



**NETHERTHORPE SCHOOL**

SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS COLLEGE

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## **NETHERTHORPE SCHOOL**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Last approved – May 2018

Next Review – May 2019

## **Policy Statement**

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, the parent/carer is responsible for making sure that their child receives efficient suitable full-time education.

Good attendance is essential if students are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life.

Good attendance is an achievement in its own right and is recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy with which staff, students, parents and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

## **Aims and Objectives;**

To establish systems and practices which will;

- a) create an ethos in which good attendance is recognised as normal;
- b) promote good teaching since this provides the best incentive for students to attend School;
- c) raise student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance and encourage in students a sense of responsibility;
- d) encourage more student involvement in attendance issues;
- e) monitor and provide effective information on levels of attendance and punctuality;
- f) maintain an effective partnership with the education social work service;
- g) develop mutual co-operation between home and School in encouraging good attendance and in addressing attendance issues;
- h) demonstrate through the use of rewards and sanctions that the School recognises that good attendance and punctuality are achievements in themselves;
- i) recognise, reinforce and support the key role of the form tutor in promoting and monitoring good attendance;
- j) ensure that time and organisation within the School enables the aims and objectives of this policy to be met.

## **ROLES**

### **School Governing Body**

The Governors delegate responsibility to the Headteacher to instruct the Local Authority to proceed with legal sanctions.

**Parents/Carers**

- a) Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular and punctual attendance, ensuring they are properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn.
- b) Parents/carers are responsible for immediately informing school of the reason for any absence by phone call on the first and any subsequent morning of any absence.
- c) Parents/carers will avoid arranging holidays during term time.

**Students**

- a) Students will ensure they attend regularly and on time.

**Headteacher**

- a) The Headteacher will promote good attendance in the school and report to the Governors and the DfES the statistics of attendance, authorised and unauthorised absence.
- b) The Headteacher will have the overview of the figures.
- c) The Headteacher will instruct the Local Authority to proceed with legal sanctions.
- d) The Headteacher has the final authority to authorise any absence.

**Senior Assistant Headteacher**

The Senior Assistant Headteacher will have managerial oversight for attendance throughout the School. They will work closely with the Heads of Section, the School Attendance Officer, the Pastoral Support Managers and the Education Welfare Service to ensure that the attendance policy and procedures are applied consistently and coherently across the whole School.

The Senior Assistant Headteacher will;

- a) Be responsible for the drawing up of the school policy on attendance and its implementation.
- b) Liaise with Heads of Section, Pastoral Managers and School Attendance Officer to monitor students' attendance.
- c) Liaise with the Education Welfare Service Manager to monitor the county's service to the school.
- d) Set up and monitor the attendance reward systems.

**Deputy Head Teacher – Curriculum**

- a) Will liaise with admin staff re ICT use in registration of students.

### **School Attendance Officer**

The School Attendance Officer will work with Heads of Section (HOS) to support students struggling to access School through poor attendance. This may take the role of home visits, becoming the home / School link, interviewing students and transporting individual students (another member of staff must be present) to the School.

The School Attendance Officer will;

- a) Implement a Targeted Action Group, with identified students in consultation with the HOS and Pastoral Support Managers (PSM's);
- b) Be aware of the vulnerable students who PSM's will contact on the first day of absence and visit on the second day of absence, and support PSM's with this where possible;
- c) will carry out a 'Safe and Well' check where no contact has been made with the student or family for a period of five consecutive days;
- d) ask parents to provide medical evidence after 5 days of absence;
- e) will carry out a 'Safe and Well' check during the second week of absence if no medical evidence has been provided
- f) Send letters out to parents/carers expressing concern about students with low attendance
- g) Set up attendance panels and invite parents /carer to a formal interview to discuss absence in cases where no improvement in attendance has been seen despite intervention from HOS/PSM's/School Attendance Officer;
- h) meet with the PSM's along with the HOS's on a fortnightly basis to discuss attendance issues and seek support and advice in ensuring good attendance;
- i) Issue fixed penalty warning letters to parents/carers as appropriate and in liaison with the Senior Assistant Headteacher
- j) liaise with the Educational Welfare Department to discuss attendance issues and seek support;
- k) monitor persistent absentees and implement initiatives/sanctions as appropriate;
- l) discuss serious cases with the Senior Assistant Headteacher before referring to the County Educational Welfare Service;
- m) keep accurate records.

