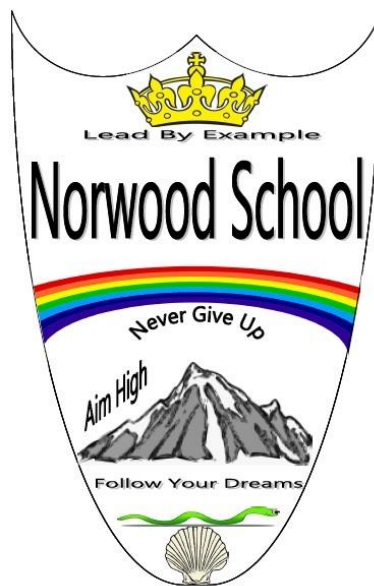


Aim High

Never Give Up

Follow Your Dream

Lead By Example



Attendance Policy

Ratified By	FGB
Date	09/10/2023
Minute	10
Review Date	Summer 2024
Policy Statement	
Who is this policy for?	All staff members of Norwood Primary School
Who has devised and contributed to this policy?	Peterborough City Council, SLT, Governors
How will this policy be communicated?	365
How will this policy be monitored?	SLT and Governors
Which other policies are linked to this policy?	All policies relevant to personnel issues

Our School

Norwood Primary School is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils/students and recognises that this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based upon the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

Everyone – including pupils/students, parents and carers, all school staff, school governors, Local Authority, external agencies – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. We are committed to working in partnership with families and other agencies to achieve best outcomes for children via the early help pathways available.

We believe that ours is a successful, welcoming school which you and your child/children plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of our school community to achieve excellence. For children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly, and your child should be at school, on time, every day on which the school is open (Isle of Wight V Platt) unless the reason for the absence is exceptional.

All staff (teaching and support) at our school have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils/students are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

Regular attendance is so important as it gives your child the best opportunity to learn. Any absences will affect the pattern of your child's schooling and consistent absences may seriously affect learning. Any child's absence disrupts teaching routines, not only for your child but for others in the same class.

The school liaises closely with our Local Authority and other agencies using an Early Help pathway (Early Help Referral) which assists in the assessment of need in order for appropriate support to be given. This initial pathway enables further referrals to external agencies to be made and further support acquired to support families to remove any barriers that are preventing regular attendance.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Definition of a Parent/Carer in Education Law

It's important that schools and local authorities are aware that parents may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

For the purposes of education law, the department considers a 'parent' to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not.
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person - this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative.

- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

The Law Relating to Attendance and the Right to a Full-time Education

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs, he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

It is the legal responsibility of **every** parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents 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 being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Isle of Wight Council v Platt case (2017) considered by the Supreme Court makes it clear that regular attendance shall mean in accordance with the school rules. Therefore, any non-attendance which is not in accordance with the school rules will be deemed unauthorised. The school rules are determined by the school and are the days and hours that they are open for pupils to attend. Under this judgment all children registered at a school should attend 100% of the time unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent this.

The Law Relating to Safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is **everyone's responsibility** and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

Attendance
Anti-Bullying
Behaviour Management

Access to the Curriculum
Health and Safety
Wellbeing

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter. Creating and maintaining a pattern of punctual and regular attendance is **everybody's** responsibility – parents/carers, pupils, school staff and, external agencies.

Reception Intake Induction Period

Peterborough City Council in line with the Admissions Code, offer all children in the September following their fourth birthday a full-time place at school if requested by their parents/carers.

Our School uses a short induction period where Reception aged children are introduced to their formal education using a reduced timetable and to assist in their transition to full-time education. You will be notified of the timetable for our Reception children for September in advance.

At our school all children are expected to be in school before the end of registration so that they are settled and ready to start the school day.

Expectations and Daily Routines

Our school starts at 8.55am and we expect all children to be in class by this time. Registers are marked at 9.00am and close at 9.15am.

Your child will receive an unauthorised late mark if they arrive after the register is closed. Your child will be given a 'U' code (unauthorised late) in line with regulations, and this may mean that you face legal action if they persist.

When your child is late, they miss the start of the day, they can miss work, and this will impact on their learning. Late arrivals also disrupt lessons for other pupils in the class, which is not fair on them or your child.

If your child has a persistent late record, we will communicate our concerns via a 'lates letter' and then you will be asked to meet with us to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Absence Procedure

If your child is going to be absent from school, you must contact the school on the first day, as early as possible and **before the close of registers**, and subsequent days of absence and inform the school the reason for the absence (unless it is a diagnosed medical condition and evidence is on file). You can do this several ways:

- Telephone – 01733 574717 – option 1
- Xpressions App
- Email – absence@norwoodschool.co.uk
- Calling into the school and speaking to a member of the office staff

If your child is absent and you do not contact us, we may, under our safeguarding policy:

- Telephone, text, message via Xpressions or email you on the first day and every following day of absence if we have not heard from you
- Contact emergency numbers held on our database
- Undertake a home visit (safe and well check) if no contact is received from you
- Call 101 (Police) and request a safe and well check if all other attempts to contact you fail to get a response
- Invite you to discuss the absences with us
- Take legal action if there are persistent absences, which may be in the form of penalty notices issued to each parent/carer for each child or legal action through the courts.

Telephone numbers and contact details

There are times when we need to contact parents/carers about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact details at all times. So, help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date details (phone numbers and email addresses) – if we don't then something important may be missed.

Who to contact if you or your child/children have questions or concerns about attendance?

- Day-to-day – speak to the teacher/form tutor.
- More detailed support – speak to the School Attendance Leader. You can contact the school office by telephone (01733 574717) or email us on (admin@norwoodschool.co.uk) and a call back or appointment will be organised for you.

Data and Monitoring

Attendance Leader

A senior member of our staff will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure that the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. This person, known as the Attendance Leader, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared weekly with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, pupils/students and parents/carers (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good school attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body half termly. S/he will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Parents/Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the **Local Authority Attendance Officer** from Peterborough City Council, School Attendance Team. S/he 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, these Officers can recommend that the Local Authority use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court

How we monitor attendance/absence

We keep track all our children's attendance and absences thoroughly through regular reports from our Management Information System (MIS). We look at the reports on a regular basis to track any concerns that may arise due to unauthorised absences and to ensure that any interventions are timely and appropriate.

We routinely monitor attendance and absences daily, weekly, half termly, termly and annually to assist the school in providing support and/or changes to our process where necessary to provide the correct support to families.

We analyse all patterns of absence, both authorised and unauthorised* and try to ensure that parents/carers are informed of any child's attendance that falls below the National Average to prevent your child becoming a persistent absentee (PA) which means that they have an attendance below 90%. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss **10%** or more schooling within an agreed period **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level may cause considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need full parent/carer support and co-operation to tackle this.

Our interventions at this stage may include, but is not limited to:

- writing to parents/carers if attendance drops below the school's threshold of 96%.

- requesting that they provide evidence to support absences
- calling a School Attendance Meeting
- making an Early Help Referral
- referring to the Local Authority for support

PA pupils are also tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system, and we may also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

***Understanding types of absence**

Every half-day absence from school must be classified by the school (not by parents/carers) as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence is essential, preferably in writing so that it can be recorded correctly.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for an exceptional circumstance such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies, or other exceptional cause authorised by the Headteacher.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been authorised. These include, but are not limited to:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children, acting as interpreters or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time not authorised as an exceptional circumstance
- medical treatment overseas (unless part of emergency treatment whilst abroad on an authorised absence).

This type of absence can lead to the Peterborough City Council, School Attendance Team, using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

Whilst any child may be absent from 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/carers and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is **never** an option to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Impact analysis

As part of our data analysis and monitoring process we will regularly assess the outcomes of our support/interventions to measure the impact that they are having on the improvement of children's attendance and attainment.

We will continue to meet with and engage with families to find out and help resolve any barriers to regular attendance, including signposting or referring to other agencies.

We will regular review cases to ensure that the school is providing the appropriate support/referrals as legal action, for our school is a last resort, but sometimes cannot be avoided.

Legal Interventions

Fixed penalty notices

When we may request a fixed penalty notice to be issued by the Local Authority in line with the Local Authority's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct for unauthorised leave of absence or where all support interventions do not secure an improvement in attendance.

Leave of absence/single absence event

As a school we ask parents/carers **not** to take children out of school without the permission of the headteacher as per the Law and Legislation. Please remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

Headteacher's must comply with The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave of absence **must** be made in advance and in writing, using our Leave of Absence Request Form (<https://www.norwood-school.co.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=123>). In deciding about whether to authorise the leave the Headteacher will consider the circumstances of each application individually taking into account the evidence submitted in support. If the request is refused the Headteacher will inform all parties of their decision. If the Headteacher grants the request it is for the Headteacher to **determine** the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

It is important that you understand that we may **only** authorise such absences in **exceptional circumstances**. It is unlikely that a leave of absence will be granted for the purpose of a family holiday.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school (with at least four weeks' notice) and/or different from that agreed by the school will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice per parent/carer per child.

