



NPCAT

Attendance

Policy

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1. Audience

The Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust (NPCAT) attendance policy is aimed towards the Central Trust, schools, parents/carers, governors and the wider school community.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out NPCAT's commitment to identifying attendance concerns and improving the overall attendance of all pupils across the Trust. When reading this policy and all related procedures, the following terms apply:

- must – where there is a duty NPCAT;
- can – where there is a power (not a duty) under statutory or common law;
- should – for guidance on good practice.

3. Policy Statement

NPCAT (also referred to as the Trust) expects pupils to attend school every day, otherwise attaining at least 97% attendance for the academic year, **which means a pupil having only 5 days of absence for the whole school year**. Questions will be asked where a child's level of attendance falls below this expectation to ensure the attendance process is strong in the early identification of attendance concerns.

High levels of school attendance are important for raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their future dreams and desires. Children and young people need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves pupils at risk of falling behind in their work and achieving less in both primary and secondary school.

Good attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. **The pupils with the highest attainment at the end of key stage 2 and key stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared with the lowest attainment.**

It is also the case that absence from school could be a safeguarding factor and this will be the foremost concern when dealing with pupil absence. However, when a pupil's absence falls below 90% attendance, subject to the evidential requirements being satisfied, the Trust may refer the matter to the local authority to consider legal proceedings. It is the local authority that prosecutes for non-school attendance. Where a parent/carer is found guilty of an offence for failing to secure the regular attendance of their child at school they can be fined up to £2,500 and/or imprisoned for up to 3 months. The Trust wishes to outline that legal proceedings are to be taken only as a last resort.

Schools manage attendance through the support of a designated attendance champion, a member of the senior leadership team, who oversees the development of school related attendance procedures that adhere to this policy. In addition, to ensure the attendance policy is adhered to and achieves its main aims, schools are also supported by the Trust. Attendance data is used to determine Trust level of support to schools, targeting intervention to priority schools, whilst ensuring there is universal support to others.

Those within NPCAT who have responsibilities defined within this policy will carry out their duties with regard to the Trust's Equality Statement and commitment to abide by the Equality Act 2010:

- accepting our legal duty to ban unfair treatment and achieve equal opportunities in the classroom, the workplace and in wider society. We have regard for our duty to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - Advance equal opportunity.

Any breach of this policy may lead to pupil sanctions or staff disciplinary action being taken.

4. Scope

The attendance process applies to all the schools and colleges (referred to as schools) within the Trust and must be strictly applied. Any differentiation must only apply where there is a need to satisfy the procedures laid down by each local authority in relation to their delegated authority to institute legal proceedings.

This policy is relevant to every pupil on roll. Statutory legal proceedings against a parent/carer can only be taken where the child is of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, and fails to attend regularly.

5. Values and Principles

Principles	What this means for NPCAT schools
Nurturing	Ensuring that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
Perseverance	Promote children's welfare as paramount and prevent concerns from escalating.

Courage Challenging behaviours, decisions and practice which may not effectively ensure the safety or well-being of a child.

Ambition Provide help for children. Identify any concerns early.

Tolerance and Respect To act in the best interests of the child at all times. To work in a way that does not prejudice either the child or the employee.

“An all-round education seeks to develop every aspect of the individual: social, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual. For there is an ecology of human growth, which means that if any of these elements is overlooked all of the others suffer.”

Pope John Paul II

Across NPCAT we fundamentally believe in:

1. Keeping children safe and ensuring their welfare needs are met in accordance with safeguarding practice.
2. Providing a stable environment for learning.
3. Maximising educational opportunities for all our pupils and ensuring there is a consistent and fair approach with equal opportunities for all.
4. Establishing good habits of school attendance with a vision on early intervention.
5. Empowering families with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to embed good habits of attendance.

6. Requirements

It is a requirement that all school attendance practices are in line with government legislation. The legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explains how they apply to local authorities, academies, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents/carers, are contained in education legislation (see Section 8).

It is crucial that school and staff develop and implement the correct procedures concerning their attendance practices, including where it pertains to:

- Safeguarding
- Admissions and attendance register
- Use of attendance and absence codes
- Daily registration practices
- Participation in training
- Delegation of leadership within the Trust and schools to oversee school attendance practices

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in each school needs to have an up to date and accurate understanding of attendance concerns relating to pupils and should collaborate with the attendance lead concerning vulnerable pupil absence and part-time/alternative provision arrangements.