### **Pastoral Support Managers**

The Pastoral Support Managers:

- a) will liaise with HOS and the School Attendance officer on a fortnightly basis to monitor students and receive referrals;
- b) will be responsible for the initial communication with parents/carers on attendance issues;
- c) will offer support to students and families who are experiencing barriers to attendance;
- d) will contact parent/carers and/or the student to discuss absence where attendance is at or below 95% but above 92%
- e) will contact parents/carers of vulnerable students on every day they are absent and do a home visit on the second day of absence
- f) will refer families to external agencies where necessary to seek help and support+;

- g) will refer students to School Health where appropriate;
- h) will liaise with School Attendance Officer / Form tutors to discuss students for whom Medical Evidence is active;
- i) will keep accurate records.
- j) the 6<sup>th</sup> form Pastoral Support Manager will make a 'safe and well' check where no contact has been made with the student or family for a period of five consecutive days; or two consecutive days for any vulnerable students

### **County Education Welfare Service**

- a) Will work in conjunction with the School Attendance Officer to process cases which may require legal intervention.

### **Heads of Section**

The Heads of Section will be responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring attendance across the Year group. S/he will:

- a) ensure that Form Tutors adhere to the attendance policy and procedures;
- b) support the work of the Form Tutor in ensuring that all absences are authorised in accordance with DfE guidelines;
- c) work closely with the School Attendance Officer and PSM's, meeting once a fortnight to discuss attendance issues;
- d) refer students to the PSM's/School Attendance Officer where poor attendance is symptomatic of wider issues within the family;
- e) refer all students within the year group whose attendance falls below 92% to the School Attendance officer;
- f) liaise with PSM's regarding initial communications with parents/carers on attendance issues;
- g) liaise with PSM's to identify the vulnerable students within the year group and update this regularly;
- h) work with the office staff to regularly monitor post registration truancy;
- i) develop a positive ethos within the Year group which recognises good attendance and punctuality as normal;
- j) Seek to promote good attendance and punctuality by means of appropriate rewards and sanctions.

### **Form Tutor**

The Form Tutor will be the key person promoting and monitoring good attendance and punctuality.

The Form Tutor will:

- a) Promote good attendance for all students within their form;
- b) keep an accurate and up-to-date register of attendance following the current agreed procedures;

- c) follow the attendance policy procedures when dealing with absence and punctuality;
- d) speak to students whose attendance fall below 98% but above 95% keeping the HOS informed;
- e) maintain effective communication with the HOS on all attendance matters concerning the tutor group;
- f) work closely with the HOS in developing a positive ethos within the Year group which recognises good attendance and punctuality as the norm;
- g) be vigilant in checking for forged absence notes.

### **Supply staff and teachers covering registration**

Any teacher taking a register is expected to operate within the attendance guidelines.

A copy of the attendance guidelines will be available to all staff temporary to the School. If supply and/or cover staff are offered absence notes by students the notes should be sent to the attendance clerk in the school office.

### **Involving Parents and Students;**

#### **Parents/Carers**

The School will inform parents and carers, through the School prospectus, information guides and newsletters of the importance of good levels of attendance and punctuality and of their role in achieving this.

Parents/Carers will be given information on:

- a) what constitutes 'justifiable absence';
- b) the School's procedure regarding family holidays taken in term time;
- c) procedures for informing the School of absence;
- d) the role of the School Attendance Officer;
- e) response to be made by the School and the School Attendance Officer in the case of absence, truancy and persistent lateness.

Parents and Carers will be informed of their child's levels of attendance and punctuality through their data reports. Parents/Carers of students causing attendance concerns will be regularly informed.

## **Students**

To raise student awareness of the necessity of good attendance and punctuality all students will be encouraged to monitor their own attendance. Consistently good attendance and punctuality will be celebrated.

## **Rewards**

- a) Praise letters/certificates sent home at the end of each term to students with 98% attendance or above for that term
- b) 100% attendance certificates are presented at the Award Ceremonies for Y7 - 11 students.

## **Response to Absence**

### **Registration**

The School is legally bound to register students at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. All form tutors will follow the attendance registration guidelines as set out in this policy.

### **Parent Responsibilities:**

- a) Contact the school as soon as possible on the first and each subsequent day of absence.
- b) Send a note to the school office with an explanation of the absence on the first day of the student's return to school. This must be done even if you have already notified the school.
- c) Ensure Medical Appointments made within school time are kept to a minimum, and provide an appointment card/letter for authorisation.
- d) Provide medical evidence for absence which in excess of 5 days, or when requested by the school. This can be an appointment card (showing the name, date and time of appointment), a copy of a prescription or similar.

