



**NORTHWOLD  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
no sky too high

## WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY 2015-2016

### Introduction

Northwold Primary School is committed to providing a full and effective education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a pupil to reach their full educational potential a high level of school attendance is essential. We consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity is used to convey to pupils and their parents /carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school's attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education. Each year we will review our attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. This policy contains advice, procedures and processes that we will use to meet our attendance targets.

### Safe-Guarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly, safe-guarding the interest of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

Attendance

Behaviour management

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Anti-Bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safe-guarding matter.

### School Procedures

Any pupil who is absent from school for the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as being *authorised*, *unauthorised* or *unexplained*. Only the Executive Principal or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unexplained using the N code if no valid reason is received within 10 days the absence will then be changed to the O,

which is unauthorised absence. Schools count each day as two sessions – morning and afternoon. Pupils have to attend every session to achieve **100%** attendance for that week. If a pupil has a half-day absence, they would have a **90%** attendance for that week; if they had a whole day off school, their attendance would be **80%**. If a pupil is absent for the whole week, they would be given **0%** attendance.

### **Late Arrival**

Morning registration takes place at the start of school promptly at 9 a.m. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked late unless there is an acceptable explanation. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education, but also that of others. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern, a meeting with the parent/carer to discuss what support can be offered.

Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below illustrates how much time can be missed over a year just by being 5 minutes late to school every day:

<b>5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost in a year</b>

- If pupils are late they will miss important instructional time. Reading skills impact on all areas of learning, so it is of paramount importance that children come to school on time.
- If a child is persistently picked up late from school (exceeding) 10% the parents will incur a fine of £1 per minute.

### **First Day Absence**

If a pupil is absent, parents/carers should call the school on the first day of absence, stating the reason for the absence. A note should then be sent into school on the day the pupil returns explaining the absence. If no contact is made by parents/carers explaining the absence on the first day, the school will try to phone to secure an explanation. Where the school is unable to make contact by phone and a letter will be sent. If attendance falls below **97%** a letter will be sent home outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support. If attendance rate does not improve the Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer will determine the intervention which may include telephone call, letter invite to attend a surgery, home-visit, escalating to court action where necessary.

## **Persistent Absence (DEFINED IN LEGISLATION AS 10% OR MORE ABSENCES)**

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 parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. 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.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

All our Persistent Absence pupils and their parents are subject to an Action Plan and the plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor or a Connexions worker, use of circle time, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance. All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parent/s. If this is unsuccessful the school may refer to the School Health Adviser /School Nurse etc. if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from other agencies.

There is clear evidence of a link between poor attendance at school and low levels of achievement:

- Of pupils who miss more than 50 per cent of school, only three per cent manage to achieve five A\* to Cs including English and maths.
- Of pupils who miss between 10 per cent and 20 per cent of school, only 35 per cent manage to achieve five A\* to C GCSEs including English and maths.
- Of pupils who miss less than five per cent of school, 73 per cent achieve five A\* to Cs including English and maths.

### **Absence Notes/ Medical reports**

Medical Evidence will be scanned onto SIMS and kept as reference to be sent to transferring school. A hard copy will be kept in the Pupil's file. Parent/ Carers to refrain from making doctor/dentist appointments during term-time unless this is an emergency situation.

### **Promoting Attendance**

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

### **Request for leave during term time (exceptional circumstances)**

Term time holidays and extended leave are not allowed and **will not** be authorised as stated in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. The school will only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances that are not related to holidays. There is, however, a discretionary power held by the Executive Principal to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or pupil's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Executive Principal agrees to consult with the principal school attendance officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent. The principal school attendance officer will discuss each case with the Executive Principal and advice will be given based on DfE Guidelines. Parents are legally responsible for ensuring their children receive education in accordance with section 7 of the Education Act 1996 and if on a school roll that they regularly attend school. Any unauthorised absence will be recorded on your child's attendance records. Unauthorised absence may result in legal proceedings against you this may include Penalty Notice (Fine), action through the Magistrates' or Family Court.

