

Newsham Primary School
Policy for Attendance and Punctuality



Date Written: June 2015
By: Cathryn Watson
Adopted by Governors: June 2019

Reviewed and adopted annually in line with Government legislation and changes to school policy.

Attendance

Schools must meet for at least 380 sessions or 190 days during any school year to educate their pupils. Poor attendance disadvantages children. At Newsham Primary School we aim to convey a positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers.

Aims

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

We aim to ensure that the children in our school attend regularly and on time. Where this is not the case, staff follow a staged procedure to encourage consistent attendance.

The Government expects:

Schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence,
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- Perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly and on time

Registers

As a legal document, attendance information is kept on the school premises at all times. Teachers are required to complete a register at the beginning of each session (morning and afternoon) every day.

School uses SIMS to record all attendance and admissions register (Number on Roll).

Where there is an absence, teachers or relevant staff are required to enter the appropriate symbol in the absence circle (see appendix 1). A sickness may be authorised by the teacher or relevant staff only if they have received a message (written or verbal). Any notes received by teachers must be sent to the school office; likewise verbal messages from parents must be recorded and also sent.

Where there is a definite pattern of non-attendance or where the explanation for absence is unsatisfactory, absence may not be authorised even with a message from a parent.

The school admin team will record weekly percentages and any unauthorised absences.

First Day of Absence Contact

The school admin team endeavours to make contact with the parents of children absent from school on the first day of absence. This contact is made by telephone and aims to ascertain the reason why the child is absent and when they are likely to return. Further calls are made if absence is prolonged. These calls also let parents know that the absence has been noted and that the school cares about the effect this has on the child's learning. A record of these calls and the responses received is always kept. Phase leaders may call parents/carers at the end of a week where a pupil has been absent, this is to check on the health of the pupil and ascertain when the pupil is likely to return.

Holidays During Term Time

Governors at Newsham Primary School have decided to register all holidays during term time as “unauthorised” in a determined drive to improve attendance at Newsham Primary School. It is their view that education should be the absolute priority for children and that every second counts when striving to ensure that each pupil achieves their maximum academic potential. Under current regulations, Department for Education, Crown copyright 2012, Headteachers may in special circumstances grant leave of absence of up to 10 days for the purpose of family holiday during term time. The application must be made at least two weeks in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are ‘special’ circumstances which warrant the leave. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher’s discretion and is not a parental right. From September 2019 if and parent/carer requests leave of absence the Headteacher will review the child’s previous school attendance history and if a pattern of leave requests is found and the child’s previous absence is below 93%, the Headteacher will refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued. A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies. Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child. See Appendix 2.

Punctuality

The school doors open at 8.40am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at 8.45am at which time the school doors will be shut. Any child arriving later than 8.40am should enter school via the main entrance and report to the school office. The names of these pupils will be added to the Lateness Register. The child will then be sent to their classroom. Letters will be sent out to parents of persistent latecomers (at the discretion of the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher, taking into account personal and family circumstances).

Rewards

In assembly, we regularly highlight to our pupils the importance of attendance and that our school and individual targets are 95%. To further support our aim to achieve 95% attendance and to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality in school for parents and children, we often reward pupils who are on target with a letter home and a certificate card. Our aim is for children and families to work with us to focus on achieving at least 95% attendance with no lateness for as many children as possible. Phase leaders will set bespoke targets, with class teachers, for a selection of pupils who are failing below 95% in order to help them increase their percentage attendance, this will include a conversation with parents/carers to work together for success. Teachers will be aware of the pupils in their class and each pupil’s individual needs.

Monitoring Attendance Rates/Persistent Absence

Monthly analysis of attendance is undertaken by the School Business Manager and the School Clerk and is followed up with, letters home to parents/carers and with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer), who can make a home visit at our request to talk to families about an improvement in absence rates. The EWO will often send letters to families who we highlight as a concern, as a way of highlighting the importance of making an improvement. Parent/carers of persistent absentees are often invited into school to meet with the EWO/Deputy Headteacher. From September 2015 this rate is only 10% of the total days in school (19 days or 38 sessions). Careful monitoring of these pupils will highlight any pupils causing concern early. Once attendance rates improve a letter of thanks is also written.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Admin Team

- *Monitor registers on a daily basis and record absences.*
- *Make and keep a record of telephone calls to parents on the first day of their child’s absence (these calls continue until an adequate response is gained).*
- *Mark reasons for absences into registers and leave a message for teachers explaining absences.*
- *Calculate weekly attendance percentages.*
- *Give regular feedback to SBM concerning attendance and punctuality issues.*
- *Liaise with Educational Welfare Officer where necessary.*
- *Work with DHT and other school staff to develop strategies to improve school attendance.*

