



## Newport Primary School Attendance & Punctuality Policy

### 1.0 Guidance for monitoring attendance

We follow the DFE guidance and Local Authority Guidelines for monitoring acceptable attendance levels:

ATTENDANCE TABLE		Actions
96+% and above	Expected attendance	Rewards given
90%-95%	School Monitoring of Attendance	School warning letter sent home Half termly pupil tracking sheet with reward for improved attendance
85%-89%	Cause for Concern – Educational Welfare Officer monitoring	School warning letter Educational Welfare Officer referral & monitoring Education Welfare Officer to visit home. Attendance case Conference Meetings to be held.
Below 85%	Significant Concern – Educational Welfare Officer involvement	Legal warning Letter issued by Local authority Attendance meetings with Educational Welfare Officer and Head Teacher Fixed Penalty Notice - £60 per child per adult.

At Newport Primary School all children are expected to attend school during term time dates from 8.40am until 3.10pm. Doors open to welcome pupils at 8.35am.

Nursery sessions run from 8.40am -11.40am and 12.10pm -3.10pm. Doors open at 8.35am.

Newport Primary School follows the Middlesbrough Local Authority guidelines with regard to the completion of school registers, leave of absences and the involvement of an Education Welfare Officer.

### 2.0 School Dates:

Newport Primary School sets term dates in line with national guidance. In addition to these dates five extra Training Days are set by the school. Parents are informed of the dates for school terms to allow for planning of appointments, child care and holidays to be booked.

### 3.0 School Registers:

Registration takes place at 8:40am and 12.45pm (EYFS & KS1) /1:00pm (KS2) each day. After registration, attendance is then recorded on our school system.

Each teacher marks the register as directed by Local Authority guidance. The input of registration details records the number of sessions children are present for and totals for each week.

Parents/carers are requested to telephone the school if their child will be absent on a given day and the class teacher is then informed of this information. It is then recorded on the pupil's record on SIMS. Parents/carers are also requested to provide information explaining absences so that absences can be authorised as appropriate.

Weekly class attendance is monitored by the School Attendance Officer who records then reports the percentages to the Head Teacher. The school buys in the services of an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) through an SLA. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO), working alongside the School Attendance Officer, monitors and follows up all absences and arranges appropriate actions to encourage attendance on a weekly basis.

Termly attendance percentages are shared with parents/carers as part of the termly progress reports. All sessions of unauthorised absences are reported to parents/carers on the end of year school report with a comparison of the total number of possible attendances.

We recognise and reward the attendance of children. Children who attend each term without absence are given certificates. We also send parents/carers letters of improvement.

#### **4.0 Punctuality:**

We place a high value on children being in school on time so that children are given the opportunity to reach their full potential academically, socially and emotionally. We rely on parental support to achieve this. If children arrive in school after 8.40am, parents/carers are expected to report to the main office with their child/children and sign in via 'sign-in app'. This will record number of minutes late directly on pupil's record on SIMS and a member of staff will request and record the reason for the late arrival. If a pupil arrives after 9:10am they will be given an unauthorised absence mark. Regular late marks will result in Punctuality Case Conference meetings being held with the Educational Welfare Officer, Head Teacher, School Attendance Officer and a member of the Safeguarding Team.

#### **5.0 Authorised Absence:**

Existing law recognises certain categories of absence. Parents and carers are responsible for informing the school of a reason for absence. We request that the school is contacted as early as possible on the first day of absence. Acceptable reasons for absence include: illness, emergency medical and dental appointments; days of religious observance to which the parents belong (2 days per celebration, 4 days in total across the academic year); absence with leave. School requests that medical evidence such as an appointment card or prescription is provided for all pupils who are in attendance monitoring procedures.

#### **6.0 Unauthorised Absence:**

All absences without reason or for which no explanation has been provided will be treated as unauthorised absence. If levels of unauthorised absence for compulsory school age children (5yrs plus) rise above 10% or there are more than 10 missed sessions within an Academic Term, then Attendance Case Conferences will be held with the Head Teacher, Education Welfare Officer, School Attendance Officer and a member of the Safeguarding Team. Parents/Carers may be invited to attend a support meeting if attendance is becoming a cause for concern.

#### **7.0 Phone calls home/Home visits:**

If a reason for absence is not reported then a phone call/message will be sent to the parent/carer to establish why their child is not in school. This will be automated via the SchoolComms system and/or a phone call will be made by the School Attendance Officer or nominated representative. Reasons for absence will be recorded.

If further days of absence occur without notification then the School Attendance Officer and Safeguarding Team will make a home visit and leave a calling card if there is no answer. Where there is cause for concern or safeguarding concerns, home visits may be carried out on first day of absence or after being notified of absence by parents/carers. All absences will be monitored closely by the Head Teacher, School Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer.

If a pupil is known to other services (e.g. Early Help/Children's Social Care) or there have been school concerns, the school reserves the right to make a home visit on the first day of absence. On occasion, Attendance/Safeguarding team may request a welfare check on the first day of absence.

