



# Northfield Manor Primary Academy

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date of last review:	October 2024	Review period:	1 year
Date of next review:	October 2025	Type of Policy:	School
Approval by:	Headteacher	Signed:	<i>Emma Tunley</i>

## Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Our aim at Northfield Manor Primary Academy is to provide the greatest opportunity for children's learning and endeavour to provide all pupils with an equal chance to make the most of the education that our school offers, by providing a welcoming, caring and positive environment.

At Northfield Manor we strive to achieve 96.1% and above for all pupils.

### Aims

At Northfield Manor we aim to:

- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Build strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school
- Promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance (applies from 19 August 2024) and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment](#)

#### It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Kee in Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## Roles and Responsibilities:

Academy Council	Headteacher and Attendance Lead	Teachers	Office staff	Parents/Carers	Pupils
<p>Set high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers</p> <p>Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos</p> <p>Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources</p> <p>Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs</p> <p>Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer</p>	<p>The implementation of this policy at the school</p> <p>Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school</p> <p>Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis</p> <p>Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies</p> <p>Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels</p> <p>Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues</p> <p>Making referrals for fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, 'Support First'</p> <p>Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed</p>	<p>Are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office</p> <p>Set work for pupils who are absent for a long period</p> <p>Ensure that systems are in place so that work missed can be easily made up</p> <p>Ensure that the classroom continues to be a safe environment where plans are made to meet individual pupils needs and lessons continue to be as relevant and stimulating</p> <p>Refer concerns and action taken to relevant staff</p>	<p>Will take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system</p> <p>Transfer calls from parents/carers where appropriate in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance</p>	<p>Will make sure their child attends every day, on time</p> <p>Call the school to report child's absence on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return</p> <p>Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child</p> <p>Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day</p> <p>Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority</p> <p>Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Mrs Sheldon via dojo or telephone</p>	<p>Attend school every day, on time</p>

## Registration

- Registration takes place using an electronic system call SIMs.
- Registers are taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. This is the responsibility of the class teacher/staff member. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.
- If a class are on a day trip, the register must be completed for both the morning and afternoon sessions. The afternoon session should not however be completed for those pupils that are not going on the trip (office staff will monitor this).

- Registers must be completed accurately because they constitute a legal document and form part of a chain of evidence.

### ***Procedures for dealing with absences***

- On the first day of absence, parent/carers are expected to call the office and provide a reason for absence. A text is sent to all parent/carers of pupils absent each day when the registers close at 9.25am. If no contact is made by 10.00am a telephone call will be made to parent/carer by office staff and the reason recorded.  
If member of office staff/other staff is not satisfied with the reason given for a particular absence or period of absence, this will be referred to Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher.
- If any absence is continued with no reason, all emergency contact numbers will be telephoned to try and ascertain whereabouts of a pupil.
- DSL will make telephone calls to any pupil's families at any time if there are any concerns around absences and further actions may be taken for example a safe and well home visit.
- If pupils are absent for medical reasons, then medical evidence will be requested. Failure to provide this will result in an unauthorised absence.
- Poor attendance with persistent authorised illness and unauthorised absences concerns will be addressed by DSL and HT. This can be seen as 'educational neglect' and Early Help is offered to families, school meetings, referrals made to school nurse and external agencies.
- Absences are monitored on a regular basis by office staff, DSL and HT.

### **Attendance Thresholds 2024-2025**

Attendance during one school year	Equals this number of days absent	Which is approximately this many weeks absent	Which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons

### ***Part-time or Reduced Timetables***

In very exceptional circumstances, there may be a need for a temporary part-time or reduced timetable to meet a pupils individual needs. For example, where a medical condition stops a pupil from attending full-time education or a reduced timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

### ***Personalised Pupil Progress Tracking Sheets***

Poor attendance or persistent absence is likely to be a significant barrier to learning and attainment. During pupil progress meetings between teachers and senior leadership team, attendance issues that are impacting on a pupil's progress are discussed and recorded. These concerns are communicated with the DSL Teachers continue to share concerns through fortnightly meetings.

