



Northfield Primary & Nursery School Attendance Policy

“Every Day Counts”

Introduction:

School attendance is mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age; it is our priority to ensure that children attend school. To achieve the best life opportunities for all children and to access the effective education and the continuity of learning experiences Northfield offers, it is vital that each child attends school regularly and punctually. School recognises that parents/carers have a crucial role to play in supporting and encouraging the good attendance and punctuality of their child/children.

1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations concerning school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will support parents/carers to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality.

Where parents/carers decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or obtaining permission for an absence in advance from the school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE’s statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on, at least, a termly basis
- Holding the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- The Strategic Development Committee and the Full Governing Body meetings discuss whole school attendance each term looking at patterns and persistent absentees, During these meetings the governing body examine recent trends and patterns in attendance and compare to historic trends; they benchmark the school's attendance against other schools similar in context and view attendance data on different vulnerable groups such as SEND, PP and children who have a social worker to ensure their attendance is good. The Governing Body set realistic goals for school attendance with school leaders and support and challenge school leaders to improve overall school attendance.

3.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy
- Report school-level absence data and trends to the governors using information provided by the attendance lead
- Deciding upon and issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Support attendance lead, if necessary, with parent/carer attendance panels
- In consultation with the attendance lead inform the local authority of parent/carers who require a fixed -penalty notice.

3.3 Parents/ Carers

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 the parents and carers are responsible for making sure that their child receives efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Regular attendance is defined, as "children must be at school every day that the school requires them to be."

- Parents/ carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy, as any absence will have a huge impact on their child's learning
- Must have their children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day at 8.45 a.m.
- Must inform school, by a phone call, via our online reporting system, of any absence on the first day of absence, and keep school up to date of any prolonged absence. If school are not informed of a reason for absence, this will be considered as unauthorised
- Must make applications for leave in writing on the school's 'Request to Remove a child from Education' form, giving the reason for the request at least 4 weeks in advance
- Must work with the school and The Family Service to improve lateness and attendance

- Need to avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day. Medical appointments should not normally need a full day; children should only be absent for the length of the appointment. They should attend school before the appointment and return to school immediately after
- If parents/carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should: in the first instance talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs their help to resolve, if not then contact school to seek support from the class teacher. If this cannot be resolved then contact the attendance lead.

3.4 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 8:50am and 1:10pm
- Building strong relationships with parents/carers, listening to barriers for attendance and working towards removing them for families
- Liaising with the attendance lead and the office staff to raise concerns about attendance and punctuality of the children in their class.
- Work co-operatively with the attendance lead and parents/ carers to support any attendance plans.

3.5 School Office Staff

School office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls and checking for messages from parents about absence and recording it on the school system
- Follow up any messages where no specific reason has been provided e.g. parent/carer has said the child is unwell
- Contacting parents/ carers of children who are absent and have not informed school of the reason why.
- Report concerns about attendance to the attendance lead
- Completing home visits with the Head teacher or other senior leader when there are concerns about a child's attendance or whereabouts
- In consultation with the attendance lead, contact parents/carers in relation to attendance

3.6 Attendance Lead

The school attendance lead is responsible for:

- Monitoring, along with the office staff, attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Compile attendance data to identify children whose attendance is concerning and report this to SLT during the weekly attendance and safeguarding meeting
- Meet with parent/carer to remove barriers which are preventing attendance and causing persistent absence and to set targets for improvement

- Advising the headteacher to request the local authority to issue fixed-penalty notices
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Summarising and analysing trends in absence and identifying future actions to improve attendance and punctuality.

4. Recording Attendance

4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register with all on-roll pupils.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent (authorised and unauthorised and the reasons why)
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
- On a part-time timetable

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

4.2 Register Timings

The register for the first session.