The Trust and Schools will establish systems to ensure all information stored electronically or otherwise, is being handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection requirements.

6.1 Responsibilities

The benefit of regular school attendance impacts positively on all aspects of school life as well as the wider community. Attendance is everyone's responsibility and is more likely to be improved when parents, pupils, schools and other agencies work together.

Parent/carers	To ensure their child receives an efficient, full-time education. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure their child attends school every day it is open, prepared for school, in the correct uniform.• Telephone school if their child is unable to attend.• Provide up to date contact details.• Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.• Make medical/dental appointments outside school hours where possible.• Work with school where support is offered to improve attendance.
Pupils	To attend school regularly, on time and prepared for the day.
Central Trust Attendance	To provide attendance support and advice to schools, parents/carers, pupils. To work with parents/carers and pupils completing home visits. To ensure absent pupils are safeguarded. To facilitate formal attendance proceedings where necessary.

Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils. • Ensure attendance is a central part of the school's vision, values and day to day life. • To oversee school attendance procedures.
School Attendance Champion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance. • Manage systems to tackle absence and ensure they are followed by staff. • Analyse absence data to identify cohorts and focus strategies • Monitor and evaluate the progress of the school's strategies and processes.
Attendance Officer	To monitor and analyse attendance data and work with pupils and parents/carers to reduce absence.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	To collaborate with the attendance lead concerning vulnerable pupil absence and in regard to part-time/alternative provision arrangements.
Tutor/Class Teacher	Knowledge of pupil/class attendance. Discussions with pupils regarding absence and implementing rewards.
School administrator/day call officer	To maintain the attendance register and adhere to registration practice.
School Governors	To have an understanding of school attendance data, incentives, strategies and procedures.

6.2 Registration

The law requires all schools to have an admission register and an attendance register. The register is taken twice daily (at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session).

To manage lateness and follow up on absence, the school will close the register at an agreed time (not longer than 30 minutes after the session begins, or the length of form time or first lesson in which registration takes place.)

Details of attendance/absence codes can be found in Appendix A.

Pupils are expected to be in school at	8.45am
Pupils will be welcomed into school	By teaching staff in classes
Pupils arriving early can	Attendance breakfast club, go to class at 8.40am
Morning register will close at	8.55am
To report an absence parents/carers should contact	01287 640613 Mrs Kelly Matchett

6.3 Punctuality

Schools will monitor lateness across the school and implement appropriate consequences and rewards.

Lateness disrupts learning and where pupils are regularly arriving late to school it will be highlighted to the parent/carers via a phone call, letter or meeting. Support and advice is available from the school office on reducing lateness.

Pupils arriving after the register has closed will receive an unauthorised mark in the register and will be subject to attendance monitoring by school. The register will remain open for 30 minutes.

6.4 Planned absence from school

When a parent/carer is aware that their child will be absent from school they must contact the school to leave a message on **01287 640613** to advise of the reason for absence and expected return date. Parents/carers should contact school on each day of absence.

For more detailed support on attendance, parents/carers should contact either the Executive Head Teacher, Mr Simon Geaves or Deputy Head Teacher Miss Elizabeth Wright.

Medical Dental	Where possible parents/ carers are encouraged to make dental/medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, parents/ carers should seek the school's agreement from Miss Wright or Mr Geaves in advance, provide supporting medical evidence and the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.
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Illness	Sometimes pupils cannot come to school because they are really unwell – and that is the right thing to do for them and other pupils. Medical advice is clear however that children with mild illnesses will often be able to attend – for example if they have a cough, or a cold, without a temperature. The NHS guidance is my child too ill for school? is designed to support parents in making decisions around mild illness.
Leave of absence	A leave of absence request form (Appendix B) must be submitted to school 20 days in advance of the leave in order to allow the Head teacher to consider any exceptional circumstances. This is a safeguarding issue. School cannot grant leave of absence retrospectively. Consideration will be made to any unauthorised leave of absence in term time that meets the local authority code of conduct for the issue of a penalty notice. Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Redcar and Cleveland Link here
Performance	A local authority licence must be obtained for a child to take part in a performance. Where a licence or exemption is issued, and the school is satisfied it will not have a negative impact on the pupil's education the absence will be authorised. Licences are issued by the Local Authority in which the pupil lives.
Exceptional circumstances	There may be an exceptional circumstance when your child requires leave of absence. Where leave is requested due to exceptional circumstances evidence of this should be provided to school with the application. Each application will be considered individually.

