

FEDERATION ATTENDANCE POLICY

February 2016

This policy is reviewed annually

Both schools are committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embrace the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines, so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (10 minutes after school has started)
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your 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. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse. Please speak to our Link Worker or the teacher.

Monitoring

Attendance and punctuality are monitored each month. Where attendance or punctuality is poor, parents will be contacted. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

If issues are not resolved and attendance does not improve then we will ask parents to meet with us. Where a child's attendance falls below 90%, further absence on the grounds of ill-health will only be authorised with evidence of medical reasons provided eg appointment card or prescription information.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

All our PA pupils and their parents will be subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through the Link Worker, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also made known to the Local Authority Attendance Service.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence by telephoning and keep the school updated subsequently;
- Or, you can call into school and report to the office,
- We will telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;

If your child's attendance falls to below 90% we will:

- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer and/or Headteacher if absences persist;
- Be unlikely to authorise further absences without medical evidence
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Pupil Attendance Service if attendance moves below 85%.

Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence will be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Exceptional Leave of absence during Term Time:

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

Absences of 10 consecutive half days and where absence falls below 95% will be referred to the Local Authority for a Fixed Penalty Notice fine.

In making a decision the school will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time and the exceptionality of any reasons given

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice of £60 minimum, issued by the Local Authority.

Attendance Awards

The school will use the following system to reward pupils who have good or improving attendance: termly certificates for pupils achieving 100% and annual certificates of 100% (and Infants 95%+)

A half-termly record will be sent home with each pupil's individual attendance data on for parent's information (Years 1-6).

Attendance Tigger in the Infant School will be awarded monthly to the class with the best attendance overall. A similar 'trophy' system will operate in the Junior school.

Regular 'Beat the Clock' weeks every half term will promote punctuality and attendance at school.

Attendance Targets

The schools set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and the Head teacher will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Our schools' targets are:

4.0% absence

2% Persistent absence

The registration system

The Schools use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity

E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday in term time, not authorised by Headteacher	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday in term time	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Entries in paper registers must be in ink.
All corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Register Security

The registers will be safely stored in the school office.

**North Walsham Junior, Infant School and Nursery
Federation**

**APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL
FOR EXCEPTIONAL REASONS
(PLEASE NOTE, NO HOLIDAYS CAN BE AUTHORISED)**

Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress

Full name of child(ren) _____

Exceptional Leave requested from _____ to _____

Total number of school days missed _____

Reasons why *exceptional leave during the school term* should be granted:

I/we have read the information on the reverse of this application and would like to formally request a leave of absence from school because of the *exceptional circumstances* specified

Signature of parent(s)/carer(s) _____

Date: _____

The Headteacher will consider your request for leave of absence following government guidelines and the following:

- 1. The child's previous attendance history**
- 2. The child's stage of education**
- 3. The time of year (SATS)**
- 4. The reason for the leave requested**

**Your request for leave of absence from school for during term time has been considered and has been agreed / not agreed.
Comments:**

Signature of Headteacher _____

Please note: Retain the original signed and completed forms in school records and ensure a copy is returned to the parent/carer of the pupil

Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

Exceptional leave of absence during Term Time

7.—(1) Leave of absence may only be granted by a person authorised in that behalf by the proprietor of the school (headteacher).

(2) Leave of absence shall not be granted to enable a pupil to undertake employment (whether paid or unpaid) during school hours except—

(a) employment for the purpose of taking part in a performance within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963⁽¹⁾ under the authority of a licence granted by the local authority under that section; or

(b) employment abroad for the purpose mentioned in section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933⁽²⁾ where a licence has been granted under that section by a justice of the peace.

(3) Subject to paragraph (4), a pupil may be granted leave of absence from the school to enable him to go away on holiday where —

(a) an application has been made in advance to the proprietor (Headteacher) by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides; and

(b) the proprietor (Headteacher), or a person authorised by the proprietor (Headteacher) in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the special circumstances relating to that application.

(4) Save in exceptional circumstances, a pupil shall not in pursuance of paragraph (3) be granted more than ten school days leave of absence in any school year.

(5) This regulation applies only in relation to a maintained school and a special school not maintained by a local education authority.

Please note: The Governing Body has agreed that no term time holidays

may be authorised by the Headteacher

Fixed Penalty Notices

With the implementation of the Anti Social Behaviour Act (2003) the Local Authority has statutory powers to use Penalty Notices to help tackle irregular school attendance and unauthorised absences. An unauthorised absence is any absence that the school has not given permission for or the parent/carer has been unable to provide a reason for the absence, which is acceptable to the school.

The school will discuss with the Local Authority any cases of unauthorised absence and whether the issuing of a Penalty Notice would be appropriate. A Penalty Notice is an alternative to a prosecution to the offence and can be issued when it is felt that parents/carers are failing in their legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The penalty is in the form of a £60 fine per parent/carer per child payable within 28 days, this increases to £120 payable between 29-42 days. Failure to pay usually results in prosecution in the Magistrates' Court.

*(Academic year is a school year from September to July)