

NETHERTON MOSS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance and Punctuality Policy



OUR WHOLE SCHOOL TARGET IS **96%**

SO REMEMBER

'ON TIME EVERY DAY!'

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Netherton Moss Primary School is committed to providing excellence for children of all abilities. High attendance and good punctuality is essential for pupils to work to their full potential, be successful and benefit from the opportunities available to them at the School. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly.

Achieving high attendance is a necessity in preparing pupils for future working life as an adult. Pupils should be at the School, **on time and every day** that the School is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that parents and carers recognise the responsibility and obligation to make sure that pupils attend regularly. This Policy sets out how the School, its partners and parents/carers can work together to achieve this.

1.1 The Importance of Regular Attendance:

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring pupils' regular attendance at the School is the **legal responsibility of Parents. By law all children of compulsory school age must attend school.** Poor attendance not only undermines a child's education and future life chances, it sometimes puts children at risk, encouraging anti-social behaviour. Permitting absence from the School without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

1.2 Promoting Regular Attendance:

Helping to create a habit of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of School staff.

To maintain a focus on this the School will:

- Report to parents every six weeks about their child's attendance and punctuality.
- Celebrate good attendance in classes each week and by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through stickers, certificates and prizes each week and annually.

2.0 ABSENCE PROCEDURES

2.1 If a pupil is absent parents should:

- Contact the School by 9:30am ideally on the first day of absence; the dedicated telephone number is 0151 525 5026 (choosing option 1)
- Complete and submit the absence form available on the school App
- Send a note in on the first day that the pupil returns with an explanation of the absence (only if the first 2 options are unavailable to you)
- Parent/carers may also call into the School and report to the school office, where a member of staff will speak with them
- For absences that extend to a week (5 school days) some form of medical evidence is required; this can be in the form of a Doctor's appointment card/copy prescription/sight of prescribed medication.

2.2 If a pupil is absent the School will:

- Telephone or text parents/carers on the first day of absence if a message (that explains the absence) has not been received
- Invite parents in to discuss the situation with the Attendance Officer and/or the Parent Support Adviser, or in some cases the Deputy Headteacher

2.3 Telephone numbers:

- There are times when the School will need to contact parents on a range of issues, including absence, so it is essential that the School has up to date contact numbers at all times. The school should hold a minimum of 3 contact numbers for your child. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

3.0 LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a pupil misses the start of the day they often miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. Often being late can upset your child when they are required to walk in to a classroom where work is already underway. Persistent poor punctuality will result in sanctions being applied e.g. an attendance or punctuality contract, or referral to Attendance & Welfare Service.

3.1 How we manage lateness:

- at **8:45** the classroom doors will be opened
- at **8:55** the School day starts and pupils are expected to be **in class** by that time.
- at **9:00** the classroom doors are closed
- after **9:00** children should be brought in to school through the main entrance, where a responsible adult must report to the school office and complete the 'Late Book'.

In accordance with the Regulations, if pupils arrive after **9:30** they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an **unauthorised absence**. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a pupil has a persistent late record, parents/carers may be asked to meet with Attendance Officer, Parent Support Adviser and/ or the Headteacher, to resolve the problem. Parents/carers can approach the School at any time if they experience problems getting their child to the School on time.

4.0 UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCES

Every half-day absence from the School has to be classified by the School (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**.

Registers are taken twice a day by staff to record attendance marks for class. Registers are legal documents so all School staff are obliged to complete them accurately. Information about the cause of any absence is always required from parents/carers, preferably in writing.

4.1 Authorised

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the School for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in School time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

4.2 Unauthorised

Unauthorised absences are those which the School does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off unnecessarily.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at the School too late to get a mark. **After 9:30 each day.** A child arriving late after that time could be recorded as U (unauthorised). This will be dependent upon the circumstances.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- Oversleeping.
- Absent to look after an poorly sibling.
- Inadequate uniform.
- Confusion over terms dates.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the School, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend, parents/carers should not condone

their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending as this gives the child the impression that attendance does not matter.

5.0 EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE IN TERM TIME

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off during school term time to have exceptional leave. Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the School, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

5.1 Holiday during Term Time

It is the School's policy not to grant holidays in term time. Applications for leave for pupils during SATs week will not be granted. The Head teacher will have the final decision.

5.2 Exceptional Leave

Pupils have a total of 13 weeks holiday a year, so parents should only request that they be able to take their child out of school under **exceptional circumstances**. This is known as exceptional leave, and must be applied for by completing an application form available from the school office. Taking holidays in term time will affect a pupil's education and is not acceptable. All application letters for exceptional leave must be made at least two weeks in advance of the requested absence.

It is at the discretion of the Head teacher, that one absence up to a maximum of 5 days in any academic year may be authorised. In making a decision the Head teacher will consider the circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave in term time.

6.0 PERSISTENT ABSENTEEISM (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the School year for whatever reason. Absence at this level will do considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. The School expects parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. All absence is monitored thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority. Parents/carers will be informed of the concern immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully throughout the year and could be referred to the Attendance & Welfare Service.

Advice and support is always available in school or you can contact the school nurse.

7.0 PENALTY NOTICE PROCEEDINGS

Penalty Notices for absence from school can be issued by the Attendance and Welfare Service based on requests from schools.

The following circumstances are considered appropriate as reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Parentally condoned absence.
- Unauthorised leave of absence.
- Unwarranted delayed return from a granted leave of absence (without school agreement).
- Persistent late arrival after the register has closed.
- Truancy, including attendance and exclusion sweeps (formerly truancy sweeps).

