

**NETTLEWORTH SCHOOL**  
**PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

March, 2026  
Miss N. Riley

1. **Aims of this Policy**

We are committed to meeting our obligations concerning school attendance by:

- . Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- . Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- . Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality.

**Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or obtaining permission for an absence in advance from the school.**

2. **Legislation and Guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)

Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)

Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)

[The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)

[The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school [census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on, at least, a termly basis. It holds the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy. The Strategic Development and Pupil Committee and the Full Governing Body meetings discuss whole school attendance each term looking at patterns and persistent absentees. During these meetings the governing body examine 2 | Page recent trends and patterns in attendance and compare to historic trends; they benchmark the school's attendance against other schools similar in context and view attendance data on different vulnerable groups such as SEND, PP and children who have a social worker to ensure their attendance is good. The Governing body set realistic goals for school attendance with school leaders and support and challenge school leaders to improve overall school attendance.

#### 3.2 The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for: Implementing this policy Leading school attendance and making referrals for families for external support Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils Holding meetings with parents/carers to discuss ways to improve attendance Create attendance plans with parents to improve school attendance Completing home visits when there are concerns about a child's attendance or whereabouts Meet with office staff weekly to discuss attendance and identify children who are at risk of PA (persistent absenteeism) Liaising with other local schools and the local authority where absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe Requesting the Local Authority issue fixed-penalty notices, where necessary Sharing the attendance policy with parents/ carers annually and ensuring it is accessible on the school's website

#### 3.3 Parents/ Carers

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 the parents and carers are responsible for making sure that their child receives efficient full-time education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Regular attendance is defined, as "children must be at school every day that the school requires them to be" Parents/ carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy, as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day at 8.45a.m To inform school of any absence and keep us up to date of any prolonged absence. If school are not informed of a reason for absence, this will be considered as unauthorised To request leave at least 4 weeks in advance To make applications for leave in writing on the school's 'Request to Remove a child from Education', giving the reason for the request To work with the school and The Family Service to improve lateness and attendance To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day. Medical appointments do not normally need a full day so children should only be absent for the length of the appointment. They should attend school before the appointment and return to school immediately after 3 | Page If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should: Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving and then contact school to seek support

### **3.4 Class Teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance daily, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office by 9:00am and 1pm Building strong relationships with parents/carers, listening to barriers for attendance and working towards removing them for families Liaising with the Head teacher and the office staff to raise concerns about attendance and punctuality of the children in their class and then work co-operatively with the Head teacher and parents/ carers to support any attendance plans.

### **3.5 School Office Staff & Attendance Leader**

Taking calls and checking for voice messages from parents about absence and recording it on the school system following up any messages where no specific reason has been provided e.g. Parent/carer has said the child is unwell making first day phone calls to parents/ carers of children who are absent and have not informed school of the reason why. Monitoring attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level Making calls to parents/carers and arranging meetings with the Head Teacher Compiling attendance data each week and identifying children whose attendance is falling below the required level Reporting concerns about attendance to the Head Teacher Completing home visits with the Head teacher or other senior leader when there are concerns about a child's attendance or whereabouts In conjunction with the Head Teacher, sending out letters to parents and parent APP messages in relation to attendance

## **4. Recording Attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance Register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances any amendment to the attendance register will include:
  - The original entry
  - The amended entry
  - The reason for the amendment
  - The date on which the amendment was made
  - The name and position of the person who made the amendment we will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **4.2 Attendance Procedure**

School bell rings at **8.50am**

**Morning registers to be completed as the children enter.**

Registers will be collected from classrooms just after 9am.

**Children arriving after 9am will have to enter school via the main entrance where they will be recorded in the register accordingly.**

- / To denote presence.

Any child who arrives after 8.50am when the register is taken needs to be recorded as Late. **Code (L) will be used.**

If a child arrives after the register closes at 9.30am, **code (U) should be used.**

If a child is absent due to a medical/dental appointment, **code (M) should be used.**

If a child is ill and is not attending school, **code (I) should be used in the register.**

If a child is not attending school due to an unauthorised absence, **code (O) should be used.**

If you know a child is absent due to a holiday, **code (G) should be used.**

**Afternoon registration** - To be taken as soon as the children come in from the end of dinner time.

### **4.3 Reporting Absences**

- Parents are asked to inform us each day by 9.30am giving the reason their child is absent, this is the time the registers close.

Any unexplained absences are followed up by telephone speaking personally to the parents.

- Parents may call, leave a voicemail or come to the school office to report absences, emails are also accepted.

- the school will decide whether an absence is authorised.

