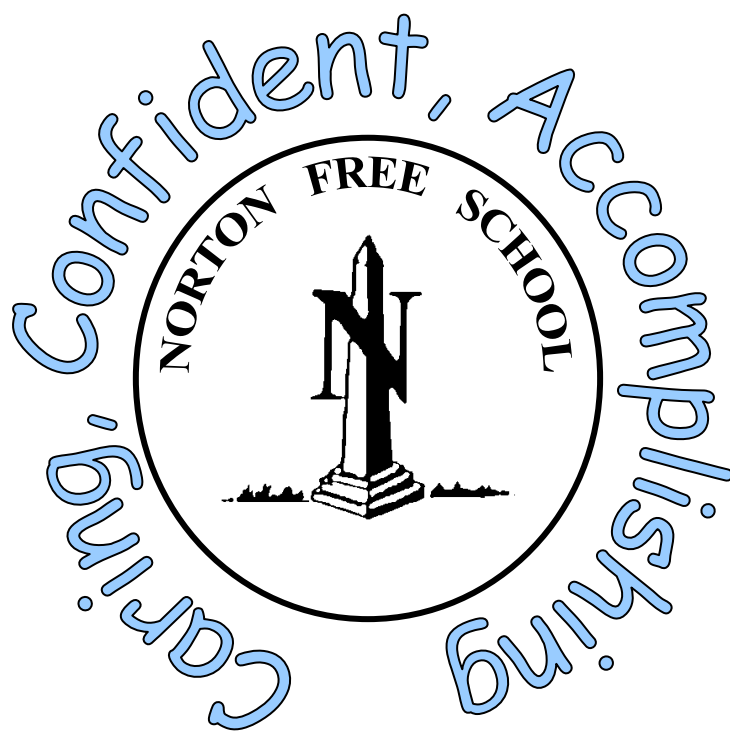


NORTON FREE PRIMARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



2018 – 2019

Norton Free Church of England Primary School

Attendance Policy October 2018

Norton Free C of E Primary is committed to promoting good attendance and punctuality to ensure that all pupils are able to achieve their maximum potential both academically and socially. Regular attendance and being punctual are vital to the educational achievement and personal development of the child. Only pupils who attend regularly can fully benefit from the academic, personal and social opportunities which are offered to them within the aims of Norton Free School (Please refer to our booklet about attendance. We are committed to a whole school approach to attendance and a partnership relationship with parent/carers).

Aims

- To encourage all pupils to achieve their **maximum potential**
- To raise awareness of the **importance of attendance** and its impact on progress and attainment.
- To recognise and reward pupils who achieve more than 98% attendance during the school year.
- To give additional and special recognition to pupils to pupils who achieve 100% attendance.
- To encourage parents/carers to play a vital role in supporting the school and encouraging their child to reach good attendance levels.
- To monitor and track pupils' attendance and punctuality through effective systems.
- To utilise this information to support the school and parents to improve attendance.
- To address poor attendance through clear, consistent and effective procedures.

The Legal Position

(Section 444 of the Education Act 1996)

- Parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age, who are registered at a school, attend regularly
- The Sheffield Children and Young People and families (CYPF) must provide a school place to parents who wish their child to be educated at school.
- The school must complete attendance registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that parents fulfil their legal responsibilities.
- Failure by parents to ensure the regular attendance at school of a registered pupil is an offence punishable by law.

WHAT PARENTS/CARERS CAN EXPECT OF THE SCHOOL

- A broad, balanced education that is dependent upon regular attendance at school.
- The encouragement and promotion of good attendance through assemblies and rewards (a voucher is presented to children achieving 100% attendance at the end of the year).
- Regular monitoring and accurate recording of attendance.
- Prompt action to be taken where problems are identified.
- Close liaison with external agencies where appropriate to assist and support pupils and their families.
- Regular communication with parents and carers.
- Attendance Policy available on the school website.
- On Line reporting to allow all parents to access up to date attendance information.
- The school works within the framework of the Sheffield City Council "School guidance for the management of Attendance"



WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF OUR PUPILS:

- To attend regularly, on time and ready to learn.
- To be prepared for the day with any appropriate equipment (PE Kit, School Uniform and appropriate clothing for visits).
- To report to the office should they arrive after the official registration time.
- To tell a member of staff if there is any problem which may prevent them from attending school.
- To work towards a target of at least 97% attendance.