### **The School requests that parents and carers:**

- Refrain from organising family holidays during term time. The Executive Principal reserves the right to refuse permission for students to be absent for a vacation. All requests must be made in writing to the Executive Principal.
- Contact the school on the first day of absence, explaining the reason and the expected length of absence.
- Arrange medical and other appointments outside school hours where possible

### **Penalty Notices**

The Local Authority has the power to issue a penalty notice in line with its code of conduct in respect of unauthorised absences from school. A parent will be sent a warning, if there are 10 unauthorised sessions (a session= ½ day) if there are any further unauthorised absences this will trigger a fine of £120.

If a penalty notice is issued and not paid the Local Authority may consider a Court Action through the Magistrates Court for the unauthorised absence. Part payment counts as no payment.

A withdrawal of the penalty notice can only be made in the following circumstances:

- If it ought not to have been issued: or
- Issued outside of the Code of Conduct for Education Penalty Notices
- If the penalty notice contains material errors
- The penalty notice may be withdrawn if it is not paid in full, and the local authority does not intend to, instigate legal proceedings against you
- The penalty notice may be withdrawn following successful prosecution for the original offence of unauthorised absence from school

A penalty notice, if paid in full, is an alternative to prosecution and does not require an appearance in court, thus enabling you to discharge potential liability for conviction A Penalty Notice may be issued in the following circumstances:

If a minimum of 10 sessions or 5 school days of unauthorised absence are taken for:

- Overt Truancy
- Parentally-condoned absences

- Holidays taken in term-time.
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the Register has closed at 9.00 a.m.)

### **Court Action**

The Local Authority may take court action where there is unauthorised absence; this may be through the Magistrates Court where a parent may be fined up to £2 500 and/ or a maximum of three months in prison. Alternatively they may consider applying for an Education Supervision Order through the Family Court.

### **Updated Contact Details**

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

### **Summary**

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff is committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted

Date of Policy /Review: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy

Signed:

Child's Name:

Form:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Persistent Late Arrival



Date:

Address

Dear <name of parent / carer>

RE: **Persistent Late Arrival**

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupils punctuality on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupils punctuality we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern, including those pupils who have arrived late to school on a number of occasions. We are therefore writing to you due to \_\_\_\_\_'s current number of late sessions:

Number of late sessions=	Percentage:	%
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Being late to school can have a considerable impact over the whole school year. The table below shows you just how much time can be missed over a year by being late:

<b>5 minutes late every day = 3 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>10 minutes late every day = 6.5 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>15 minutes late every day = 10 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>20 minutes late every day = 13 days of school lost in a year</b>
<b>30 minutes late every day = 19 days of school lost in a year</b>

Kindly be informed that the Reading Lesson begins promptly at 9:00am. If your child is late he/she will miss important instructional time. Reading skills impact on all areas of learning, so it is of paramount importance that your child comes to school on time. If your child is persistently late at school the matter will be referred to the Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer (SAO). If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance please do not hesitate to contact the school\_on **0208 806 6352**

Yours sincerely

Executive Principal

**Appendix 2: Request for Exceptional Term Time Leave (one form per child)**



**Request for Exceptional leave during Term Time**

<b>Name of Pupil:</b>	<b>Name of Parents/Carers</b> <b>Tel Number:</b> <b>E mail:</b> <b>Address:</b>
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**Siblings in this school:**

**Dates of exceptional leave request.**

**From :** \_\_\_\_\_

**To:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons for request:**

**What steps have you taken to minimise the impact of leave on your child's learning?**

Where will you be living during the leave period? Please provide full address and contact details.

