We believe we will achieve this by having in place a home-school agreement that all parents have signed up to and by improving pupil attendance and truancy.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

#### **Aims**

- To create a culture in which good attendance is accepted as the norm.
- To demonstrate that good attendance and punctuality is valued by the school.
- To maintain and develop effective communication regarding attendance between home and school.
- To have in place procedures to prevent truancy.

#### **Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure**

#### **Role of the Governing Body**

The Governing Body will:

- delegate powers and responsibilities to the Executive Headteacher to ensure all school personnel are aware of and comply with this policy;
- promote the importance of attendance and punctuality with all stakeholders;
- ensure compliance with all statutory pupil registration regulations;
- ensure the First Day Contact Supervisor identifies and follows up all absence and lateness;
- ensure that the attendance policy is carried out;
- ask questions about trends and what is being done to prevent persistent poor attenders;
- monitor attendance termly:
  - ☐ Has attendance improved?
  - ☐ Has punctuality improved?
  - ☐ Has parental response to absences improved?

### ***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

- ensure the Headteacher does not authorise absence if it is to the detriment of a child's education;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;

### **Role of the Executive Headteacher**

The Executive Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel, pupils and parents are aware of and comply with this policy;
- create a culture which encourages attendance;
- address all school based causes of poor attendance such as bullying, racism etc;
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure school personnel are fully trained in the registration process and with the appropriate categorisation of absence;
- monitor attendance according to gender, age, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for Free School Meals, special educational needs and persistent absentees;
- monitor trends by using data effectively to help strategic planning;
- ensure early intervention in order to prevent absenteeism or truancy and to put in to affect a range of procedures to deal with this problem;
- target intervention and support to those children that have been highlighted as poor attenders;
- agenda attendance and truancy at periodic meetings with school personnel;
- have in place a system for parents to report a child's absence;
- question any parental explanation for pupil absence if there is doubt as to the validity of the explanation;
- expect an explanation for every absence and if one is not forthcoming then the absence will be categorised as unauthorised;
- report to the Governing Body every term attendance figures;
- remind parents of their commitment to this policy;
- ensure school personnel are aware that unauthorised absence is absence without approval from the Headteacher and includes all unexplained absences;
- apply a consistent approach across the school and ensure equity for all pupils;
- promote the importance of attendance during collective worship;
- publicise good attendance during assemblies, newsletters and the termly report to the Governing Body;
- introduce rewards and incentives to encourage punctuality;
- organise home tuition with the local support services for pupils with long term illness provided they are well enough to undertake the work;
- adopt procedures for reintegrating long-term absentees;
- organise training for school personnel on the use and understanding of attendance codes and authorised and unauthorised attendance;
- improve teaching in order to improve pupil engagement;
- work closely with the link governor and First Day Contact Supervisor;
- strengthen links with external agencies who engage with and support families;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;

### ***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

- provide guidance, support and training to all staff especially on bullying and the needs of vulnerable groups;

#### **Role of the First Day Contact Supervisor**

The First Day Contact Supervisor is responsible for:

- implementing the policy with the Headteacher;
- contacting parents if they have not reported their child's absence by 10.00a.m;
- sending a text if no contact is made;
- continuing to contact the parents throughout the day until contact is made;
- contacting the key worker if a child is on the child protection register and no reason has been given for the child's absence;
- monitoring individual and class attendance on a daily basis;
- keeping the Executive Headteacher informed of attendance figures and trends;
- contacting parents regarding concerns about their child's attendance;
- compiling attendance data reports for the Executive Headteacher, the Governing Body and the School Attendance Team;
- ensuring registers are distributed to the teaching staff and are kept up to date.

#### **Role of School Personnel**

School personnel will:

- comply with and implement this policy;
- set an example of punctuality and good attendance;
- ensure registration is taken at the start of the morning session and at the beginning of the afternoon session;
- ensure pupils are aware that registration is a significant part of the school day;
- ensure registers are up to date;
- be responsible for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality by monitoring class and individual attendance patterns;
- inform the school office of any concerns about attendance or suspected truancy;
- emphasise the importance of punctuality and good attendance with pupils and parents;
- discuss individual pupil attendance at parent-teacher consultations.

#### **Role of Parents**

Parents/carers will:

- comply with this policy;
- work as partners with the school in the education of their children;
- ensure their children of compulsory school age receives suitable full-time education;
- ensure their children are punctual and know the importance of good attendance;
- inform the school on the first day of absence;
- inform the school of any changes to their contact details;
- collect their children on time
- take part in periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- do not take family holidays in term time;

### ***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

- be aware that where parents fail to seek permission for time off then the absence will be treated as unauthorised;
- be encouraged to take an active interest in their child's work and to take an active role in the life of the school by attending:
  - ☐ parents and open evenings
  - ☐ parent-teacher consultations
  - ☐ school concerts
  - ☐ fundraising and social events
- encourage completion of homework and return it to school;
- provide the right conditions for homework to take place;
- expect their child to hand in homework on time;
- join the school in celebrating success of their child's learning;

### **Role of the Local Authority**

The Local Authority may prosecute a parent for not ensuring their child attends school regularly or may issue or apply for:

- Penalty Notice
- Education Supervision Order
- Parenting Order
- School Attendance Order

### **Role of Pupils**

Pupils are responsible for:

- being aware of the school attendance and truancy policy;
- arriving at school on time;
- knowing the value of good attendance;
- knowing the seriousness of truancy, attending classes during the school day and not playing truant;
- accepting sanctions if they are caught playing truant;
- returning to school after a period of illness;

### **Dealing with Lateness**

The office personnel monitor lateness and inform:

- the Head of patterns of lateness;
- parents of the school's concerns and arrange a meeting so that the problem can be addressed

### **Dealing with Truancy**

If a pupil is thought to be playing truant then the school will immediately inform:

- the police
- the parent/carer;

All truants will receive:

- sanctions;
- support;

### ***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

- discussions with the School Attendance Team to understand the seriousness of the matter;
- a programme of monitoring and support

The Police must be informed immediately if a pupil leaves school without prior permission.

## **Absence**

**Leave of Absence during term time** –Leave of absence for a holiday in term time will not be granted, except for exceptional circumstances, and parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Fine. Parents are asked to complete a Leave of Absence form requesting permission to take their child out of school.

**Extended Absences** - Where a child's absence (sickness) extends to 3 days, parents will be asked for medical evidence ie Doctors appointment card or medicine.

**Religious Observance** – a maximum of three days absence, over the year, is allowed for religious observance.

**Medical, Dental or Hospital Appointments** – we encourage these appointments to take place out of school time in order not to disrupt the child's education. Parents will be asked to show appointment cards/letters or other evidence for appointments in school time.

## **Raising Awareness of this Policy**

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Handbook/Prospectus
- the school website
- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with school personnel
- communications with home such as end of half term newsletters

## **Training**

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on this policy on induction which specifically covers:
  - ☐ the importance of good attendance and punctuality
  - ☐ all aspects of this policy
  - ☐ the use and understanding of attendance codes
  - ☐ authorised and unauthorised attendance
  - ☐ looking at trends and patterns
  - ☐ bullying
  - ☐ the needs of vulnerable groups
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information

## **Linked Policies**

- |             |                         |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| ▪ Behaviour | ▪ Home School Agreement |
|-------------|-------------------------|

***Northern Parade Schools – Truancy and Attendance***

▪ Inclusion	▪ Anti-bullying
▪ Troubled and Vulnerable Children	▪ Admission and Attendance Registers

<b>Headteacher:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Chair of Governing Body:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	