



Attendance Policy

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE MATTERS

EWO: Reviewed March 2021

Updated with Covid Amendments March 2021

Aim

There is a direct correlation between Attendance and Attainment. The aim of the Attendance Policy is to raise levels of attendance and punctuality for children and young people, therefore maximising their opportunities for improved attainment.

Objectives

- ✓ Reduce absence and lateness, and raise awareness of the importance of school attendance.
- ✓ Include all school staff, parents, pupils and Governors in School Attendance Matters strategies.
- ✓ Develop a robust electronic data handling system, enabling school staff, the LA and DfE to access statistical data in order to work effectively in partnership.
- ✓ Work effectively with parents/carers and partner agencies, using a range of strategies to improve the attendance of individual pupils and the whole school. The strategies may include assemblies and rewards.

The Law

Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act states:

that if a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly, the parent is guilty of an offence.

Parents, therefore have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's school attendance. Failure can lead to legal action being taken by the LA in the Magistrates Court, or the need to issue Fixed Penalty Fines. Since March 2001 there has been a further offence, Section 444 (1A) where a parent **knowingly** allows their child to be absent from school. This offence can carry a custodial sentence.

Absence from School

Any absence from school is detrimental to a child's education and progress. It disrupts learning, routines and progress. Government research shows that 17 days lost learning in one school year can lead to a drop of one grade at GCSE and SAT level.

School will follow up unexplained absences by contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence. Parents/carers are invited into school to discuss attendance issues if there is a

cause for concern. School will agree with the EWS at what point a referral to the Service will be made.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are unavoidable, usually due to illness, bereavement or difficult family circumstances. These absences should be supported by medical evidence where possible or an explanation from the parent/carer. The decision to authorise an absence lies with the Headteacher. Notes electronically on Integris should a parent/carer phone to say a child is going to be absent from school. Written explanations are copied to Integris.

Unauthorised Absence

These are absences which are not permissible in Law, e.g. birthdays, shopping trips, days out and Term Time Holidays, and absences where no explanation or evidence has been received. The School will discuss unauthorised absence with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and further action may be agreed.

The Headteacher cannot authorise holiday taken in term time. The school works in close partnership with the Education Welfare Services (EWS), and the school will apply for a term-time holiday Penalty Notice, if the threshold is met. Please note; that the threshold can be met even if the absences are not consecutive.

Parents are asked to complete a request form for any absences from school.

Persistent Absence

A pupil becomes a persistent absentee if he/she has missed 10% or more of school for any reason and has an attendance of below 90%. The school will invite parents/carers in to discuss the situation, and referrals may be made to the Education Welfare Services. A range of school and LA strategies can be deployed to improve attendance, including the Fastrack to Attendance programme, Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices and Parental Prosecutions.

All children who meet the threshold of Persistent Absence will be discussed with the EWO on a monthly basis.

Punctuality

The Law states that children should arrive at school on time, every day. The school doors open at 8.50am and the expectation is that pupils should be ready to learn at 9.00am. Poor punctuality is unacceptable and persistent lateness, whereby a pupil arrives after the close of registration at 9.15am may be marked as an unauthorised absence, leaving parents/carers at risk of legal action. Families who are persistently late are brought to the attention of the Headteacher who will determine whether further action should be taken.

Roles and Responsibilities

We will:

- ✓ Set high expectations for pupil attendance, and monitor individual and whole school attendance on a weekly basis.
- ✓ Identify causes of concern with regard to pupil attendance.
- ✓ Make initial contact with parents where there is unexplained absence.
- ✓ Invite parents/carers into school to discuss concerns if there is no improvement.
- ✓ Work in partnership with the LA, and with EWS particularly.
- ✓ Maintain electronic registration data systems effectively and deploy them robustly to facilitate presentation of reports.
- ✓ Provide attendance data for parents.
- ✓ Promote attendance at all levels – within school, the community, the LA, regionally and nationally.
- ✓ Celebrate excellent and improved attendance.

Parents and Carers will:

- ✓ Ensure pupils arrive at school on time every day and that routines are in place at home to support this.
- ✓ Contact the school as soon as possible if absence is unavoidable, and follow this up with a written explanation.
- ✓ Obtain evidence where appropriate to support medical absence.
- ✓ Avoid term time holidays, and attempt to minimise school time appointments.

Education Welfare Service will:

- ✓ The EWO will work in partnership with the school to promote and facilitate improved attendance, at an individual level, either through a referral system or using the Fastrack to Attendance Programme; and at whole school level using proactive strategies and Action Plans.
- ✓ The EWO will work with children and families to ensure their school attendance and safeguarding is maintained.
- ✓ EWS will provide advice and guidance with regards to Children Missing Education. Child Employment and Licensing.
- ✓ EWS will work in partnership with other agencies and will offer advice and signposting for referrals to appropriate organisations.
- ✓ EWS will undertake legal action on behalf of the School.
- ✓ The LA will support the school with networking and training events and with individual School Audits and Action Plans.

Under exceptional circumstances when a national crisis may or may not apply:

COVID 19

Who the guidance is for: This guidance is for parents/carers of pupil's at Newton Hill Community School

Recording non-attendance related to coronavirus

We have defined a set of sub codes for our school to use to consistently record non-attendance related to coronavirus and help us to complete the educational settings status form. The guidance below was created by the DFE:

The set of sub codes to record non-attendance related to coronavirus are: Code X01: Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to be in school This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code X02: Pupil self-isolating with coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because they have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) but they have not yet had a positive test.

Code X03: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) inside the school setting This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) inside the school setting (for example, individuals, classes, year groups or bubbles who have been sent home because of potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID19) within the school setting). Includes test and trace where it applies.

Code X04: Pupil self-isolating due to potential contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) outside the school setting This code is used for pupils who are self-isolating because of contact with a case of coronavirus (Covid-19) OUTSIDE the school setting (for example, a household member with symptoms or a confirmed positive test, or a social contact or a contact with someone from the local community with a confirmed positive test). Includes pupils advised to self-isolate through test and trace where appropriate.

Code X05: Pupils required to self-isolate as part of quarantine requirement (after arriving in the UK from a non-exempt country or territory) This code is used for pupils who are required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK. Department of Health & Social Care guidance 'Coronavirus (COVID-19): how to self-isolate when you travel to the UK'.

Code X06: Pupil not in school because they have been advised specifically by their Doctor or public health authority that they are clinically extremely vulnerable and should not attend. This code is used for the small number of pupils who have been specifically identified as clinically extremely vulnerable and advised that they should not attend school. Department of Health & Social Care / Public Health England 'Guidance on protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19'.

Code X07: Pupil advised specifically not to attend school as part of restrictions to education set out in Government advice. This is for pupils who as part of local or national restrictions to education

settings, (including set out in the Contingency Framework and related guidance) are specifically advised not to attend school for public health reasons.

Code I01: Illness This code is used for pupils who are absent because of non-coronavirus (COVID-19) related illness or sickness.

Code I02: Illness Confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19) This code is used for pupils who are absent because they have tested positive for coronavirus (COVID-19). Where schools are using these sub-codes, they will still need to consider on an individual basis whether Code X is the appropriate code for a given non-attendance.

They will need to ensure that Code X is only used where a pupil does not attend school because their travel to, or attendance at, school would be:

- contrary to guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) from either Public Health England (PHE Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- prohibited by any legislation (or instruments such as statutory directions) relating to the incidence or transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19)

Where a pupil's non-attendance does not meet these requirements it should not be recorded as Code X and schools should consider whether another code can be used.

LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

[The Education Act 1996](#)

[The Education Act 2002](#)

[The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.