



Northgate High School

Inspiring excellence, fulfilling potential

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Heads of Northgate High School, Dereham Sixth Form College and DESA: Mrs Z Galley and Dr D Hone

9th September 2022

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance at school and legal intervention

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly.

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At Northgate High School our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents about the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government is very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The DfE policy document entitled, '[Working together to improve school attendance](#)' states:

- Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.
- If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the head teacher to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school.
- As head teachers should only grant leaves of absence in exceptional circumstances it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

If the school does not receive a request for leave, the head teacher will be unable to consider your individual circumstances and the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. There will be no obligation on the head teacher to reconsider authorising the leave if an application has not been made in advance.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention if they have **at least 9 sessions (4.5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence by the pupil during 6 school weeks.**

The intervention could be in the form of a fixed penalty notice. Any pupil at Northgate High School who meets the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a fixed penalty notice is issued, the arrangement for the payment will be detailed on the notice. The penalty is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. A parent may receive more than one separate penalty notice resulting from unauthorised absence. When penalty notices are issued each parent will receive one per child. Therefore, each parent could receive multiple notices if they



have more than 1 child who has been absent. You should be aware that failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken by the local authority. In some circumstances, the Norfolk County Council Attendance Team may choose not to issue a further penalty notice in the same academic year and may instead choose to prosecute a parent under the Education Act 1996 S444. There is no right of appeal by parents against a fixed penalty notice.

If your child is absent because of sickness or unavoidable cause Northgate High School must be informed on each day of absence before 8.45am. Please call 01362 697033 and dial option 1 when prompted to leave a message for or to speak to the Attendance officer.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

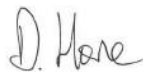
If your child is absent because of a medical appointment we require the parent to notify the school in advance of the appointment and or provide relevant medical evidence such as an appointment card/letter. Please call 01362 697033 and dial option 1 when prompted to leave a message for or to speak to the Attendance officer. Medical evidence can be brought to Reception on collection or drop off or emailed into school via office@northgate.norfolk.sch.uk

The school day starts at 8.45am and any pupil not in school by this point without a good reason will be given a detention on the day at break time. Individual transport issues do not count as a good reason.

For the school full attendance policy please visit the schools website: <https://www.northgate.norfolk.sch.uk/>

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Z Galley
Heads of Northgate High School, Dereham Sixth Form College and DESA

Mr D Hone

APPLICATION FOR PUPIL LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

Important Information for Parents

Head teachers comply with the 2013 amendment to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (2006) regulations 2013** which means that they cannot authorise a leave of absence from school unless it is exceptional. However, every case should be treated on an individual basis and with due consideration of the circumstances.

Ultimately, it is the Head teacher at the school who decides if a period of leave during term time should be authorised or not. Head teachers may grant leave of absence if they consider exceptional circumstances apply. If the exceptional circumstances are agreed, the Head teacher will determine the length of the absence to be authorised.

Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance and before any arrangements are confirmed or money committed. If leave of absence is granted, please contact school to discuss measures to minimise the impact of the absence on your child's academic progress.

This form **MUST** be completed by the parent who intends to remove the pupil from school during term time. Failure to make a request for a leave of absence in advance will result in the absence taken being recorded as unauthorised.

Please note: Parents do not have any legal entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time.

I wish to apply for Leave of Absence from school to be granted to:

Full name of child/ren.....

Address.....

From (1st day of absence)To (last day of absence)

Total number of school days.....Expected date of return to school.....

Reason for proposed absence - please provide reasons to support the application including evidence:

.....
.....

Please read the following and sign to indicate you agree:

I would like to request the above absence. I understand that the school strongly advises against taking unnecessary absence during term time and accept that this may have a detrimental impact on my child/ren's progress. I undertake to make sure my child/ren catch up with any work that is required of them.

Signature of parent(s)/carer (s).....Name (Block Capitals)

Signature of parent(s)/carer (s).....Name (Block Capitals)

Date:

Your request for leave of absence from school during term time has been considered and has been:

Agreed **Days agreed**..... **Not agreed**

Signature of Headteacher..... Name (Block Capitals)