### **Office Staff with Responsibility for Attendance:**

- a) will notify parents/carers by telephone or text on the first and each subsequent day of absence where parents/carers have not contacted school;
- b) will notify parents/carers by letter, any absence which has been unauthorised due to no reason having been provided within 2 weeks of the absence;
- c) will keep Notes for absence in the students file.

## **Post Registration Truancy**

To discourage post registration truancy a register will be taken in all lessons. The HOS together with the office staff will, at frequent intervals, check all lessons across their Year group to monitor students showing as absent to lesson after being marked present.

The HOS should maintain a record of these truancy checks. Each time a register is taken the teacher will have on view the student's attendance mark for the previous period. Teachers should inform the school office as soon as possible if a student is absent from the lesson having previously been marked present.

## **The School Attendance Panel**

The School Attendance Panel will be convened when there are concerns about a student's attendance. The School Attendance Panel gives families the opportunity to work with the School in improving their child's attendance before the School feels that prosecution procedures are necessary.

The School Attendance Panel consists of the School Attendance Officer, Senior Assistant Headteacher, HOS and/or a PSM. The PCSO on the Youth Engagement Team may also sit on the panel.

Six week inclusive attendance targets will be set for individual students and their progress reviewed after six and finally twelve weeks. If targets are met then prosecution may not be necessary.

## **Student Support**

Netherthorpe School recognises the need to support students during and after long term absence of any kind.

With this in mind the School will:

- a) endeavour to arrange to give full support to home tuition when applicable;
- b) consider all strategies, in partnership with the education social work service, to encourage the return of students to School. This may include negotiated timetables and/or use of the Inclusion room to promote gradual re-integration;
- c) ensure that there is a positive atmosphere within tutor groups and lessons in which students are welcomed back into School;
- d) encourage parents to be actively involved in re-entry programmes. This may entail special procedures for students who do not attend regularly.



## **POLICY STATEMENT ON HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME**

### **Background**

Parents/carers have a legal obligation to ensure that their child receives efficient full-time education suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have. The school therefore has a statutory obligation to challenge parents who are failing in their duty and this includes using a wide range of legal powers to intervene. New legislation has increased the range of intervention available. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 has introduced additional remedies including the power to issue penalty notices to the parents or carers of pupils who take unauthorised absence from school.

The school's first priority will be to work with parents to ensure early intervention and prevention of unauthorised absence. However, where there is evidence of non-cooperation and continuing unauthorised absence, the school will ask the ESW to consider issuing a Penalty Notice as one of the options in the range of statutory options. The Local Authority is required to publish a Code of Conduct, setting out the principles on which Penalty Notices will be issued. A copy of the Code is available from school.

### **Policy on term time holidays**

Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to withdraw their child from school for a holiday.

In September 2013 the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 came into force. These regulations make it clear that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made.

Parents/carers may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised.

Please contact Diane Oxborough by email at [diane.oxborough@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:diane.oxborough@derbyshire.gov.uk) or telephone on: **01629 539320** should you require further advice or support.

School will not be responsible for any monies lost as a result of a holiday being booked where the request is not approved.

The school will follow the LA Code of Conduct and, unless there are exceptional circumstances, will ask the Education Welfare Service to serve a penalty notice for any period of holiday during term time that has not been authorised by the Headteacher.

Moreover, the Education Welfare Service may do so without any further recourse to assessment or casework with the pupil or family. There will be no requirement for:

- The EWS to offer support
- Any formal warning
- The absence threshold to be met

If the Headteacher declines a request for a holiday to be taken in term time the absence will be categorised as unauthorised, and the Education Welfare Service may serve each parent/carer with a penalty notice for each child without any further warning or intervention.

**The Headteacher will:**

- a) ensure that the school's policy on term time holidays is made clear to parents and issue regular reminders;
- b) keep parents/carers up to date on Government legislation;
- c) ensure that each case is considered;
- d) communicate the school's decision in writing to each parent within 10 days of the holiday being requested;
- e) warn parents/carers of the consequences of taking their children on holiday in term time without authorisation.