- The external doors/gates are opened at 8.35am, children make their way immediately to their classrooms.
- Teachers will make a prompt 8.45 start to learning.
- A full attendance mark will be given up to 8.50am, after 8.50am a late mark will be issued.
- Children arriving late will enter school through the main entrance, go straight to the school office; the lateness will be recorded by the office staff.
- At **9.15am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if a child arrives after that time they will receive a mark -U- which shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark, it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

The register for the second session is taken between 12:55 and 1:10pm.

4.3 Unplanned Absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00a.m. or as soon as practically possible.

This can be done by telephoning school (01623 625589) and speaking to an office member or leaving an answer phone message. Parents/carers can also report the on our online reporting system.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, parents/carers can check this on the online system.

4.4 Planned Absence

Parents/carers should make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. A whole day will not be authorised for an appointment unless there are exceptional circumstances.

When collecting a child/children for an appointment during the school day children will be brought to the office once the parent or carer has arrived at school. They will not be ready and waiting in reception. Parents/carers need to allow time for the office staff to locate and collect their child/children in school, this may take a little longer if they are in PE, an IT lesson or Forest School for example, as well as allowing enough time for them to be able to travel to their appointment.

Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.5 Holiday Requests in Term Time (Request to Remove a Child from Education)

In August 2024 the DfE introduced statutory guidance stating no holidays will be authorised in a school term. If parents/carers still wish to remove their child from education during term-time, they must apply as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. They should do this by collecting a 'Request to Remove a Child from Education' form from the school office. Any request to remove your child from education for **5 days/ 10 sessions over a ten-week rolling period** could lead to the local authority issuing a penalty notice or prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. For the first offence the penalty notice is set at up to **£160 per child per parent/carer**. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. A second offence within three years will lead to an automatic fine of **£160 per child per parent/carer**.

If a parent/carer has received two penalty notices over a three-year rolling period, and removes their child for a third time, (within the three-year rolling period) the local authority may prosecute via Magistrates court. This decision is the Local Authorities' and not the schools.

Unofficial "Extensions": If a child is taken out for a holiday of less than 5 days but is subsequently absent for additional days that exceed the unauthorised 5-day/10-session threshold, a penalty notice will be requested. For example, if there is a request for a 4-day holiday but the child is also sick for a day before and a day after, the school will consider those additional days as unauthorised without medical proof.

4.6 Suspected Holiday

If school suspects parents/carers have taken their child/ren on holiday a letter will be sent advising parents/carers that we need proof that they have not been on holiday. The onus is on the parent/carer to provide reasonable proof they were not on holiday.

- This proof could include a prescription provided locally within the dates of absence.
- A bank statement with local transactions within the dates of absence.

4.7 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9:15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed (after 9:15am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If the lateness is regular and sustained and/or impacting upon a child's progress, the Attendance lead will arrange a meeting to discuss reasons for the lateness and to offer support to improve the punctuality.

Ten unauthorised late marks in a six-week period may result in a fixed penalty fine being issued.

4.8 Following Up Absence

For any child who we expect to attend school and who does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by making a first day contact by 9:30am or as soon as possible
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.9 Reporting to Parents

- Parents/carers can view attendance data for their child/children on our online reporting system.
- The final yearly attendance will be reported in an annual school report which the parent/carer receives in the second half of the summer term.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence

The attendance lead in conjunction/under the authority of the Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence can be granted at the Head Teacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances that could not be reasonably foreseen and for which there was insufficient time to take the necessary action to resolve the situation arising from those circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Unauthorised Absences Graduated Response

The local authority can request penalty notices for unauthorised absences, where the child is of compulsory school age. A penalty notice is considered when a child has had 10 or more sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-week period. (10 sessions are equivalent to 5 school days.)

