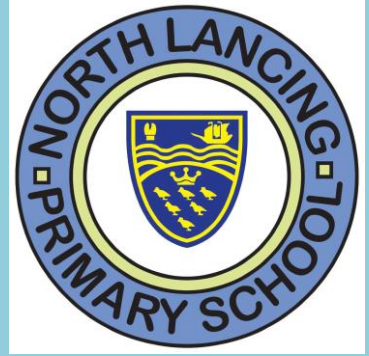


NORTH LANCING PRIMARY SCHOOL



Attendance Policy 2023-2024

To be reviewed annually



North Lancing Primary School

Attendance Policy

Introduction

Attendance Matters . . . Punctual and regular school attendance is an essential requirement for successful learning from the time a child starts school. We have high expectations for all our children at North Lancing Primary School. Attendance must be a priority as we can only teach those who attend. Our attendance 'floor target' is 96%, but we hope for 100%. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. There are 190 school days in each academic year. This means, 175 days in each year are non-school days. These 175 days are available to spend on family time such as visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments.

Impact of Poor Attendance

Absence from school is often the greatest single cause of poor performance and achievement. Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS2, 83.9% achieved the expected standard compared to 40.2% of pupils who were persistently absent. Missing school leaves pupils vulnerable to falling behind, more likely to struggle sustaining friendships and much less likely to enjoy the school environment. The table below shows percentage absence in days, weeks and years:

Attendance during one school year	Equals days absent	Approximate weeks absent	School career absence (Yr1-Yr11)
95%	9 days	2 weeks	½ year
90%	19 days	4 weeks	1 year
85%	29 days	6 weeks	1 ½ years
80%	38 days	8 weeks	2 years
70%	57 days	12 weeks	3 years
60%	76 days	15 weeks	4 years
50%	95 days	19 weeks	5 years

Introduction from the Adur Family of Schools

As a locality group of schools we acknowledge the considerable effect good attendance and punctuality has on a child's learning and their educational outcomes. We follow government and OFSTED guidelines regarding attendance.

All the Adur schools agree to:

- Promote high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Work in partnership with Parents
- Have clear procedures for dealing with pupil absence
- Have rigorous systems for safeguarding pupils through absence checking procedures.

Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we can offer in order to increase learning;
- enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets

This policy has been devised in consultation with Staff, Governors, Children and Parents.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

[School census guidance](#)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

[Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

Being at school

School education lays the vital foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff should work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- If you have a link governor for attendance, or a committee responsible for attendance, add details of their role in the monitoring of pupil attendance.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

We expect that all pupils will:

- attend school every day
- attend school punctually
- attend appropriately prepared for the day
- discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their school attendance.

We expect that all parents/carers will:

- ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day.
- ensure that they contact the school **daily** to inform of absence
- contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

We expect that the school will:

- provide a welcoming atmosphere.
- provide a safe learning environment.
- provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.
- keep regular and accurate records of AM and PM attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality.
- contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the school can authorise the absence. In the case of long term or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested.
- encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition.
- regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils.
- make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.

- refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Fair Access. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by Fair Access may result in further actions, e.g. a Penalty Notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order.
- Will notify the Local Education Authority (LEA) after 15 days sickness.
- Will notify Fair Access after 10 days unexplained absence.

Registers, Punctuality and Lateness

Punctuality to school is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils, the main playground is supervised from 8.35am and the school doors are open as follows:

Year R to Year 3: 8.40am until 8.50am

Year 3 to Year 6: 8.35am until 8.45am

By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. Registration takes place at 8.45am in upper school and 8.50am in lower school; pupils who arrive after these times will be recorded as late to school.

Registers close at 9.15am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority. Afternoon registration is taken daily after lunchbreak. Persistent lateness by a pupil will be dealt with by school and may be referred to Fair Access.

Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed on to future schools as necessary.

Register Codes

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record (For pupils of compulsory school age):

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupil Leaving During the School Day

During school hours the school staff are legally in loco parentis and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- whenever possible, parents should try to arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- parents are requested to **confirm in writing**, by letter, StudyBugs message or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back in on their return.
- where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- if a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact the Police and register the pupils as a missing person.*

Leave of Absence

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

In line with the Government's amendments to the 2006 regulations, holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- in **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of five days of leave providing your child has a good (95% or higher) attendance record over the previous three terms.

- where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- if leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Fair Access (WSSCC) may well be notified.

Examples of when leave of absence may be authorised:

- genuine illness of the pupil;
- hospital/dental/doctors appointment for the pupil;
- major religious observances;
- visits to prospective new schools;
- external exams or educational assessments.

Examples of unauthorised leave of absence:

- shopping /day trip/theme park visit/birthday treat;
- holiday;
- oversleeping due to a late night;
- looking after other children / other family member;
- appointments for other family members.

Attendance monitoring

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Analysing Attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Attendance Categories

At North Lancing, attendance categories and colour codes are used to help parents understand how their child is doing in relation to attendance. The categories and colour codes are as follows:

Category 1 Excellent	Category 2 Good	Category 3 Beginning to cause concern	Category 4 Significant Concern	Category 5 Unacceptable
100%	96-99%	93-96%	90-93%	Below 90%

Support Systems to Encourage Regular Attendance

North Lancing has employs structured intervention steps to encourage regular attendance of pupils fall into category 3 to 5. The structured intervention system is as follows:

Intervention Steps for Category 3 to 5 Attendance							
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		Step 4
Category 3 (93-96%) Beginning to cause concern	Warning letter 1 sent	➔	6 Weekly Check No further action if improved or	➔	Attendance Clinic 6 Weekly Check	➔	Attendance Panel if no improvement
Category 4 (90-93%) Significant Concern	Warning letter 2 sent	➔	Attendance Clinic 6 Weekly Check	➔	Attendance Panel Attendance Contract 6 Weekly Check	➔	Early Help Intervention 6 Weekly Check
Category 5 (Below 90%) Unacceptable	Warning letter 3 sent	➔	Attendance Panel Attendance Contract 6 Weekly Check	➔	Early Help Intervention Social Care referral (MASH) Fortnightly Check	➔	Welfare Checks Legal Action/Fines Fortnightly Check

Failure to ensure regular school attendance

North Lancing Primary School hold regular attendance clinics for pupils whose attendance falls below threshold. Any parents whose children are identified as a cause for concern will be invited to attend. Attendance panels are also held regularly. These take place if there is no improvement in school attendance. Clinics and panels aim to work in partnership with parents to support pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis. Interventions are explained in detail in appendix 1.

Recognising good and excellent attendance (96-100%)

Pupils are recognised for good and excellent attendance (Category 1 and 2). An attendance displays recognised whole class attendance related to targets. Targets take into account pupils who have specific challenges which prevent them for attending regularly. Pupils are recognised for career attendance.

Penalty Notices

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave and may also be issued when a pupil is stopped by police outside of school or if a parent / carer fails to ensure regular school attendance.

Penalty Notices for Holidays

Holidays in term time will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued.

In line with the amendments made to The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- A Penalty Notice can issued to parents, when pupils are taken out of school for 5 or more day's holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- If prosecuted, a fine of up to £2,500 could be issued, a community order or a jail sentence up to 3 months. The court also gives a Parenting Order.
- Penalty notices are issued to **each** parent, for each child.

- Should the period of absence for a holiday in term time be 15 school days or more, a FPN may not be deemed suitable. Instead the matter may be brought directly before the Court.

Fair Access can also investigate legal proceedings against parents under section 444 Education Act 1996 or apply to family proceeding court for an ESO to secure regular attendance.

Changing Schools

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform North Lancing Primary School as soon as possible.

A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- A new home address if appropriate
- Confirmation from admissions

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority.

Appendix 1 - Interventions explained:

Intervention	Explanation	Occurrence
Warning letter sent	Warning letters will detail current attendance percentage, explain expectation for improvement and next steps in the process.	When attendance falls into category 3 or below (below 96%).
Half Termly Check	Attendance of pupils in category 3 to 5 checked for improvement. Attendance panel invitations sent to any pupils failing to improve.	6 weeks after warning letter was sent (category 3-5 attendance)
Attendance Clinics	School staff hosted attendance clinics with parents/carers to identify any underlying reasons for absence.	6 weeks after warning letter 1 (if no improvement has taken place)
Attendance Panel	Half-termly panel meetings for parents of pupils where attendance is a concern. Parents are invited into the school for the meeting and attendance targets for improvement can be set.	For all pupils in category 4 – 5 (below 93%)
Attendance Contract	An attendance contract outlines target for improvement, timescale and agreed actions to get there. Contracts will be reviewed half termly.	For most pupils in category 4 – 5 (below 93%)
Social Care referral (MASH)	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team make assessment of the risk to the child and make a decision on what to do to best protect that child. To make an informed decision the team share and gather information from partner agencies, children and their families.	For pupils in category 5 (below 90%) who have not shown improvement and who do not have capacity to improve on their own
Early Help	A partnership of specialist keyworkers for families with multiple or complex needs who require coordinated multi-agency support. This aims to prevent the need for statutory social care intervention.	For pupils in category 5 (below 90%) who do not have capacity to improve on their own
Welfare Check	A welfare check is the act of a school representative or police officer attending to ascertain the welfare of an individual or individuals in their place of residence.	10 days consecutive absence
Medical Evidence Requests	Requesting medical evidence to be provided if absences continue to occur and the reason given is illness or medical.	When attendance falls below 96% and illness and medical are persistently cited as reasons for absence
Education Supervision Orders (ESO)	An ESO is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring the parent and their child to follow directs made in the order. An ESO supports parents to exercise their parental authority.	For pupils who have been in category 5 for a prolonged period and family circumstances require legal support
Fixed Penalty Notices	When a child is recorded as absent from school without authority their parent(s) can be held accountable for an offence under S.444 of the Education Act 1996. FPNs are issued per parent, per child and are an alternative to prosecution. This gives the parent an opportunity to discharge their criminal liability by paying a fine of £120, which must be paid within 28 days. If you pay the FPN within 21 days, the amount is reduced to £60.	Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) are generally issued where there have been at least 10 sessions of unauthorised absence from school within a recorded 10 school week period. However, there are some occasions where they are issued outside of these criteria.