**Interventions and Legal Sanctions**

If, despite support, no improvement in attendance is made the following intervention may be applied which could result in legal intervention:

- a) Parent/carer Contract / School Attendance Plan
- b) At the point where school feel legal intervention is required, the School Attendance Officer will liaise with the County Educational Welfare Service. The Educational Welfare Service will apply both
  - a. The Evidential Test and
  - b. The Public Interest Test

to ensure fairness and equality, and will determine the appropriate legal action to take. This may be in the form of:

- a. Parenting Contracts
  - b. Penalty Notices
  - c. Education Supervision Orders
  - d. Prosecution.
- c) If the school is made aware of, or suspects, that a child is missing. In this case, if the child continues to be missing from school for more than 20 days, their whereabouts is unknown, and School have made reasonable enquiries to locate them, it is permissible under current

legislation, once they have been reported to the 'Children Missing from Education' Co-ordinator, for the child's name to be removed from school roll.

## **REGISTRATION**

**(Coordination: Senior Assistant Headteacher)**

### **Guidelines;**

- a) Class teachers are legally required to take morning registers promptly at 8:45am.
- b) Teachers are expected to take a class register every lesson.
- c) If a student is not present in the room they must be registered absent.

**Form Tutors/Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance on SIMS electronic registration.**

**Codes to be used by Form tutors/Class Teachers are:**

**/ \ Present**

**N – No reason provided for absence**

**L – Late**

**(See Appendix C for the complete set of attendance codes)**

If a student is marked N during morning registration but arrives late, the student will have signed in at the office and will be marked present. The Office Staff will add 'L' on the register.

If a student is marked 'L' twice within a 5 day period, they will be issued with a Head of Section Late Detention. Parents/carers will be informed by letter. If a student receives four late marks in any half term, they will also receive a full day Internal Exclusion. If there is still no improvement, the School Attendance Officer will be involved.

If a student arrives after 9.00am, they will have reported to the Office, where a C4 detention slip is issued. If the student arrives after 9.30am the register will be marked 'U' (Late after register closed). This will count as an unauthorised absence unless a note from home is presented at the time of signing in.

The register must be marked present, absent or late at the time of registration. If a student is marked 'L', the number of minutes late must be recorded. This satisfies Health and Safety requirements in the event of an emergency and informs any other member of staff who needs to know whether or not the student is present in school.

## **Absence**

**See Attendance Expectations, Appendix A for an overview of actions and triggers**

- a) The office staff will endeavour to make telephone contact via text message with the parent/carer of each student on their first day of absence. If contact is made and an acceptable reason is given the appropriate absence code will be entered into the system
- b) The PSM will endeavour to make telephone contact if students reach three days of absence and no contact has been made from home, or on the first day of absence for vulnerable students. A home visit may also be carried out by the PSM/School Attendance Officer.
- c) If an absence remains unexplained for five days a safe and well check will be carried out by the School Attendance Officer.
- d) If a student returns to School with an acceptable absence note the tutor should enter the appropriate absence code on the system, sign and date the letter and place in the registration folder which should be returned to the office immediately after morning registration.
- e) If the tutor is unhappy with the reason given for absence the note should be accepted from the student and referred to the HOS. Never refuse to accept a note. If the tutor is concerned that a note is forged it should be referred to the HOS.
- f) Any student who fails (after reminders) to bring a note should be referred to the HOS. If an absence remains unexplained for 2 weeks, the absence will be unauthorised and parents notified.
- g) Any notes will be filed by the office staff in student's files kept in the school office.
- h) Notes will be kept for at least five years for audit purposes
- i) If a student is required to provide Medical Evidence, and fails to do so, the absence may be marked 'O' (Unauthorised) even if a note is provided from home. The office staff will send a letter to parents to notify them the absence has been Unauthorised.
- j) If a student is missing a lesson due to a school activity, the subject staff must add a comment on the register. E.g. Music lesson, Careers Interview etc.

**No member of staff should alter a register code, (with the exception of Inclusion/Isolation/6<sup>th</sup> Form Administrator) once registers have been submitted. If a child is removed from a lesson by a member of staff, a comment should be added to the register with details.**

## **Punctuality**

**See Appendix B, Punctuality Expectations for overview of actions and triggers**

- a) If a student arrives late to registration or class the absent mark should be over written with L (late) and the number of minutes late entered. The register must then be re-sent. The student will be issued with a C3 detention.
- b) If a student arrives late (after registration) they should first report to reception to sign in. Following this, they should make their way directly to their next lesson. The office will issue them with a C4 detention if they arrive after 9am.
- c) If a student is persistently late HOS should contact home to discuss the reasons for this and how it can be resolved.
- d) Parents/Carers are regularly informed about persistent lateness through the detention notification system.

The form tutor should refer students to the Head of Section if any patterns of non-attendance emerge.

