



NORTH FERRIBY C E PRIMARY SCHOOL

PLANNED ABSENCE POLICY

Date of New Policy	Spring 2018
Review Date	Spring 2019
Type of Policy:	School
Co-ordinator	Mr R Orr
Link Governor:	Derek Shepherd
Committee:	Full Governors

Mission Statement:

A Christian School with children at its heart.

Christian Values Statement:

At North Ferriby CE Primary School, we keep Christian values at the heart of our school community where we live, love and learn together.

Ethos Statement for North Ferriby CE VC Primary:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

YORK DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

Background

Schools are required to provide education for 190 days a year and it is expected that children who are registered at a school will attend for this time. Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have time off school and any requests for absence are entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Research shows that children do not achieve as well in their education and in public examinations the more school absence they have, for example a child absent from school for a period of two weeks each year, for exceptional circumstances and with the average absence for illness may miss the equivalent of one whole year's education over their school life.

General Principles

The following general principles underpin this policy:

- (i) The principles of honesty, openness, transparency and the spirit of co-operation underpin the policy.
- (ii) All schools within the East Riding that have adopted this policy agree to follow it through to penalty notice if appropriate. This will ensure that the policy is applied in a consistent manner and provides equity for all parents and schools.
- (iii) Support of this policy from the local authority will be as a partner in both the primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships. The achievement and inclusion services of the Council will ensure other local authority departments are aware of and include the philosophy of this policy in their practice.
- (iv) Where a request for absence form is not submitted, absences cannot be authorised retrospectively; this is prescribed in law and in these circumstances the penalty notice code of conduct must be followed.
- (v) Data from each individual school in relation to requests for absence will be monitored by the local authority and shared with schools and the partnerships. This will allow the partnerships to assess the impact of this policy.
- (vi) The behaviour and attendance partnerships will review this policy annually or in line with any legislative changes.

Policy

In order for consideration to be given, requests for absence must be for exceptional circumstances only. The primary and secondary behaviour and attendance partnerships and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council agree to follow the law, in such that the provision for Headteachers to authorise absence purely for the purpose of a family holiday is not an exceptional circumstance. Exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 4 above, the Headteacher agrees to consult with the chair of governors before making a decision.

Evidence would be required in each case.

If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:

- 1) The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils).
- 2) Year six transition day (for pupils in year six).
- 3) Year six SATs week (for pupils in year six).
- 4) Year nine options time (for pupils in year nine).
- 5) At any time during years 10 & 11 (for all pupils in these year groups).

In addition to these times, North Ferriby Primary School will not normally authorise planned absences for periods which coincide with the following times:

- The month of December
- Harvest Festival
- Two weeks prior to Easter holiday
- The month of May (for all Y2 pupils)
- The 'Phonics Check' week (for Y1 pupils)

Consistency across our large geographical area is vital for parental confidence. If a Headteacher has any doubts their thoughts can be discussed with the principal education welfare officer for advice and guidance prior to informing parents of their final decision. Headteachers would be well advised to keep a log of their decision making rationale.

Looked After Children

This policy applies to all children, including those who are Looked After Children. The Headteacher will only approve an absence for a Looked After Child in accordance with Children, Family & Adult Services guidance. The only person who can request an absence for an East Riding Looked After Child is the area manager. Requests from foster carers and social workers should not be considered.

Headteachers should, in the cases of a child placed in an East Riding school who is a Looked After Child from another local authority, consult with the child's social worker. The social worker will enquire from that local authority what agreements or exemptions their policy on exceptional circumstances contains.

Persistent Absence:

A child is deemed to be a persistent absentee if their attendance is 90% or less. When a request for a planned absence is received the Headteacher will look at the pupil's current attendance data. If the data shows that the pupil is at risk of being deemed a persistent absentee then the absence may not be authorised, but the Headteacher agrees to consult with the Chair of Governors before making a decision.