



NORD ANGLIA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Nord Anglia International School is committed to providing a high-quality education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. For a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level of school attendance is essential. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or guardians the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Attendance at Nord Anglia International School is subject to both local education laws and also to standards and practices appropriate for a British School Overseas. To this end this school attendance policy is written to acknowledge educational law in Hong Kong and the guidance produced by the Department for Education in England and Wales (see Appendices 1 and 2).

Each year the school will set attendance targets for its pupil body as a whole and the school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals. This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its annual attendance target.

SECTION 2: PROMOTING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

2.1 The Home/School Agreement

The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child. A Home/School agreement will contain details of how we work with parents and our expectations of what parents need to do to ensure their child achieves good attendance. We will ensure that our pupils are made aware of the importance of good punctuality and attendance and how this will benefit them.

2.2 Reporting and Rewarding Attendance

Parent/Guardians can access up to date attendance data for their child through the Parent Portal of Firefly. The school will report on a pupil's attendance in their school achievements reports. The school may communicate a pupil's attendance data to other destination schools or universities. The school may use the existing reward systems (such as Progress Commendations, Certificates, and House Points) to celebrate pupils who have outstanding attendance records over a prolonged period such as a term or school year.

Section 3: School Registration Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the time of a registration must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Principal or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise

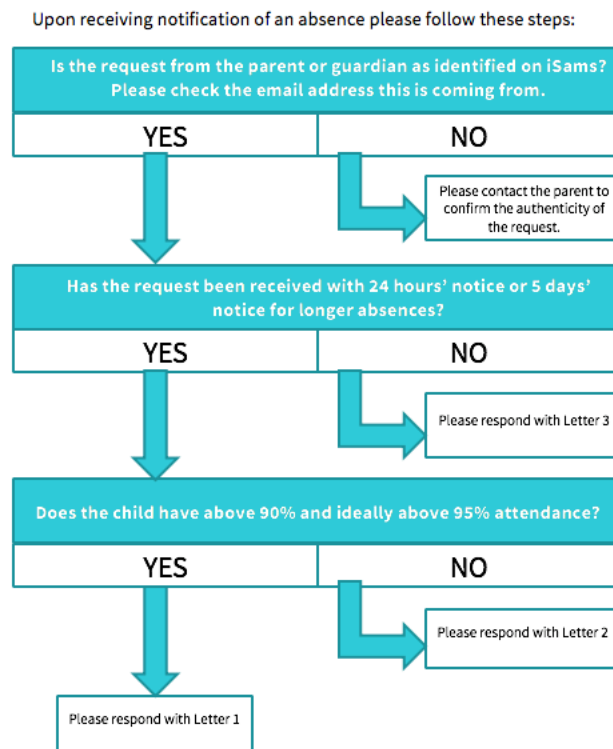


absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence will be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

The coding for any absences are as used in the iSAMS management of information system which are in accordance with the guidance provided by the Department of Education in the England and Wales. They are described in Appendix 2.

3.1 Notification and administration of absences (please see appendix 3)

The flow chart below indicates the pathways of response when a notification of absence is received. The relevant response letters are also available at the back of this document in Appendix 4.



3.3 Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

- I. Unauthorised Absence
- II. Authorised Absence (Illness has a separate code but counts as authorised absence)
- III. Approved Educational Activity

i. Unauthorised absence



This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason (refer to criteria).

ii. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under either the Education Act (England and Wales) 1996 or the local EDB regulations. This includes uncertified illness of up to two days, or certified illness of 3 days or more.

iii. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school. Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes. This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site

3.4 Registration Procedures in the Upper School

Registration takes place through the iSAMS system twice a day within the Upper School (years 7-13). The first registration period is 8:00 – 8:15 and an arrival register by the form tutor is called at the start of this period. The afternoon registration will be at 1:50pm.

Lesson registrations correspond to the eight lesson periods each day and these registrations should be taken by the subject teacher for their records.

If a student doesn't arrive for the registration period or any one of the lesson periods, the student will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed.

In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. If a student arrives after the register has been called in registration or the lesson he/she is marked as late.

3.3 Registration in the Lower School

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8:00 a.m. The registers will remain open for 30 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered. Pupils arriving after the start of school but before the end of the registration period will be coded as late before registers close.



