



NORTHCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Guardians

I hope you all had a lovely break. Now that the weather is finally improving, it's been wonderful to see the children enjoying more time outdoors. You may also have spotted a few updates around our playground—repairs to some uneven surfaces, and the planters have been refreshed ready for spring, helping us create a bright and welcoming space for everyone.



We're also excited to share that plans have been drawn up to enhance the Year 1 outdoor area, as well as the corner space where the old bus once stood. These improvements will create a more engaging continuous provision area along with a calm quiet zone for the children to enjoy. We're hopeful that work can begin very soon, and we look forward to keeping you updated on the progress.

Attendance



Improving attendance across school remains a big priority and the initiatives in place seem to be having a beneficial impact. However, attendance figures in school still place us well below national and local averages. We are working with many families to improve their attitudes towards attendance because the impact upon children with an attendance below 95% is significant in terms of future success. Children with an attendance below 90% are significantly less likely to hit key goals.

KS2 results National averages – Proportion of children achieving the expected standard in read, writing and mathematics

- Average attainment of pupils with attendance above 95% : **68%**
- Average attainment of pupils with attendance between 80% - 90%: **42%**

This is just one statistic to measure attainment but put simply if your child has an attendance below 90% they are more than 50% less likely to achieve the expected standard at the end of primary school. This means even if as a school we are doing everything we can to help the children reach their potential they are unlikely to achieve it as they have simply missed too much school. If attendance remains at this rate into high school only a third of the children in year 11 attain the expected standard.



You may have seen on social media or in national press some headteachers are looking at the placement of teaching Inset days to place a week's holiday outside of the traditional school terms to allow families to avoid the inflated costs associated with holidays in term times. This is something I am considering. If it means that we can save families money and improve attendance.

Around 3% of the absences recorded in school relates to pupils arriving after 9:30am. Did you know that if a child arrives after this time they do not receive their morning mark. So please do your best to be on time.

School Systems

We're excited to share that we are transitioning to a brand-new MIS system called Compass. This modern platform will bring several of our school systems together, helping us work more efficiently and communicate even better with families.

Over the coming months, Compass will be introduced to parents in stages, offering an easy-to-use app where you'll be able to receive school updates, report attendance, make payments, and keep your child's details up to date—all in one simple place.



Free Breakfast for children

We're delighted to share that Northcote Primary will be taking part in the Government's new **Free Breakfast Club pilot**. We believe this is a fantastic opportunity that will benefit many of our families, so we've signed up to take part right away.

Our free breakfast club will launch **after the Easter break**, running each morning in the school hall from **8:25am to 8:55am** (last entry at **8:45am**). To help us plan staffing and resources, we'll be sending out a short survey soon to gather an idea of expected numbers.



Please note that our existing paid breakfast club will continue as usual from **8:00am** at the small charge of **£2 per child**.

We're excited to offer this additional support to families and look forward to welcoming the children in for a great start to their day.

Staffing Update

Before half term, we began the process of recruiting maternity cover for our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Hearnshaw. We were delighted with the high level of interest from both internal and external candidates, and we are pleased to share that Mrs Manely has been appointed to the role during the maternity period. We know she will provide excellent continuity and support across the school.

We are also very happy to confirm the permanent appointments of Miss Slaughter, Miss Hamilton, and Miss Jones. Each of them has made an outstanding start to their teaching career, and we are thrilled that they will be staying with us on a more permanent basis.

Volunteers Welcome

If you are considering a future career in education, volunteering in school can be a wonderful first step. We are particularly keen to welcome volunteers who can listen to children read—this makes a huge difference to our pupils. If this is something you might be interested in, please get in touch.



Front Office Capacity



Our school office is currently operating with reduced staffing, and at times Mrs Turner is the only person available at the front desk. When families arrive unexpectedly for early pick-ups, it can significantly impact how smoothly the office can run. If your child needs to leave school early or attend an appointment, we kindly ask that this is arranged with reasonable notice and only when absolutely necessary. Your support helps us keep the school running safely and efficiently for everyone.

Yours sincerely

Gary Anders
Headteacher

