



NORTHERN STAR ACADEMIES TRUST  
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26<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Dear Parents and Children,

Here is our first newsletter of the Summer term.

First of all a big 'Well Done!' to the Y6 pupils who attended their residential visit last week. They had great weather, really enjoyed the activities and their attitude and behaviour was complemented by the instructors. Thanks to Mr. Pratt and Miss Barker for organising and accompanying the children.

Next, some news about our attendance management. A review of our most up-to date attendance information shows that there are still around a quarter of our pupils whose attendance falls below the national average of around 96% and in some cases falls below the persistent absenteeism threshold of 90%. I am sure all of you are aware that the school has a statutory duty to promote and support good attendance however we do take a sensitive and realistic approach to attendance. For example it is usually the case that attendance improves as the children progress through school and this is borne out by the fact that the highest attendance percentages can be found in years 4, 5 and 6. The youngest pupils are often more susceptible to illness and we take this into account. Overall I am pleased to say we have made some progress and current class average attendance stands at 96.26%. However, in order to ensure that parents of those children whose attendance is giving cause for concern are aware of this and make efforts to improve it, we will be following the North Yorkshire guidance and issuing 'below percentage attendance' letters to families of all children whose attendance falls below our target of 96% and will be colour coding this as follows:

Yellow: 93-95% - close to target and usually acceptably accounted for by illness or specific longer term medical issues but effort should be made to ensure no further absences this term.

Pink: 90-92.9%- attendance is uncomfortably close to falling below persistent absenteeism threshold and is likely to be affecting your child's progress and development. In the absence of specific medical conditions/needs attendance needs to have improved by the end of the year.

Red: below 90%- attendance is below persistent absenteeism threshold and, in the absence of specific medical conditions/needs, immediate improvements are required. Your child's absence will be closely monitored during this half -term and if there is no improvement a warning letter will be issued.

**NORTHERN LIGHTS**  
Teaching School Alliance

The letters you will receive are the standard letters used by most schools and as such you may find the tone a little disconcerting. It is not our intention to be heavy handed about this but rather to ensure that parents understand their responsibilities for ensuring good attendance and support the school in improving in an area for which they are held directly to account by the DfE and OFSTED.

In issuing the letters we have considered each pupil's absence record individually.

Additionally we will also be issuing leave of absence request response letters confirming whether or not the absence is authorised or unauthorised. This letter will also indicate whether or not the school will be requesting that a penalty notice be issued.

Could I please remind all users of the out of hours club and nursery that bills need to be paid in a timely manner. This avoids the accumulation of large debts and helps us with our budgeting and staffing as the employment of adults in these areas is largely dependent on the income we receive- if we don't get the fees due then this threatens the provision. If you do experience difficulties meeting your bills from time to time for any reason then please contact us to discuss a suitable solution.

Finally for this week, a reminder that school will be closed next Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May for the Bank Holiday and on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May for local elections.

Yours Sincerely,

Andrew Tomlinson