

INTAKE FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY



Attendance Policy

September 2024

Attendance team

- Our attendance lead is Mrs Helen Cox. To contact Mrs Cox: hcox@intakefarm.notts.sch.uk
- To report absences on a daily basis, please contact the school office on 01623 625552 or office@intakefarm.notts.sch.uk
- Our family support worker is Miss Vicky Eyley. To contact Miss Eyley: veyley@intakefarm.notts.sch.uk

Regular and punctual attendance is an essential prerequisite to effective learning. We aim to develop an ethos which demonstrates to children, parents/carers and the wider community how much we value good attendance and punctuality.

The school day

The school day begins for each year group as follows:

FS1: 8:30 – 11:30 and 12:15 – 3:15

FS2: 8:45 – 3:15

Y1: 8:50 – 3:10

Y2: 8:50 – 3:10

Y3: 8:50 – 3:10

Y4: 8:50 – 3:10

Y5: 8:50 – 3:10

Y6: 8:50 – 3:10

Our attendance expectations

At Intake Farm Primary School, we expect all of our children to:

- attend every school day;
- attend school punctually;
- be prepared for the day;
- speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance.

We believe that attending school, on time, is key to enabling children to make the most of the opportunities we offer to prepare them for their future.

We will work in partnership with our families to identify the reasons for any poor attendance, supporting them in addressing any barriers to attendance for their child. Promoting good attendance is a matter for the whole school community. This policy sets out our expectations and our approach and is in line with the Department for Education's guidance, 'Working together to improve school attendance.'

Every pupil should be able to learn in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. Attending school regularly promotes the welfare and safety of children whilst they are not in the care of their parents/carers.

This policy will be applied consistently and fairly. In applying this policy, we will take into account the needs of individual pupils. This policy is supported by other school policies and procedures e.g., admissions, safeguarding and child protection, anti-bullying and our behaviour policy.

Our commitment to parents

Parents and carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive full-time education by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

We commit to having open, honest communication regarding attendance with parents and carers. We build positive working relationships rooted in kindness and honesty where there are tough messages, which may need to be shared. We commit to always working in partnership with parents to maintain the highest expectations of your child's attendance and ensuring that they attend school in order for them to access their full educational entitlement.

We commit to supporting parents with attendance. We commit to sharing what good attendance looks like and discuss with you any misunderstandings you may have in order to work together for your child/ren to attend school. We commit to having a relentless approach to ensuring your child/ren are in school and on time.

We expect all our parents to:

- Maintain effective routines at home to support good attendance.
- Contact the school if their child is absent to let us know the reason for the absence and the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. For example, non-emergency medical/dental appointments should take place outside of school hours.
- Inform us of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support us by becoming involved in their child's education, acknowledging the value of education and the importance of children receiving the same messages from home and school.

- Work with us to address any barriers to attendance for their child including attending all meetings requested to discuss attendance issues.

Registers

We are required by law to call attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and again during the afternoon session. Intake Farm expects parents/carers to ensure that children are on the school premises by 8.50 am and again at 12.40 pm KS1, 1.00pm Lower Key Stage 2 and 1.10pm upper Key Stage 2. The morning register closes at 9.20 so pupils arriving between 8.55 and 9.20 will be marked with an L indicating they are late for school. However, pupils arriving after the register has closed will be registered with a U showing they are present in school but were late enough for their learning to be affected. In considering attendance levels, the register is of paramount importance. Registers are legal documents. Should the parents/carers of a persistent non-attender be prosecuted by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, then the information which the register contains will be the main source of evidence presented to the court. The regulatory requirements placed on schools with regard to the keeping of registers are to be found in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. We expect parents/carers to ensure that children are on school premises by 8.50 am and again for the after lunch time registrations. The data which is extracted from accurate and up-to-date attendance registers will be used to support the more effective management of whole-school attendance matters. Such data can be used to:

- support and underpin the target-setting process (for individual pupils, year groups, identified cohorts, the whole school) in relation to overall attendance and unauthorised absence on a half-termly and yearly basis;
- identify individual children and particular groups of children who are, or may be, at risk of becoming persistent absentees;
- facilitate and encourage early intervention;
- identify particular types or patterns of absenteeism (for example, time lost to term time holidays, regular absences on Mondays and/or Fridays, etc.);
- match attendance trends with attainment trends;
- identify possible inconsistencies in the implementation of school policy; • report attendance matters to parents/carers.

Daily routines

At Intake Farm Primary School, we meet and greet our pupils at the classroom door upon arrival. This begins at 8:30 (FS1 Nursery) and 8:45 (all other classes).

- Attendance registers are taken at the start of each morning session of each school day (8:50am) and once during each afternoon session.
- Our school day begins at 8:30am (FS1), 8:45am (FS2) and 8:50am (all other classes).
- All morning register will be taken at 8:50am. Any child arriving after 8:50am is required to report to the main school office to sign in and provide a reason for lateness. This will be recorded on our school system.