WHAT THE SCHOOL EXPECTS OF PARENTS/CARERS:

- It is vitally important that parents are actively involved in **promoting good attendance** and fulfil their legal parental responsibility by ensuring their children attend school regularly.
- Parents are encouraged to **make contact** with school to discuss any issues that are or could be impacting on their child's attendance.
- To ensure their child arrives on time and is well prepared for the day.
- To arrange **medical and dental appointments out of the school hours** where possible, and, in the case of unavoidable emergency appointments, **bring evidence** of the appointment to the main office. This will enable us to authorise the absence and to keep a photocopy of the appointment for our school records.
- **To take holidays in school holiday time.** Term time holidays will be classed as unauthorised holidays (marked as code G in the register) unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. In line with the **Sheffield City Council policy** for **"Exceptional Leave during Term Time"**, if parents choose to take their child on holiday in term time, they may be issued with a fixed penalty notice (a fine), **especially if the child's attendance is below 95%**.
- To understand that Head Teachers no longer have the option to authorise term time holidays unless exceptional circumstances can be applied.

To report any absences to the school office by 9:30am each day via the telephone.

It is a legal requirement of parents to inform school of a child's absence on the first day and the third day if the absence continues.

- If absence continues, parents are requested to contact the school office again on the third day.

TERM TIME LEAVE:

All requests for term time leave must be made to the Headteacher on the Term Time Leave Request Form available from the school office or website. A return date must be provided and a prompt return is essential.

Only in exceptional circumstances will leave be authorised. For further guidance on exceptional circumstances please refer to the policy on "Exceptional Leave during Term Time". This can be found on the school website with the Attendance Policy.

Unauthorised absence may result in prosecution.

If queries are raised about holidays, parents may be asked to provide evidence of the days taken e.g. flight tickets or accommodation receipts.

If the school has reason to believe a term time leave has been taken without a request, it is the parent's responsibility to prove otherwise – (Doctors appointment card, proof of medication etc).

The school will monitor and record attendance using the following registration system:

- Children will line up outside their classroom as soon as the bell goes at 8:50am.
- They will be met at the classroom door by their teacher or their TA.
- Registers are taken in class between 8:50am and 9am.
- Class teachers will enter a present mark (/) or if a child is not present when the register is taken they will enter N – absent until a reason is provided for their late arrival, or the school have been notified of the reason for the absence.
- Any child arriving after 9am must report to the school office providing a reason for their late arrival. They will be marked in the register as L (late).
- After 9:20am, any child arriving late will be marked as 'late after the register closes' (U), unless proof of a medical appointment is presented to the school office.
- Afternoon registration is at 1pm.
- Electronic registers (SIMs) are used by all classes, with manual fire registers kept in each class.

The school will respond to lateness in the following ways:

Persistent lateness is discussed with parents at parent/teacher consultation meetings or with the Headteacher, prior to a referral being made to external agencies where appropriate to assist and support pupils and their families arriving at school on time.

Dealing with Absence:

Attendance will be monitored to achieve the school target of 97%.

Attendance below 97% will be closely monitored by school. If attendance continues to fall, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to support unexplained absences and may be invited into school to talk to the Head teacher about their attendance.

Attendance falling below 93% will result in a written notification to parents to bring this to their attention and offer support if necessary.

Attendance below 90% will be closely monitored by school and the LA, through MAST (Multi Agency Support Team). Parents may be invited to a professionals meeting to discuss the reasons for continued absence. The aims of this will be to identify any issues and provide support to ensure the child's attendance improves.

Attendance below 90% may be subject to prosecution.

Responding to lateness

Pupils arriving in the classroom after registers have been completed are deemed to be late (up until 9:20am). These children will receive a Late Mark (L). Children arriving after 9:20am will receive a U mark on the register.

If a pupil is late, they must enter the school via the main entrance if it is after 9.00am.

Parents/carers will be contacted by school if their child is not in school during registration.

If lateness persists the Head will follow the matter up with the Attendance and Inclusion service.

All attendance data is shared with the governors in the termly head-teacher's report.

