

# NORTH LONDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

## Introduction and Aims

Poor attendance disadvantages children. We aim to ensure that the children in our school attend regularly and on time, and where this is not the case, staff follow a staged procedure designed to encourage consistent attendance.

While 100% attendance is clearly the ideal, in many cases legitimate illness or other factors can prevent it. Such attendance is, where it occurs, is clearly "excellent". On the other hand, attendance, which falls below 90%; where a child is known to be in reasonable health and there are no other extenuating circumstances, is poor and should give cause for concern. In order to ascertain the levels of individual children's attendance, we aim to ensure that a complete register check is undertaken daily and weekly, and where there is cause for concern, appropriate action shall be taken.

As a school, we recognise that regular school attendance and punctuality are most important. Without them the best efforts of teachers will come to nothing. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to obtain the full advantage of educational opportunities available to them. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It may, in addition, place the pupil at risk.

Although parents are primarily responsible for ensuring that their children attend school, we give our full support to parents in this undertaking and try to avoid non-attendance of any pupil. The school has to make the decision whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised; parents cannot make this decision.

Finally, we aim to ensure that school registers, on which these returns depend are kept accurately, and that the criteria by which we judge absences as authorised or not are common and known to all class teachers.

## Holiday During Term Time

Absence during term time can seriously affect a pupil's progress. Pupils will only be given permission to take holidays during term time in exceptional circumstances. Medical and dental appointments should not be made during school time, if possible.

Any request for permission to take a pupil out of school for a holiday should be in writing to the Headteacher and this must be done before the holiday is booked. You can only do this if there are exceptional circumstances. It's up to the head teacher how many days your child can be away from school if leave is granted.

You can be fined for taking your child on holiday during term time without the school's permission. The fine is £60 in the first instance and £120 in the second instance. The local council may be informed and various legal powers may be used if your child is missing school without a good reason. They can give you:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order

- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

### **Attendance Registers**

The attendance registers should be kept in KSM or on paper when there is no access to KSM. Teachers are required to complete the register at the beginning of each session every day, and return it to the office at the end of each registration period if KSM is not accessible.

Morning and afternoon registration periods are an important part of the school day and should be seen as such by both teachers and pupils.

Staff should pay particular attention to accuracy and follow the Legal Requirements For Registration when marking the online or paper registers.

Parents must telephone the school office on the First Day of Absence, giving the reason and probable length of absence. On the pupil's return to school a letter confirming the absence must be given to form tutors. Without this the absence remains unauthorised.

### **Responsibility of the Form Tutor**

- Taking the attendance during the form time every morning.
- Liaising with admin team for absent students and contact parents when necessary.
- Ensuring that the students will receive the missing lessons and homework especially during longer absenteeism.

### **Pupils Who Need To Leave The School Premises During The School Day**

Pupils in Years 7-11 are allowed to leave the school premises during the school day only if a request, in writing, from parents is received and approved by the school.

### **Acceptable Reasons**

- Visit to the Dentist/Orthodontist, Hospital, Doctor, Chiropodist.
- Family funeral.
- Special occasion e.g. music, dancing exam, and interview.

### **Punctuality**

Punctuality needs to be continually encouraged amongst pupils.

For school purposes, a pupil is late if they are not in line by the second bell in the morning at 8:20am or not outside the form by the time the form tutor arrives. Sanctions should be taken for lateness on this basis.

For official purposes, a pupil is late if they arrive after the register is taken by the form tutor. Registers should be taken immediately after the second bell, if going to an assembly.

Pupils arriving after morning registration or afternoon registration must report to 'Reception' and be given a 'late slip'. This should be shown to the class teacher but retained and given to the form tutor at the next registration.

For statistical purposes pupils arriving after 8.20am or 2.00pm are given (L) which is classed as an authorised absence.

### **Absence Follow Up**

#### **Procedure for Years 7 – 13**

- a. Absences to be identified instantly by Form Tutors on KSM.
- b. A letter or message using parentmail platform is sent to parents by the Form Tutor requesting explanation about unexplained absence after 2 consecutive days' absence.
- c. Form tutor to visit the home of the absentee as and when appropriate.
- d. Absence notes to be kept in a file for a term.
- e. Absence notes to be checked by admin team but any queries to be referred to Form Tutors.
- f. A standard letter is sent to parent/guardian of pupils who are absent for odd days without explanation.

Form Tutors must maintain constant supervision of attendance. Any concern or persistent absentees must be reported to the Assistant/Deputy Head Teacher.

### **Truancy**

Any pupil truanting must be:

- a. Interviewed by the Form Tutor or Head of Pastoral care to try to find out the reason. If possible parents should be involved.
- b. Monitored to ensure work is caught up.
- c. Placed in after school detentions equivalent to the number of days missed, up to a maximum of four.
- d. Reported immediately to the Headteacher.
- e. Attendance monitored carefully in the future.

Internal truancy including dinner time should be dealt with in the same way as above, including after school detentions.

Attendance to classes should be monitored by weekly report with subject teachers initialling the report to prove attendance.

If a pupil is off site at dinner time more than once, he/she should report to a member of SLT every 15 minutes: 1.15 pm, 1.30pm, 1.45pm for at least 3 days.

In all cases, parents must be informed.

### **Punctuality Follow Up (Lates In This Case Are 'School' Lates)**

NB In the case of school buses being late, i.e. through no fault of the pupil, sanctions must not be taken against pupils. Pupils' missing their bus is not a legitimate excuse.

