

# **NORTHMEAD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

## **Attendance Policy**

### **1. AIMS**

Through our Attendance Policy we aim to ensure that all children at Northmead have an opportunity to reach their full potential, both socially and academically, by attending school regularly unless prevented from doing so by illness or other acceptable reason. All children are expected to attend 100% of the time, unless the absence has been authorised by the Headteacher (or delegated member of staff).

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

We endeavour to achieve our aims by:

- providing an effective means of recording and reporting attendance
- clarifying the roles and responsibilities of individuals
- establishing clear, simple and effective systems for monitoring attendance
- working closely with the Inclusion Officer and other support services, eg Social Care.

### **3. ADMISSION REGISTER**

An admission register is kept electronically in accordance with section 6/9/10 of the Statutory Instruments 1995 No. 2089 Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations.

### **4. ATTENDANCE REGISTER**

It is the duty of the class teacher or any covering teacher to electronically mark the attendance of pupils at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. The morning register will close at 9.20am. The register must be marked in accordance with the directions summarised in Appendix 1. Pupils arriving at school between 8.50am and 9.20am will be marked as 'L' (late). After 9.20am the register will be marked as 'U' (unauthorised absence).

## **5. NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

Telephone notification from an adult will be recorded in an absence book showing the date, the child's name and the reason for the absence. A dedicated telephone line (01483 529889) with answer phone facilities has been installed in the school office to receive absence calls. Alternatively, parents may use the Studybugs facility.

If we are unable to make telephone contact with you regarding your child's absence from school within 24 hrs and we have had no prior notification of absence, we will attempt to contact you via a home visit. If no contact can be made, a call will be made to the Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Verbal messages must not be accepted from children. The school employs a support assistant whose responsibility it is to check answer phone messages daily at 9.00 a.m. A further responsibility is to check registers and try to contact all parents/guardians whose child is absent without notification.

## **6. LATENESS**

Children who arrive late after the register has been taken at 8.50am must report to the school office. Arrival after this time will result in the register being marked as late. Arrival after 9.20 will be marked as an unauthorised absence. Lateness is dealt with by the Home School Link Worker. Lateness is considered to be more than three late marks in one week or a regular pattern of repeated lateness. In these circumstances contact is made to parents through a standard letter (Appendix 2). In cases of persistent lateness the Headteacher is informed.

## **7. DENTAL AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

Whilst the school will grant requests for absence for dental and medical appointments, parents/carers are encouraged, whenever possible, to book such appointments outside of the school day. When appointments during school hours are unavoidable, the school office should be notified in advance in writing of the date and time of the appointment and when the child will be collected and/or returned to school. Evidence of the appointment may be requested.

## 8. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There is no longer an entitlement for parents to take children out of school for a leave of absence.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. To request leave, parents should fill in an Application for Leave of Absence in exceptional circumstances form and return it to the Home School Link Worker. (Appendix 3)

In accordance with the above Regulations, requests for Leave of Absence are treated sympathetically, but only in exceptional circumstances can they be approved. The policy of Surrey County Council to which this school has agreed, states that where a child is taken out of school for 5 days or more and 'Leave of Absence' is without the authority of the Headteacher, **each parent** is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for **each child** who is absent. In these circumstances, a warning will not be given where it can be shown that parents had previously been warned that such absences would not be authorised and that they may be liable to receive a Penalty Notice if the leave of absence is taken.

The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions during the preceding 6 school weeks.

The parents' failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Inclusion Officer will be a factor when considering the issue of a Penalty Notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

**With the exception of unauthorised leave of absence taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.**

If there is an unauthorised Leave of Absence for 5 or more school days, each parent/carer will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are issued per parent/carer per child and the amount payable is £60.00 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120.00 if paid after 21 days but before 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 38 days, the Local Authority must consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

## 9. INCLUSION OFFICER

The Inclusion Officer (IO) monitors the attendance of all children on a regular basis. The IO will work with school staff and parents to promote good attendance and investigate reasons for absence.

If attendance problems cannot be resolved by the school then a referral to the Inclusions Officer will be made. The IO will try to resolve the situation but if attempts to improve attendance have failed, but unauthorised absence persists, the IO can use sanctions such as parenting contracts, penalty notices and prosecution.

## **10. CHECKING OF REGISTERS**

It is the duty of the Headteacher periodically to check registers and consult with the Home School Link Worker over any inconsistency or concerns. The school's Inclusion Officer makes regular visits to check registers and discuss any problems or inconsistencies; with the Home School Link Worker.

## **11. ATTENDANCE RECORDS**

The data manager will be responsible for keeping an annual record of attendance for each class and for completing statutory attendance returns.

## **12. CHANGING EDUCATION PROVISION**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform school staff 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 this school and starting the next;
- The address of the new school;
- The new home address (if appropriate and known).

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Inclusion Officer.

If a parent removes their son or daughter from the roll of the school to home educate, the school will notify the Inclusion Officer as soon as we have received written notification from the parent of their intention to home educate.