6.5 Following up absence

The school will support pupils and parents/ carers by working together to address any barriers to attendance.

If a pupil is absent from school and no reason for absence has been provided by the parent/ carers, the school will engage in a number of strategies to obtain a reason for absence and ensure the safety of the pupil.

- **First Day Calls** - parents/carers will be called, and /or any other contacts to alert them that their child has not arrived in school and establish the reason for absence.
- **Other Agencies** - the school will contact any other agencies involved with the family, ie. social care if this is relevant
- **Home Visit** - The Trust Home School Liaison Officer or school staff may make a home visit to discuss a pupil's attendance or as part of safeguarding procedures.
- **Other agency involvement** - if the school is concerned about the welfare of a pupil, they may contact Children's Services, the local authority or police for advice.

6.6 Early Years and Foundation Stage

Attendance expectations remain consistent for those pupils who are not yet of compulsory school age as early years education provides a foundation for future learning, promotes social and emotional development and has a positive impact on learning development.

6.7 Attendance Data and Monitoring

Attendance data is regularly and thoroughly tracked across the school to monitor and analyse both areas of improvement and concern. Attendance will be tracked across a variety of cohorts, to highlight any areas that require specific intervention.

- Whole school - tracked along national and local figures. Shared with school staff through staff meetings and weekly memo, pupils in attendance award assemblies and parents/carers newsletter and letter updates.
- Cohorts - across forms/years and specific groups to highlight areas that require targeted intervention.
- Individual - to identify issues relating to attendance and offer support and advice at the earliest opportunity.
- On all levels to inform and evaluate school reward and incentive programmes.

6.8 Supporting Improved Attendance

97-100%	<p>Attendance levels are good to excellent Positive encouragement/incentives/rewards systems are used to maintain high levels of attendance.</p>
94-96.9%	<p>Concerns emerging Establish reasons for absence, patterns of absence, analyse data to regularly monitor absence. Letter parent/carer advising of concern, offer support to improve and advise that future absences will not be authorised unless medical evidence is provided.</p>
90-93.9%	<p>Attendance levels causing concern Parents/carers invited to a meeting in school to identify any barriers and complete an attendance support plan. Where issues identified are outside of school offer referral to Local Authority Early Help service. Review date set.</p>
Below 90%	<p>Persistent Absentee despite school intervention Commencement of formal attendance support procedures. Attendance meeting held with parents/carers and school to formulate attendance plan and liaise with Local Authority in regard to issue of education supervision order, parenting order, fixed penalty notice or prosecution if unauthorised absence continues.</p>

Absence and Missed Learning (across an academic year)			
Attendance Percentage	Number of days missed	Number of weeks out of school	Number of hours missed
97%	5.7	1.14	28.5
95%	9.5	1.9	47.5
90%	19	3.8	95
85%	28.5	5.7	142.5
80%	38	7.6	190
70%	57	11.4	285
60%	76	15.2	380
50%	95	19	475

6.9 Persistent Absence

Any pupil who has 10% absence or more is classed as a persistent absentee. The school attendance champion and attendance officer will analyse persistent absence data to identify individuals that require targeted intervention to support their improved attendance.

This could include Improving Attendance Plan, incentive scheme or formal attendance support procedures. A home visit may be made by the Home School Liaison Officer/school to those pupils who are persistently absent in order to discuss and identify any barriers to attendance. All interventions offered to support improved attendance will be evaluated. These procedures are identified below.

6.10 Severely absent

Children who have missed more than 50% of school are referred to as severely absent. Severely absent pupils will be discussed with the local authority where targeting support meetings are held to identify, discuss and agree action plans and joint approaches.

6.11 School Level Intervention

Working together is the most effective way to tackle absence effectively. Where concerns are identified, schools will follow intervention below to work with parent/carer and pupil to improve attendance. A school may need to 'fast track' a case to formal attendance procedures if the level of unauthorised absence requires such intervention. See Appendix B Attendance Interventions.

Attendance Rewards	Targeted and whole school attendance rewards
Attendance Letter 1	Letter to parent/carer advising of attendance level.
Attendance Letter 2	Letter to parent/carer requesting medical evidence is provided to support any future illness absence.
Improving Attendance Plan	Attendance meeting with parents/carers and pupils to complete an improving attendance plan, identify any issues, signpost/refer to support agencies and set attendance targets.
Targeting Support Meetings	Case discussed with Trust Attendance Manager and/or the local authority attendance support team.

Support to improve attendance - school will work with parents and pupils to try and identify any barriers to attendance. We can help by making reasonable adjustments and offer school level support for issues relating to school. Where problems outside of the school are impacting on attendance, we can signpost and refer parents for support from outside agencies. These services include Early Help, school nursing service, CAMHS etc. Please talk to either the Executive Head Teacher, Mr Simon Geaves or Deputy Head Teacher Miss Elizabeth Wright if you are concerned about anything impacting on your child's attendance.

The children's commissioner produced guidance for parents around school attendance [children's commissioner guide for parents on school attendance](#)

6.12 Formal Attendance Support

Where absence continues and school level support has not been effective/and/or engaged with, the school and/or Trust Attendance Team will work with the local authority to commence formal support.

The local authority will consider the individual circumstances and identify the appropriate legal sanction. These are:

- Attendance contracts
- Penalty Notices
- Education supervision orders
- Attendance prosecution
- Parenting orders

<https://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-attendance-and-welfare-service/legal-action-to-enforce-school>

There may be instances where a pupil's attendance has not improved but escalation to formal attendance support is not appropriate, for example, where there is a confirmed medical illness or the pupil is looked after. In such cases the School Attendance Champion will liaise with the Attendance Manager, the family and other professionals to complete a plan and where necessary refer for additional support.

7. Definitions

Compulsory School Age	A child reaches compulsory school age on or after their fifth birthday. If they turn 5 between the 1st January and 31st March, they are of compulsory school age on 31st March. If they turn 5 between 1st April and 31st August, they are of compulsory school age on 31st August. If they turn 5 between 1st September and 31st December, they are of compulsory school age on 31st December.
Parent	<p>The term 'parent' is defined by section 576 Education Act 1996 and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• all natural parents, whether they are married or not,• any person that has parental responsibility for a child or young person and• any person that has the care of a child or young person i.e., lives with and looks after the child. <p>Generally a parent includes all those with day to day responsibility for a child.</p>
Safeguarding	<p>Safeguarding is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• protecting children from maltreatment;• preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;• ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and• taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
Persistent Absence	10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible absence).
Discrimination	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, particularly on the grounds of age, gender, disability, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

8. Scope of the Policy & Legislation

- 8.1 This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance 'working together to improve school attendance' (2024) and refers to the DfE's 'school attendance and parental responsibility statutory guidance' (2015). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:
- The Education Act 1996
 - The Education Act 2002
 - The Education and Inspections Act 2006
 - The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (amendments 2010, 2011, 2013, 2026)
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
 - School Attendance (pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2024

9. Related Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Pupils with medical needs policy
- Exclusions Policy
- Alternative Provision Policy
- GDPR Policy

10. Contacts

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APPENDIX A - Attendance and Absence Codes

Code	Definition	Meaning
Present in school		
/	Present (am)	Present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival before register closes	Arrived before the register closed
Absent		
C1	Performance/Employment	Leave of absence to participate in a performance/employment regulated by the local authority
C2	Part-time timetable	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable
C	Exceptional circumstances	Leave of absence authorised as exceptional circumstances.
J1	Interview	Approved interview with prospective employer or another educational establishment
E	Excluded	Excluded but no alternative provision made
I	Illness	Pupil absent due to illness (not medical or dental app)
M	Medical Appointment	Medical/dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Absence due to religious observance set by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Granted Y11 absence during public exams
T	Traveller absence	Travelling for purpose of parents occupation and agreed by school
Unauthorised		

G	Holiday not granted	Unauthorised leave of absence
N	No reason for absence	Unknown reason for absence - to be amended accordingly within 5 days
O	Unauthorised absence	Absent without authorisation
U	Unauthorised late	Pupil arrived after the register has closed.
Attending an Approved educational activity		
D	Dual Registered	Pupil is dual registered at another school (not counted)
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is attending an approved, supervised off-site educational activity (present)
K	Local Authority Provision	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority (present)
P	Participating in approved sporting activity	Approved by school and taking place in the session recorded (present)
V	Educational trip or visit	Organised by the school (present)
W	Work Experience	Placement approved by school (present)
Administrative Codes		
Q	Lack of access arrangements	The local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance (not recorded as possible)
X	Non-compulsory school age	Not required to be in school (not recorded as possible attendance)
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available
Y2	Disruption to travel	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel caused by local, national, or international emergency
Y3	Part of school premises is closed	Unable to attend due to part of school premises being unavoidably out of use

Y4	Whole school site is closed	Unable to attend due to school being closed unexpectedly
Y5	Pupil is in criminal justice system	Pupil is unable to attend because they are; in police detention, remanded to youth detention, detained under a sentence of detention.
Y6	Public health guidance	Pupil unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law.
Y7	Unable to attend due to unavoidable cause	Pupil is unable to attend due to any other unavoidable cause. Emergency in nature and must affect the pupil, not the parent
Z	Prospective pupil not on register	Pupil not yet on admission register
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	

APPENDIX B - Request for Leave of Absence in term time

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME	
	
<p>The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 sets out the law in respect of leave of absence during term time.</p> <p>An application for leave of absence in term time should be made to the Headteacher for the school at which the child is on roll, by a parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides and giving at least <u>20 school days notice</u>.</p> <p>Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust requires an application for leave of absence in term time to be completed whenever a child is to be absent from school, for any reason, other than medical or illness absence. This ensures the academy is aware of the absence and the appropriate safeguarding procedures have been followed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A SEPARATE APPLICATION IS REQUIRED FOR EACH CHILD</p>	
PARENT/CARER DETAILS	
NAME & ADDRESS OF PARENT/CARER(S) REQUESTING LEAVE:	
<p>By signing this form you are agreeing to the request being made.</p> <p>Signature(s):</p> <p>Date:</p>	
<p>Where leave of absence in term time is taken without a request being made, this will be investigated in accordance with NPCAT Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and the Child Missing Education procedures, which may involve a referral to the Local Authority Children's Services and the Police. Fines may be issued</p>	
CHILD DETAILS	
NAME:	DOB:
ADDRESS:	
NAME OF SCHOOL:	YEAR GROUP

DATES REQUEST	
First date of absence:	Last date of absence:
REASON FOR REQUEST	
Has an application for leave of absence been made to another school? If yes, please give the name of the school/pupil	

A Headteacher will not grant leave of absence during term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance

The exceptional circumstances will focus on:

- A recent serious illness or bereavement of an immediate family member
- A member of the Armed Forces whereby they need to undertake a tour of duty, which conflicts school holidays
- Restrictions on Police leave or other emergency services where specific duties are undertaken in relation to a national event, which conflicts with school holidays

Please provide evidence of any exceptional circumstance with the application

Office use only: Please tick appropriate box	
LEAVE AUTHORISED Exceptional circumstance found	<input type="checkbox"/>
LEAVE DENIED Exceptional circumstances NOT found	<input type="checkbox"/>
Headteacher signature:	Date:

A Penalty Notice

- Can be issued by the Local Authority where leave of absence in term time is not granted, but taken
- A fine of £80 payable within 21 days, if unpaid increasing to £160 payable within 28 days will be issued to each parent for each child who has not been granted leave of absence. If the penalty notice is not paid in full the Local Authority may prosecute.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child in a 3 year rolling period, the charge will be at the higher rate of £160.
- A national limit of 2 penalty notices can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3 year period so at the 3rd or subsequent offence the Local Authority will investigate legal proceedings such as prosecution.

The Penalty Notice Code of Conduct is drawn up by each Local Authority, which sets out measures to ensure consistency in the issuing of penalty notices. Details are available on each Local Authority website.

NPCAT will endeavour to respond to this request within 15 school days of receiving the request