

Attendance Policy

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T Scott Review Date (3 yearly): November 2018

Northern
House
School



Northern House School (Solihull) adheres to the following attendance aims:

- To achieve a 95% + attendance rate
- To restrict days taken as holiday, during term time in any one year.
- To promote partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
- To involve other agencies when all possible school based supportive measures have been put in place.

This section of this policy gives clear guidance on expectations and procedures for the following: Pupils, Parents, Staff and Governors.

Expectations of pupils:

1. That they will attend school regularly, aiming for an attendance rate of 95 – 100%
2. That they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
3. That they will inform a member of staff of any problem or reason that may hinder them from attending school

Expectations of parents:

1. That they will ensure their child attends school, aiming for a 95 – 100% attendance rate
2. That they will contact school as soon as it is reasonably practical, before 9.30 am, whenever their child is unable to attend
3. That any absence is followed by a written explanation of why the child was absent and for what period of time if it is more than one day
4. To ensure that their child arrives in school well prepared for the school day
5. To contact the school, in confidence, whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school
6. To refrain from taking the child out of school for holidays, or occasional days, unless there are significant exceptional circumstances

Expectations of staff:

1. To ensure regular, efficient and accurate recording of presence / absence
2. To make early contact with parents when a child fails to attend
3. To refer to appropriate support agencies as required
4. To communicate clear expectations of what is good attendance
5. To give clear guidance as to how good attendance is promoted
6. To display attendance data appropriately in tutor rooms

Expectations of Governors:

1. To monitor the effectiveness of the policy through Head Teacher reports
2. To support the school in encouraging good attendance through role modelling
3. To communicate with parents and other agencies as appropriate
4. To attend celebration assemblies for good attendance



School Attendance Procedures

Registration:

- The registration period is 8.45 – 9.00am, registers will be completed during these periods and returned to the office at the end of registration
- Registers will be completed using the appropriate codes
- If no information, regarding the absence of a child, has been received by 9.30am, the office will telephone the parent to check the reason for absence
- If there is no initial reason given for the absence, or letter of explanation on the child's return, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence

Authorised and unauthorised absence:

The decision to authorise an absence is taken by the Head Teacher, following statutory requirements and the school's policy on attendance.

Authorised absence:

- Absence will be authorised if the school has notification from the parents that the child is ill. This should usually take the form of an initial notification at the beginning of the period of absence and a note of confirmation on the child's return if the absence is longer than one day
- If the child has a medical appointment with the doctor or dentist that cannot be made outside school hours, this will be considered as an authorised absence. Regular absences for medical reasons will be raised as a concern with parents. Parents must request the period of absence or inform the school in advance
- If the absence has been requested and approved in line with the school procedures then this will be an authorised absence.

An absence may not be authorised, even if the parents give a reason, if the absences are persistent. In the case of repeated absence due to illness, the school will request confirmation from the GP that the child has a medical condition that seriously impacts on their ability to attend school regularly.

Unauthorised absence:

Absences will not be authorised if the following occur:

- Unexplained absence
- Absence for a shopping trip or looking after a younger child at home
- A trip or holiday
- Any absence that is not considered by the Head Teacher to be as the result of extenuating circumstances

Persistent lateness:

If a child arrives after the register has closed at 9.30am, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the lateness is persistent and parents/carers fail to work with school to address the issues, the matter can be

referred to the Attendance Lead (MF). If there is still no improvement, a Penalty Fine could be issued.

Holiday absence:

From September 2013 the law changed, making it clear that the Head Teacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher is responsible for determining the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Parents are not able to request holidays in term time.

If a child is absent from school for five consecutive days, without any contact from parents/carers, 'Children Missing Education' within the local authority will be informed and procedures will be followed and may result in a fine being issued.

Response to non-attendance:

- Attendance concerns are discussed fortnightly at SMT meetings
- If a child is absent, and contact is not received from the parents/carers, the parents/carer will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone and there after until the child returns to school
- Where there has been no response or explanation, a home visit may take place. The school will post a letter to the parents/carers requesting information regarding the absence
- Where there continues and Engagement Officer (AEOS).
- If a child's attendance falls to 90% the school will write a letter to parent/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance. If the situation does not improve or there is no response to the schools intervention and the absence level persists without explanation then the child's attendance will be monitored weekly by MF and appropriate action taken
- If a child's attendance falls below 90%, the school will write to parents/carers expressing concerns about levels of attendance and offering support if required. (If the situation does not improve quickly, the Attendance Lead MF will invite the parents/carers to a meeting to discuss the issue and may request the support of the Education Enforcement Officer if appropriate).
- If a child's attendance falls below 85% advice will be sought from the Education Enforcement Officer and a formal attendance meeting will be held.
- In extreme circumstances, where the issue cannot be resolved between school and parents, with the support of the Education Enforcement Officer, the school will refer the matter formally to the service and, where necessary, legal proceedings will be instigated.



Legal proceedings:

The Education Act 1996, Section 444 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, Section 23, gives powers to the Local Authority to initiate a range of legal procedures if parents/carers fail to ensure an appropriate education for their child. These procedures include a Penalty Fine, an Education Supervision Order, Parenting Order or prosecution which could result in a parent/carer being fined, being required to undertake unpaid work in the community and in extreme cases a term of imprisonment.

Incentives for good attendance:

- Attendance data will be checked six times a year by MF, Attendance Lead to identify any issues
- Attendance successes will be discussed fortnightly at MLT meetings
- Attendance will be discussed at regular staff meetings where staff have the opportunity to express any concerns
- A certificate for 100% attendance will be given out weekly in assembly, with additional certificates for ½ termly, termly and for the year
- A weekly attendance raffle will take place for pupils with 100% attendance, with the chance to win a £5 voucher
- Certificates for improved attendance will be given as appropriate
- Certificates and vouchers will be given out for achievement of personal attendance targets
- Attendance focus weeks will take place with different rewards and initiatives to promote good attendance
- Reasons for regular attendance and arriving on time, well prepared for school will be raised in assemblies and PSHCE sessions
- Parents/Carers will receive reports on their child's level of attendance at
- Parent/Carer consultations, at Annual Review meetings and when requested

Monitoring and evaluating effectiveness:

- MF Lead for Attendance will analyse attendance data at the end of each of the three terms to identify issues and trends
- The school will work closely with the CME and Education Enforcement officer in their monitoring of the attendance and registration procedures in the school
- The school will evaluate the success of the procedures by measuring the annual attendance % against their target at the end of the year and their progress towards attaining the target in December, March and June

Attendance Summary

Through the implementation of the policy, the following will be achieved:

- a 95% + attendance rate
- a positive partnership between parents and school, working for the benefit of the children's learning
- clear and transparent procedures and expectations understood by all stakeholders