

Norton Community Primary School

Attendance Policy

February 2024 - July 2025

Norton Community Primary School seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise their full potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby every member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

The school will regularly praise and reward the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and will challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

To meet these objectives Norton CP will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Punctuality

Pupils in Reception through to Year 4 can arrive in school from 8.35. The doors close at 8.45 and all children should be in class by then for Registration. If pupils arrive after this time, they need to go through the main entrance to be marked in. They will also be registered after the lunch break.

Pupils in Years 5 & 6 need to be in school by 8.35am for Registration. The doors open at 8.30 and after 8.35 the gate to the playground will be locked and they will need to enter through the main entrance. Pupils in Years 5 & 6 will need to make up any lost learning time at break or lunchtime. The dinner register closes at 8.40 so children arriving in school after this time will be given a school dinner rather than a choice of manner.

Any pupil arriving more than 30 minutes after the start of the school day will be marked as absent – this will be an unauthorised absence.

If a pupil arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time.



The registers are monitored daily to identify pupils who are arriving late and regular late arrival for school will be challenged as not acceptable.

Where children arrive in school late, the minutes will be accumulated over the week and an email sent to their parents to make them aware of how much learning time has been lost over the week.,

What can I do to help my child have good attendance?

- Ensure regular and early bedtimes.
- Have uniform and equipment prepared the night before.
- Report any academic or social concerns promptly to the class teacher or office.
- Keep open and honest communication with the school.
- Be positive about school (even if your own experience was less than positive).
- Discuss your child's timetable/lessons with them each evening.
- Make routine medical appointments outside of school hours.
- Attend meetings and parents' evenings.

Absence Procedures

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow the following procedures:

: • Contact the school on the first day of absence before 9am and each subsequent day of absence before 9am. The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if nobody is available to take your call. Alternatively, parents can drop into school personally and speak to the office staff or complete the absence form on our webpage [Report Absence \(norton-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk\)](http://norton-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk) If we do not hear from you we will make a home visit and, if necessary, contact the police or social care for a welfare check.

- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible.

Can I take my child out of school for a Family holiday?

The law does not grant parents an automatic right to take their child out of school during term time. Any absence from school will disrupt your child's learning. You may consider that a holiday will be educational, but your child will miss out on the teaching that their classmates will receive during your holiday. Attendance is vital to academic success and lost education poses a potential risk of under achievement. This is something we all have a responsibility to avoid. The Headteacher will not authorise an absence for a Family Holiday. The Headteacher will consider requests for a leave of absence in term time in exceptional circumstances only. If you wish to request a leave of absence you must complete a leave of absence request form, provide any supporting evidence and return it to school at least six weeks prior to the period that leave is requested for.

Unauthorised Absence

If you take your child out of school without the school's prior authorisation the absence will be recorded as unauthorised (which is illegal) and noted in your child's school records. Leave of absence can only be authorised by the Headteacher.

Where a parent / carer has taken their child on a leave of absence during term time for 5 consecutive school days or more, without the Headteacher's authorisation, you could receive a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are per parent per child – if paid within the first 21 days the fine is £60. If paid after this time, then it is £120. Unpaid Penalty Notices result in prosecution for the absence in the magistrate's court.

Penalty Notices are an alternative to prosecution for failing to ensure a child's regular attendance and will only be used once per pupil in an academic year before prosecution takes place.

Any child arriving 30 minutes after the start of the school day will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless we have proof of an appointment.

When does a child become a Persistent Absentee?

These figures explain the impact of poor attendance in school and on a child's learning.

97% = Average of 6 days absence within the academic year.

96% = Average of 2 weeks absence within the academic year.

90% = Average of 20 days absence equalling 4 weeks within the academic year making it difficult to achieve their best. This also equates to at least 80 lessons missed a year.

80 – 90% = Average of 38 days equalling 8 weeks. They are missing so much time from school that it will be difficult for them to keep in touch with lessons or set work.

80% and below = They are missing so much time from school that it will be impossible for them to keep in touch with lessons or work.

70% = 57 days absence equalling 11.5 weeks.

It becomes a concern when it falls below 90% and the child is then categorised as persistently absent (there is a reoccurring pattern to their absence) the school will then need to record the absence formally with parents and begin a monitoring process.

Monitoring Process

Attendance is scrutinized at the end of each half term and where a pupil has attendance below 93% (without evidence of appointments) their parents will receive a letter to make them aware of this.

If the attendance does not improve over the following half term, then the parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Headteacher / Attendance Manager. At this meeting, the school will offer support to assist the parent/s in getting their child to school. A monitoring period of 20 sessions (10 school days) will then follow where there is an expectation that the child will

be in school for 100% of the time and arrive on time. Support could be offered from the Early Help Team if the parents agree to a referral being made.

After the 10 days, if the attendance has not met the target, a further period of monitoring with 100% expectation will follow. This will last for 40 sessions (20 school days).

If the attendance is still not significantly improving, a meeting with the Local Authority Attendance Officer will follow to discuss reasons for the poor attendance. This meeting may then result in the Local Authority taking legal action. This may include issuing each parent with a Penalty Notice for £120, reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days or referring the matter to the Magistrates Court whereby each parent may receive a fine up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

Any absence after a 10 day monitoring period will be unauthorised without proof of an appointment.

Once attendance increases above 90% the process is stopped – but the attendance will be closely monitored so that it does not fall back below 90%.

The school expects every pupil to be in school at least 96% of the school year.

Incentives to support good attendance

All classes have their attendance recorded on a league table for the term. The class at the top of the league table in the last week of term are taken to the cinema.

Every day that a class has 100% attendance they move their class football up a 10-step ladder which is displayed in their classroom. Once they reach the top rung of the ladder, the football is exchanged for a £10 voucher at the office. They then start the climb again. At the end of the year or anytime throughout the year, the class can spend their vouchers on a treat or equipment for wet play etc.

At the end of each term, certificates are presented in an Attendance Assembly for good attendance and personal points. The certificates are:

Gold Certificate with 50 Personal Points – for 100% attendance

Silver Certificate with 25 Personal Points – for 97-99.9% attendance

Bronze Certificate with 10 Personal Points – for 95-96.9% attendance

Children with a 100% attendance record for the year will go to the cinema and receive a £10 voucher as a thank you.

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 school, on time, every day.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