Absence due to Non School Attendance (Irregular/Persistent Absenteeism)

Where the school has implemented attendance interventions and parent/carers have failed to support the school, the school may request a penalty notice under the Peterborough City Council, Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

A penalty notice can be issued if **one** of the following criteria can be met

- Level of unauthorised absence leads to an unauthorised absence rate of **10%** or more within a minimum period of any 8 school weeks (A maximum of 2 penalty notices for ongoing attendance concerns may be issued in any academic year)
- A single unauthorised absence event of at least 2 consecutive school days (4 consecutive sessions)
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has closed contribute to a level of unauthorised absence at **10%** or above.

- Lack of adherence to the dates agreed for any authorised leave of absence without reasonable justification
- Pupils identified in a public place whilst excluded from school (during the first five days of the exclusion period) without reasonable justification.

For further information regarding Penalty Notices please refer to the **Peterborough City Council Code of Conduct** which is available on the Peterborough City Council Website.

Escalation of Procedures

When we escalate cases to higher level legal interventions

The school will make every effort to support families/children whose attendance is causing concern. However, there are some circumstances where despite the school's, the Local Authority's and extended work through multiple agencies fails to improve the attendance of children and at this point the school may instigate, or request that the Local Authority instigates a more formal legal intervention.

If this occurs a case may be prepared and presented to the Magistrates Court for prosecution under Section 444 (1) or 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1996.

The outcome of these cases will be determined by the courts, of which can be:

- where convicted under Section 444(1) Education Act 1996, you may be fined up to £1,000.
- where convicted under Section 444(1a) Education Act 1996 you may be fined up to £2,500 and/or a custodial sentence.
- Impose a Parenting Order

Incentives and Rewards

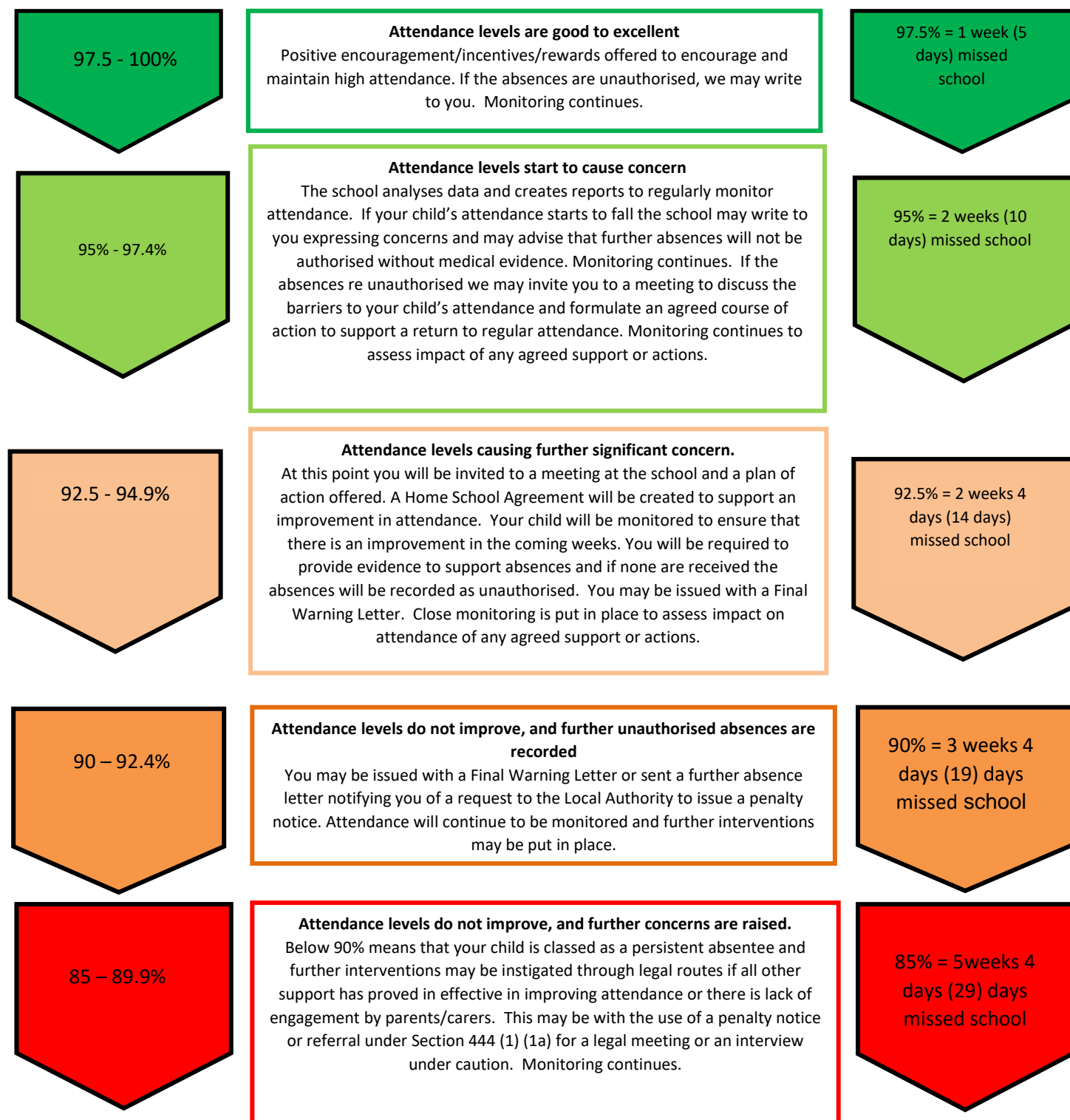
How our school is **promoting** and incentivising good attendance.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Having a whole school approach to attendance
- Provide details on attendance in our regular newsletters
- Report to you regularly on how your child/children are performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment and rate of progress
- Update you at parent/carers evenings'