The Penalty Notice process will be triggered, if a pupil is absent from school in one or several of these unauthorised absence circumstances, for at least ten school sessions (five days) in the current term, **and/or** eighteen sessions (9 days) over two consecutive terms.

Payment of a penalty within 28 days of receipt of the notice is £60. Payment after this time, but within 42 days of receipt of the notice is £120. **[The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012].**

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice, a check is made by the Attendance and Welfare Service to ensure that the request meets the terms of the Code of Conduct.

8.0 THE ROLE OF THE ATTENDANCE STAFF

Parents are expected to contact the School at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the case will be referred to the local authority, who will invite the parent to a school attendance panel. It is here they will receive a formal warning in relation to their child's attendance at school.

9.0 CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

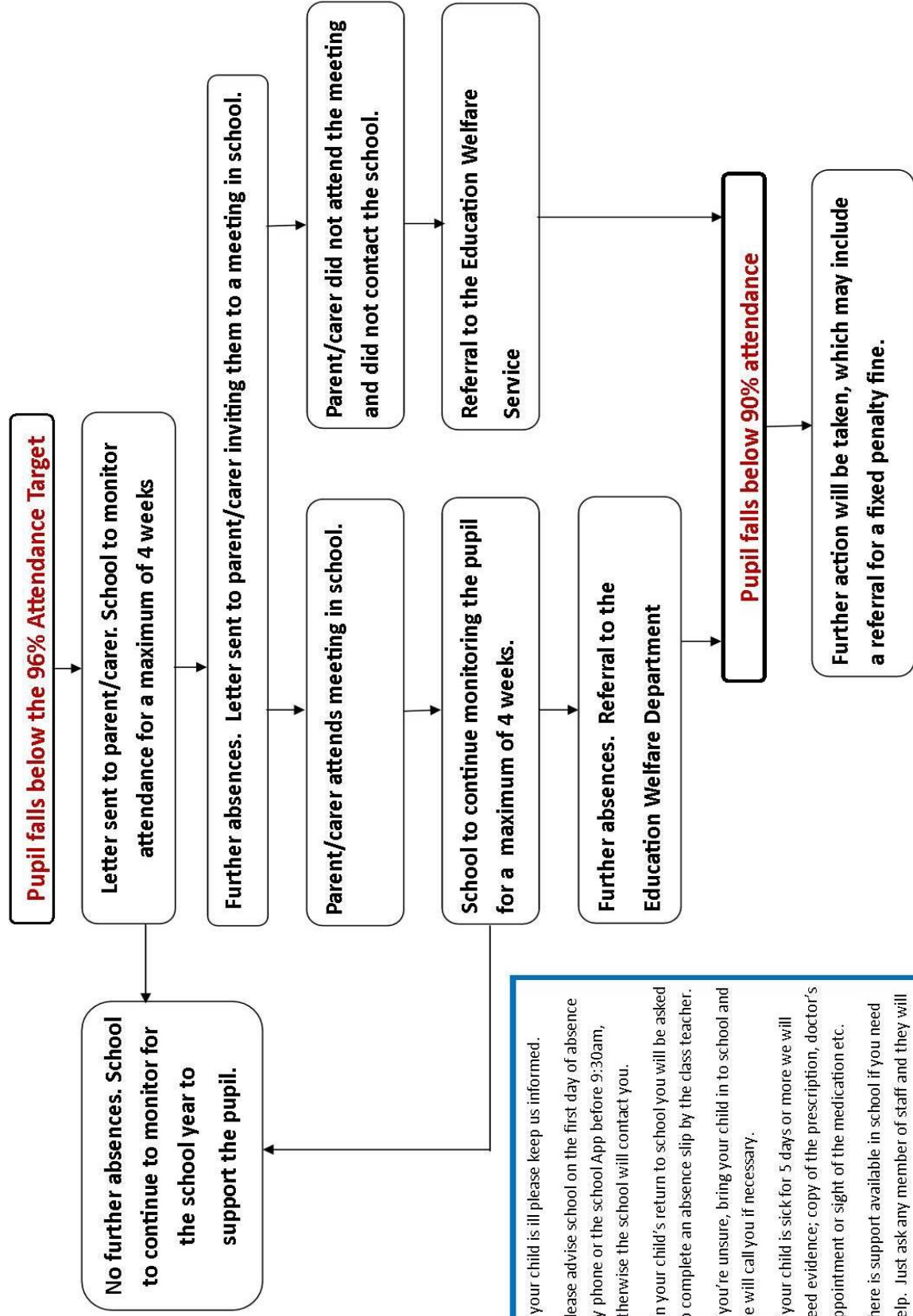
No child will be removed from roll without consultation between the Headteacher or the school's Attendance Lead and the Attendance & Welfare Service. Where a child is missing from education with prolonged absences that are unexplained, or if a family move away from the area but do not register with another school, the School will alert the local authority who will then take action according to child missing in education policy and procedures. Movement of children between local authorities and schools is tracked nationally.

10.0 PUBLICATION OF ATTENDANCE FIGURES

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

NETHERTON MOSS PRIMARY ATTENDANCE FLOW CHART



If your child is ill please keep us informed.
 Please advise school on the first day of absence by phone or the school App before 9:30am, otherwise the school will contact you.
 On your child's return to school you will be asked to complete an absence slip by the class teacher.
 If you're unsure, bring your child in to school and we will call you if necessary.
 If your child is sick for 5 days or more we will need evidence; copy of the prescription, doctor's appointment or sight of the medication etc.
 There is support available in school if you need help. Just ask any member of staff and they will point you in the right direction.