How the graduated response works at Northfield

1. If a child has had 6 sessions (3 days) of unauthorised absence a letter will be sent to parents/carers reminding them of their duty to ensure their child is in school.
2. If a child has a further 4 session (2 days) of unauthorised absence, within a 10-week rolling programme, the parents/carers will be invited to an attendance meeting where support will be offered alongside a target for improvement. If parents/carers fail to attend the meeting targets will be set in their absence and a letter sent to inform them of these targets.
3. If attendance does not improve following the attendance meeting and targets being set, a notice to improve will be issued. This will give parents/carers twenty school days (4 weeks) to improve their child's attendance. During this time their child must show significant improvements in attendance and avoid having any unauthorised absences. Should insufficient improvements be made and further

unauthorised absences take place during this period a Penalty Notice may be issued / a referral may be made to the Local Authority requesting they issue you with a Penalty Notice.

If issued with a penalty notice, the penalty is set at up to **£160 per child per parent/carer** and should be paid within 28 days of the date of which the notice starts. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute.

For a second offence (within 3 years) the penalty notice will be £160. For third or further offences (within 3 years) a penalty notice will not be issued; instead, the case may be referred to the magistrates' court under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

If a penalty notice is not paid, or for more serious cases like repeat offenses, legal action can be taken in the magistrates' court. This could result in a larger fine (up to £2,500 per parent), a Community Order, or even a custodial sentence.

6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

To promote good attendance, the following strategies are used:

Weekly attendance figures are read out in assembly. The class with the best attendance receives a certificate and a cup. The class with the best attendance at the end of each term will receive a reward.

Classes with good attendance are celebrated on the home page of the website and on the termly newsletter.

At the end of each term an attendance assembly will take place. Children with 100% attendance will receive a small prize in recognition, children with over 96% attendance will receive a certificate. The class with the best attendance will be recognised.

Children who have 100% attendance for the whole year are presented with a book of their choice.

Days which show a trend for poor attendance will be identified and one-off incentives will be chosen to encourage attendance on these days.

7. Attendance Monitoring

The office staff at Northfield monitor pupil absences daily.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to phone school **every day** that their child is absent to give an update.

Day 1 - If we have not received a phone call from parents/carer by 9:30 a.m. (or as soon as possible after this time), the office staff will make first day contact. Until contact with the parent/carer is made, this absence will remain unauthorised.

Day 2 - In the event of a parent/carer not responding on the first day a telephone call will be made to attempt to contact them.

Day 2 onwards If a child/children are subject to child protection or are deemed a child in need then the social worker will be informed if required or school are concerned.

Day 3 to 5 – If parents/carers have not made contact by day 3, the attendance lead will be informed, and a home visit will take place to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. A letter will be posted through the home address of the parent/ carer of the child stating a home visit has taken place and school need to be contacted as soon as possible by the parent.

NB: If a child is not seen by school staff by day 3, and/or contact has not been made to parents/carers, a phone call to the police and/or social care will be made. In addition, children whose attendance is of concern will automatically proceed to step 3, if contact is not made on day 2.

If a pupil's absence goes above the expected number of days for the specific illness, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this. The school uses the Public Health guidance to ascertain the recommended number of days required for illnesses.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. See grid below:

Term	No of Absences
September – October 1 st Half Term	3½ days
September – December Autumn Term	7 days
September – February Half Year	10 days
September – Easter Autumn & Spring Term	12½ days
September – May 5 Half Terms	15½ days
September – July Full Academic Year	19 days

7.1 September Procedure

Parents/Carers whose children have had attendance below 90 in the previous academic year will receive a letter to inform them that their child's attendance will be monitored closely over the following year

7.2 Punctuality Monitoring

Children who are late must report to the school office and a late mark is entered on the register.

Informal school support:

Step 1 - Lateness is monitored by the Class Teacher. If they have concerns regarding a child's punctuality they will speak with the parent/carer regarding their concerns. They will record on CPOMS when they had this conversation.

Step 2 - If the lateness continues, the teacher will email the Attendance lead who will make a phone call and record on CPOMS. If needed a meeting will be held to support to remove the barriers to punctuality, the child's punctuality will be monitored.