- If children arrive within 20 minutes after the start of their school day (9:10am), they will be marked as L
- If a child arrives more than 20 minutes after their start time (after 9:10am), they receive U.

Absence

School absence is the time your child/ren spend away from Intake Farm Primary School when they are scheduled to attend. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less.

If a parent fails to ensure that his/her child attends that school regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence. When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and the appropriate register code will be used.

Types of absence

Authorised absence

Authorised absence means that the school has either given approval in advance for your child to be away from school. An authorised absence is still classed as an absence from school as the child was not in attendance. Authorised absences include medical appointments where medical evidence has been submitted. We strongly encourage parents to make appointments out of school hours.

Absence may be authorised for the following reasons:

- Illness and scheduled medical appointments;
- days of religious observance;
- suspension;
- traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents' employment;
- family bereavement;
- involvement in a public performance or sporting competition;
- exceptional occasions (the nature of such occasions will be determined by school on an individual basis).

Unauthorised absence

An unauthorised absence is an absence from school as the child was not in attendance, or the child has arrived after registers close at 9:20am or after the registers close in the afternoon. An unauthorised absence will be marked as O or G.

An unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable. Examples of unauthorised absences include:

- holiday not authorised by the school;
- reason for absence not yet provided;

- absent from school without notification;
- arrived in school after registration closed;
- the explanation offered is unsatisfactory.

Absence for religious reasons

The school will authorise one day of absence per religious festival, up to a maximum of 3 days in any one academic year, on the day specifically set aside by the religious body of which the parent/carer is a member, and this will be marked as 'R' in the register. If parents/carers require an additional day this must be requested in advance and this can only be authorised if it is felt that exceptional circumstances apply (this would be marked in the register as 'C').

Persistent absence

Persistent absence (PA) is absence of 10% or more. An individual child is deemed to be a persistent absentee, therefore, if his/her attendance is less than 90% (regardless of whether or not the absences have been authorised).

During weekly monitoring, parents will be contacted to warn of low attendance and support will be offered to ensure improvement is seen. In our school, we start to monitor attendance when a child's attendance falls below 95%, this is so we can make parents aware at an early stage that attendance is falling below an average level, and to ensure we are putting support in place should it be needed. If a child is persistently absent, we will look to increase contact with parents/ carers – to consider how to overcome any barriers to attendance or punctuality. We may look to invite parents/ carers to a meeting to discuss their child's attendance, or agree on a voluntary parenting agreement (if appropriate). In some cases, parents/ carers of persistently absent children must provide medical evidence to authorise any absence from school. Medical evidence should be provided to the office either in person or via email - this can be in the form of a note from a GP or pharmacist, a prescription dated the date of the absence or similar, or evidence of an E Consult. Where we are concerned that a child is experiencing high levels of illness, over 15 days, the school might refer to Early Help. If we cannot contact a parent/carer about a child's absence, and we have concerns around a pupil's safety, we may also request a welfare check to be made by social worker/police.

Requests for holidays in term time

We do not grant a holiday in term time. All holidays should be booked out of term time. Legislation does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time. If you take your child out of school during term time you could be referred to the local authority for a fixed term fining penalty.

Exceptional circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, we may warrant a short period of leave where an application had been made in advance in writing. We will judge each application on an individual basis, based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

Any exceptional circumstances granted will still be recorded as a school absence, even if authorised religious observance. Children may take one day for religious observance. This must fall on a day exclusively set aside for the religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.

Approved educational activity

Children who are educated off site (if in conjunction with or organised by Intake Farm), or dual registered, or who are engaged in supervised educational activities away from school premises (e.g. residential visits), need not be marked as an authorised absence, and will be recorded as on an approved educational activity. This means that, for such activities as educational visits, or approved sporting activities, children can be counted as statistically 'present'. The nature of the activity must, however, be recorded by use of the appropriate code. This is important in order to ensure that an accurate record of those children physically present on site at any given time is instantly available.

48-hour sickness rule - diarrhoea and vomiting exclusion

From time to time children are sick (vomit) either at home or at school. Unfortunately, it is not possible to distinguish between the causes of vomiting, and therefore it is essential that the same rule of exclusion applies in all cases of vomiting and/or diarrhoea.

Diarrhoea and/or vomiting commonly affect children and can be caused by a number of different germs, including viruses, parasites and bacteria. Infections can be spread easily from person to person (by unwashed hands), especially in children. Any child or member of staff with diarrhoea and/or vomiting symptoms must stay away or be excluded from the school or early years setting until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours (the '48-hour rule') and feel well. Personal hygiene whilst ill must be very strict.

If your child is sick at school, we will ask you or your emergency contact to take your child home. They should not return for 48 hours to the school premises (this includes being in and around the swimming pool). We appreciate that this is inconvenient in many cases, and you may not believe your child is ill, but you will appreciate that we do this in all cases and it should reduce the risk of infection for all children in school. As an example, if your child is sick at lunchtime on a Tuesday, they should not return to school until after lunch on Thursday, provided there have not been any further episodes of vomiting and/or diarrhoea. Further guidance on infection control may be found on the Public Health England website.