The Inclusion Officer will then visit the family to ensure parents are aware of their responsibilities and know where to access support.

## **13. ATTENDANCE MONITORING**

As part of our half-termly attendance monitoring, for any child whose attendance has declined, the parents will be contacted in the first instance by letter. (Appendix 4)

Support will then be offered by the Home School Link Worker to help the parents improve the child's attendance.

A meeting will follow (Appendix 5) if attendance does not improve, with possible referral to the Inclusion Officer if absences are no longer authorised by the school. (Appendix 6).

#### **14. LEA GUIDANCE**

An Attendance Information Leaflet is available to all parents/carers and is given to all new parents.

This leaflet is also available on the school website or from the school office (Appendix 7).

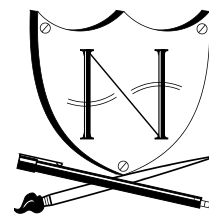
In addition, a letter regarding penalty notices, as issued by the LEA is given to all new parents, with updates where indicated, sent home to all parents. (Appendix 8).

Further information provided by the LEA in relation to Penalty notices is included (Appendix 9).

**Date of Policy :** Spring 2007  
**Author :** DB & HSLW  
**Date of Review :** September 2021  
**Date of next Review:** **September 2022**

# Northmead Junior School

## Appendix 1



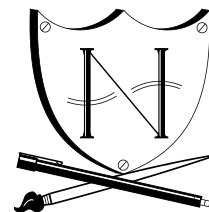
### ATTENDANCE POLICY: STANDARD PROCEDURE FOR MARKING REGISTERS

/ \ Present

#### Authorised Absences

I	Sickness
N	No reason yet provided for absence
L	Late (before reg. closed)
M	Medical/Dental
H	Annual family holiday (agreed)
V	Educational Visit
X	Covid related/Non compulsory school age absence
U	Late (after reg. closed)
C	Other authorised circumstances
E	Excluded
Y	Enforced closure
Z	Pupil not yet on role
B	Educated off site – changed
J	Attending interview
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
O	Unauthorised absence
T	Traveller absence
W	Work experience
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)
F	Extended Family Holiday (agreed)
G	Family holiday (not agreed or days in excess of agreed days)

## Northmead Junior School Appendix 2



Name of Parent/Carer  
Address

Dear Mr & Mrs,

We have noticed that ( ) has been late for school on ( ) occasions in the last ( ) weeks.

The morning register is taken at 8.50 am and it is absolutely essential for children to be in school at this time.

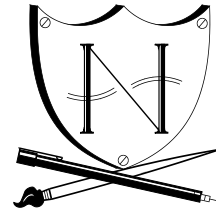
When pupils arrive late in class the following happens:

1. The pupil misses out on the beginning of the lesson and does not know what is expected of him/her.
2. The classroom routine is disrupted.
3. The child feels uncomfortable at not knowing what is going on.
4. There is a negative effect on the child's learning.
5. The child is marked 'late' in the register and if arrival at school is after 9.20am, when the register closes, the child is marked as having an unauthorised absence.

If there are difficulties or areas where you may need some help in order to arrive at school on time, please either contact me or speak to the class teacher.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Cook  
Home School Link Worker



## Northmead Junior School Appendix 3

### Application for leave of absence for Exceptional Circumstances

Please read the following guidance carefully

As parents, you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. During the Academic Year, pupils are at school for 190 days and at home for 175 days.

**Please be aware that The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.**

You are required to complete and submit this form for your request to be considered by the Headteacher.

We may ask for proof to validate your request.

#### **Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more may result in the issue of a Penalty Notice**

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority in accordance with Surrey County Council's Code of Conduct. The Penalty Notice is £60, per child per parent/carer, if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in the Local Authority considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

The Headteacher will consider the reasons for the request carefully and you will be notified of the decision.

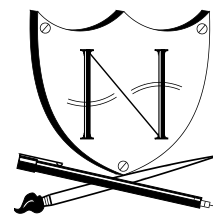
For further information, please refer to our School Attendance Policy.

<b>Name of child:</b>	<b>Class:</b>
I am applying for leave of absence for my child for .....	
from:	to:
Number of school days:	
The exceptional circumstances for which leave is requested:	



<b><i>To be completed by the Headteacher</i></b>		
Having considered your request carefully, my decision is that leave of absence is:		
Approved		The absence will be recorded as authorised.
Not approved		The absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
Explanatory notes:		
Signed: _____ (Headteacher)      Date: _____		
Has your child already had leave of absence in this school year?      YES / NO		
If YES, please give dates and details:		
I also have children at...		
Signed: (Parent/Carer) _____		Date: _____

**Northmead Junior School  
Appendix 4**



Name of Parent/carer  
Address

Date

Dear  
ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL – ... %

Having carried out a review of school attendance for this year I am concerned by ..... level of absences from school. I enclose a copy of his attendance grid for your information.

The Government recommend that the minimum level of attendance is 90% and anything below this is likely to impact on a child's academic attainment.

It is parent's legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time for registration.