#### **8.0 Leaves of Absence:**

Leaves of absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. No leave will be authorised by the Head Teacher in September or during Year 6 SATs tests each year, unless significant extenuating circumstances e.g. death of a parent.

Parents and carers are asked to complete leave of absence request forms available from the school office, two weeks prior to the requested leave. The Head Teacher will look at the current attendance percentages for the requested child/children and the nature of the exceptional circumstances and then respond.

A response to the request is returned to parents and carers within 2 working days of the request. The Head Teacher should determine the number of days a child can be away from the school if leave is granted. Should there be any difficulties or queries parents are requested to contact the Head Teacher. Any authorised absences are still classified as an absence.

***Leave taken without authorised consent from the Head Teacher may result in a fixed penalty being issued or possible court proceedings in line with LA guidance.***

### **8.1 Fixed Penalty Notice:**

The Head Teacher will notify the Local Authority to request a fixed penalty notice if:

- At least 10 sessions (5 school days) are lost to unauthorised absence by a pupil in a 10 week rolling period. The 10 weeks can span different terms of school years

Each parent/carer could receive a fixed penalty notice each for each child at a current cost of £80 per child per parent if paid within 21 days or £160 per child per parent within 28 days.

Please see Appendix One for details of the Fixed Penalty Notice procedure, including details of fines for second and subsequent offences.

### **8.2 Travelling Community:**

Newport Primary School welcomes the children of the Travelling community. We value the diversity and experiences that they possess and consider them to be a valuable asset to our school. We acknowledge that whenever practical they attend school. We value the strong partnership that has been established with the Travelling community and education staff.

A leave of absence request should be made when Travelling occurs and the Head Teacher will have the discretion to approve the absence. Where absences are recognised, they will be recorded in registers as Travelling. If there is a prolonged period of Travelling then children are removed from the school registers and must re-apply for place after their return.

### **9.0 The Role of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO):**

Newport Primary School buys in the services of an Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The officer visits the school weekly to meet with School Attendance Officer, to review the attendance registers, follow up absences and punctuality and discuss any matters that may have arisen or areas of concern that require monitoring or action to be taken.

### **9.1 Pupils on a part time timetable:**

In certain exceptional circumstances there may be a need to educate a child on a temporary part time basis. This is not a long term solution and the arrangements must be agreed with parents/carers of when the plan will commence and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

### **9.2 Children Missing in Education:**

Children with poor attendance may be at risk of becoming missing from education. Children with poor attendance are subject to rigorous scrutiny through our attendance monitoring procedures. Where children regularly attend medical appointments within school hours then written confirmation of the appointment must be provided by the parent/carer.

The criteria used is:

- Children who are believed to have left the area – Destination unknown
- Children who fail to arrive at Newport Primary School in the Autumn Term

In these circumstances the school attendance officer will follow the Middlesbrough Local Authority CME Procedures for recording, tracking and monitoring the progress of CME cases.

Details of new cases will be submitted to the Local Authority designated CME officer by the School attendance officer using a specific form. The usual procedures relating to common transfer files and the national S2S website will continue.

Newport Primary School attendance and safeguarding team will make every significant effort to establish the child's destination and liaise with relevant professionals within and across local and national authorities.

If the child is not located, then the child will be removed from the school register after 20 school days. The Local Authority CME will continue to review the "destination unknown" cases and should inform the school of outcomes.

The school will hold all relevant information on the child/children until a destination and receiving school is identified. The information will then be passed on by the relevant personnel in school.

### **10.0 Nursery Attendance**

Good nursery attendance is important. At a young age continuity and consistency are important factors that contribute to a child's wellbeing and progress. Regular attendance at Nursery can set good practice for compulsory schooling.

Parents and Carers need to contact school to inform them if, and why, their child will be absent from a Nursery Session.

If a Nursery child misses 3 consecutive sessions without informing school, then the school's attendance team will contact home by telephone or undertake a home visit. In some cases, contact may be made prior to 3 sessions being missed.

#### **10.1 Phone calls home/Home visits - Nursery:**

If a nursery pupil is absent for more than three consecutive sessions, a phone call or a home visit will be made. In some cases, contact may be made sooner. If no contact is made within that time, the Attendance/Safeguarding team may request a welfare check.

If a pupil is known to other services (e.g. Early Help/Children's Social Care) the school reserves the right to make a home visit on the first day of absence. On occasion, Attendance/Safeguarding team may request a welfare check on the first day of absence.

School staff will endeavour to offer support and advice to ensure young learners get the best opportunities available to them. However, persistent poor attendance at Nursery will lead to the removal of a Nursery place.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Date of Last review – September 2023

Date of next review – September 2024

Date of Last review – September 2024

Date of next review – September 2025

## Middlesbrough Council

### Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

#### National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

**Please note:** The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

#### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

#### Per Parent\*, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent\*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

#### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for the same child for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

#### \*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

#### Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.