3.4 Record preservation and Security

We will ensure compliance with attendance regulations by keeping attendance records for at least 3 years. Computer registers will be preserved as electronic back-ups and will be available for each month. Electronic registers must be password protected. Parent/Guardians can access up to date attendance data for their child through the Parent Portal of Firefly.

SECTION 4: HOME / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION OVER ABSENCES

4.1 First Day Absence.

Parent/guardians expected to contact the class teacher / tutor via email and outline reason for the absence. If this does not happen, the pupil will be marked as an unauthorised absence, and the school administration will then contact nominated parent/guardian by e-mail. The school administrators will amend the iSAMS record of reason for absence. Absent students and parent/guardians are informed that they can access set homework and supporting material for the missed lesson through Firefly.

4.2 Continuing Absence

For each subsequent day of absence the parent/guardians expected to contact the class teacher / tutor and outline reason for the absence and they will amend the iSAMS record of reason for absence. If no contact is made by parent for a full day of absence via e-mail/phone call then the school administration will phone contact numbers in iSAMS. If no contact is made by the parent for three full days of absence via parent portal or e-mail/phone call, then the school administration will phone contact numbers in iSAMS then Head of School and appropriate Head of Key Stage are alerted and further strategies to contact the parent/family are implemented.

4.3 Seven Day's Consecutive Absence Without Notification

Within Hong Kong, it is a legal requirement for local schools to notify the Local Authority of any pupil who is absent without a notification or explanation for 7 consecutive days, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Staff for the local area. Within our local context the equivalent measure open to the school would be to contact the EDB.

4.4 Absence notes

For up to two days' continuous absence a parent can verify a child's illness in writing. From the third day onwards, a doctor's certification is needed if the absence is going to be considered justified. Notes (hard copy or electronic) received from parents explaining absence should be scanned/printed and attached to the child's iSams record. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may be needed as evidence to support the attendance record.

4.5 Leave of absence in term time



Leave of absence during term time will be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider any application for leave of absence and will only agree to authorize the absence in exceptional circumstances; parents must apply to the Head of Pastoral Care (LT) or the Senior Leader at Sai Kung and Tai Tam in writing at least 1 working days in advance for permission for their child to have a short leave of absence and 5 days prior to a longer absence. Travel and accommodation arrangements should not be made until permission from the school has been obtained.

4.6 Leaving During the School Day

If a student is to leave school early owing to a prior engagement such as a medical appointment or booked flight, then the parent/guardian needs to request permission from the SLT at least one day prior to the engagement.

If a student is to leave school early owing to feeling unwell permission needs to be given by the school nurse or in the rare event of the nurse's unavailability by relevant Head of School. Permission will not be granted for pupils to leave school during the school day when there are special events such as sports days, swimming galas, performances and celebrations. These are part of the curriculum and attendance is compulsory.

Section 5: The Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on any essential work and key assessments that have been missed. They should be brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

If a pupil has been absent for a substantial period of time, determined on a case by case basis, a return to school meeting can be held to identify areas of support that can be implemented to ease the transition.

Section 6: When Attendance is a Concern

6.1 Frequent Absence

Within the school it is the responsibility of the class teacher (Lower School) or form tutor (Secondary School) to be aware of and bring to the attention of the Head of Key Stage and Head of House any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem as soon as possible.

6.2 Persistent Absence

In the first instance the teacher or tutor will discuss absence issues with the family. If they persist, the parent/guardians will be informed that the absence record is excessive and requires definitive action. A date will be set for a meeting with senior staff.



Prior to the meeting, the school will carry out due diligence as to the reliability of the attendance record and through the school's legal representation how the number of absences relate to local legal requirements. The pupil's teachers will be alerted as to the forthcoming meeting and will be able to communicate their view as to the impact of the poor attendance on the pupil's progress.

The pupil with their parent/guardians will meet with a committee of senior staff including at least two from the Principal, Head of School, Head of Pastoral Care, Head of House and relevant Head of Key Stage. Key teachers and counsellors may also be involved.