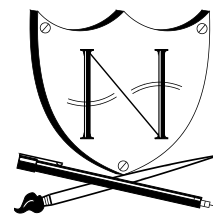
I am advising you that I will be monitoring ..... attendance and should there be no improvement I will have to invite you to attend an Attendance Panel to discuss the reason for absences.

Should there be any issues of which the school is not aware of or, should you require assistance in improving ..... attendance please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Cook  
Home School Link Worker  
01483 529888

**Northmead Junior School  
Appendix 5**



Date

Dear

ATTENDANCE IN SCHOOL – %

Having carried out a review of student attendance for this year with the Inclusion Officer, there are concerns with ..... high level of absence from school as shown on the attached attendance grid.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time and that days are only missed for exceptional reasons.

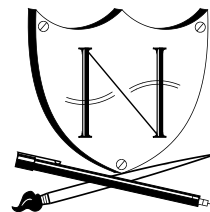
We would like to invite you to a meeting to be held at school on ..... to discuss how we can support you in bringing about an improvement in this situation.

Please confirm that you are able to attend by telephoning the Home School Link Worker on 01483 529888.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Cook  
Home School Link Worker  
01483 529888

**Northmead Junior School  
Appendix 6**



Name of Parent/Carer  
Address

Date

Dear Mr

**MEDICAL EVIDENCE REQUEST**

I have this week had an Attendance Meeting with .....(Inclusion Officer) in which we discussed your child's attendance.

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly and on time and that days are only missed for exceptional reasons.

To reiterate the school's position, we are no longer able to authorise absences without evidence of illness. This evidence must take the form of a letter from your GP, a hospital appointment card or a letter from a Consultant outlining the current issues.

The IO has also now advised us that any absences due to lack of transport will need to be marked as unauthorised.

As I am sure you are aware it is vitally important that we ensure all children at Northmead have the opportunity to reach their full potential, both socially and academically.

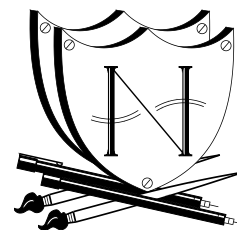
Regular attendance at school is one of the ways we can achieve this, and is supported in our attendance policy.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything further we can assist you with.

Yours sincerely  
Wendy Cook  
Home School Link Worker  
01483 529888

Appendix 7 – (Separate document)

## Northmead Junior School Appendix 8



29<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

Following new Government legislation that came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 we have been required to change our policy regarding authorised absence from school. Full details of the updated attendance policy plus all the relevant documentation are available either from the school website or from the school office.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 states that Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. The Head teacher is also required to determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carers for their child's unauthorised absence from school and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances:-

1. Pupils identified by police and education welfare officers engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more). In such cases the Head teacher/Governing Body will have to judge whether there are exceptional circumstances and may request that the Local Authority issue a Penalty Notice when the absence is not authorised. Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.
3. The issue of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where a pupil has incurred 7 or more unauthorised sessions in the preceding 6 school weeks. The parent's failure to engage with supportive measures proposed by the school or Education Welfare will be a factor when considering the issue of a penalty notice. Unauthorised absence will include late arrival after the close of registration without good reason.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you take action without delay to secure their regular attendance. If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement, please contact the school or the education welfare officer.

## Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours. This duty applies to the first five days of each exclusion. Failure to do so will render the parent/carer liable to a Penalty Notice. (Alternative education provision will be made available from the sixth day of any exclusion.)

### **Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice**

Notification has been received by means of a Statutory Instrument, **-The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**, that from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 the charge for Penalty Notices will be increased.

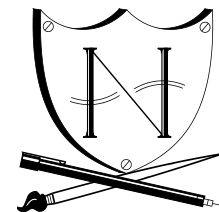
The standard charge will be £60 if the Penalty Notice is paid within 21 days, and £120 if the Penalty Notice is paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

If the Penalty Notice is not paid, the recipient will be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for the offence for which the Notice was originally issued. **Please be aware that each parent is liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who incurs unauthorised absences, for example, if there are two parents and one child, each parent will receive one Penalty Notice. If there are two parents, and two children incur unauthorised absences, each parent will receive two Penalty Notices.**

Advice and support is available from an Inclusion Officer by contacting your local Education Office as follows:- South West - Tel: 01483 517179

Yours faithfully

Debbie Brown  
Headteacher



***Leave in Exceptional Circumstances– not approved***

Dear Mr and Mrs.....

**Re:                      d.o.b.**

**Attendance at**

**School**

I am writing to inform you that your request for.....(pupil).....to be absent from school from.....(date).....until.....(date).....has not been approved as the reasons given for the absence are not considered to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

**The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 states that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

If you take your child out of school without the approval of the school, you will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for failing to ensure your child's regular school attendance.

**Each parent will be liable to receive a Penalty Notice for each child who is absent.**

The Penalty Notice is for £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in you being served with a summons to appear at the Magistrates Court.

I hope that you will re-consider your application.

Yours sincerely,

Debbie Brown (Headteacher)