

# Attendance Policy 2016

2016/01/01 Version Number: 1 (Transferred)

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Review Date: 2018/01/01

Northern  
House  
School



## 1.0 Terms of Reference

- 1.1 This Policy has been written for all staff at Northern House School (City of Wolverhampton); pupils, parents and carers. All staff should have a working knowledge of this policy.
- 1.2 Copies of this Policy may be obtained from;
  - 1.2.1 Available electronically on the School Website.
  - 1.2.2 Reference copy in the main School Office
  - 1.2.3 Shared Area – Electronically
- 1.3 Edition, review and frequency;
  - 1.3.1 Edition 1 released January 2016
  - 1.3.2 The Objectives will be reviewed annually
- 1.4 This Policy has been written for all staff, parents, carers students and governors at Northern House School (City of Wolverhampton).
- 1.5 The policy is broken down in to the following sections:
  - 1.5.1 Introduction
  - 1.5.2 Illness or other legitimate reasons
  - 1.5.3 Exclusions
  - 1.5.4 Holiday requests
  - 1.5.5 Penalty Notice
  - 1.5.6 Lateness
  - 1.5.7 Lateness and pupils being detained
  - 1.5.8 Parents and Carers reporting a change in circumstance
  - 1.5.9 Medical and Dental appointments
  - 1.5.10 Parenting Contract



## 2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.
- 2.2 Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend regularly and on time.
- 2.3 School Staff are committed to working closely with parents to ensure attendance standards are met.
- 2.4 The importance of regular school attendance cannot be underestimated.
- 2.5 Regular attendance is a prerequisite to a good education and securing it must, therefore, be a high priority for school staff, governors, the Local Authority, parents/carers and the students themselves.
- 2.6 By failing to attend school regularly, students diminish the value of education provided for them. They may also damage the learning of others because fluctuations in the size of student groups may restrict the scope for effective teaching.
- 2.7 There is a clear link that strong attendance correlates to high levels of success.
- 2.8 Children should be at school, on time and ready to learn, every day the school is open, unless there is a valid reason for the absence.
- 2.9 Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent that can result in legal action being taken by the Local Authority.
- 2.10 All children are sometimes unhappy about attending school. Families can be going through unsettled times that can make regular school attendance difficult.
- 2.11 Any problems with regular attendance, especially any concerns about possible bullying or learning difficulties can be resolved once raised by the parent or carer and the child at an early stage.
- 2.12 If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending.
- 2.13 This gives the impression that school attendance does not matter and may make things worse. Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by staff at the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED.
- 2.14 This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.
- 2.15 An absence authorised or unauthorised is still an absence and counts against the students' attendance data.
- 2.16 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable causes.
- 2.17 Unauthorised absences are those which the staff at school do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:
  - 2.17.1 Parents keeping children off school without a good reason
  - 2.17.2 Truancy before or during the school day
  - 2.17.3 Absences which have never been properly explained
  - 2.17.4 Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

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- 2.18 Parents are expected to contact school staff and to work with them in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful.
- 2.19 If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may offer parents a formal Parenting Contract or refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority.
- 2.20 He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement wherever possible but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can issue legal proceedings if required, including Penalty Notices (fines) or prosecution.
- 2.21 Alternatively, parents or pupils may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school attendance office.
- 2.22 The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences.



### **3.0 Illness or other legitimate reason**

- 3.1 If a pupil is unfit for school, parents should contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.30am.
- 3.2 If the absence is prolonged then parents should continue to contact the school on the third day and every two days after this with a regular update. Absence will not be authorised without this procedure. In exceptional circumstances, further evidence of the child's illness, such as medical evidence, a doctor's note may be required.
- 3.3 Parents should send a written explanation of absence to school with the student on their return. Northern House School (City of Wolverhampton) has a legal duty to inform the Local Authority of any student whose attendance is considered poor or failing.
- 3.4 Parents may be offered a Parenting Contract to help address any attendance issues. Leave may however; be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which take place during school time; please see information below on medical appointments – Working together.

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- 4.0 **Exclusions.** Where exclusion is in place the pupil will be marked as being educated off site or having another authorised circumstance.



## 5.0 **Holiday requests Holidays**

- 5.1 Requests made during term time are viewed unlikely to be granted unless there is an exceptional circumstance. All requests for holiday during term time must be made in advance, and addressed to the Head teacher by completing a holiday request form; obtainable from the school office. The Head Teacher will review the details of the holiday request and check whether an exceptional circumstance exists. In most instances this will mean a family holiday contravenes these guidelines. Requests for extended holiday will be considered on a case by case basis and will be referred to the Education Welfare Service
- 5.2 **Penalty Notice-** a Penalty Notice of £60.00 could be imposed per child, per parent if you ignore advice not to go on a holiday during term time that has been refused. If the fine is not paid with 21 days of receipt the fine is doubled to £120.00. All Penalty Notices will be issued by the Local Authority – from advice taken through liaison with the Educational Welfare Service & school. Prosecutions are brought under S440 of the Education Act 1996. Parents/Carers must be mindful that a conviction can result in a Criminal Record. Further details can be found on the booklet that is attached to the holiday form or log on to [www.wolverhampton.gov.uk](http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk).

## 6.0 Lateness

6.1 Parents are expected to ensure that their children arrive to school on time for registration. The register will be taken by 09.00 daily and in the afternoon at 13:15. Students that arrive after that time for school will be marked in the register with the recognised late mark.

6.2 **Lateness and pupils being detained-** Parents are expected to ensure that their children arrive to school on time for registration. The register will be taken by 09.00 daily and in the afternoon at 13:15. Students who arrive after that time for school will be marked in the register with the recognised late mark. If the student accrues a late mark on the day they may be detained at the end of the school day. Parents of students who persistently arrive late for school will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher or Assistant Head Teacher and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to discuss the reasons for persistently arriving to school late



## 7.0 **Parents and Carers Reporting a change in circumstance**

7.1 The school recognises that from time to time disruptions may occur and ask all parents to talk with us about any circumstance that may have an impact upon their child's education. Please contact the school office on 01902 551564 to inform school of any change in circumstance, that could impact attendance. We will do all we can to offer advice and support/ or refer you to a relevant agency who may be able to assist and offer the necessary support. By working together we can ensure that school meets the targets set for it by Local and National Government and that the whole school community will benefit from a good school attendance record.

7.2 **Medical and dental appointments-** Parents are asked to book medical and dental appointments outside school time where possible. Where unavoidable we ask the school office be contacted, preferably in advance. A "present" mark can still be awarded if the child attends for as much of the session as they can, rather than missing the whole day. School may ask parents of students who they feel are not achieving the level of school attendance expected of them to attend meetings to discuss this matter and this may include the Education Welfare officer or other member of the Local Authority.



## 8.0 Parenting Contract

- 8.1 Parenting Contracts will be encouraged to promote attendance and punctuality and will form part of the strategy for attendance prior to referral to the Education Welfare service.
- 8.2 The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects;
  - 8.2.1 School rewards students who achieve the target level of attendance and give special praise to students who manage a 100% attendance record.
- 8.3 School National Attendance target is 95%
- 8.4 Students who fail to meet the required attendance target will be encouraged and supported in every way to help them to strive and achieve the required level. The school also recognises students who demonstrate hard work and commitment although their attendance is below this target.