### ***What do we define as being late?***

If a pupil arrives at school after 8.55am (when the gates close) the pupil is considered to be late and will be given a late mark 'L'. The time registers are closed officially is 9.25am. If a pupil arrives after this time they will be given a 'U' mark (late after registers close) which counts as an unauthorised absence for the whole session.

### ***Procedures for dealing with lateness***

- School gates are closed at 8.55am after this time a pupil is classed as arriving 'late' and must be brought through the main office only.
- The person who is responsible for bringing the pupil to school must come and sign the pupil in on our electronic system situated inside the main school entrance.
- If lateness becomes a concern for any pupil, then this is communicated with DSL who will take appropriate action for example a letter sent to parent/carers and a meeting in school, if further sessions of lateness.

- Punctuality is monitored on a regular basis by office staff/DSL and HT.

### **Medical Appointments**

Parents are actively encouraged to make routine medical appointments, outside the school day such as dentist, optician and GPs' surgeries outside of school hours and during the school holidays. Parents need to inform the office in advance of any medical appointments and show the appointment letter/card or text/email. A pupil absence for medical appointments will only be authorised for the session as code 'M' morning or afternoon session. If the pupil does not return after appointment, then the session will be unauthorised.

### **Early Help**

'Working together to improve school attendance' identifies that effective Early Help relies upon local agencies working together to identify children and families who would benefit from support, undertaking an Early Help assessment and providing targeted services to address those needs to significantly improve outcomes.

### **Support First**

'Support First' is the new framework (August 2024) which should be used in all cases of absence. 'Support First' is based on the expectation outlined in the statutory guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' that schools and agencies should support pupils and parents by working together to address any in-school barriers to attendance: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

Where we are concerned about a pupil's absence levels, whether absence is authorised or unauthorised, it is important to know that the school will act to improve attendance levels at the earliest opportunity.

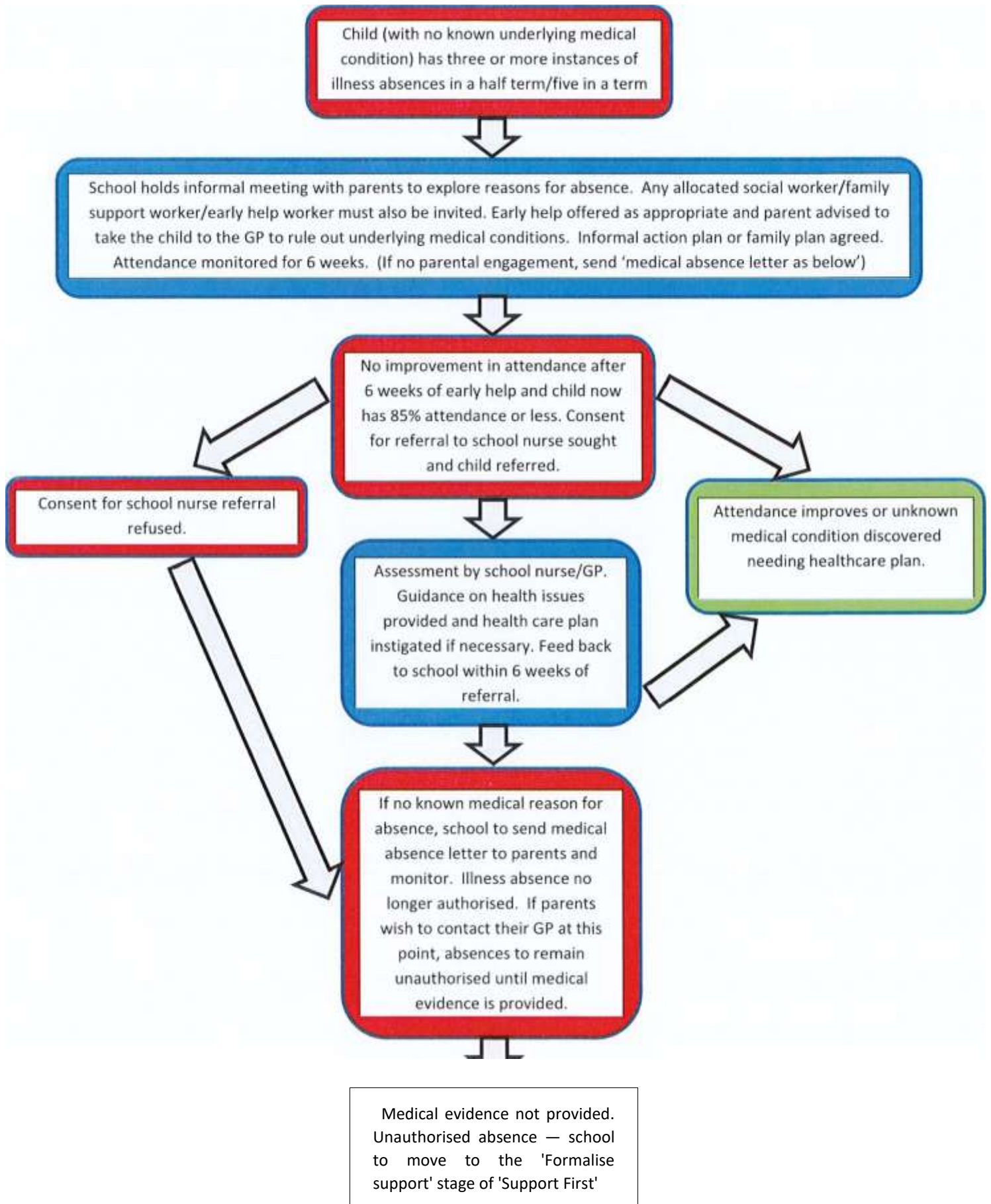
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It does not apply where support isn't applicable such as in cases of unauthorised leave in term time. We will use the 'Leave of Absence (Legal) Process'.

