



Venerable Bede Church of England Academy

Northern Lights Learning Trust

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Headteacher: Mr D Airey (BSc Hons)

CEO: Jo Heaton OBE



19.10.23

Attendance

Dear Parent/Carer,

As an academy we have a strong focus on Attendance; or more accurately, on 'absence'. Research shows that, in order for pupils to have the best possible outcomes in their school career, they need to have as few absences as possible. And, in order to support pupils in reducing absence, we need to work together. Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways we can prepare our students for success – both in school and in life.

Attendance - a common goal:

In order to support your child to improve, or maintain, their attendance, you need to feel supported with a focus on positive and proactive solutions to encourage excellent attendance. It requires a three-way partnership between pupil, parent/carers and school; because achievement is directly linked to attendance.

Sometimes, talking about attendance can give a false impression. When we say a pupil has 90% attendance, that can sound acceptable: even quite good in some cases. However, a child with 90% attendance is classed as being one with persistent absence, because 90% attendance actually means **10% absence** from school. 90% attendance means $\frac{1}{2}$ a day missed from school every week! If a pupils' attendance stays at 90% for a whole year, they will miss out on **4 full weeks of learning**.

Over 5 years of school, 90% attendance would mean a pupil missing **half a school year**.

| Every 6-week term | Attendance | Impact |
|-------------------|------------|----------------------|
| EXCELLENT | 98%+ | 1 DAY OFF |
| GOOD | 97-95% | 1.5 DAYS OFF |
| NEEDS IMPROVEMENT | 94-91% | 2 DAYS OFF |
| CONCERNS | <90% | MORE THAN 3 DAYS OFF |
| SERIOUS CONCERNS | 85% | 4.5 DAYS OFF |
| | <84% | 6 DAYS + OFF |



Northern Lights Learning Trust is a company registered in England & Wales (07909140) with its registered office at Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy, Marcross Drive, Moorside, Sunderland, SR3 2RE.

School requirements:

All schools are legally required to take a register of pupils first thing in the morning and in the afternoon. At Venerable Bede CE Academy, these registers are taken at 8.40am and at 1pm. Pupils with high attendance levels invariably perform better in class and in examinations.

Impact of absence:

A pupil's attendance will also affect the number of GCSEs they will pass at Grade 4 or above.

Pupils with over 90% attendance to school are statistically more likely to gain 5 GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

Pupils with less than 85% attendance to school are unlikely to gain 5 GCSEs or any qualification.

What you can do as a Parent/Carer to support your child's attendance:

- Talk to your child about school.
- Take a positive interest in your child's attendance and school work.
- Take a positive interest in your child's homework.
- Attend parent's evenings and other school events organised to support your child in succeeding.
- Arrange appointments outside of school time, or consider after 1pm or before 9am. If that is not possible, ensure your child returns to school as soon as their appointment is finished.
- Provide medical documentation for periods of illness and appointments.
- Inform the school attendance officer immediately on the first day of absence.
- Ensure your child returns to school promptly after a period of illness.
- Encourage your child to come to school if they are claiming they feel unwell – if they are too ill to be in school, we will contact you.
- Take holidays in school holiday time, not in term time.
- Monitor attendance closely and keep in touch with school staff including Form Tutor or Head of Year if you have any concerns.

If you are concerned about your child's attendance, the first thing to do is to contact the school to discuss your concerns. We will set up a meeting to discuss any issues and discuss how best to support you and your child to improve their attendance.

Punctuality is important too:

Arriving 5 minutes late to school each day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.

If your child is late to school, they will be marked as late and asked to sign in at school reception. Below is the sanctions chart for punctuality:

| Instances of late to school | Sanction | When | Place |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------|------------------|
| Late once in a week | None | N/A | N/A |
| Late twice in a week | 15 minute detention | That day | Bistro/Main Hall |
| Late three times in a week | 30 minute detention | Friday | Bistro |
| Late 4 or 5 times in a week | 1 hour detention | Friday | Bistro |



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You will receive a text message informing you of your child's sanction when they are late more than once.

If the school is concerned about your child's attendance:

Attendance is very closely monitored by the school; we want to support all pupils to be in school wherever possible.

If we identify an issue, or a potential issue, with your child's attendance, then we will contact you to discuss this. We will also send you a letter detailing our concerns and invite you in for a meeting to discuss any ways in which we can work together to support your child in improving their attendance.

Your child's attendance will be closely monitored and they will receive support from any of the following:

- Form Tutor
- Head of Year
- Member of SLT
- Attendance Officer
- Early Help workers

Together, we can support children to improve, or continue excellent attendance and, as a result, have the best possible chances of success during their time in school.

Many thanks in advance for your support in encouraging your child to maintain a high level of attendance throughout their school life.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs A. Chapman-Jones

Assistant Headteacher Pastoral



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