Responding to absence- criteria for referral to the Attendance and Inclusion Service:

If the children's absence has already been highlighted as a cause for concern, the parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to support the absence.

As a safeguarding precaution, telephone contact is made with parents/carers of any pupils who are absent where school has not been provided with a reason for absence. This is made on the morning of the absence by 9:30am.

Absence will only be authorised when a satisfactory reason has been provided by the parent or carer.

In cases where parents have been asked to **provide medical evidence for absence**, this should be taken to the **office** in order for the absence to be authorised.

Home contact will be made by the school if several days absences remain unauthorised. If this is unsuccessful then the case may be referred to the Local Authority, where 'Children Missing from Education' procedures may commence. (see 'The school's response to poor attendance', below).

The school's response to poor attendance:

Absence is monitored regularly by school staff and MAST (Multi-Agency Support Team).

Where there is concern over a child's absence, initial communication is made with the parents and appropriate support is offered. This may be written notification, telephone conversation or during an arranged meeting.

Where attendance is seen as a concern e.g. if the trend is not improving, support from MAST may be requested.

Parents will be informed by the school if attendance drops below 93%. This may be via a conversation with the Head teacher, a letter and an end of term registration certificate.

Where persistent non-attendance continues to be an issue, parents may be asked to provide evidence of attendance of all medical appointments.

Where there is no improvement in attendance, **a referral will be made to MAST.**

In cases where a child's non-attendance constitutes a safeguarding concern, this will be reported to Social Care professionals.

Each case will be dealt with depending on needs and circumstances.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Governors

- Maintain an overview of attendance through reports by the Headteacher and the LA via the head teacher report.
- Have a named governor with responsibility for attendance.

Head Teacher

- Has overall responsibility for attendance within the school
- Has responsibility for reviewing and updating the attendance Policy in line with local/ National changes
- Provides advice and support to school staff regarding attendance and punctuality issues
- Liaises with the named governor and the LA
- Works with colleagues to implement targets, review statistics and amend policy as necessary
- Works with other schools and agencies to promote attendance and punctuality within the Family of Schools

- Has responsibility for monitoring the progress of children Looked After by the LA
- Has responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of Children who are Missing from Education
- The school has been given authorisation from the Children Missing in Education (CME) Team to remove a child from role when the child has been continuously absent for a period of not less than 20 school days, absence has been unauthorised and both the school and local authority have been unable, after reasonable enquiries, to ascertain where the child is.

Class Teacher

- Accurately mark registers using appropriate codes, in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Ensure Office staff receive notes from parents promptly
- Report to appropriate staff any issue or problem which may affect the attendance or punctuality of a child
- Promote good attendance and punctuality within the classroom and the school.
- Share any concerns over attendance with HT and/or Admin Officer

Clerical Officer

- Receive, update and maintain accurate class registers in line with Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006
- Maintain SIMS attendance data base
- Ensure correct codes are allocated for absences
- Where a specific need has been highlighted, ensure medical evidence is requested and followed up
- Provide reports from SIMS to the governors each term (via Head Teacher or Chair of Gobs)
- Provide reports for the Headteacher for discussion at weekly meetings to identify vulnerable children (falling attendance) and agree a course of action
- Provide relevant information to the LA officers making contact with families regarding attendance and punctuality
- Have responsibility for investigating and, where necessary, reporting incidents of children who are Missing from Education.
- Have responsibility for ensuring parents/carers have access to accurate information and appropriate forms
- Have responsibility for ensuring requests for term time leave are dealt with in a timely and effective manner in line with the school's policy on attendance.
- Prepare requests for penalty notices to be made to the LA

Multi-Agency Support Team – Attendance

- Liaise with staff in school and other offices of the LA to promote good attendance and punctuality within the school, Family of schools and wider community
- Support the school to develop whole school strategies relating to attendance and inclusion. Offering advice, analysis and monitoring of attendance issues.

Additional Information can be found at:

Norton Free C of E Website; www.nortonfree.sheffield.sch.uk

Sheffield City Council; www.sheffield.gov.uk/attend

The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006

Education Act 1996

Chair of Governors: Mr D Thaw

Attendance Governor: Mrs T Dyson