

## NORTH NEWTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Attendance Policy

#### **Policy Statement:**

It is in the interests of better life chances for our students that we emphasise the importance of school attendance for individual educational outcomes and develop systems and support that maximise the attendance of all students. All students are expected to attend regularly and be punctual. This establishes good working habits. Students who attend regularly achieve better results than those who do not.

The Government have issued schools with legislation which will only allow Headteachers to grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. If parents/carers make a request for holiday in term time it will only be authorised if the school deems that there are exceptional circumstances and reasons for this to happen. At least 4 weeks' notice of any request for leave must be given.

Such exceptional circumstances may be:

- Where forces personnel are on leave from a foreign posting
- Where parents have significant employment restrictions. (A covering letter from the employer will be required).
- Where significant family events and circumstances occur.
- 
- Any unauthorised absence such as taking holidays in term time when they have not been approved by the school may result in a fixed penalty **fine** being issued by the Education Attendance Service.

The school works in close partnership with parents, carers, Governors and the Education Attendance Officer (EAO).

North Newton Community Primary School has developed a range of flexible responses to meet the emotional and social needs of the students. There are in place a range of strategies in pastoral, learning support and curriculum areas that focus on enabling the individual to secure excellent attendance and achievement.

#### **1. Glossary of Terms/Acronyms**

LA = Local Authority  
EAO = Education Attendance Officer  
AO = Attendance Officer  
DfE = Department for Education

#### **2. Authorising an Absence**

The school will follow Statutory Guidelines, Legal Processes, interventions and request warning penalty notices if there are too many unauthorised absences.

The decision to authorise an absence rests with the headteacher. The reasons must be clear and acceptable and usually fall into one of the following categories:

- Illness.
- Medical or Dental appointment.
- Family bereavement.
- A Student who has been granted leave to perform through licensing.
- Fixed term or permanent exclusion.
- Days set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the child's parent /carer belongs.
- Where the school is outside the statutory walking distance for students of that age and the LA has not made provision for transport to and from school or has not offered a place at a school nearer to the student's home.

- Dual registration.
- Family holidays in term time due to “exceptional circumstances” agreed by the headteacher.
- Travellers when travelling.
- Approved sporting activity.
- Alternative provision off-site, organised by the school.
- Home tuition

### 3. Term time leave

The School follows the Government regulations. Absence as a result of holidays taken during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents/Carers need to apply for holiday absence before going on holiday and need to explain the specific exceptional circumstances that the headteacher may consider. **Any unauthorised absence such as taking holidays in term time, when it has not been approved by the school, may result in an application from the school for a fixed penalty fine which will be issued by the Local Authority.**

### 4. Follow-up of Poor Attenders

- Parents/Carers report absences by telephone.
- The school may request a Penalty Notice for students with 12 sessions (6 days) unauthorised absence in a 12 week period. A Penalty Notice could be requested by the school for a fixed fine to be issued for holiday leave or a Warning Penalty Letter which parents would then receive 15 days to improve school attendance. Warning Penalty Notices can be issued for 12 unauthorised absences.
- Governors support the securing of good attendance through regular reports of school attendance.
- Copies of standard letters can be found in Appendix 1

### 5. Persistent Lateness

In individual circumstances of persistent lateness a letter will be written to parents. Following a period of regular on time attendance children will receive a short term award.

### 6. Encouraging Excellent Attendance

A number of strategies are used:-

- Termly letters to parents reporting individual, class and whole school attendance percentage (Appendix 2).
- Termly Attendance Certificates
- Annual rewards for students with 100% attendance for the whole year.

### 7. Taking Students off Roll and Missing Students

The school follows the procedures laid down by the LA.

**8. Excluded students** – the school may issue a penalty fine if a student is observed in the community whilst excluded for a period of time.

## WHY ATTENDANCE MATTERS

*Why is Regular Attendance Important?*

- You don't miss lessons and so don't get behind with school work.
- Catching up on work when you return to school can be difficult
- You don't “miss out” on events and friends at school. You know what is going on, so you don't feel left out.
- Group work isn't disrupted
- Better results for everyone.

**Research shows that there is a direct link between good attendance and achievement in school. Poor attendance can have a direct effect on a student's attainment and their future life chances.**

For example, 90% attendance might sound quite acceptable but what that means in reality is....

- You are absent **one day every fortnight.**
- It adds up to **four weeks absence out of every year.**
- In five years this would add up to **half of a school year missed.**
- This results in having only a 75% chance of getting 5 A\*-C at GCSE.
- Also achieving all other qualifications will be affected in a similar way.

If you are **absent one day a week** this means you have an attendance of 80%.

**Habits of poor attendance and lateness in school can be repeated in working life which is why employers do ask the school for such information as part of references.**

**How students and parents/carers can help.**

Let the school know the first day of your absence and when you return.

Make dental and doctor's appointments outside school hours. If you have to go during school hours, unless you have had major treatment, you should return to school so you can get your mark.

Ensure no family holiday is taken during term time unless under "exceptional circumstances".

Make sure you leave home early enough to get to school in time for registration. If you arrive after 9.15am or 1.30 pm it is classed as an unauthorised absence.

**Rewarding Good Attendance**

The majority of students do attend regularly and are punctual.

Students with 100% attendance over the year will receive a reward.

All students should aim for at least 95%

The overall school target is 96%.

**Monitoring Absence**

Attendance of all students is checked.

Where the school suspects that absences due to medical reasons are not genuine they will be challenged.

When a student's attendance becomes a serious cause for concern our Education and Attendance Officer becomes involved.

If the Student's attendance doesn't improve or there are unauthorised absences action is taken. This may include penalty notices, fines and prosecutions.

**BY WORKING TOGETHER WE WILL ACHIEVE GOOD ATTENDANCE FOR EVERYONE.**

**GOOD ATTENDANCE MATTERS.**

**GOOD ATTENDANCE LEADS TO BETTER RESULTS.**

**GOOD ATTENDANCE LEADS TO INCREASED OPPORTUNITY AND LIFE CHANCES.**

8. **Review**

The Attendance Policy is reviewed annually by the Governing.

Signed ..... Chair of Governors

Date .....

## Duties, Roles, Responsibilities

<b>LA</b>	<b>Statutory Duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LA policy for attendance at school</li> <li>• Ensure parents/carers cause their children to receive a full time education</li> <li>• Use statutory powers to take legal action to meet the LA's statutory responsibilities</li> <li>• Inspect school registers</li> <li>• Regulate child employment.</li> <li>• Advise on child protection.</li> </ul>
	<b>Other Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and maximise school attendance.</li> <li>• Work to the Government Statutory Guidance on Schools Attendance and implement fast track prosecutions, attendance orders and so on.</li> <li>• Work with schools to set individual school targets to improve attendance</li> <li>• Develop service level agreements with all schools to improve attendance.</li> <li>• Support schools with best child protection practice to safeguard children's and young people's welfare</li> <li>• Prioritise resources in inverse proportion to success.</li> <li>• Support student and families to improve attendance including the promotion and support to schools to write up parenting contracts.</li> <li>• Discuss with schools, students for whom attendance is a concern, offering guidance and support.</li> <li>• Agree with the school a system for recording actions arising from liaison meetings, clearly indicating responsibilities.</li> <li>• Carry out assessments on attendance of individual students, calling attendance reviews where appropriate.</li> <li>• In consultation with the school, and where appropriate, instigate legal action.</li> </ul>
<b>Schools</b>	<b>Statutory Duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep an accurate and up to date admissions register</li> <li>• Keep accurate and up to date attendance registers</li> <li>• No authorised holiday absence, except in exceptional circumstances. Decision on this made by the headteacher.</li> <li>• Decide if a Fixed Penalty Notice should be issued for more than 10 continued unauthorised sessions for holiday purposes.</li> </ul>
	<b>Other Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure staff accurately record attendance through electronic registration</li> <li>• Promote and maximise school attendance</li> <li>• Work to Government Statutory Guidance on School Attendance</li> <li>• Have a whole school attendance policy</li> <li>• Set individual school targets to improve attendance</li> <li>• Implement best child protection practice to safeguard children's and young peoples welfare, including attendance</li> <li>• Support students and families to improve attendance</li> <li>• Provide attendance data for the liaison meeting and to ensure regular transfer (electronically where possible) of accurate attendance data to the EAOs via the LA.</li> <li>• To inform the EAOs of children with poor or irregular attendance where attempts by the school to rectify the situation have failed.</li> <li>• To be clear, consistent and decisive in the approach to the authorisation of absence from school, consistent with DfE and LA guidance.</li> <li>• Communicate with EAO in regard to issuing of penalty fines.</li> </ul>
<b>Parents/ Carers</b>	<b>Statutory Duties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure their children attend school punctually and at the required times</li> </ul>
	<b>Other responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure their children attend school in order to take full advantage of the learning opportunities.</li> <li>• Supporting the school and student in matters of school policy including behaviour and attendance.</li> <li>• Inform the school on first day of absence.</li> <li>• Seek authorisation from the school for all holiday absences in term time.</li> <li>• Ensure their child if excluded from school is not seen in the wider community (Fixed Penalty Fine may be issued).</li> <li>• Avoid medical/dental appointments during the school day.</li> <li>• Avoid any Term time leave.</li> </ul>

# NORTH NEWTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## "TOGETHER WE ACHIEVE"

Headteacher: Mr. Nick Arnold  
Chair of Governors: Mrs. Sarah Cook



Tel: 01278 662140  
E-mail: [northnewton@educ.somerset.gov.uk](mailto:northnewton@educ.somerset.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.northnewtonschool.co.uk](http://www.northnewtonschool.co.uk)

Church Road,  
North Newton,  
BRIDGWATER,  
Somerset.  
TA7 0BG

### REQUEST FOR TERM-TIME LEAVE

Dear Headteacher,

I wish to apply for term time leave for my child(ren):

Name	Class
1.	
2.	
3.	

from

to

inclusive

The Exceptional Reasons for this request are:

Siblings at other schools:

Name	School
1.	
2.	
3.	

Signature  
(Parent)

Date

Please make your request prior to making any bookings and at least four weeks before the anticipated leave date.

***NB. If the school refuses your request and the child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This may result in a penalty notice being issued or legal action taken for poor attendance.***

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Church Road,  
North Newton,  
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Somerset.  
TA7 0BG

Date:

## APPROVAL LETTER

Dear

**Name of Child:**

### **Request for Term Time Leave**

Thank you for your request for term time leave.

I am in agreement this is for exceptional reasons and have authorised this leave.

The leave is from

to

Should the leave be extended for any reason, the extension may be regarded as unauthorised absence which may be used in any legal action for poor school attendance.

Signature  
(Headteacher)

.....

Date

.....

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Date:

## LETTER OF REFUSAL

Dear

**Name of Child(ren):**

### Request for Term Time Leave

You have requested \_\_\_\_\_ school days leave from ..... to .....

Your request for term time leave has been carefully considered but unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:

The reasons are not considered exceptional

The leave has not been requested in advance

Other


If your child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and noted on your child's attendance record. This may result in a Fixed Penalty Fine.

A copy of our Attendance Policy which gives further information is available to view on the School Website or you can ask for a copy from the School Office.

Signature

(Headteacher)

Date

If you have any concerns about this decision please contact:

Louise Hull  
Education Welfare Project Manager  
Education Welfare Service  
Support Services for Education  
County Hall  
Taunton  
TA1 4DY  
Tel 01935 463911  
Email: [LXHull@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LXHull@somerset.gov.uk)

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Date .....

Dear

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor attendance on a regular basis. We are therefore writing to advise you of .....’s current level of attendance for the period .....:

Overall Attendance	
Of which Authorised Absence is	
Of which Unauthorised Absence is	

You may be interested in the following figures which I supply purely for your information. Please remember we do not wish any child to attend school when ill.

Hedgehogs attendance rate = .....% (authorised absence .....%/unauthorised .....%)  
 Foxes attendance rate = .....% (authorised absence .....%/unauthorised .....%)  
 Squirrels attendance rate = .....% (authorised absence .....%/unauthorised .....%)  
 Badgers attendance rate = .....8% (authorised absence .....%/unauthorised .....%)

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child’s future progression.

<p><b>Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year</b>                  Excellent attendance! These pupils will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future.</p>
<p><b>95%: 10 days absence a year</b>                  These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance.</p>
<p><b>90%: 19 days absence a year</b>                  Pupils in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.</p>
<p><b>85%: 29 days absence a year</b>                  Pupils in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; it will be very difficult for them to keep up with work and they are unlikely to do their best.</p>
<p><b>80%: 38 days absence a year</b>                  The Government classes pupils in this group as “Persistent Absentees”, and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of pupils in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority.</p>

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

---

Nick Arnold  
 Headteacher