- a. Student who is late first time will be given a warning and C1 level of sanction. Admin officer will send a text message to the parent and form tutor to keep them informed. Next stage of action needs to be informed to the parent/guardian
- b. Second lateness will receive a lunch time detention and C2. Detentions to take place on designated school lunch detention days. Detention to be logged in by admin officer on KSM.

- c. At the third instance, admin officer will issue after school detention and C3 on KSM. The parents will be called and letter of concern will be sent. Form tutor will closely monitor the student.
- d. If the punctuality doesn't improve, Form Tutor will follow up with Yellow report and then 2 hours detention as well School mentor intervention.
- e. Persistent lateness will escalate to red report, internal and external exclusion overseen by the SLT.
- f. If the strategies do not work, Headteacher will meet the parents and issue legal obligation letter with £250 fine. At the same time local authority will be informed about the problem.
- g. The weekly reports will be analysed at SLT meeting.

### **Pupil Returning To School after Long Absence**

Each pupil may be different in their needs when returning to school after a long absence due to illness, or truancy. Form Tutors should discuss the pupil's re-integration with the pupil and his/her parents before the pupil returns to school. Arrangements need to be made to:

- a. enable the pupil to catch up with work
- b. re-establish or establish friendship groups and monitor progress closely

### **Encouragement Of Good Attendance And Punctuality**

Pupils should be encouraged to maintain good attendance and punctuality, especially by their form tutors.

Certificates for 99% attendance, 99% punctuality and less than 5 days absence (very good attendance) should be awarded at least annually.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The form tutor is initially responsible for encouraging good attendance, seeking out reasons for absence, keeping the register correctly, and referring children for whom concerns exist.

The form tutor has a responsibility to liaise with teachers and DHT, and when a referral has been made, shall decide in consultation with the DHT and teacher, a course of action. This may involve home visits and or writing letters home.

The DHT has oversight for whole school attendance. She is responsible for checking the registers, for communicating with parents where clear concerns exist, for keeping the Headteacher briefed about attendance issues, for completing statistical returns for legitimate agencies as and when they are required, and for keeping records of concerns.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for dealing with statutory referrals.

### **Monitoring Of Attendance and Punctuality**

- a. Admin officer and form tutors must check for patterns and likely problems on a daily basis.
- b. DHT must check registers, at least once a week to check for patterns and likely problems. DHT discuss attendance and punctuality with the SLT and designated safeguarding lead weekly.

- c. The Head of Pastoral Care must monitor attendance and punctuality termly.

### **Attendance/Punctuality in Practice**

Head of Pastoral Care is in overall charge of the process.

#### **Form Teachers**

- a. To complete registers accurately according to guidelines.
- b. To request first day contact, made by the office, if worried about a pupil.
- c. To request and monitor absence notes to distinguish between authorised/unauthorised absences. These will be taken out of registers and filed at regular intervals (monthly).
- d. To report unacceptable levels of attendance/punctuality to DHT.

#### **DHT/AHT**

- a. To discuss problems with Form Teachers on a weekly basis
- b. To decide on a course of action following school guidelines
- c. Either
  - i. Letters to Be Sent (the office to action)
  - ii. Head of Pastoral Care to Be Informed (If serious)
  - iii. DSL to be informed (If very serious)

#### **Head of Pastoral Care**

- a. To be informed by the AHT of major problems
- b. To interview the pupil
- c. To contact DSL if required (please record the request)

#### **ESW**

- a. To be informed by the AHT/Head of Pastoral Care of major problems
- b. To follow up as seems appropriate

#### **Office**

- a. To make first day contact as requested and maintain records
- b. To send standards letters as requested and maintain records
- c. To keep all data from the registers up to date in order to:
  - i. complete statutory returns
  - ii. report to parents (especially yearly reports)
- d. To keep a 'hit' list of pupils of most concern

**Reviewed by Hakan Gokce in September 2017**

**Next Review Date: September 2018**

**Appendix - Standard Letters**

Date :

**Dear Mr & Mrs** .....

Your Child ..... Form .....

has now had two days unauthorised absence from ..... to .....

Could you please confirm by returning this letter to school as soon as possible:

Reason for absence:

.....  
.....  
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.....  
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.....  
.....  
.....

Parent Signature .....

Thank you for your co-operation on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Date :

**Dear Mr & Mrs** .....

Your Child ..... Form .....

has now had two days unauthorised absence from ..... to .....

Could you please contact the admin office on the above telephone number, to confirm why your child has not been in school?

Thank you for your co-operation on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year

Date :

**Dear Mr & Mrs** .....

Re: ..... Form .....

I am writing to advise you of my concern about your child's punctuality. He/she has been late ..... times since .....

I would be grateful if you could contact me at school regarding this matter.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Attendance Officer

## **2 Day Follow-Up Letter on Absence**

To improve absence please let me know about any pupils that are absent for two consecutive days.

A standard letter will be sent out to parents asking them to authorise the absence.

Thanks

Name:

Dates absent:

## **2 Day Follow-Up Letter on Lateness**

To improve punctuality please let me know of any pupils that are causing you concern i.e. a number of lates over a short period of time or an emerging pattern.

A standard letter will be sent out to parents making them aware of the problem.

Thanks

Name:

Dates late: