

## **The Nelson Thomlinson School Attendance Policy**

We believe that high levels of attendance are a pre-requisite for academic success and for making the most of the opportunities afforded by school.

### **The Nelson Thomlinson School expects that our students will:**

- Attend school regularly. (The school attendance target for 2011/12 is 95%)
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the school day.
- Carry out any work provided by the school during an authorised absence.

### **The Nelson Thomlinson School expects that parents/guardians will:**

- Ensure that their children do not miss school except when they are too ill to attend or for other equally pressing or unavoidable reasons.
- Keep health appointments out of school hours wherever possible.
- Contact the school by telephone on each day of the child's absence.
- Seek permission from school for any leave of absence. The Head has the right to refuse authorised absence in accordance with LEA guidelines.

### **Parents/guardians can expect the following from the school:**

- Regular, efficient and accessible recording of attendance
- Early contact when a pupil is absent without explanation
- Action on any attendance problem notified to the school
- Referral of specific attendance issues to supporting agencies where appropriate

### **The Schools response to non-attendance:**

- Contact parents/guardians via the School Attendance Officer as soon as possible by telephone if no reason has been received
- The School Attendance Office carefully monitors attendance patterns AND targets students whose attendance patterns are a cause for concern. Such students will be contacted on the first day of any absence
- IF parents/guardians have not contacted school after three days of a student absence then the School Attendance Officer will contact them via a formal letter
- Where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging the parents/guardians will be invited into school to work with the school staff to resolve any difficulties
- Where there is no response to school intervention and where the absence patterns or pattern of absence has persisted, the school will refer to the Designated Inclusion Officer, once the pattern of absence meets the service referral criteria

### **Holiday Absence**

Government guidelines recommend that student attendance should be at least 95% of the school year. Just 10 days' absence takes a child to below this figure. Parents must be aware that taking their children on holiday during term time can damage their academic futures – a possibility that must outweigh the financial savings made on cheaper term time holidays. Occasionally, however, other factors are involved – where, for example, a parent's job makes it impossible to take family holidays that are not in term time. In such cases, parents should write to the Head, well in advance to explain the situation. The law allows, if the Head considers it to be justified, to grant up to two weeks holiday leave for special cases. Where a student's attendance is below 90% then any leave of absence will be marked as unauthorised in accordance with LEA guidelines. (See attached copy of the Director of Children's Services letter to parents/guardians.)

Reviewed by the Pastoral Committee September 2011

Review: Annually

Next review due: June 2012