### **4.4 Holiday Requests in Term Time**

The DfE introduced, in August 2024, statutory guidance stating no holidays will be authorised in a school term. If parents/carers still wish to remove their child from education during term-time, they must apply as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. They should do this by collecting a 'Request to Remove a Child from Education' form from the school office or download and print one from the school website. Any request to remove your child from education for 5 days/ 10 sessions over a ten-week rolling period could lead to the local authority issuing a penalty notice or prosecution under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996. If issued with penalty notice, the penalty is set at £160 per child per parent/carer and should be paid within 28 days of the date on which the notice is issued. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. If a parent has received two penalty notices over a three-year rolling period, and removes their child for a third time, (within the three-year rolling period) the local authority may prosecute via Magistrates court. This decision is the Local Authorities' and not the schools.

### **4.5 Reporting to Parents**

- the registers are examined each Friday afternoon and periodically by the Attendance Officer Miss Riley.

- Any child that the school has concerns about regarding their absence may be targeted to ascertain whether patterns of non-attendance are observed. These children's attendance will be closely monitored and any absence challenged.

In 2026 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 continue until any amendments are required.

## **5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

### **5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence**

The Head Teacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence can be granted at the Head Teacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances that could not be reasonably foreseen and for which there was insufficient time to take the necessary action to resolve the situation arising from those circumstances. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Valid reasons for authorised absence include: Illness and medical/dental appointments Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

### **5.2 Legal Sanctions**

The local authority can request penalty notices for unauthorised absences, where the child is of compulsory school age. If issued with a penalty notice, the penalty is set at £160 per child per parent/carer and should be paid within 28 days of the date of which the notice starts.

The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may consider: The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a ten-week period (that may or may not include a holiday in this amount and unauthorised absence for another reason) 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.

## **6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance**

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 e.g. non-uniform day, and the class is highlighted on the school website.

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

## **7. Attendance Monitoring**

The office staff at our school monitor pupil absence daily.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health. It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to phone school every day that their child is absent to give an update.

**Day 1** - If we have not received a phone call from parent/carer by 9:30am, the office staff will make a call until contact with the parent/carer is made.

If parents/carers have not made contact, the Head Teacher will be informed, and a home visit will take place to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. A letter will be posted through the home address of the parent/ carer of the child stating a home visit has taken place and school need to be contacted as soon as possible by the parent.

If a pupil's absence goes above the expected number of days for the specific illness, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this. The school uses the Public Health guidance to ascertain the recommended number of days required for illnesses.

If a pupil's attendance continues to decline after contacting their parent/carer, we will consider involving the School Attendance Support Team (Early Help).

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

See below:

### **7.1 Process for Monitoring and Intervening**

School office staff & the Head teacher will monitor and track all children's attendance on a daily and weekly basis. Any children's attendance that falls below 90% will be identified and flagged by office staff to the Head Teacher each week.

#### **Informal school support: -**

**Step1** – Letter 1 will be sent to any child's parents/carers whose attendance falls below 90% explaining the attendance has fallen below the acceptable level. Parents/carers will be invited into school to speak to the Head Teacher and offered support and help to increase the attendance.

NB: If after letter 1, attendance falls again within 6 weeks they will automatically receive letter 2.

**Step 2** - If a child's attendance continues to fall, they will receive letter 2. This will inform the parents/carers that an appointment has been made to speak to the Attendance leader and/ or the Head Teacher or a member of the SLT. At this meeting, parents are asked about the barriers to ensuring good attendance for their child, and they will be offered further support to improve attendance. This support may be advice, reward charts, referrals to other services such as Family

Hub, HFT and EHU. At this meeting parents/ carers will be informed that a 6-week monitoring period will begin, and medical proof will be required to authorise any future absences. The purpose of this monitoring period is to increase the attendance of the child.

### **Specialist service support**

**Step 3** – If a child’s attendance improves after the 6-week monitoring period, a message will be sent via letter in recognition of this.

If a child’s attendance continues to fall, parents/carers will be sent a letter requesting they meet with the Head Teacher and attendance leader so a more formal attendance plan or referral to relevant support services can be made.

At this meeting, barriers to good attendance will be explored again, the impact of poor attendance explained, and parents will be asked to complete an attendance agreement. This will be signed by parents and the Head teacher and detail the agreements decided at the meeting. Parents/ carers will be referred for any specialist support they need and the child, if useful, will receive support through THRIVE and mindfulness club in school. At this meeting it will be made clear that over the next 10 weeks their child’s attendance will be closely tracked and if 5 days or 10 sessions are taken in absence, then a referral for attendance enforcement to support the family will be made. It will also be made clear that medical proof will be required to authorise any future absences.

## **8. Monitoring Arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Mrs Debbie Hyslop (Head Teacher). At every review, the Full Governing Body will approve the policy.

## **10. Links with Other Policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Behaviour policy

Working together to improve school attendance