Depending on the number of absences, seriousness of extenuating circumstances and the progress of the pupil the school will decide to

- (i) Allow the pupil to progress as normal into the subsequent year group although there will most likely be written conditions.
- (ii) Require the pupil to repeat the school year i.e. not to progress with their peers but to drop back to a class with pupils one year younger. The final written decision may only be issued by the Principal, whether present in the meeting or not.

The parent/guardians will have the normal right to appeal the school's decision in a meeting with the Principal.

This was created by:

David Sheehan Head of Pastoral Care December 2018

Updated by:

To be reviewed: November 2020



Appendices

Appendix 1:

1.1 The Law in England and Wales

(i) The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

- The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and [b] To any special needs he may have.
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.
- The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.
- Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

1.2 The Law in Hong Kong

Every child in Hong Kong, without any reasonable excuse is required by law to attend a primary school after the child has attained the age of 6. It is also required to attend a secondary school after primary education and is completed before he/she attains the age of 19.

Section 74 of the Education Ordinance (Cap 279) empowers the Permanent Secretary for Education to issue attendance orders to parents who fail to send their children to school without reasonable excuses. Section 78 stipulates that any parent, who without reasonable excuses, fails to comply with an attendance order shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine at Level 3 (\$10,000) and to imprisonment for 3 months.

It is important to maintain an accurate register of student attendance both in school and in individual classes. It is a legal requirement in Hong Kong to maintain such a record.



Appendix 2: iSAMS Absence Codes

The following codes are available to teachers on their daily register. If there is no information regarding a child's absence it will default to Unauthorised.

If a child leaves early they should sign out at the front desk and their record updated by the admin team.

O	Unauthorised Absence
E	Excluded
I	Illness
Z	Pupil not yet on Roll
#	School closed to pupils
L	Leave Early

If we have had advanced notification regarding an absence (Approved or otherwise) the Admin team will enter the details onto the Future Absence function of iSams. This will feed into the register and the teacher will be alerted. This will update the register, so the teacher is aware.

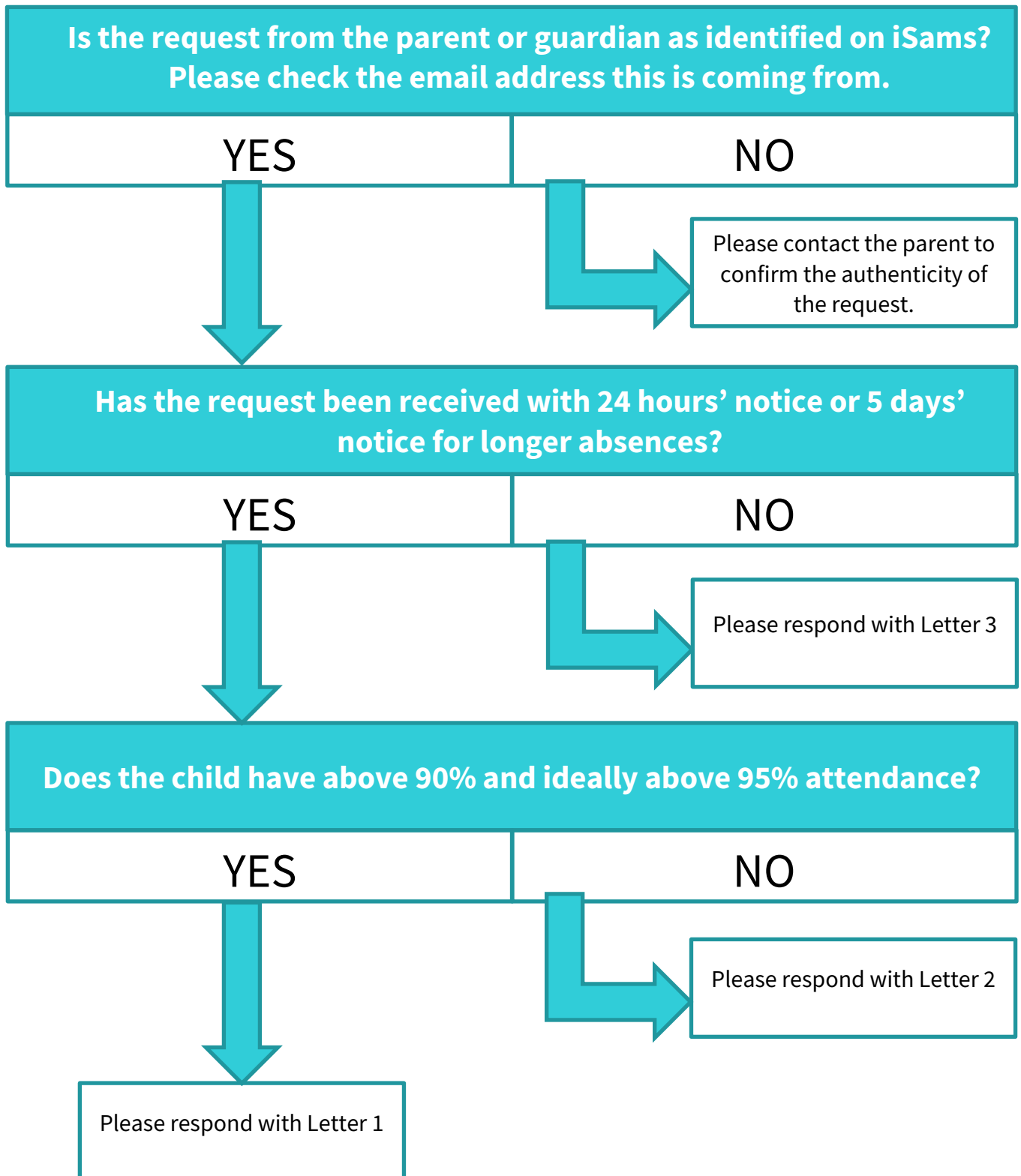
If a child is to be taking part in an excursion or educational event with the school, they can be added to the 'Out of School' function by the admin team and marked with the code 'P' as this still counts as being present for school but out of the building in case of a fire.