### **What must support from the school include?**

Support must include:

- Completing the 'The Signs of Safety Framework' (three houses) form with the child (section 6 of the Early Help Assessment form). This should determine if a full early help assessment is required.
- Inviting the parents/carers into school for an informal supportive meeting and offering an early help assessment as appropriate (use section 7 of the Early Help Assessment form to determine if a full assessment is needed)
- Ensuring other practitioners already involved with the family, such as social workers, family support workers, or early help workers are included in any discussions, planning or target setting related to school attendance and that improving attendance is included in any formal plans.
- Where the child has an EHCP, ensuring the plan has been reviewed as part of the school's obligations outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (at least annually) to ensure that the provision is suitable to meet their needs (unless the initial EHCP has been issued within the last year)
- Advising parents/carers that they can apply for travel assistance if the home to school distance is more than 2 miles for children up to 8 years, 3 miles for children aged 8 and over (though they are unlikely to receive assistance if they chose the school despite nearer school places)
- Following the 'Frequent Illness Absence Protocol' where there is frequent illness absence from school. Addressing any barriers to good school attendance including child mental health; homelessness; caring responsibilities etc.





'Support First' reflects the model of attendance intervention outlined in 'Working together to improve school attendance' where all partners should work together to...

### EXPECT

Aspire to high standards of attendance from all pupils and parents and build a culture where all can, and want to, be in school and ready to learn by prioritising attendance improvement across the school.

### MONITOR

Rigorously use attendance data to identify patterns of poor attendance (at individual and cohort level) as soon as possible so all parties can work together to resolve them before they become entrenched.

### LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

When a pattern is spotted, discuss with pupils and parents to listen to understand barriers to attendance and agree how all partners can work together to resolve them.

### FACILITATE SUPPORT

Remove barriers in school and help pupils and parents to access the support they need to overcome the barriers outside of school. This might include an early help or whole family plan where absence is a symptom of wider issues.

### FORMALISE SUPPORT

Where absence persists and voluntary support is not working or not being engaged with, partners should work together to explain the consequences clearly and ensure support is also in place to enable families to respond. Depending on the circumstances this may include formalising support through a parenting contract or education supervision order.

### ENFORCE

Where all other avenues have been exhausted and support is not working or not being engaged with, enforce attendance through statutory intervention or prosecution to protect the pupil's right to an education.

### ***Leave in Term Time (Legal Process)***

- From 1st September 2013, The Education (Pupil Registration — England) Regulations 2013 and the Education (Penalty Notices — England) Regulations 2013 are in force and followed by this school. The law clearly states that parents have a legal duty to ensure their child/children attend school regularly and that head teachers can only authorise leave during term time in exceptional circumstances, which must be evidenced.
- From 1st September 2016, further amendments were made to the same regulations relating to removal from roll.
- On 19th August 2024, those regulations were replaced by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, specifically regulation 11. 'Working together to improve school attendance' states that all schools are expected to restrict leaves of absence as described in regulation 11.
- The Leave of Absence (Legal) Process was developed to work in conjunction with other legal processes such as 'Support First' (which aims to reduce on-going absence), in order to reduce the unauthorised leave of absence in term time taken by pupils.

### ***School Procedures and Local Authority 'Leave in Term Time'***

- A whole school letter in line with Birmingham City Council Education is sent out at the beginning of the school year by email and on the school website informing all parents/carers. This is in line with the policies in all other local schools.
- Northfield Manor does not authorise 'leave in term time' unless there are exceptional circumstances and satisfied with evidence presented. All requests must be written for the attention of the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead. The outcome of the request will clearly state if the leave is authorised or unauthorised and will be sent out by post.
- Where children do not attend school, but unauthorised leave of absence is suspected (parents have not made a request for example) School will then follow the 'Children Missing Education' procedures, for safeguarding purposes, jointly making reasonable enquiries to try to locate the pupil.
- LDI Letter sent — If the parents/carers have applied for leave either in writing or verbally, either before the leave or as the leave commences, but the leave has not been authorised, the Headteacher will send the 'request denied' letter immediately.
- LD2 Letter sent— If the school has not heard directly from the parents/carers prior to or as the leave commences (a friend or relative might have contacted school instead); the child has not returned from authorised leave on the dates agreed; or the child has returned from a period of absence where school suspect the child has taken an unauthorised leave of absence in term time, the Headteacher will send the 'leave taken' letter immediately.

### ***Penalty Notices and Court Cases***

- The Local Authority may issue a penalty notice when a pupil has taken unauthorised "leave of absence" from school for minimum of 10 continuous sessions (5 days-G code) with no other unauthorised absences and the school have followed the relevant local authority legal intervention process.
- Under the National Framework for Penalty Notices, penalty notices may only be issued twice in relation to a particular child within a three-year period.
- The first penalty notice can be paid at the discount level of £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 between day 22 and 28.
- A second penalty notice must be paid at the full amount of £160 within 28 days as the discount does not apply for a second offence.
- If a third offence is committed the local authority cannot issue further penalty notices and must consider other forms of enforcement action such as prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.
- Where parents seek to avoid penalty notices by regularly booking a leave of absence just under the threshold for enforcement under the National Penalty Notice Framework or Birmingham Education Penalty Notice Code of Conduct, action may be taken at the discretion of the local authority.



- For pupils who have taken unauthorised leave in term time for six weeks or more, penalty notices may not be issued as cases may proceed straight to court. In these instances, schools should continue to follow the usual Leave of Absence (Legal) Process. Decisions as to whether a penalty notice is to be issued or the matter proceeds straight to court lie with the Education Legal Intervention Team.

### ***Strategies for promoting regular attendance***

- A paid daily breakfast club is run to support parents/carers by allowing them to drop off pupils from 7.15am.
- Free toast and fruit are provided every morning during registration for all children - fuel for learning.
- Praise, rewards and incentives schemes are implemented by the school to encourage good attendance by all.
- Whole school letter at the beginning of academic year, regular school newsletter, website and class dojo is used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality and provide up-to-date information. Parents Evening twice a year and induction meetings for all families are used to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

### ***Legal Framework***

Definition of a parent: Section 576 of the Education Act 1996:

A 'parent' in relation to any child or young person, includes any person:

- All natural/adoptive parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person (i.e. lives with and looks after the child).
- Parental partners can be included (whether or not they are married or the natural parent of the child) as they have 'care of' the child. If a pupil lives with a grandparent or older sibling as their main carer they can also be included.

For the purpose of this guidance:

- DSL means-Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Sheldon)
- HT means-Head teacher (Mr Hull)