Step 3 – If a child's punctuality improves after the 6-week monitoring period, a message will be sent via in recognition of this.

If a child's punctuality does not improve, a letter requesting they meet with the Attendance Lead will be sent so a more formal plan or referral to relevant support services can be made. At this meeting, the Attendance Lead and parents/carers will agree a plan and agreements put in place. This will be monitored daily by the office staff and reported back to the Attendance Lead. If the parents/carers do not attend, then a letter will be sent to inform them of the targets to improve their child's punctuality.

Issuing fixed penalty notice:

Step 4 - A referral to Family Service or fixed penalty fine being issued. Ten unauthorised late marks in a six-week period may result in a fixed penalty fine being issued.

8. Children missing in education

Who are children deemed to be missing education?

Those who do not arrive at their identified school with no explanation for their absence

- admission intake

Those whose whereabouts ARE known but not on a school roll

- moved into county
- immigration
- child health visits

Those whose whereabouts ARE unknown but on a school role

- migration
- moved out of county / house move

Those who fall out of the education system and not on a school role

- exclusion
- school transfer
- Travellers

Children Missing Education Referral Process (Appendix A)

Discussion can be held between School and Children Missing Officer (CMO)

Referral made via email to glen.scruby@nottsc.gov.uk which would include:-

- Name / D.O.B. of young person (include details of known siblings)
- Date of last day in school
- All contact details for parent/carers and emergency contacts
- A clear record of all attempts/actual conversations with parent/carers
- Contacts with known professionals (Social Care, Family Service, Health, Education)
- Actions as a result of visits
- If known, or indicated inform CMO of the area the family are believed to be in
- Do School have safeguarding concerns?

Do NOT remove the child from your roll until initial checks have been completed by CMO and have been advised to do so.

Elective home education (EHE) Northfield will follow Nottinghamshire County Council guidance relating to elective home education.

[EHE Policy 2024 2028](#)

9. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs. Carolyn Burgin (Attendance Lead). At every review, the full Governing Body will approve the policy.

10. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Mental Health policy
- Medicine Policy

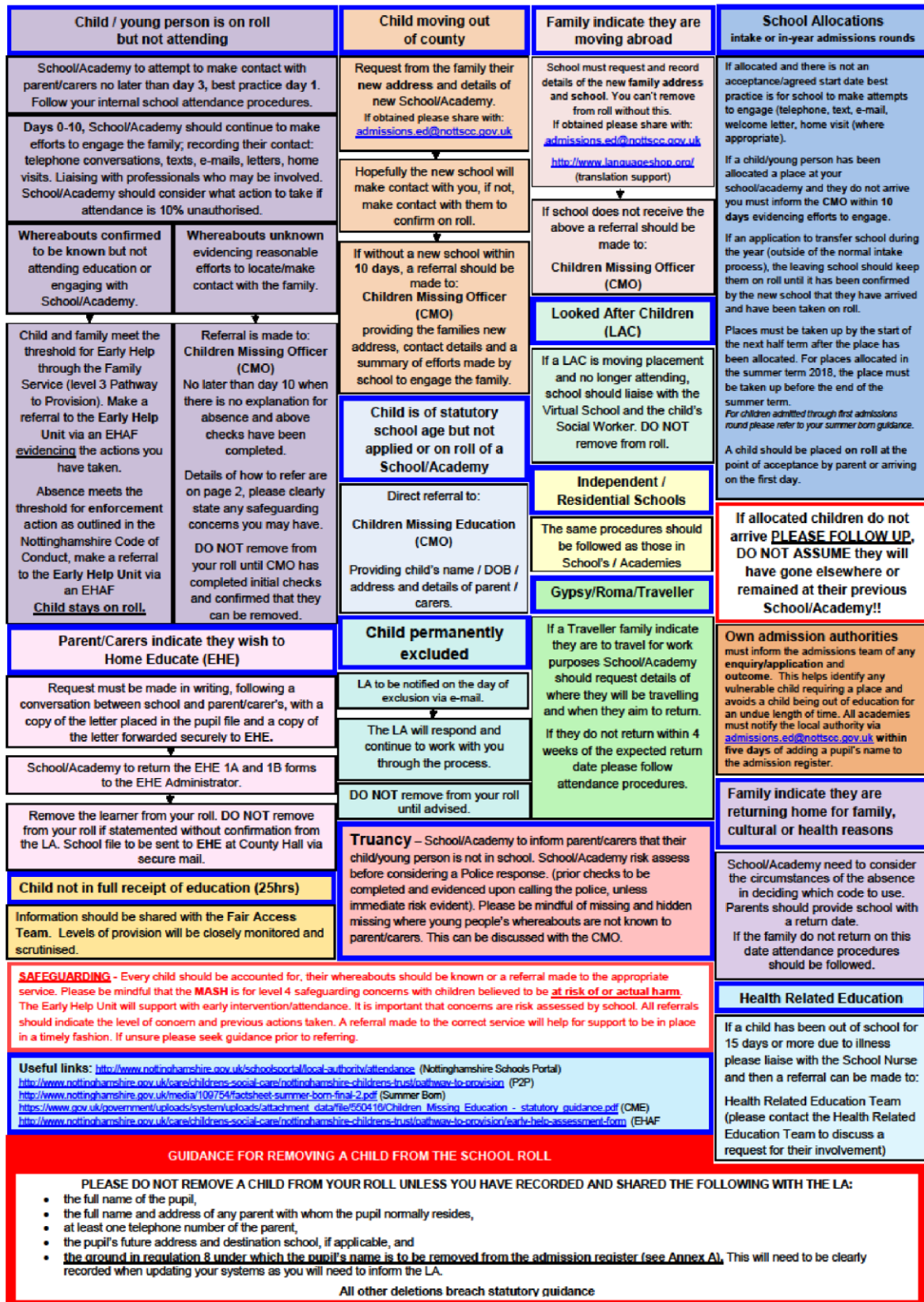
11. Other Documents

- Northfield Primary and Nursery School: Quick guide to school attendance. (Appendix B)
- Northfield Primary and Nursery School: Guidance on childhood illnesses and school attendance. (Appendix C)

Author: Mrs Burgin
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Appendix A: School Attendance Guidance (flowchart)

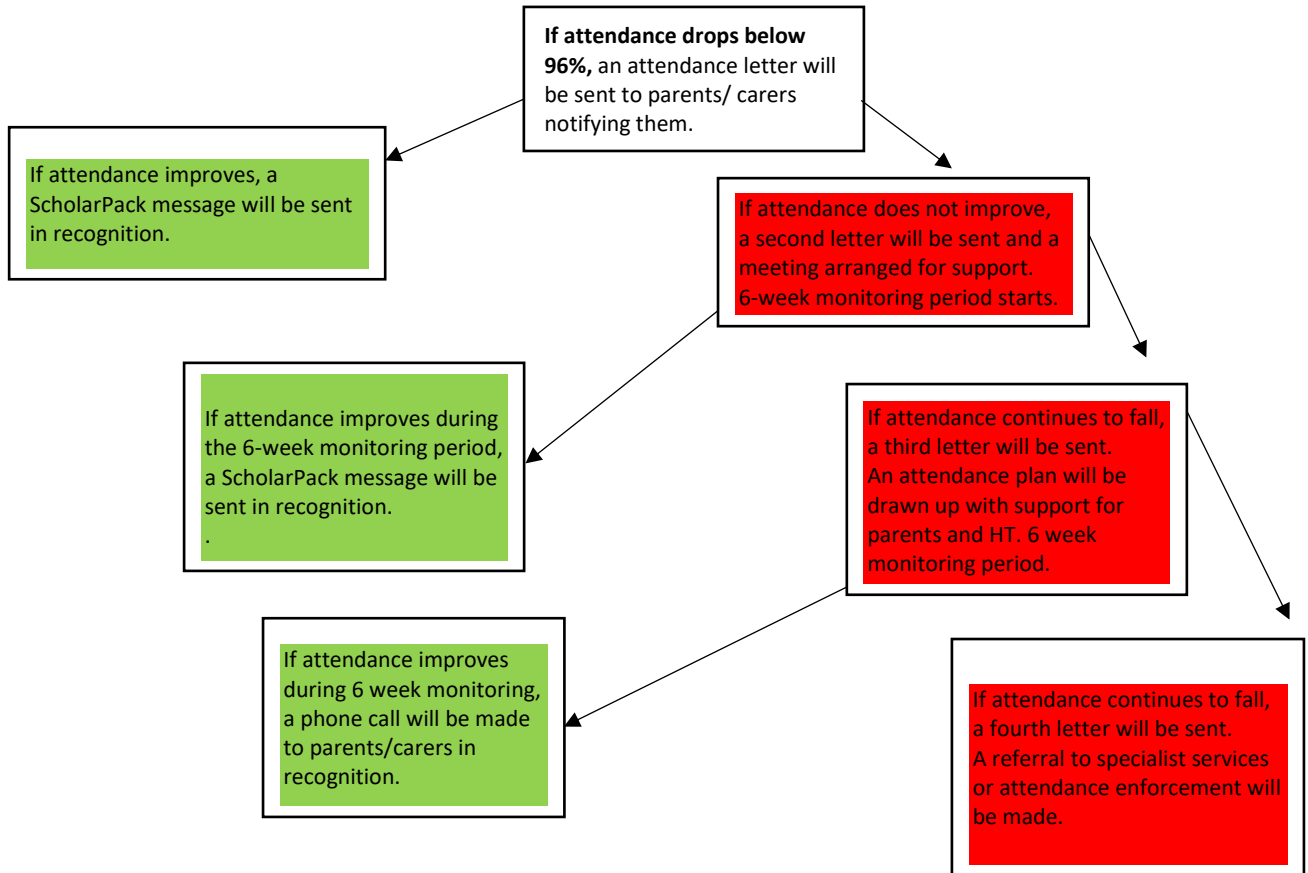
GUIDANCE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND BUSINESS MANAGERS WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION



Appendix B: Northfield Primary and Nursery School: Quick guide to school attendance

If your child is ill and needs to be away from school, phone school by 9:00am.

Attendance falling below 92% will result in attendance tracking (see below).



For children's attendance to fall below 92% they only have to be absent for the following number of days.

Term	No of Absences
September – October 1 st Half Term	1.5 days
September – December Autumn Term	3 days
September – February Half Year	4 days
September – Easter Autumn & Spring Term	5 days
September – May 5 Half Terms	6.5 days
September – July Full Academic Year	7.5 days

Appendix C: Northfield Primary and Nursery School: Guidance on childhood illnesses & school attendance



Good attendance starts from your child's first day at school or nursery. Children who attend have a better chance at fulfilling their potential, making friends, understanding routines and boundaries and keeping up.

Research shows that **overall absence had a negative link to attainment**, with every extra day missed associated with a lower chance of achieving 5 or more good GCSEs or equivalent at grades A* to C including in English and mathematics.

Introduction

As a parent, it can be difficult to decide whether your child is well enough to go to school. To help avoid unnecessary school absences, Northfield has produced this leaflet as a general guide to help you decide whether your child is well enough to attend school when they have a minor illness.

Advice and guidance have been taken from NHS England, The World Health Organisation and Public Health England.

Missing lessons is upsetting for children and there is good evidence that children achieve better at school when they have good school attendance rates. Parents have a duty to ensure their child is not absent where this can be avoided. School may not authorise your child's absence for a minor illness if they thought it was not necessary.

When should I keep my child off school?

Your child should only be kept away from school due to illness if they:

1. Have an infectious illness which could spread to other people
2. Need care during school hours that cannot be carried out in school
3. Are so unwell that they are not able to cope with lessons

The NHS website has useful advice here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=It's%20fine%20to%20send%20your,to%20wash%20their%20hands%20regularly.>

If you are not sure, check the guidance in this leaflet. If you are still unsure, contact:

- School
- The school nurse

- A pharmacist or GP

How can you help?

Always contact school if your child is going to be absent due to illness.

Keep school up to date with your contact details in case your child is ill during the school day.

Many children experience common illnesses from time to time. Most of these illnesses do not need a prescription or a visit to your doctor and do not need time away from school. Often treating your child's illness, yourself, or with advice and medicines from your pharmacist, can be the quickest and easiest way to deal with it. Please remember that early morning aches and pains often pass, so don't keep your child at home 'just in case' when they could be learning in class.

When you send your child to school with minor aches or pains, tell the school staff and they will phone you if your child continues to have symptoms.

Medicines in school

Your child does not need to be kept at home just because they are taking medicines. A member of staff can give medicines that have been prescribed four times a day, in school. Medicines prescribed three times a day can be given before school at home, when the child arrives back home and then before bed.

School staff can give regular medicines or creams, if a care plan is completed by parents/carers. Please speak to your child's class teacher about this.

Health tips to ensure that your child is happy, healthy and able to participate fully in school activities

Your child should:

- Be registered with a GP and a dentist
- Have regular checks with their dentist and optician
- Have all the childhood immunisations recommended by the Department of Health
- Have a healthy diet and exercise
- Get enough sleep by going to bed on time

Please speak to school staff or nurse at the GP surgery, if you have any concerns about your child.

Guidance and recommended time away from school

Illness	Recommended days off school
Chicken pox	5 days or until spots have scabbed over
Cold sores	0 days
Conjunctivitis	0 days
Diarrhoea or vomiting	48 hours from last episode
Flu	As soon as they have recovered
Glandular fever	0 days
Hand, foot and mouth	0 days
Head lice	0 days (treatment needed at home)
High temperature	Until temperature is controlled/ seek medical advice
Impetigo	48 hours after starting antibiotic treatment
Measles	4 days from start of rash
Molluscum contagiosum	0 days

Mumps	5 days from glands swelling
Ringworm	0 days (treatment needed at home)
Rubella	4 days from start of rash
Scabies	Can return after first treatment
Scarlet fever	1 day after treatment has been started
Slapped cheek	0 days (once rash has developed they are not contagious)
Threadworms	0 days (treatment needed at home)
Tonsillitis	2 days (After starting antibiotic treatment)
Warts/ verrucae	0 days
Whooping cough	2 days (After starting antibiotic treatment)

Guidance on Health protection in schools and other childcare facilities (PHE 2018) & NHS guidance.

Other health concerns

If your child has a long-term illness, you should discuss this with the school. Usually, it is possible to arrange medication so that it is not taken during school hours. School staff may need to be made aware of the illness so that if it causes problems while your child is at school, they know how to help.

When a parent or sibling is ill

You should make other arrangements to get any well children to school. Family/ sibling illness is not considered a good enough reason for children to be absent from school. Developing good family or parent networks can be helpful, as schools will not usually authorise absence due to parental or sibling illness. Please discuss any difficulties with the school, as they may be able to offer support.

Quick links:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/#:~:text=It's%20fine%20to%20send%20your,to%20wash%20their%20hands%20regularly.>

<https://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/your-babys-health/common-illnesses/childhood-illnesses-six-tips-for-how-prevent-them>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-health-improvement-and-disparities>

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/adult-social-care/d2n2-health-and-well-being-hub/parenting>

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/care/childrens-social-care/family-services>