



### **Information for all parents and carers on the importance of attendance and the attendance process.**

The Northam Schools' Federation is committed to ensuring the best for all our learners and we appreciate your support in achieving this aim. It is essential that children form good habits of regular attendance at school from an early age and that good attendance is maintained throughout their school career.

It is a legal requirement that all children should attend their educational provision and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school. It may be of interest to note that:

- We will be celebrating all those pupils who achieve a good level of attendance on a half-termly basis this year.
- Every child's attendance will be monitored and we work closely with our Education Welfare Officer (EWO), Mrs Amy Lambert. We will monitor attendance figures on a half-termly basis and meet termly to discuss any emerging patterns or concerns to support children and young people whose attendance levels are causing concern.
- It is important that pupils are in school on time. Time keeping is not only important in obtaining maximum benefit from education it is also a key skill for adult life. Lateness is monitored by the school and contributes to absence rates. The start times are: St. George's 8:45 a.m. and St. Margaret's 8:50 a.m.
- Whilst we understand that children do become ill on occasions, children who lose a lot of time at school can suffer in the long term from significant gaps in their learning. If your child is absent due to sickness for a period of time the school, in line with DCC protocol, will request that evidence is given of GP appointments or prescription or hospital letter.
- If a child is absent from school for any reason then it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the school is informed of the reason for your child's absence. The Northam Schools' Federation operates a "First Day Call" system, which means that should the school not receive a phone call before the start of the day then we will contact you to ask why your child is not in school and when they are expected to return. In the event of communication between home and school not being made then a home visit may be deemed appropriate.
- No Leave of Absence request, due to a holiday will be granted during term time, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Should you wish to take your child out of school for any leave of absence, holidays or otherwise, requests will not be routinely granted. It is essential that any requests for leave of absence are made to the Executive Head Teacher / Deputy Headteacher via the school office. Any absence which has not been authorised by your child's school will be recorded as "unauthorised" and this has the potential to impact on your child's overall absence figure and could result in legal action.

A penalty notice may be issued by Devon County Council. A penalty notice offers a parent the opportunity of dealing with a potential offence without going to court, by paying a penalty. If parents can't afford to pay, or for any other reason do not take the offer of paying the notice within a set time, then the case will proceed to a magistrates court. The provision of penalty notices is set by Regulations and the amount of the penalty, timeframe for payment or payment method are not able to be varied by Devon County Council.

- Any school aged-pupil is deemed to be persistent absentees if they miss 10% of sessions or more.
- Should any child's attendance fall below either a 95% threshold of attendance or be absent from significant number of sessions at the beginning of the school year, parents will be made aware of their child's level of attendance.