**Supply teachers or colleagues covering registration please work to these guidelines as far as possible.**

**Always accept absence notes from students if offered and send or deliver them to the school office.**

<b>Attendance Expectations</b>			
<b>Level</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Potential trigger</b>	<b>Owner (All actions logged on SIM's)</b>
1	Text message sent by the office Communication with home via student planners to clear 'N' code, or letter sent by office asking for a reason to be given for absence PSM to speak to the student	Each day of absence with no contact from parent to explain the reason for the absence  Attendance is 95% (from October onwards)	School Office / Tutor
2	Pastoral team phone call or home visit  PSM to speak to parents	After 3 days of continuous absence with no contact from parents <b>OR</b> On the first day of absence for vulnerable students  If attendance falls below 95% (from October onwards)	Pastoral team
3	Monitoring letter issued to express concerns about attendance	Attendance has dropped below 92% (after October half term)	Attendance Officer
4	Attendance Panel set up and medical evidence letter issued (if appropriate)	10 sessions (5 days) of absence in a 6 week period	Attendance Officer Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL) informed
5	Fixed Penalty Warning Notice issued giving 30 school days to improve attendance	Any further absence in the next 6 weeks	Attendance Officer DSL informed
6	Fixed Penalty Issued	If attendance does not improve in light of level 4 (ie any more days of absence in a 6 week period with no medical evidence)	Attendance Officer DSL informed
7	Second Fixed Penalty Issued	Attendance has not improved in the next 15 days	Attendance Officer DSL informed

<b>8</b>	<b>Pre-prosecution panel meeting and caution</b>	Attendance has failed to improve following series of interventions and support mechanisms	Attendance Officer DSL informed
<b>9</b>	<b>Court proceedings</b>	Attendance fails to improve following series of interventions and support mechanisms	Attendance Officer DSL informed
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>Any vulnerable students are phoned on the first day of absence with no contact from home, and every consecutive day.</b>	Unexplained absence – day 1	PSMs
	<b>Home visit by PSMs for vulnerable students on day two of unexplained absence</b>	2 days of continual absence with no contact from parents	PSMs
	<b>Safe and Well Check – home visit</b>	5 days of continual absence with no contact from parents or between 5 and 10 days of absence with no medical evidence provided	Attendance Officer
	<b>CME form sent to county</b>	Child missing from education with no response from family for 10 days	Attendance Officer and DSL

Note: These expectations are designed to be used as a guide. If colleagues have any particularly concerns these should be discussed with the Attendance Officer and Pastoral Team. The Pastoral Team will put interventions in place to support students in coming to school where necessary.

The Attendance Officer, HoS, PSM and member of the office staff will meet fortnightly to discuss attendance concerns and record which stage students are at. The reception staff will send letters out and attach to SIMs, at the direction of the Attendance Officer during the meeting.

<b><u>Punctuality Expectations</u></b>			
<b><u>Level</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Potential trigger</u></b>	<b><u>Owner (All actions logged on SIM's)</u></b>
<b>1</b>	<b>C3 20 minute detention issued for the following evening</b>	1 or more lates (AM registration or late to lesson)	Form Tutor/SLT on late duty/Subject teacher
	<b>OR C4 40 minute detention</b>	Late after 9am	School Office/Isolation room manager
<b>2</b>	<b>Punctuality panel - Attendance officer and HoS / Inform DSL</b>	If punctuality remains a serious concern and shows no sign of improvement in light of previous interventions	Attendance officer and HoS / inform DSL
<b>3</b>	<b>Punctuality letter Home visit if appropriate</b>	If punctuality remains a serious concern and shows no sign of improvement in light of previous interventions	Attendance officer & HOS/PSM - inform DSL
<b>4</b>	<b>Fixed penalty notice and/or Individual Punctuality Support Plan</b>	Over 10 lates in 12 week period - Punctuality has not improved following series of interventions and support mechanisms	Attendance officer & HOS/PSM - inform DSL
<b>Safeguarding</b>	<b>Starting Point referral if appropriate</b>	Safeguarding concern that could be contributing to issues with punctuality / attendance	Attendance officer / HoS/PSM and DSL



**Attendance Codes, Descriptions and Meanings**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
/	Present (am)	Present
\	Present (pm)	Present
B	Supervised Education off site	Approved Education Activity
C	Other authorised circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. student attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	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	Non-compulsory School age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Student not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to students	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Internal Codes</b>		
\$	Student in Inclusion	Present
K	Internal Exclusion	Present
%	Student in Medical Room	Present
&	Exams	Present