**UK:**

**Tel:**

**Abroad:**

**Tel:**

- I confirm that the information on the form is true
- I agree to keep the school informed of any changes to my travel arrangements or if my child is unable to return to school on the due date
- I am aware that if my child does not return to school by the date I have stated that he/she is at risk of losing his/her place in the school

- I am aware that I may be fined and/or prosecuted for any time which my child is absent from school that has not been authorised by the Executive Principal.
- I have provided the school with a copy of my flight tickets and travel arrangements

Signed by parent/carer	Print name & relationship to child	Date
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Please note: Evidence would be required in each case.

For school use only	Date request received
Has the request been considered by the Executive Principal? Y/N	
Has the request been discussed with the parent/carer? Y/N      Date: .....	
No of school days Requested .....    No of days Authorised .....    No of days Unauthorised ..... ..... Date of decision letter sent to parent/carer :	
If unauthorised leave is taken and this case complies with Penalty Notice criteria please forward to Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer along with Pupil/student attendance register.	
Executive Principal's Signature:	Date:

### Appendix 3: School Decision Letter



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Date:

Name:

DOB:

Address:

To the Parent/Carer of .....

On the ..... (date) you requested that the school consider term time leave for your child(ren) ..... (name). You have requested that you would like to go to ..... (Place) for ..... (Reason). You have requested leave from ..... (date) to .....(date). This equates to ..... school days

The Executive Principal has considered your request and has reached the following decision:

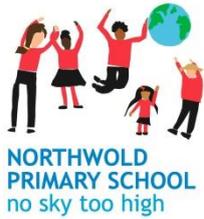
- The school will authorise ..... days but the remaining ..... days will be unauthorised.
- The school will authorise the request for ..... days.
- The school has declined this request.

The reasons for the Executive Principal's decision are given below.

We expect your child to return to school on ..... (date). If your child is unable to return on this date please let us know, as your child will be at risk of losing their school place.

Signed on behalf of the School: .....

**Appendix 4: School letter to parent, informing parent/carer of possible risk of losing school place**



**Date:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**To the Parent/Carer of .....**

**Your child ..... was due to return to school on .....(date). We have made enquiries and we have been unable to contact you to confirm the reason for the unauthorised absence.**

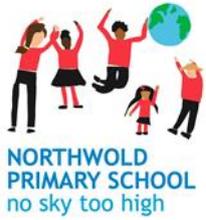
**As we are unable to confirm where your child is at present and/ or return date, I am writing to let you know that your child is now at risk of losing their school place. We will be informing the Hackney Learning Trust School Attendance Officer, who will investigate this case and may then refer to the Child Missing in Education Team.**

**It is important that you contact the school as soon as you receive this letter, as we would like to resolve this matter as soon as possible.**

**Yours sincerely**

**Executive Principal**

**Appendix 5: Child taken off school roll**



**Date:**

**Name:**

**Address:**

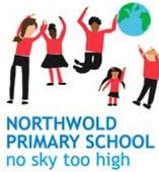
**To the Parent/Carer of .....**

I am writing to inform you that ..... (child's name) has been removed from the School roll ..... (date). If you would like your child to attend this school you will have to re-apply for a place. Please contact the Hackney Learning Trust Admissions Team on 0208 8820/7150/7250/7197. They will support you in making an application for this school or another school if we no longer have any vacancies.

Yours sincerely

**Executive Principal**

## Appendix 6: School Checklist to Locate Missing/Lost Pupils



Please complete fully and include 'no response' where appropriate, as this form will be required if a Child has not returned to School. Please contact the School Attendance Officer if a child is absent from school for at least 5 school days. The school must have completed its actions within this time frame.

Name of Child:

DOB:

School Action	Details	Outcomes including date completed
Telephone calls made to parent/carers		
Telephone calls to emergency contact numbers		
Email to parent		
Letters sent to last known address		
Enquiries made with school which siblings attend		
If the child has moved to another part of the UK. The address and new school contact details.		
If the parent is going abroad. All contact details abroad, address, phone numbers and new school.		
Flight tickets/ travel arrangements. Please make sure a copy is taken.		

**The completed form to be emailed to the HLT School Attendance Officer**