



## Attendance Policy

Resilience  
Respect  
Responsibility

This policy was reviewed by the Governing Body:  
January 2024

Next review: January 2025

Chair of Governors: Karen Grundy  
Head Teacher: Ilona Sanderson

Strategic Lead: Ilona Sanderson

### 1. Expectation

At North Clifton Primary School we expect all our children to attend school every day that school is in session as long they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. Parental support in encouraging good attendance and punctuality is very important as it gives children messages about the value of education. We are also aware that legally, children are required to attend school and so we wish to encourage good attendance and punctuality.

Under the Education (pupil registration) Regulations 1995 and in conjunction with the Local Authority (LA) Policy, the Governing Body are responsible for ensuring that the school attendance register is maintained and records which pupils are present at the start of both morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. Where a child is absent, the register also indicates whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

We aim to:

- establish and maintain good patterns of punctuality;
- seek parental support and involvement in this process;
- seek advice from the LA, with special reference to the Educational Welfare Service, as appropriate.

### Session Times

Children should arrive promptly for each school session. These are as follows:

**Morning session - 9.00 a.m.**

**Afternoon Session - 1.00 p.m.**

Morning register ends at 9.10 a.m. If a child arrives after the registration period they will be marked in as late. The afternoon register is taken at 1.00 p.m.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent/carer outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office.

## Authorised and Unauthorised Absences

If a child is unable to attend school parents should notify the school as soon as possible on the first day, giving reasons why their child is not at school - the quickest way is by telephone to the school or use ClassDojo to notify us of an absence.

There are two types of absence, examples are given below:

| Acceptable and Authorised Absence  | Unacceptable and Unauthorised Absence   |
|--|---|
| Genuine illness<br>Hospital appointment<br>Emergency medical or dental appointment<br>Family funeral<br>Cultural/religious observance<br>Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes | Shopping trips<br>Sibling or parental illness/appointments<br>Family holiday in term time<br>Birthdays, reunions or family events |

The decision to authorise an absence can only be made by the school.

## Holidays During Term Time

Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances cannot be fully defined but agreements within our family of schools suggest that marriages, funerals and absence for medical reasons would constitute “exceptional circumstances.”

## If a child is absent

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff. We shall pursue this policy through a system which includes:

- When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence on the register.
- Parents are expected to telephone the **school office, or leave a message via ClassDojo** by 8.55am on the morning of the day of absence to inform the school that their child is absent and the reason for their absence. Parents should leave a message if no one is available to answer the phone.
- If there has been no contact then the office/school will message on Class Dojo/ring the parent or guardian by 9.30am on the morning of the first day of absence and leave a message for the parent to contact the school immediately. The parent or guardian will be prompted to contact the school. If no response has been received by 12noon, school will attempt to contact the family again.
- If there is no response from the parent on the **second day** of absence the office/school will call the parent or guardian to establish the child’s whereabouts. If the parent is unavailable

following this, the school office will email the parent asking them to contact the school immediately. If there is still no contact, the emergency contacts will be contacted.

- If the parent has still not made contact then the Headteacher will be informed. Home visits will take place leaving a letter at the house requesting contact by the end of the school day.
- If there continues to be no contact from the parents, referrals will be made to outside agencies. Social Care will be contacted for advice and to request a safe and wellbeing check. The police will be contacted if required. The above system will continue for the next 9 days. On day 10 the school will contact the Children's Missing Officer and Education Welfare.

## **Responsibilities**

All members of school staff have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of responsibilities which individuals might have.

### **Head Teacher Responsibilities (Ilona Sanderson)**

The Headteacher is responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school. They are also responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance
- Monitoring trends in authorised and unauthorised absence and punctuality
- Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Making referrals to the EWO service
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school EWO
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence

### **The Class Teacher responsibilities**

The class teacher plays a vital part in monitoring the attendance and punctuality of the children in their class. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to:

- Keep overviews of individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance or anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/carers.
- Inform SLT where there are concerns
- Provide background information to support referrals
- Monitor follow up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns.
- Emphasis with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness
- Follow up absences with immediate requests for an explanation if this has not been forthcoming from the office.
- Discuss attendance issues at parents evening where necessary.
- Record attendance and non-attendance on Scholar Pack on a daily basis.

## **Office Manager Responsibilities**

The office manager will:

- Check for any phone messages/emails by 9.30am. If the Office Manager is not in office, then phone messages will be checked by teaching assistants/member of staff, who will also check Class Dojo. Details of absences taken by teaching assistants/staff will be recorded on the Pupil Absence Form in the office for the attention of Office Manager.
- If a child is not present and school hasn't been informed of the reason for the absence, then the procedure outlined in 'If a child is absent', Section 4 of this policy will be followed.
- Record daily absences on Scholar Pack and monitor attendance patterns and raise any concerns with SLT.
- Support the Head teacher in monitoring attendance, providing attendance data and ensuring that appropriate data is returned to the LA.

