



NEWTON WESTPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of Policy: Summer Term 2015

Review date: January 2019

Next Review: Annually

Attendance Policy

- Newton Westpark Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient 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. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. From the age of 5 years of age, parents have a duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.
- School attendance is subject to various Education laws (**see appendix 1**) and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- The school will examine its attendance figures and 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 attendance targets.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity. Only the Headteacher or the person responsible for attendance can authorise attendance. If there is no known absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Punctuality

Morning registration will take place at **8.50am** for both Infants and Juniors.

Pupils arriving after the start of school but **before** the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close (L).

Registers will be closed at 9.30am. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) 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 (M).

Afternoon registration will be at:

1.00pm for Juniors

12.45pm for Infants

Register Security

To ensure that no pupils miss their mark the registers must not be returned back from class to the school office before 9.00am. The school gates will close at 8.50am and any late arrivals must be signed in the late book held in the school office. The registers will be held in the office at any times during the day other than registration periods.

Attendance Policy

All staff will be given a copy of the attendance policy. Copies of the attendance policy will also be included in the handbook given to new staff, students and supply teachers.

All staff who are responsible for taking the register will be given a copy of school expectations when marking the register.

First Day Absence Procedure

- Parents are expected to contact school to inform them of the reason for absence. There is an answer machine available to leave a message.
- The Office Staff or Pastoral Manager will try to contact by telephone the parents/carers of children who are not present after 9.30am without good reason. If we have not heard from you by 9.30am then we will start to call all the contact numbers that you have provided school with.
- If we still have not been able to ascertain where your child is then we will **make a home visit on Day 2** of your child's absence.
- However, if we still have not been able to get a response then we will report it to the police, for a welfare check, as your child will then be classed as a **'Missing Child'**. This procedure is to ensure that we know where your child is and that you are **all** safe, as we do have a duty of care.
- Other agencies may be contacted if school has any child protection concerns.
- If there has been no reason for the absence received by the time the child returns to school on day 2, a letter will be sent home to parents/carers. If there is still no response the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. ALL children should provide a note for their absence on their return to school.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 15% or more absences)

If a child continues to have persistent periods of absences (which our schools target is 90%) parents/carers will be invited to discuss schools concerns.

Our Pastoral Manager and Attendance Officer will monitor attendance closely, and an Attendance Early Help will be put in place that will support the child/family to improve attendance. However, if there are no significant improvements school will have to refer for an Education Penalty Notice.

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-school attendance (see appendix 2)

Working within a code of conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12-week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90 % attendance

- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- Persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

Our school is committed to supporting parents and children to improve Attendance and want to avoid this option where possible.

Medical Evidence

Parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is less than 90% will be asked to provide medical evidence as to the reason that their child is not in school. This can be in the form of an appointment card/letter from a medical service/professional. Full day absences will NOT be authorised for a GP/Dentist appointment.

Absence notes

Notes received from parents explaining absences should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Holidays in term time

Holidays during term time are to be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. The school will consider requests in very exceptional circumstances but parents must apply in advance for permission. Holidays taken without permission of the Headteacher will result in these absences being marked as 'unauthorised'. Thus leaving parents open to Local Authority investigation and potential financial penalty. **Written requests should be handed into the school office and addressed to the Headteacher. A written response will be issued. The school may also consider issuing Penalty Notice warnings.**

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and the Headteacher will be responsible for overseeing this work.

School target 2018/19

95%

Poor Attendance Sanctions

The school will advise the Local Authority if it deems appropriate to either:

- Enter into an Attendance Early Help whereby parents will receive a penalty warning letter (**appendix 2**) and will have to sign an Attendance contract.
- Issue an Education Penalty Notice (fine)

Attendance Awards/Promoting Attendance

The school will use the following systems to reward and promote attendance:

Weekly Class Awards

Each week the class with the highest attendance will receive extra playtime and receive the attendance trophy award for the week.

Termly attendance/End of Year attendance

At the end of each term the Headteacher will give out certificates to any children who have 100% attendance.

At the end of each year any child that has 100% attendance will receive a medal and a certificate.

Individual Attendance Certificates

At Newton Westpark we like to recognise pupils improved attendance and the Pastoral Manager will send out individual well done attendance certificates home each term when the attendance figures are analysed and improvements are made.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. Our Pastoral Manager will meet the pupils and check to see if they are well. This also includes ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

How we monitor and improve attendance in school

Warning letters will be sent home when attendance falls below 90%.

Attendance concern meetings held in school with parents/carers to provide proactive support aimed at improving attendance.

Proof of absence information.

Referrals made to other agencies – school nurse, counselling, Startwell.

The registration system

The school will use a computerised system for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE DESCRIPTION MEANING

/ Present (AM)

\ Present (PM)

B Educated off site (NOT Dual registered) – Approved Educational Activity

C Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code)

D Dual registration (i.e pupil attending another establishment)

E Excluded (no alternative provision made)

F Extended family holiday (agreed) – authorised absence

G Family holiday NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement – unauthorised absence

H Family holiday (agreed) authorised absence

I Illness – NOT medical or dental or appointments etc – authorised absence

J Interview – Approved education activity

L Late – before registers closed – present

M Medical/dental appointments – authorised absence

N No reason yet provided for absence – unauthorised absence

O Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)

P Approved sporting activity – approved education activity

R Religious observance – authorised absence

S Study leave – authorised absence

T Traveller absence – authorised absence

U Late (after registers closed) – unauthorised absence

V Educational visit or trip – approved educational activity

W Work experience – approved educational activity

X Untimetabled sessions for non compulsory school age pupils

Y Enforced closure

Z Pupil not yet on roll

School closed to pupils

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Entries in paper registers must be in ink & all corrections must be visible (no correcting fluid)

Teaching staff should not leave a blank space in the register. They should use the /\ or O. All other marks will be entered by the staff responsible for attendance.

Categorisation of Absence

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

1. Unauthorised absence

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

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. 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
- Most types of dual registration

Appendix

1. The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive 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.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

These procedures are based on:

Race Relations Act 1976

Equality Act 2006

Children Act 1989

Education Act 2002

Children Act 2004

Wigan ACPC

Safeguarding Children Wigan Council

Appendix 2.

Dear Parent,

Education Penalty Notice Warning for Non-School attendance

Under the Education Act 1996, parents and carers have a duty to make sure their children regularly attend school. If parents or carers fail to do this, they can be prosecuted.

Working within a Code of Conduct the Local Authority can issue a penalty notice to parents or carers if a child has missed a number of sessions without permission from the school.

If your child falls within one or more of these categories within a 12 week period

- 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence with under 90% attendance
- 20 sessions (10 days) of unauthorised absence
- persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration

you could receive a Penalty Notice of £60 which will increase to £120 if not paid within 21 days. The Penalty Notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution (a separate penalty notice may be issued to each parent for each child).

In law, an offence is committed if a parent fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Wigan Council Attendance Service, in conjunction with schools, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

You may also receive a Penalty Notice for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance under the following circumstances:

- Your child is stopped on a truancy sweep
- You fail to ensure that your child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your school and ask for support.

Headteacher

Date

Chair of Governors

Date