Appendix 3.

Upon receiving notification of an absence please follow these steps:





LETTER 1

<DATE>

Child Name / Form name

Dear _____

Thank you for the notification that <CHILD> will be out of school on <DATE>, while <HE/SHE> attends <DETAILS>. This date falls within the normal school term. The information was communicated to the relevant staff.

With the reason provided on this occasion, we are able to code this as an 'authorised absence' as outlined in the school policy, and will be reflected in <CHILD>'s end of year attendance records.

Please can I also remind you, work will not be arranged by teachers for students who are absent from school. It is the individual student's responsibility to arrange with a peer to collect all work that is covered during their absence; and then to catch up on work promptly on their return to school.

Please let us know the dates of any subsequent absences as soon as possible.

Best Regards,

David Sheehan.
Head of Pastoral Care



LETTER 2

<DATE>

Child Name / Form name

Dear _____

Thank you for the notification that <CHILD> will be out of school on <DATE>, while <HE/SHE> attends <DETAILS>. This date falls within the normal school term. The information was communicated to the relevant staff.

We are not able to authorise these absences unless they are for exceptional reasons. Please be advised that this absence will be marked as 'Unauthorised absence' in <CHILD NAME>'s attendance records as outlined in the School Policy, and will be reflected in their end of year attendance report.

Please can I also remind you, work will not be arranged by teachers for students who are absent from school. It is the individual student's responsibility to arrange with a peer to collect all work that is covered during their absence; and then to catch up on work promptly on their return to school.

Please let us know the dates of any subsequent absences as soon as possible.

Best Regards,

David Sheehan.
Head of Pastoral Care



LETTER 3

<DATE>

Child Name / Form name

Dear _____

Thank you for the notification that <CHILD> will be out of school on <DATE>, while <HE/SHE> attends <DETAILS>. This date falls within the normal school term. The information was communicated to the relevant staff.

Unfortunately, we did not receive the required amount of notice as detailed in our attendance policy and as such we are not able to authorise these absences unless they are for exceptional reasons. Please be advised that this absence will be marked as 'Unauthorised absence' in <CHILD NAME>'s attendance records as outlined in the School Policy, and will be reflected in their end of year attendance report.

Please can I also remind you, work will not be arranged by teachers for students who are absent from school. It is the individual student's responsibility to arrange with a peer to collect all work that is covered during their absence; and then to catch up on work promptly on their return to school.

Please let us know the dates of any subsequent absences as soon as possible.

Best Regards,

David Sheehan.
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