- *Print official registers.*

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/School Business Manager

- *Ensure that attendance and punctuality receive high profile in the school through newsletters, school reports, home/school communications, assemblies and rewards.*
- *Meet with parents/carers who request a leave of absence for their child.*
- *Oversee and report to Headteacher and Governors on whole school attendance and punctuality.*
- *Communicate with parents where clear concerns exist about attendance or punctuality.*
- *Liase on a regular basis with school admin team.*
- *Complete statistical returns.*
- *Offer support to parents on attendance and punctuality issues.*

Class Teachers

- *Have high expectations for punctuality and attendance in their classes.*
- *Complete registers on a daily and weekly basis.*
- *Use class newsletters to highlight class attendance and punctuality.*
- *Develop and share strategies to improve class attendance.*

What can parents do to help?

- *Let the school know by 9.00am (12.30pm for afternoon nursery) why your child is away, usually on the first day of absence.*
- *Make appointments and book holidays out of school time.*
- *Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary.*

Newsham Primary School
Attendance Registers

The attendance register is a legal document and the following guidelines apply.

Registers should be called at the beginning of the morning session AND the afternoon session. On both occasions registers MUST be promptly completed and saved. Any problems must be reported to the admin team immediately.

Non-attendance must be indicated with the appropriate symbol (see below).

Unauthorised absence is the only occasion when a register space can be left empty. Absence letters from parents should be kept for the term and dated to correspond with the relevant absence.

SYMBOLS

/ - Present (am)

\ - Present (pm)

C – Leave of absence authorised by the school

G – Family holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of agreed period

H – Family holiday authorised by the school

I – Illness (Not medical or dental appointments)

L – Late

M – Medical/Dental appointments

O – Absent from school without authorisation

U – Arrived at school after registration closed

! – Non-compulsory school age absence

B – Off-site educational activity

D – Dual Registered – at another educational establishment

J – At an interview with prospective employer, or another educational establishment

P – Participating in a supervised sporting activity

V – Educational visit or trip

E – Excluded but no alternative provision made

F – Extended family holiday authorised by the school

R – Religious observance

S – Study leave

T – Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

N – Reason for absence not yet provided

X – Not required to be in school

Y – Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

- Planned whole or partial school closure



Headteacher: Mrs. Anne-Marie Armstrong

Application for Leave of Absence of Child from School – During Term Time
 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
 Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The 2013 amendments to the 2006 regulations explain clearly that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted.

Name of Child:	
Date Of Birth:	
Address:	
Year Group / Class:	
Contact Numbers:	
Name of Siblings and school attended:	

I request permission for my child to be granted leave of absence from school between:

Proposed first day/date of absence:

Actual day/date of proposed return to school:

Total Number of School Days:

Please fully explain the exceptional circumstances relating to the leave of absence you would like the Headteacher to consider. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary). Any documentation supporting exceptional circumstances **MUST** be provided at the time of the application.

Please note that is our school policy NOT TO AUTHORISE HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME.
PLEASE SEE THE REVERSE OF THIS FORM FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION.

Declaration

I have read and understood the information regarding leave of absence during term time, unauthorised absence, Penalty Notices and prosecution. I am aware of the possible consequences should I take my child on leave of absence without the prior authorisation of the Headteacher.

Name of Parent:	
Date of Birth (Parent):	
Address:	
Signature:	
Date:	
Name of Parent:	
Date of Birth (Parent):	
Address:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Important Information for Parents/Carers

The Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to justify an authorised absence. It is the parents' responsibility when submitting the request to provide all the information and evidence to prove **exceptional circumstances**.

NEWSHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL DOES NOT AUTHORISE ANY HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME.

The request for authorised Leave of Absence must be made at least two weeks in advance and the Deputy Headteacher will invite the parent/carer(s) into school to discuss the request before a decision is made.

If the Headteacher refuses Leave of Absence and the absence is recorded as unauthorised, the Headteacher may refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

From September 2015 if a parent/carer requests leave of absence, the Headteacher will review the child's previous school attendance history, and if a pattern of leave requests is found and the child's previous absence is below 93%, the Headteacher will refer the matter to the Local Authority requesting that a Penalty Notice be issued.

A Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid in full by the end of the 28 day period the Local Authority may prosecute for the offence to which the notice applies. Where there is more than one child, each parent may be issued with a Penalty Notice in respect of each child.

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This section is for school use:

Response to your request for leave of absence during term time

Child's Name/DOB:

Child's overall attendance during last academic year:

Child's overall attendance during the current academic year:
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Our overall school attendance target is 95%

Your application for leave of absence detailed above is AUTHORISED / UNAUTHORISED.
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Signed: _____ (Headteacher / Deputy)
Date: _____