Our Monitoring/Intervention Strategy

Below is the basis of our intervention pathway. We treat each child individually and therefore each case may take a different route depending on the barriers, needs of the family and any other circumstances which may be impacting on regular attendance. We try to take a holistic approach to dealing with and resolving barriers to non-school attendance and use legal interventions as a last resort.



Expectations of the Governing Body

Our governing body will have high expectations for attendance at our school.

It is their role to:

- Recognise the importance of school attendance and promote it across the school's ethos and policies
- Ensure that our school leaders fulfil their expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss, and challenge and help to focus our improvement efforts where needed most
- Ensure all our school staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools

References

The Education Act 1996, 2002 & 2011

Working together to improve school attendance (Guidance) May 2022

Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018,

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010, 2011, 2013 & 2016

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, 2012 & 2013

Children Act 1989 & 2004

People with Overall Attendance Responsibility in our School

- Mrs D Reynolds – Head Teacher – 01733 574717
- Miss H Fletcher – Attendance Leader – 01733 574717

Appendix 1

Norwood Primary School – Attendance Policy - Internal School Procedures

Registration

1. The school will record and monitor attendance in accordance both with the statutory requirements and with the principle that regular, uninterrupted attendance is vital to a child's educational progress.
2. Registers will be called twice daily - Whole school morning session at 8.55am and at the very start of each year groups afternoon session. Any child arriving after the registers have been called will be recorded as late for that session. Registers close at 9.15am and any child arriving after this time will be marked as unauthorised absence for the whole session.
3. Teachers will complete the registers in accordance with the guidance contained in the staff handbook. The Head Teacher, working in liaison with the Admin Manager (with responsibility for Attendance), will inspect registers in order to ensure that these are being satisfactorily maintained and to ensure that any potential attendance difficulties are identified at an early stage.
4. Working in partnership with the Local Authority Attendance Officer, school will identify cases where a child's attendance data is of particular concern, relative to the time of year. The Head Teacher will then analyse the data and where appropriate make contact with the parent/carers to discuss strategies to support the improvement of the child's attendance.
5. If a child is absent the class teacher will not enter any code in the register, leaving the office to select the correct code for the absence.
6. Upon completion of the collation of school registers, the Admin Manager will print out the required report of the MIS system and record reasons for each child's absence. This must be handed to the Head Teacher (or in their absence to the most senior member of staff on site) with any issues flagged up at this time.

