

# Newington Green Primary School



## Attendance Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 **Newington Green Primary School** committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending school regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.
- 1.2 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.
- 1.3 The policy has been drawn up based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory Regulations. The school will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

## 2. School's roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 All staff (teaching and support) at Newington Green Primary School have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. **Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality. This is now part of the National Standards for Teachers.**

### 2.2 Attendance Leader

The Home School Worker (HSW) will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. As the Attendance Leader, the Home School Worker will ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared with the Senior Leadership Team, made regularly available to all staff, pupils and parents. The Attendance Leader will ensure that the Governing Body is fully aware of attendance data and targets. She will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

### 2.3 Registration

- i) The school is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers are responsible for completing the electronic registers. The Home School Worker completes the registers using the prescribed codes.

## REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
<b>B</b>	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
<b>C</b>	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
<b>D</b>	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
<b>E</b>	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
<b>F</b>	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>G</b>	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
<b>H</b>	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
<b>I</b>	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
<b>J</b>	Interview	Approved Education Activity
<b>L</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Present
<b>M</b>	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
<b>N</b>	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
<b>P</b>	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Authorised absence
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Authorised absence
<b>T</b>	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
<b>U</b>	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
<b>V</b>	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
<b>X</b>	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Y</b>	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
<b>#</b>	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

- ii) The register will be called promptly at **9.00 am** and **1.30 pm** by each class teacher and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child.
- iii) The registers will close at **9.05 am** and **1.35 pm**. Any pupil who arrives **after** the closing of the register will be marked as **late (L)**. Any child arriving after 9.30am will be marked as **unauthorised absence (U)**.

### 3. Categorising absence

- 3.1 A mark will be made in respect of each child following the close of the registers. Any child who is not present will be marked with an unauthorised absence (No reason yet provided) unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the school at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Headteacher.
- 3.2 Newington Green Primary School recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-school attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Newington Green will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a pupil's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the school**.
- 3.3 If no explanation about an absence is received by the school **within 7days**, the absence will remain unauthorised;
- 3.4 Newington Green Primary school will only authorise absences as circumstantial in **wholly exceptional** circumstances. Where an absence cannot be covered by any other code it will be marked as C.
- 3.5 Where leave has been granted by the school in advance, for example pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority,
- 3.6 where the school is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;
- 3.7 where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible), and to return their child to school immediately afterwards – or send him / her to school beforehand;

- 3.8 where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, eg extreme weather conditions;
- 3.9 the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's / student's parents belong;
- 3.10 **Exceptional circumstances** are classified as a family bereavement, an event of an accident or an emergency which must be attended straight away (this does not include home repairs, or planned appointments, but may include genuine medical emergencies).

Appointments or arrangements for other members of the family will be unauthorised

- 3.11 Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Some examples of reasons for **NOT** authorising absence would be:
- no explanation has been given by the parent;
  - the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
  - the pupil or parents are staying at home to mind the house;
  - the pupil or parents are shopping during school hours;
  - the pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday, wedding;
  - the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday

**3.12 Approved educational activity**

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the school will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

**3.13 Absences after close of class registers**

Any absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the class teacher school office and reported to the Home School Worker.

**3.14 Staff Training**

The Home School Worker will ensure that all staff responsible for taking electronic registers, including any temporary or supply staff, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

**4. Collection and analysis of data**

- 4.1 Home School Worker will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the school target. The data will inform the school's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

4.2 Attendance is monitored by year group and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils / students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

4.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the Access and Engagement team (SIMS) within the stipulated time frame.

4.4 The school produces reports every half term and should your child's attendance drop below 90% parents/carers will be invited to meet with the Head Teacher and Home School Worker to discuss any family/medical issues that are affecting attendance and to explore strategies to improve attendance.

## 5. **Deletion from Roll**

5.1 When a registered pupil fails to attend school for a period of three weeks and all efforts by the Access and Engagement Team and school have been unsuccessful in tracing the child, they will be deleted from roll and will have to re-apply for a place. If the school is full it is more than likely the pupil will be placed on a waiting list.

## 6. **Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance**

6.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Newington Green. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters, text messages, school website and school meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment.

6.2 Newington Green has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week. Home school worker or Learning Mentor will contact the families for an explanation of absence and refer to the Headteacher.

### 6.3 **First-day calling**

Newington Green has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned on the first day or texted if a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage pupils who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the school will send a letter to them by first class post.

### 6.4 **Meetings with parents**

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a 3 to 4 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the school will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans should be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

#### 6.5 **Referral to the Engagement and Access Team**

If there continues to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), the matter will be referred to the Engagement and Access Team

#### 6.6 **Lateness and Punctuality**

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the school is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the pupil to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost shoes. A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the Access and Engagement team

6.7 Pupils who arrive late for school but before the register closes must report to the Home School Worker and will be recorded in the register and late slip given. They will then be marked as late.

6.8 Every Friday text messages are sent out to all parents/carers informing them of how many minutes late their child has been to school for the whole week.

6.9 For health and safety reasons it is important that the school knows who is in the building. Pupils arriving late should therefore report to the school office. **It is important that all pupils arriving late follow this procedure.**

6.10 For the same reason it is important that parents of pupils leaving the premises legitimately (eg for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day inform the school office. The school office will record that the child has left the school site and will mark them back in when they return.

6.11 An Escalation policy will be put in place outlining the strategies in place for children arriving to school late between 9.05 -9.30am which the Home School Worker will follow up accordingly.

6.12 Late Gate patrols are held regularly involving the Home School Worker and the Senior Leadership Team being present on the playground in the morning. Warnings will be given to parents/carers via text messages, newsletter and website that late gate patrol are imminent.

6.13 In the school reception area an attendance board is on display with weekly updates of best class attendance and punctuality.

## 7. Attendance and Punctuality Rewards

**At Newington Green we have clear strategies and rewards to promote and celebrate good attendance these can be given to individual or classes.**

- 7.1 Individual pupils can receive certificates for 100% or improved attendance/punctuality termly.
- 7.2 Pupils with 100% attendance every term will be put into a raffle with a chance to win a bike.
- 7.3 Pupils with improved punctuality will be put into a raffle with a chance to win a scooter termly.
- 7.4 End of each academic year all pupils with 100% attendance including the two winning classes with the highest attendance will be rewarded with a prize such as a magic show, indoor zoo or trophies.
- 7.5 Notices will be put in the newsletter, school website and text messages sent to celebrate the winners

## 8. Term-time Holidays

**No time off for holidays during term time will be granted.**

**Home country visits or visits to relatives.**

- 8.1 Newington Green will consider every application individually; its policy is **NOT** to grant leave of absence for a home country visit. Time off school for this purpose **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing using the appropriate form (see appendix), with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended trip.
- 8.2 Newington Green will respond to all requests for a leave of absence using the appropriate form (see appendix) giving the reasons for the decision.
- 8.3 **Parents' / Carers' responsibilities**  
The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents / carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Newington Green. Newington Green expects parents / carers will:
  - ensure their children attend the school regularly;
  - support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
  - Not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not condone unjustified absence from school.
- 8.5 Parents will also be expected to:

- Notify Newington Green on the first day of absence telephone line (0207 254 3092 option 0) or reporting to the school office.
- ensure their children arrive at school on time, full uniform and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, overseeing homework when asked to do so, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- Contact the school without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives Newington Green will endeavor to support parents to address their concerns.

## **9. Pupils' responsibilities**

- 9.1 All pupils should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their class teacher, HSW or Learning Mentor.
- 9.2 Pupils should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their class teacher a note from their parents to explain the absence. Pupils also have a responsibility for reporting to the school office if they arrive late.

## **10. Governors' responsibilities**

Section 175 (2)

- 10.1** The governing body of a maintained school shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the school are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the school.

### **Reviewing the policy**

The school will review this policy each year with its allocated Access and Engagement Team.

Reviewed January 2017

# Newington Green Primary School

## Request for child's leave of Absence

### REQUEST FOR CHILD'S LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

This form needs to be submitted at least four weeks prior to proposed leave.  
Please complete Application Form and return to the school office or the Home School Worker.

PLEASE USE CAPITAL LETTERS TO FILL THIS FORM IN8

1. Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the following dates:

Date of last day of school: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of return to school: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of days missed: \_\_\_\_\_

If your child will not be able to attend on the date of return to school please make sure that you inform us. This needs to be done by phone or email. Failure to follow this requirement could result in your child being deleted from the school roll and it may lead to a referral to Children Social Care, Educational Welfare Officer or 'Children Missing from School' Investigation Team.

(Please state the purpose of this period out of school and why this must be taken during term time and not school holidays).

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### 2. Contact details whilst abroad/absent from school

If the child is being taken out of school during the term time and the details of their location is not provided by the Parents/Carers then this could turn into a serious safeguarding issue. When a child is absent or missing from school, they could be at risk of harm. The school has a duty to keep children safe and this includes knowing where they are. If the Parents/Carer fails to provide required information than the school may make a referral to the International Police and International Social Services as a 'missing child'.

Address whilst away:

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Telephone number whilst away: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address whilst away \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please attach proof of where you will be whilst away.

I make application for my child named above to have authorised absence from school. I understand that if this is not agreed then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and this will be brought to the attention of the school Education Welfare Officer which could lead to a penalty notice.

4. Parents/Carers Details:

Mother/Carer: Title \_\_\_\_\_ Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Father/Carer: Title \_\_\_\_\_ Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check list:

- \*All sections are filled in: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- \*Copies of proof of where and when child is away: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
- \*Date of receiving the application: \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Received by: \_\_\_\_\_
- \*Decision by Head Teacher: Authorised/Unauthorised