Reporting Absence

All absences must be called into school on the first day of the absence and any subsequent days of the absence before 8:45am.

A message can be left with child's name, class and the reason for absence, e.g. earache, cough etc., so that we can accurately record the reason and don't have to disturb you by calling you back for further details. Saying 'poorly' 'sick' 'feels bad' or "...is not coming in today" is not enough information for us to record the absence properly. Accurate recording of absence is a legal requirement.

1. If a child is absent from school, parents should contact the school office on the first day of absence, providing a reason for the absence. Any evidence e.g. medical letters may also be provided. We request that you call each day with an update on your child's attendance and well-being.
2. Where absence is recorded as unexplained, we will use all reasonable efforts to contact you by phone, email and/or in person.
3. If a child is absent, and we have had no contact from the parent to provide a reason for the absence, we will follow the actions outlined in the table below.

Day 1

School will phone contact 1 and contact 2 if the parent has not contacted school by 9:20am. We will phone again in the afternoon.

Day 2

If we have not had contact from you and the child is still not accounted for, school will phone and email all contacts. We will use all reasonable efforts to contact you.

Day 3

If the child is still not accounted for, we will phone and email all contacts again. This will be followed by a home visit with a DSL. If the child is not seen, we will deliver a letter stating the school has concerns and has endeavoured to contact parents.

The letter will state that if school does not hear from parents by 4pm then school will inform social care and ask for a welfare check and complete an interagency form for Children's Services alerting them to our concerns. We may also liaise with the police.

Punctuality

In addressing punctuality at Intake Farm we:

- have clear procedures - registers close at 9.20 am;
- publicise this policy in school and communicate it to parents/carers;
- balance any sanctions with positive encouragement;
- praise and acknowledge punctuality and improvements in punctuality;
- ensure that teachers set a good example by arriving punctually for registration and for lessons;
- follow up the reasons for lateness and be alert to any emerging patterns or problems.

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor attendance and punctuality regularly. The Governing Body set attendance targets annually and are kept informed on attendance figures.

Leave of absence

There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from school in term time. Any applications for leave of absence must be made in advance using the Withdrawal from Learning form and any request can only be authorised where school accepts there are exceptional circumstances. Any parent/carer requesting leave of absence of more than 5 days will be asked to make an appointment to see the Headteacher.

Leave of absence in term time will never be authorised:
during an assessment/test period – Key Stage 2 SATs, phonics, multiplication check;
when a pupil's attendance record already includes any level of unauthorised absence.

Penalty notices

The law gives powers to the Local Authority and other designated bodies to issue Penalty Notices where a parent/carer is considered able but unwilling to ensure their child's school attendance. Reducing absences from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others.

In line with our collaboration of schools (Mansfield Area Collaboration), the school will consider setting in motion the fining process after a period of absence totalling any five days in a 10-week period. The 10th session of absence is the fining process trigger. (One session is half a day.) These days could be consecutive or non-consecutive. Each case will be considered separately.

Promoting and incentivising good attendance

We have a robust and positive attendance rewards system in place for all children of compulsory school age across school. This includes:

- weekly attendance assemblies with Arnold bear;
- attendance celebration assemblies;
- class celebrations of good attendance;
- half-termly rewards including casual clothes coupons and extra playtimes;
- letters home when attendance has improved for individual children;
- end-of-year 98% and above celebrations and certificates and 100% attendance celebrations and rewards including bowling and cinema treats.

Review date: September 2025

INTAKE FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

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Website: www.intakefarm.notts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr Julian Fieldwick B.Ed (Hons)



APPLICATION FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM LEARNING DURING TERM TIME

On the reverse is an application form for you to request permission to withdraw your child from learning for any circumstance. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully:

The law states that you *do not have the right* to take your child out of school for holidays during term time.

From September 1st 2013, amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 make it clear that Headteachers may not authorise leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If you wish to withdraw your child from learning for any reason during term time, you must apply for permission in writing using the attached form. Permission for authorised leave of absence remains at the discretion of the Headteacher.

There are certain times of the year when a child may experience problems because of missing school. These include examination periods, at the time of starting a new school and at the start of a new school term. In deciding whether to authorise your child's absence, the Headteacher will take these and other factors into account.

If the Headteacher refuses your application and you still take your child out of school, the absences will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Summons being issued against you for irregular school attendance.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child to accompany you on holiday during term time then please complete the application attached.

This form should be returned to your child's school as far in advance of the proposed withdrawal from learning as possible.

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM LEARNING DURING TERM TIME

Pupil's Name Class

Home Address

.....
.....

I wish to apply to withdraw my child from learning during the following dates:

Date of Last day at SchoolDate of Return to School

Total number of school days missed

Could you please explain the circumstances that make it necessary to withdraw your child from learning during term time?.....

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

Do you expect to withdraw your child from learning again during this academic year? If yes please give more detail.....

.....

I make this application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.

Name of Parent/Carer making application

..... Signed

..... Date.....

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE