Attendance Policy 2024/25: Summary for Parents

Why does attendance matter?

School gives children the **life skills to prepare them for the future.**

They make friends, **learn about themselves and their bodies** and **how to build relationships**

They learn **fundamental skills in English and Maths** as well as **learning about the wider world.**

When children miss school:

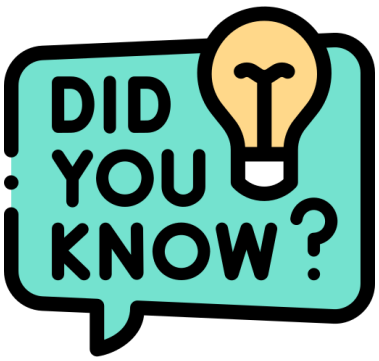
* They **miss 5 lessons** per day. They then feel lost and confused when they return to school because they have missed key information and this gets worse given the length of absence. If a child misses **10 days of school** in a year, they are missing **50 lessons** and this causes significant gaps in their learning. Some topics are not repeated leading to **knowledge gaps** in subjects in future years.

* They **miss out** on fundamental **reading, writing and maths skills** and are more likely to fall behind. Children with poor attendance are more likely to not be working at the expected level for their age. They are more likely to **underachieve** in their standard primary school tests and this continues to **impact** their GCSEs and **further education**.

* They develop a **habit** of missing school which can be **difficult** to turn around.

* They may struggle with **anxiety, their mental health, and wellbeing** as they struggle with the return to school.

All children have a legal right to a full-time education. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education.



Where parents decide to have their children registered at a school, **they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends the school regularly.**

Therefore, we have 3 expectations for all children and families in our school:



Attend school daily

Attend school on time

Attend school ready and prepared to learn

****Uniform/PE kit** **water bottle/lunch box****
**** Reading book/reading record****

The School Day -

The school day starts at 8.55am and all children **must** be in their classrooms by this time ready for the register. The school gate is open from 8.45 to enable all children to have enough time to get to class. The gate will close at 8.55am. By this time children should already be in class.

Children arriving after 9am will receive a late mark in the register.

Unauthorised absence will be recorded after 9.10am.

The school day ends at 3.15pm

Reporting your child absent

It is the **parent/carer's responsibility** to inform the school when their child is absent. All parents should **call the school between 8am and 9am on 01473 659370. A message can be left on the answerphone if the office is closed. If parents are on site they can also let the office know directly.** Parents should report their child's non-attendance for **every day of absence**, and to explain the **reasons** for their absence.

Medical Appointments



All medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. On the rare occasion where this is not possible, for example a child needs to attend a specialist centre at a given time, **parents must inform the school office and provide evidence of the appointment**. The child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Requesting Other Leaves of Absence in Advance

* Headteachers can only grant leaves of absence in **exceptional** circumstances, **it is highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**

* In the **exceptional case** where families know in advance of a reason why their child may not be able to attend school, **they must complete an 'Exceptional Leave of Absence' form** available on the school website at

https://nacton-c-of-e-vc-primary-school.secure-primarysite.net/attendance/

* **Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.**

Fixed Penalty Notices

The law states that **if children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason they are committing an offence** and their parents or carers may be prosecuted in the Magistrate's Court.

Fixed Penalty Notices may be used when:

- Regular **unauthorised absence** from school has occurred, **this can include being persistently late.**

And/Or

- **One off instances of irregular attendance** where leave has been taken during term time without the permission of the school.

    * This **includes unauthorised family holidays during term time**.
    * If an unauthorised absence occurs for **more than 3 consecutive days**, a fixed penalty notice referral could be completed and a fine issued.

    * **Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority (Suffolk County Council) From September 2024, the Fixed Penalty Notice for each child is £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days. This is reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.**

* If **granted**, it is for the Headteacher to decide the **length of time** a pupil can be away from school. Parents will be notified of this in **writing**.

* If **rejected**, and parents decide to not bring their child to school **this absence will be marked as unauthorised. This could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice**.

*** Referrals to the EWO may be made if 2 or more unauthorised holiday requests are made within one year.**

How will the school work with families to improve attendance?

The diagram below outlines the key ways that staff will work with families when supporting them with attendance. When discussing attendance with families, staff will use this document to outline what next steps will happen to work with and support the child and the family.

Number of days absent	Attendance Percentage	Impact	Possible School Actions
0-2 days absent in a school year	**99% to 100%**	**Attendance Levels are Excellent** Your child is accessing all learning opportunities	- Celebrate strong attendance during our gatherings - Awards - Termly update for parents
2.5-9 days absent in a school year	**96% to 98%**	**Attendance levels are Good** Your child has missed very few learning opportunities	
9.5-17 days absent in a school year	**93% to 95%**	**Attendance levels are Unsatisfactory** Your child is at risk of **underachieving** due to missed learning	- Attendance monitored weekly - Possible letter sent home
18-25 days absent in a school year	**90% to 92%**	**Attendance levels are Poor** Your child is at risk of high **underachievement** due to missed learning	-Attendance letter sent home - Attendance support meeting to **identify support** for pupil and family to **improve attendance** - Discuss attendance with **Education Welfare Officer** for advice and support
Over 25 days absent in a school year	**Below 90%**	**Attendance levels are Inadequate** Your child is at risk of **serious underachievement** and is now considered **persistently absent**	-Attendance letter sent home - Attendance support meeting to **identify support** for pupil and family to **improve attendance. Action plan if necessary. Include Education Welfare Officer** - Family allocated one member of staff to **support with improving attendance** - **Daily** check-in by member of staff