

**NAWTON AND ROSEDALE ABBEY FEDERATION
ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY 2026**

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This Attendance and Punctuality Policy applies to all children Reception to Year 6 registered at this school. This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from the Local Authority.

(September 2024) This policy has been reviewed in response to the publication of Working Together to Improve Attendance (August 2024), Department for Education and supporting documentation and guidance from North Yorkshire Council.

INTRODUCTION:

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Good attendance ensures children get the most out of their school experience; increase their opportunities to boost their attainment and wider life chances.

The Nawton and Rosedale Abbey Federation fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The Nawton and Rosedale Abbey Federation also recognise that not all pupils find it easy to attend school. Therefore, our aim is to create a safe, warm and welcoming environment. We aim to work collaboratively with families to remove barriers and build strong and trusting relationships to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's good attendance, the Head Teacher, staff and Governors in our Federation work together with other professionals and agencies to ensure the children in our care get the best possible start in life.

We aim to promote good attendance and punctuality through:

- Building strong, positive, honest relationships and provide support to families to prevent attendance issues from escalating.
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of responsibility.
- Rewarding and praising positive improvements to encourage; to raise the profile of attendance and punctuality
- Regularly monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with challenges.
- Having a designated Attendance Lead to improve attendance across the Federation whilst understanding attendance is '**everybody's business.**'
- Ensuring that parents have a clear understanding of the procedures in place and the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.
- Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and governors on school attendance.
- Developing and implementing robust daily procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.
- Working in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and the Local Authority and wider multi-agencies so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.

MEDICAL EDUCATION SERVICE:

DfE statutory guidance – Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school

The local authority and schools have a statutory duty to make the necessary arrangements to provide ongoing education for children who, due to their medical condition, are unable to attend school for a period of time.

The Medical Education Service team provide short-term education and advice to help schools and settings to provide continuity in education when a child or young people has been absent from school for 15 days or more due to a physical or mental health need. The medical education service is neither an Alternative Provision nor a long-term solution.

If it is likely that a child or young person will be out of education for a long period due to a medical need further discussions will take place between the school and the Local Authority regarding a longer-term plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

The Head Teacher is responsible for:

- Overall monitoring of school attendance and implementation of all procedures set out in this policy.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of attendance across the Federation's policies and ethos
- Making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Federation
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The Attendance Lead is responsible for:

- Alerting governors/headteacher to trends in authorised and unauthorised absence
- Building strong relationships and work jointly with parents; listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and work in partnership with families to remove them.
- Improving school attendance by carrying out home visits, attending meetings with the parent / carer
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Head teacher
- Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised
- Providing reports and background information to inform discussion and referrals with other agencies
- Refer to outside agencies for additional support for families including School Health, CYPS, Prevention Service, Police, Youth Offending Team & Social Care
- Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and

reasons for absence.

School Administrators are responsible for:

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence; reporting any concerns to Attendance Lead/Headteacher
- Ensuring CPOMs is updated for monitored pupils
- Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home early
- Sending out standard letters regarding attendance following the procedures outline in this policy
- First Day Response: contacting home if no reason for absence is received (phone call, text message or email)

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers
- Informing the nominated person where there are concerns and acting upon them
- Providing background information to support referrals
- Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns
- Emphasising and promoting with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness
- Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be recorded appropriately
- Discussing attendance issues at Consultation Evenings or in Attendance Meetings where necessary.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator is responsible for:

- Completing and submitting to the Inclusion Service requests for support from the Medical Education Service.
- Organise and lead multi-disciplinary meetings to agree what the short-term medical education intervention will look like and how school will meet the needs of the child or young person long term.
- Organise 6 weekly review meetings and formulate transition plans for pupils when ready to return to full time in school education.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a necessary and unavoidable medical appointment.
- Contacting the school office on each morning of absence by 8:45am.
- Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter)

- Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and supported.

Parents can inform school by:

- Telephone - 01439 771245
- email (admin@nawton.n-yorks.sch.uk or admin@rosedaleabbey.n-yorks.sch.uk)

CATEGORISATION OF ATTENDANCE

AUTHORISED ABSENCE:

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE:

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school. Absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Examples of authorised and unauthorised absence (not an exhaustive list):

AUTHORISED ABSENCE	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE
Illness that would impede learning or infectious.	Absence without a valid reason - parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or too tired
Medical Appointment / Dental These should routinely be arranged after the school day or during school holidays and appointments should not normally result in a full day of absence.	Non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect a child's ability to learn. Persistent unexplained illness without medical evidence or credible authenticity.
Agreed other educational activity at the discretion of the Head teacher	Latecomers beyond 30 minutes after the session has started.
Family bereavement	Persistent lateness within the first 30 minutes of the day.
Excluded Children	Shopping during school time. Hairdressers' appointment
Religious Observance.	Holidays in term time

Absence due to illness:

It can be tricky deciding whether to keep your child off school, nursery or playgroup when they're unwell.

