



NETTLEWORTH INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

We nurture, we flourish, we achieve

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Related Policies/documents	DfE A Guide to Absence Statistics March 2019, DfE Children missing education: Statutory guidance for local authorities Sept 2016, DfE Keeping children safe in education: Statutory guidance for schools and colleges Part 1: Information for all school and college staff Sept 2021, Notts County Council Improving School Attendance: A Toolkit for Maintained schools and Academies 2021, Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices issued in respect of truancy and excluded pupils (revised 2021), DfE School attendance: guidance for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
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PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Dec 2023
Miss N. Riley

Introduction

The Government has continued to give regular attendance at school a high profile as part of its programme to improve standards in schools and to reduce youth crime.

Effective schools convey their positive regard for regular attendance to parents, pupils and teachers. Children quickly pick up the message that their presence is important. Parents are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly.

Legal Background

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Educational (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and these came into effect on 1.9.13:-

- References to a family holiday have been removed. Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Penalty notices can be served where the school believes a parent is not securing their child's regular attendance.

Aims of this Policy

- ✓ To increase levels of attendance throughout the school;
- ✓ To continue to improve punctuality;
- ✓ To promote a positive attitude to attendance and punctuality amongst pupils and their families.

Policy Advice

- Nursery pupils should arrive for a prompt start at 8.40am and 12.20pm. A nursery attendance policy was introduced in January 2016.
- Infant school pupils should arrive for a prompt start at 8.50am.
- Late arrivals should enter school via the main door as classroom doors will be locked. This enables administrative staff to monitor lateness and provide support for families in difficulty. A record of late arrivals is maintained. Meetings with parents are held to review continuous lateness.
- Parents are informed of the child's attendance record at the parent/pupil information meetings each term. The attendance policy is circulated to all parents annually.

Reporting Absences

- Parents are asked to inform us each day by 9.30am giving the reason their child is absent. The administration staff complete an absence slip, which is given to the class teacher. If a reason for absence has not been received by 9.30am a member of the administration staff will follow this up by contacting parents by text or telephone to ask about the absence.
- Some parents come into school when their child returns to school to explain the reason for their child's absence to the class teacher.
- Notes or letters are also accepted.
- A message through a neighbour, older sibling, etc. is accepted.
- The school will decide whether an absence is authorised.

- The registers are examined each Friday afternoon by the administrative staff and periodically by the Attendance Officer and any unexplained absences are followed up by telephone or by the Head Teacher speaking personally to the parents.
- Any child that the school has concerns about regarding their absence may be targeted to ascertain whether particular patterns of non-attendance are observed. These children's attendance will be closely monitored and any absence challenged.

In 2013-2014 the school undertook a thorough review of attendance and school procedures. As a result absence has been highlighted to all pupils and parents. The new model adopted includes:-

- ✓ Circulating the attendance policy to all parents annually
- ✓ 3 individual attendance reports with discussion with class teacher annually
- ✓ Weekly class attendance competitions
- ✓ Attendance rewards throughout the year
- ✓ Letter from Head Teacher indicating concerns
- ✓ Careful monitoring of meetings
- ✓ Referrals to Targeted Support.

This model will continued until any amendments are required.

Registration

- Registration takes place, usually, at the beginning of the morning and the beginning of the afternoon session. The children sit quietly on a carpet area or at their tables.
- Staff are responsible for the correct marking and completion of the attendance registers. The guidelines printed inside the front covers are followed.
- The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that its importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school. They may also contribute to pupil's end of term reports and to records of achievement. For these reasons, registers are required to be marked in ink and not easily erased, and all alterations should be visible and explained.

- Red diagonal line to denote presence.
- Black circle with a **C** denotes 'Other authorised absence', **H** – authorised 'Family Holiday', **I** – 'Illness' or **M** to denote authorised absence for a medical/dental appointment; **L** for lateness before close of registers
- During the coronavirus pandemic the following sub-codes were used:- **I01** - illness; **I02** - illness – confirmed case of Covid-19; **X02** - self-isolating – Covid-19 symptoms; **X03** - self-isolating - Covid-19 contact outside of school; **X04** - self-isolating – Covid-19 contact inside of school; **X05** - quarantine - self-isolating; **X06** - clinical advice not to attend; **X07** - Government advice not to attend
- Insert a black circle with **G** for 'unauthorised Family Holiday', **O** for unauthorised absence, **U** for lateness after registers have closed.
- No tippex.
- Weekly/termly headings completed.

- Registers are used to indicate future pupil leave of absences – a pencil mark is used by administration to denote a forthcoming planned absence in order to keep the class teacher fully informed.

Categorising Absence

- Most children between the ages of 3 and 7 have some time off school because of illness.
- Leave for medical and dental appointments is authorised but parents are asked to remove the child from school for the shortest possible time and returned as soon as possible.
- Late arrival is discouraged but account is taken of the individual circumstances. Persistent lateness would be dealt with by the Head Teacher.

- Requests for absence are treated sensitively e.g. family bereavements, religious observance, need for parents to attend court, etc. Permission would be sought from the class or Head Teacher via the 'Withdrawal from Learning' form.
- Special position of Traveller children is recognised and a sensitive and sympathetic approach is adopted.

Roles

Role of the Class Teacher

- To complete registers in full twice each day.
- To reward good attendance and punctuality.
- To investigate reason for absence where possible.
- To report concerns to the Head Teacher.

Role of the Head Teacher

- To monitor attendance/lateness each half term.
- To report regularly to the Governing Body.
- To feedback regularly to staff.
- To make families more aware of their responsibilities.
- To reward and encourage pupils.
- To organise attendance competitions and highlight these for parents.

Role of the Administrative Staff

- To make absence enquiries by phone.
- To pass on absence information to staff.
- To record attendance electronically.
- To send standard letters on request.

Role of the Governing Body

- To monitor the school's authorised and unauthorised absences in comparison with local and national figures.
- To encourage a positive approach to attendance and punctuality.
- To raise awareness of the need for full attendance in order to achieve high standards for all pupils.

Rewards and Sanctions

Raising the profile of attendance amongst pupils can be effective.

Whole school competitions are held throughout the year. To date these play a significant role in raising attendance.

Weekly charts examine class by class data and the best attending class receive a class reward of their choice eg. non-uniform day and the class is highlighted on the school website.

Individual attendance certificates are posted to pupils with 100% attendance each term.

Information to Parents

Annually a school attendance policy, written especially for parents, is circulated to parents of pupils in the Infant school. Newsletters are used to highlight attendance.

Legal Action

Details of an attendance referral:-

- Details of unauthorised absence and a certificate of registration will be provided to Nottinghamshire County Council along with detailed recording of all actions taken by the school to support parents and the child. Barriers to attendance will be identified along with the views of the parent and the child.

Issuing of Penalty Notices

Parents may discharge potential liability for conviction for an offence under Section 444(1) by paying a penalty.

Nottinghamshire County Council has a code of conduct to enable penalty notices to be applied consistently and fairly.

A Penalty Notice is set at £120 and should be paid within 42 days. If paid within 28 days the sum is reduced to £60.

Persistent Absenteeism

From 2015-2016 (updated March 2018) the DfE defined persistent absenteeism as attendance of less than 90%.

If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee and appropriate actions will be taken to support improvements in the pupil's attendance

Parents are well informed by letter from the Head Teacher if their child is approaching this threshold.

A sensible and empathetic approach is taken if absence is due to unavoidable illness or accidents.

Working together to improve attendance

Successfully treating the root causes of absence and removing barriers to attendance, at home, in school or more broadly requires schools and local partners to work collaboratively with, not against families. All partners should work together to:

