



# **Nafferton Primary School**

## **Promoting Good School Attendance**

### **Information for Parents**

#### **Introduction:**

We aim to provide a school environment which enables and encourages all our pupils to gain the maximum benefit from the education provided. There is a clear link between attendance and educational attainment: for children to flourish it is vital that they attend school on time, and every day unless the reason for absence is unavoidable.

It is vital therefore that you ensure your child attends regularly and this guidance sets out how together we can achieve this.

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in punctuality.

#### **Why Regular Attendance is so important:**

There is a clear link between attendance and attainment. Any absence affects your child's education, and regular absence seriously affects their learning, disrupts teaching routines and the learning of others in the same class.

As a parent/carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure your child attends school regularly. Permitting absence from school without good cause is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

#### **Promoting Regular Attendance:**

Creating a regular pattern of attendance is everybody's responsibility, parents, pupils and members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Publish details of whole school attendance in our regular newsletter.
- Report to you regularly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.
- Celebrate good or improving attendance by rewarding individual or class achievements, through class competitions, certificates and rewards.

## **Understanding types of absence:**

The register is a legal document and every absence from school has to be recorded and classified by the school (not by the parent) as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why the cause of any absence is always required.

AUTHORISED absences are sessions away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Please advise the school if your child is not able to attend school through illness, Local Authority requirements are that they are to remain at home after sickness and diarrhoea for 48 hours from the last episode.

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 Local Authority using sanctions and or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absences include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. shopping trips, looking after other children or birthdays
- Truancy
- Absences which have not been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school after the register has closed (30 minutes after the start of school)
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes there are other issues that affect their attendance. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never good to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This can make things worse as it gives the impression that attendance does not matter. Any problems maintaining regular attendance are best sorted out at an early stage between the school, parents and pupil. Swift contact between home and school is more likely to result in a successful outcome for your child.

## **Persistent Absenteeism (PA):**

Government directs that a persistent absentee is a pupil that misses 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is seriously detrimental to a child's educational prospects.

At this school we monitor all absence thoroughly and if your child is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils and their parents will be invited to an action plan meeting where support and strategies to improve attendance will be offered.

PA cases may be referred to the EWS.

At the end of each term data will be produced, action will be taken as follows:

90-95 % - A letter will be sent home.

85-90 % - Contact made and an interview conducted.

Below 85 % - Referred to Education Welfare Service.

Past attendance in exceptional circumstances will be reviewed at the Heads discretion.

## **Absence Procedures:**

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence.
- Contact us again if your child is still absent after 3 days.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone you if we have not heard from you.
- If absence persists, we will invite you in to discuss the situation.
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Service if attendance falls below 85%.

## **Telephone numbers:**

There are times when we need to contact parents, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. Please make sure we have an up to date number in case of emergency.

## **The Education Welfare Service:**

We ask that you contact the school at an early stage if you are experiencing difficulties with your child attending school. Working together nearly always results in a successful outcome; if difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may refer to the Education Welfare Service, who can offer further support and guidance.

## **Punctuality:**

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they will miss work and will not receive information and news for the day. Pupils arriving late disrupt the lessons and it can be embarrassing for the child.

## **How we manage lateness:**

The school day starts at 8.55am and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers are marked by 9.05am and by 1.15pm; your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

At 9.30am the register will close. If your child arrives after this time they will receive a mark which shows that they are in school, but in accordance with regulations it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This means that if lateness persists you may face the possibility of receiving a penalty notice.

If your child is late due to attending a medical appointment, they will receive a late mark if they arrive by 10.45am. If your child arrives after 10.45am they will receive a mark indicating medical appointment for the whole session.

## **Term Time Holidays:**

There is no automatic entitlement in law to take time off school to go on holiday. Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling just as any other absence would.

Requests for authorised holiday must fall in to one of the following categories-

- Where you have to take holidays at a time specified by your employer.
- Where a holiday abroad is recommended as part of your, or your child's, rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
- Where you are considering emigration and wish to visit the country as part of your consideration.
- To attend a wedding or funeral of a close member of the family that is taking place out of the area.

Evidence would be required in each case.

If your request is approved, you are required to ensure your child catches up on any missed school work. This is your responsibility and the school is not obliged to provide work for your child to complete.

Any excessive family holiday or any unauthorised leave of absence will be recorded as unauthorised by the school on your child's records. This may result in legal proceedings against you, either through a Penalty Notice or the Magistrates' Court.

All staff are committed to working with parents and pupils to raise attendance levels and ensure the best outcomes for pupils attending our school. We appreciate your support in this endeavour. If you wish to discuss attendance matters please contact:

Mrs L Riby Parent Support Advisor

Mr P Johnson Head Teacher

Telephone number: 01377 254307