



Attendance Policy

Source	Newlyn School
Date written	July 2021
Reviewed on	July 2021
Next review date	July 2022
I confirm that this policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Governing Body of Newlyn School. Mrs E Lambourn Date 6.7.21 Chair of Governors	

Newlyn Primary School Attendance Policy

At Newlyn Primary School we believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too, that children arrive and leave school on time. It is equally important that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

As attendance is crucial to effective learning and the continuity of learning experiences school places great emphasis on this in its communication with parents.

Statutory Framework

Under section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, all children of compulsory school age must receive suitable education whether by regular school attendance or otherwise.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise absence. Only if the school is

satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter / message will the absence be authorised.

Rights and Responsibilities; Improving attendance at Newlyn School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community -pupils, parents and staff.

Pupils

✓ All pupils are expected to attend school and all of their lessons regularly and punctually. Pupils who do experience attendance difficulties will be offered prompt and sympathetic support.

Parents

✓ Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and in a fit condition to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible - by a telephone call, email or letter (delivered by hand or sent in with sibling). A pupil's absence from school must be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours, or taking holidays during term time.

✓ All absences, authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

We will contact parents by letter if:

✓ Attendance falls below 95% - A letter printed on amber paper with a copy of the child's registration certificate will be printed on the reverse. Parents are required to return the attached slip to indicate that they have received this letter.

✓ Attendance falls below 90% - A letter printed on red paper with a copy of the child's registration certificate will be printed on the reverse. Parents are required to return the attached slip to indicate that they have received this letter and contact the school to arrange a meeting.

✓ A second letter will be sent to parents if their child's attendance has not improved after half a term and will be invited to the school's attendance clinic, chaired by the Educational Welfare Officer.

✓ Attendance falls below 85% to notify parents that all time off due to illness has to be verified with a doctor's note for the absence to be authorized.

✓ Their child has 4 or more broken weeks* in a half term. (e.g. Sept – Oct half term)

✓ There is a regular pattern of absence.

✓ Their child is late on a regular basis.

If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to affect an improvement have been unsuccessful, a referral will be made to the Local Authority's Education Welfare Officer.

*Broken weeks – incomplete weeks with one or more absence.

School

✓ Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism, liaising closely with parents. Staff will respond to all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

Registration

Registers will be called promptly at 8.55 a.m. and at 1.15 p.m. and will be taken electronically with the list of codes set out in the electronic register.

Registers will close at 9.00 a.m. and at 1.20 p.m. If a pupil arrives after registers close, but within a reasonable (as determined by the Headteacher depending on circumstances) amount of time of them closing then he/she will be marked as late and an explanation will be sought. If a pupil arrives **before** registers close they will receive an authorised late mark.

Parents are reminded that if a child arrives in school after the registers have been closed and an acceptable explanation is not forthcoming, the pupil has to be recorded as 'unauthorised absent' for that session.

Class teachers will take registers electronically in their class and will inform office staff if a child is not in school. Office Staff will check for any absentees.

The Attendance Coordinator, on behalf of the Head, will inspect all registers each term in order to ensure that correct procedures are being followed.

Early departure

✓ A child leaving early may seriously disrupt not only his/her learning but that of other children.

✓ Early departures will be monitored by the Office Staff, on behalf of the Head. If a child leaves before midday or 3.15 p.m. then they and their parents/carers will report to the office, where a record is kept of the fact and noted, in case of an emergency. This will include the time of departure, the reason for leaving early and will be signed by the parent/carer.

Authorised / Unauthorised Absence

Absence will only be authorised for:

- ✓ Illness
- ✓ Bereavement
- ✓ Medical appointments
- ✓ Observance of religious festivals
- ✓ Bad weather (where it would be a safety risk to attempt to come to school)

It should be noted that this list does not include annual family holidays.

The headteacher on behalf of the Governors will consider requests for absence, outside the above categories, only in exceptional circumstances. Examples might be once in a lifetime events or restrictions put in place by an employer about when holidays can be taken (evidence may be requested). The child's attendance will need to be over 95% for any authorization.

Parents should make requests in writing using the form available from the School Office. A discussion with the headteacher would be helpful before a request for absence in exceptional circumstances is made.

If absence is requested outside these exceptional criteria it would not be authorised.

Both authorized and unauthorized holidays will be recorded as non-attendance and will, therefore, affect the child's attendance percentage.

Please be aware that should your child's attendance suffer due to repeated illness, the school may request medical evidence. This can be in the form of an appointment card or prescription label.

Medical appointments

- ✓ While we appreciate that appointments have to be taken when they are on offer, parents/carers are encouraged to make them towards the end of either a morning or afternoon session as this avoids the child being marked as an authorised absence.

Procedures for the following up absence

- ✓ If a pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent without adequate explanation, the headteacher or Attendance Coordinator will contact the parents and invite them to attend a meeting at school

- ✓ If a pupil returns to school after a period of absence and fails to bring a note or if the parents explanation offered by a note is unsatisfactory the headteacher will contact the parents
- ✓ If a pupil is persistently absent or late and the school's efforts to effect improvement have been unsuccessful, the situation will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.
- ✓ If a pupil is absent due to taking holiday in term time, and that holiday is not authorised under the exceptional circumstances guideline, then the parent may be liable for a Fixed Penalty at the rate recommended at the time by the Government.
- ✓ Notes from parents will be kept. All telephone messages regarding absence / lateness will be recorded on the electronic register.
- ✓ Children who have not attended school for 10 consecutive days, without any contact from parents, will be marked as a Child Missing Education and will be referred to the Educational Welfare Office.
- ✓ A child's attendance that regularly falls below 85% and shows no signs of improving, after all interventions by the school, will be referred to the Educational Welfare Office and possible arrangements will be made for a home visit.

Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

Promoting Good Attendance

- ✓ Certificates and prizes will be presented to children with 100% attendance for each term and an extra prize for pupil's attendance is 100% throughout the year.
- ✓ Classes with the highest overall attendance for the previous week will be celebrated in assemblies, on newsletters and in the school noticeboard.

✓ During the school year we wish to encourage the highest possible individual attendance rate and view this procedure as a necessary and important objective in order to ensure highest level of achievement for all our children.

Headteacher: Isabel Stephens Date: 6.7.21

Chair of Governors: Elizabeth Lambourn Date: 6.7.21

Approved by Governors Minute number.....