## **Governor Responsibilities**

In matters relating to pupil or staff attendance, the Governing Body have a number of statutory obligations:

- To monitor staff and pupils' absence and punctuality through regular comment from the Head teacher in their Head teacher's report to Governors.
- To report annual pupil attendance data to parents and carers.
- To take appropriate action in cases of prolonged absences.

## **Parent and Carers' Responsibilities**

- To encourage maximum attendance.
- To ensure pupils arrive at school on time.
- To inform the school by phone or ClassDojo as soon as possible on the first day, when their child is absent from school.
- To give a reason for the absence of the child.

## **Pupils' Responsibilities**

- To encourage parents and carers to ensure that the pupil arrives at school on time.
- If arriving late, report to their class teacher apologising for their lateness and to inform the school office if a cooked lunch is required.

## **Children Absent from Education (previously know as Missing from Education)**

In order to safeguard children who may be at risk of missing education it remains important for all staff in school to take swift action.

- This will include the need to liaise with the relevant colleagues in safeguarding/education within Nottinghamshire County Council for pupils who are to be removed from the admission register and include circumstances where the pupil:

- Has been taken out of school by their parents and the school has received written notification from the parent they are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education – this will be communicated with the home elective education team.
- Does not arrive at the school as part of the admission process and we are not aware of their whereabouts
- Has ceased to attend school and no longer lives within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered and has been discussed with the children missing officer (CMO) as they have not been registered at a new school.

## 2. Monitoring

### Points of Identification and Monitoring – Every School Day Counts

Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning, and it quickly adds up. See the table below.

| Descriptor    | % Attendance              | Learning Days Lost in the Year |
|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Excellent     | 100%                      | 0                              |
| Average       | 96%                       | 9                              |
| Below Average | 90% (persistent absentee) | 19 (half a day per week)       |
| Below Average | 85% (persistent absentee) | 28                             |
| Below Average | 80% (persistent absentee) | 38 (1 day per week)            |
| Below Average | 75% (persistent absentee) | 46                             |

A pupil becomes a ‘persistent absentee’ when their attendance falls to 90% or less across the school year or whatever reason. Persistent Absentee pupils are tracked and monitored carefully.

#### Monitoring Attendance:

At the beginning of each term the school will identify children whose attendance has fallen below 95% for the previous term and for the current year.

- The registers will be analysed to find the reasons and patterns. If deemed necessary, an initial letter will be sent out to parents and carers to set a target of 95% for the next term (letter A in Appendix).
- Children who continue to have attendance below 95% but have improved receive a letter and are set a new target (letter B in Appendix).
- Children who continue to have attendance below 95% and have not improved will be sent a letter requesting a meeting between the Head teacher, and Parent or Carer (letter C in Appendix).

The intention is that by working with families any attendance issue will improve. However, if this is not the case at any point, the advice of the Local Authority Inclusion Officer may be sought. Our school recognises a child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect.

If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan any absences must be reported immediately and these will be investigated.

**Cohort Level**

The data that is collected on attendance is also used to monitor cohorts to ensure that there is no group that has significantly different attendance rates.

**Listen and Understand, Facilitate Support**

Where attendance of a pupil has not improved, the school will work with parents to establish and remove the barriers to attendance. This will be done in a supportive way and could include other agencies to ensure the appropriate resources are accessed.

**Enforce**

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, the school will seek to enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

**Penalty Notices**

The issuing of Penalty Notices will follow the code of conduct set out in:

Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices Issued in Respect of Truancy and Excluded Pupils ([NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PENALTY NOTICES ISSUED IN RESPECT OF TRUANCY AND EXCLUD PUPILS](#))

## Letter A

Dear

We are committed to ensuring that every child at North Clifton Primary School is successful in all aspects of their school life, and regular attendance at school is vital to this success.

At the beginning of every term we monitor the attendance over the previous term of all the children in our school to identify if there are any issues that need to be addressed. The target that is set for all children is to attend school at least 95% of sessions.

Our records show that [name's] attendance over the last term was [xxx%], and this has meant that attendance for the year is now [xxx%]. This is a cause for concern because there is very strong link between good attendance and achievement at school.

I am therefore setting the target for [name] to have at least 95% attendance over this coming term, and we will review the position at the beginning of next term.

We are keen to work with you to address any problems that may affect [name's] attendance going forward. If you wish to discuss this letter please contact me to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for your support in this matter.

Best wishes

## Letter B

Dear

As you know, we have been monitoring [name's] school attendance over the last term and I am pleased to see that this has improved.

- a) [Name] has achieved their target of a termly attendance of [xx%] and therefore does not need any new target setting.
- b) Whilst there has been an improvement [name's] attendance, it is still below the target of 95%. We will therefore continue to monitor.

We are keen to work with you to address any problems that may affect [name's] attendance going forward. If you wish to discuss this letter please contact me to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,



## Letter C

Dear

As you know, we have been monitoring [name's] school attendance over the last term and unfortunately this has not yet improved. This is a real cause of concern as when pupils are absent, it is difficult for them to keep up with their school work and this could affect their life chances.

We are keen to work with you to address any problems that may affect [name's] attendance going forward. I would therefore like to arrange a time to meet you so that we can support you and [name] in achieving the target set.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes