

Attendance Policy 2023-2024

Note: This document uses the most current Government information and guidance at the time of writing. It may change according to Government policy.

This policy was reviewed on:

Date: 18 August 2022

By:

Policy will be reviewed on: August 2024

This policy was ratified/reviewed by Governors on:

Date: 8 September 2022

Frequency of review: Every 2 year(s)

1 | Rationale

Regular school attendance has always been important. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and the best schools will come to nothing. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places at risk and in some cases it can in pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour.

2 | Home/School Partnership

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education. (Section 36, 1944 Education Act). In most cases children attend school and therefore parents should ensure that their children attend, and stay at school.

At Northstar New School the staff endeavour to support parents in this responsibility by:

- providing a comprehensive induction programme for new entrants and parents to help children come to school willingly with a positive attitude
- encouraging parents to discuss any attendance related problems with the class teacher/head teacher
- aiming to ensure that the school is bright, clean, warm and welcoming
- teachers/classroom assistants available from 9.00am in classrooms/common areas to greet/help settle the children

3 | Reporting Absences

It is parent's responsibility to inform schools of the reason for a child's absence as soon as possible. At Northstar New School parents are expected to contact the school office on the first day of absence giving as much information as is available at that time. If the absence is prolonged, interim information would be appreciated, so that the school can help with homework or other necessary arrangements.

To report their child's absence, parents should call: 020 8724 8862

On their return to school children should bring a letter from their parents confirming the reason for their absence and giving any other appropriate information.

In the event of no contact having been made regarding a child's absence by the end of the school day, the parents will be contacted by the class teacher/headteacher. If unexplained absence continues, or the school is concerned regarding irregular attendance the assistance of the Education Welfare Officer will be enlisted.

4 | First Day Response

In the unlikely event that a parent fails to contact the school to inform them of an absence the school will call the home of every young person that does not attend to ascertain the whereabouts of that particular young person. This procedure is to ensure that no young person is 'missing in education'.

5 | Registration

Under regulation 3 of the Pupils' Registration Regulations 1956, all schools must keep an attendance register on which, at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. The 1991 Regulations also state that registers must state whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

The session times for Northstar New School are:

Breakfast/Registration

→ 09.00 – 09.15

Morning Lessons

→ 09.15 – 12.10

Afternoon Lessons

→ 12.40 – 14.30

It is important that classes make a prompt and effective start.

6 | Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, not parents. (Section 199, Education Act 1993).

The question of authorised and unauthorised absence is a fairly recent issue and to help parents distinguish between the two the following guidelines are included. If after reading these guidelines you are still in doubt please contact the Headteacher.

→ Illness, Medical and Dental Appointments

If the school is satisfied that a pupil of compulsory school age is prevented from attending school by reason of illness then the absence will be treated as authorised. Leave for medical or dental appointments may be given (ie. the absence may be authorised) where confirmation has been received from the parents (either in person, in writing or by a telephone call) or on production of an appointments card. A book is maintained by the School Office for the purpose of recording pupils leaving or returning to the site.

→ Special Occasions

It is for schools to determine whether an absence in this category should be authorised or not: much will depend on the circumstances of the particular case. Generally the rule should be that only truly exceptional occasions should be sanctioned through authorised absence after discussion with the Headteacher.

→ Family Bereavements

The death of a family member can be a particularly traumatic event in any young person's life. Schools have discretion to authorise absence to attend funerals or associated events and any request would be dealt with sympathetically.

→ Family Holidays

Under regulation 12 of the Education (Schools and Further Education) Regulations 1981, there is a discretionary power for leave to be granted for the purpose of any annual family holiday during term time. Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed (in total) more than two weeks.

Requests for leave of absence for up to two weeks should be made on a Holiday Form. Forms can be obtained from the School Office. Requests for more than two weeks need to be sanctioned by the authority. A letter of explanation should be addressed to the Headteacher who will then pass it on to the authority for consideration.

→ Days of Religious Observance

Absence of a pupil for participation in a day set aside exclusively for religious observation by the religious body to which the parents belong is classified as authorised absence.

It would be helpful if the school could be given advance of religious observance days.

7 | Lateness

The school policy is to encourage punctuality but to actively discourage lateness as it can seriously disrupt lessons and the working day. If a child is late and misses registration, a late mark will be recorded. Obviously the school will be sympathetic if this is for a good reason. If however a pattern of lateness starts to emerge, parents will be invited to discuss the matter with the deputy/headteacher in order to reach a satisfactory solution.

Late is after 10.00am

8 | Education Welfare

The school works closely with the EWS (Education Welfare Service) and in the event of a pupils unauthorised absence falling below 85% a referral will be made. The school will however continue to work closely with the parents and the LA to try and successfully reintegrate the young person back into school.