Unexplained Absence

1. School operates a 'First Day Calling' process for any unexplained absences as follows
 - a. The Admin Manager will contact by telephone, before 9.15am, any parent/carers who has failed to inform the school of the reason for an absence
 - b. If unsuccessful, the Admin Manager will follow up with other contact details and methods such as Groupcall and Xpressions
 - c. The Admin Manager will immediately inform the most senior member of staff on site of the situation
 - d. Should contact not be successful the Admin Manager will try all other contacts for the family provided on our MIS system
 - e. If all contacts have been tried and no successful outcome has been achieved then the most senior member of staff on site and a relevant colleague will carry out a safe and well visit.
 - f. If the safe and well visit does not inform the school of a justifiable reason and there are on-going concerns for the safety and wellbeing of the child/family then contact to the police will be made.
2. There is no fixed expected time scale for the above process as each situation and number of contacts will vary. The office will prioritise upper KS2 children as these are the children that may be walking to school without parent/carers supervision.

Recording Absence

All absence communication from parents/carers should be recorded on our MIS system. Documentation relating to appointments will be retained by school and placed in the child's folder. Only notes concerning absences about which there are concerns/queries should be brought to the attention of the Head Teacher (who may then choose to speak to the parents/carers concerned himself/herself).

Working in Partnership

The Head Teacher will regularly collect attendance data and will use this data during meetings with the Local Authority Attendance Officer. These meetings will agree on attendance thresholds and targets and will identify tasks and follow-up actions for both the school and the attendance service.

In School Illness

1. Office staff will inform the Head Teacher / Deputy Head Teacher when a child is sent home due to illness, injury etc
2. Any injury sustained on school site will be recorded as per school policy and cases requiring external medical attention will be report to PCC.

Leave of Absence During Term time

1. Leave of absence should not be requested and will not be granted, unless it is for exceptional circumstances – family holidays are not deemed as exceptional circumstances.
2. Any such request should be submitted in writing and handed/emailed into the school office – admin@norwoodschool.co.uk using the appropriate form that can be found on our school website (www.norwood-school.co.uk) or a paper copy can be requested from the school office. Please use this form to provide evidence to support exceptional/unavoidable circumstance.
3. The initial letter, form and any provided evidence will then be issued to the Governor Attendance Panel and will
 - a. be seen by the Governor Attendance Panel, which will consist of 2/3 members of the governing body
 - b. look at each request on a case by case basis
 - c. outcomes shared with parent/carers with a clear reason for the decision
 - d. any appeal following the Panel's decision will be heard by further members of the Governing Body
 - a. no further correspondence will be entered into following the any appeal as the decision is final

Working with Peterborough Local Authority

Norwood School works in partnership with the Local Authority on all attendance matters and has fully adopted the working policies and practices of Peterborough Local Authority.

- Further information on such matters can be found at <https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/attendance/>

Declaration of Acceptance by Parents/Carers

I/We have read and understood the terms and conditions of the attendance policy at **Norwood Primary** School.

Full Name of parent/carers (PRINT) _____

Signed Parent/carers 1:

Date:

Full Name of parent/carers (PRINT) _____

Signed parent/carers 2:

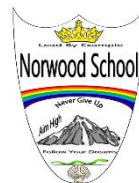
Date:

Child's Name:

Class/Form:

Norwood Primary School

Leave of Absence Request Form



Child's Name:			D o B:	
Class:			Year:	
Main Parent(s)/Carer(s)				
Surname: Date of Birth: (for legal purposes in the event of prosecution)		First Name:		
Surname: Date of Birth: (for legal purposes in the event of prosecution)		First Name:		
Address and Postcode:				
First written language if not English:				
Telephone contact No's:				
Siblings/Siblings School (if different)				
Siblings/Siblings School (if different):				
Additional Parent/Carer (Please complete if parents live separately)				
Surname: Date of Birth: (for legal purposes in the event of prosecution)		First Name:		
Address and Postcode:				
Telephone contact Nos:				

Start date of absence:	
Last date of absence:	
Exceptional circumstance resulting in this request for absence, WITH EVIDENCE ATTACHED: Types of evidence can include, booking details, flight documents, invitations, certificates, appointment letters:	

I/We understand that a penalty notice may be issued if this request is denied and my/our child is absent during this period. I/we understand that a fine will be payable **per child, per parent of £120 if paid within 28 days but reduced to £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days.**

(All parents/carers to sign where appropriate)

Signed:		Full Name:		Date:	
Signed:		Full Name:		Date:	

To be completed by the school:

Date Received by School:			
Total number of days requested:			
Leave of absence AGREED / DECLINED for the following reason/s:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Declined as deemed as a family holiday and these will not be authorised under any circumstances			
<input type="checkbox"/> Authorised due to the following reasons:			
Date of decision letter sent to each parent/carers:			
Headteacher:			
Signed:		Date:	