There are government guidelines for schools and nurseries about health protection and managing specific infectious diseases. These say when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Please always inform school if your child has any of the conditions identified in the document as there are medically vulnerable children attending our Federation schools.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES:

The school gates open at 8:45am and close at 9:00am. Children are greeted at the gate by a member of staff and proceed to their classroom for registration.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance by 9.05am and by 1.05pm.

Once the gate is closed at 9.00am the only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way from 9.00am will be marked as late in the attendance record.

Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L) with the reason given and in the Late Book.

Any child who arrives for school later than 9:30am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning (Attendance code U) on the electronic register for each pupil with the reason given and in the Late Book.

PUNCTUALITY:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can sometimes lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good time-keeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

When a child has 5 late marks in the register their parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

If the child continues to have a further 5 late marks in the register they will be invited to a meeting to discuss the punctuality concern with the Attendance Lead and Headteacher.

ABSENCES:

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child's absence and every subsequent morning they are absent with full and accurate details of the reason for their absence and expected date of return. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Head Teacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child's absence by 9.10am, the school office staff will attempt to contact parents/carers via telephone, text and or email. Where no contact has been received by 9.30am, the Attendance Lead may conduct a home visit (known as a 'Safe and Well Check'). We may also contact any older or younger siblings' schools/pre-schools to identify a family pattern of absence.

When a child's attendance falls below 96% or there is an attendance concern or there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness/absence, the school may ask for 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.

Emotional Based School Avoidance.

Occasionally children develop anxieties and sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then please contact your child's Class teacher and/or our designated Attendance Lead so that we can work together to solve any problems.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed.

The amendments specify that headteachers **may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances"** and they do have discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year.

Holidays, leisure or recreational activities are not considered to be exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional circumstances are one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

Only the headteacher or their designate may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, at least 6 weeks in advance where exceptional circumstances allow, on the prescribed form provided by the school.

Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. It is likely that penalty notices will be requested, in line with the National Framework and North Yorkshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period (usually equivalent to 5 school days). The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers).

The 10 school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with:

- A Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence).
- A second Penalty Notice issued within a three year period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child.

- If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court.

If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

PROCEDURES AND ADDRESSING AN ATTENDANCE CONCERN:

Step One – Identify, Assess, Prevent National threshold is at risk of being met (10 sessions missed/ 5 school days in a 10-week period) or attendance less than 96%)	Daily actions and processes aim to promote positive relationships with children and families to prevent absence. Actions include: • Daily monitoring of data/trends to inform conversations • Use of praise and incentives • Present staff on morning gate to deal with any issues • Swift follow-up of absence calls/emails • House visits to meet safe-guarding duties • Letter 1/dojo communication to raise awareness of emerging concerns • Offer support, listen and respond to concerns
Step Two – Early Absence Support No Improvement following Step 1 OR National Threshold met (10 missed sessions/ 5 days over a period of 10 weeks) with authorised and unauthorised absences	• Discussions and meetings will be offered by letter or in person to discuss if early support or reasonable adjustments are needed. • An Early Help Assessment may be required for some support. • Letter 2 – request for meeting with Attendance Lead/phone call if more appropriate.
Step 3 – Formalised Support No Improvement following Step 1 and 2 OR Attendance falls below 90%	• Initial Warning Letter from LA • (Letter 3) • 10 day monitoring period • Attendance Contract will be offered to formalise support • Plan of improvement to prevent further escalation (3-6 months) • Signpost to outside agencies if required • Medical evidence may be requested at this stage to authorise future illness
Step 4 – Concerns Remain No improvement after Step 3 (monitored for 10 days) OR Support declined by parent	• Request for Panel meeting with Attendance Lead and Headteacher. • Warn parent of impending legalities and offer further support from outside agencies • 20 day monitoring period.
Step 5 – LA involvement/Legal Action No improvement after Step 4 (monitored for 20 days) OR No engagement with support	• Formal PACE interview or LA Panel meeting to discuss possible outcomes: – Notice to improve – Education Supervision Order – Penalty Notice – No further action/review meeting

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SUPPORT FOLLOWING A SHORT-TERM ABSENCE:

Following a short period of absence, a child may have missed vital learning which then presents a barrier to further progress. To help them 'catch-up' as quickly as possible, school staff may consider the following:

- in-class support
- additional homework to support work in class
- 1:1 support during playtime/lunchtime/assembly.

REINTEGRATING LONG TERM ABSENTEES:

Following a long period of absence, a child may feel vulnerable, so school staff may consider the following:

- a phased or gradual return
- allocation of a 'Key Worker'
- consideration about whether Additional Needs support is appropriate
- additional 'catch-up' support sessions during lunchtime/playtime/assembly

REWARDS AND RECOGNITION:

Although good attendance is an expectation the school seeks to improve whole school attendance by offering incentives, this may include:

- Attendance Certificates
- Positive Postcards/stickers/Dojos
- Letters

LINKS TO SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

<https://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/school-attendance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

