



# **School Attendance Policy**

**September 2018**

**Next Planned Review: September 2019**

**We are proud of our attendance record over time.**

**Our attendance as a whole school September 2017 – July 2018 was 96.75%**

**The national expectation is 96.1%**

### **Philosophy**

Newdale Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that, if pupils are to benefit from education, punctuality and good attendance is crucial. As a school, we organise and do all we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that impede punctuality and regular attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible. Our Pastoral Team and Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) play a significant role in supporting parents and children in getting to school on time every day.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school actively promotes and encourages 100 % attendance for all our pupils.

Our school gives a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### **Principles**

The school will:

- ensure that all staff are aware of the registration procedures and receive in-service training on registration regulations and education law,
- complete registers accurately at the beginning of each morning and during the afternoon session,
- stress to parents/carers the importance of contacting staff early on the first day of absence,
- display attendance rates around the school and reward good and improved attendance of all pupils,
- promote positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence,
- consult with all members of the school community and the Attendance Support Team in developing and maintaining the whole-school attendance policy,
- ensure regular evaluation of attendance procedures by senior managers and the school governors,
- a specified attendance team meet half termly to scrutinise attendance and impact of intervention,

- send regular newsletters to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues, additionally update school website with any attendance related issues,
- work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that, if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed,
- have in place procedures which allow absentees to catch up on missed work without disrupting the learning of other class members.

## **Procedures**

If no contact is received from the parents/carers of an absent pupil on the first morning of absence we will:

- follow 'First day contact' procedures and contact the parent by telephone/text message,
- request the school's Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and/or the school inclusion manager, to conduct a home visit if no response is received after 3 days of absence, and consider a referral to the '*Children & Family Locality Services*' or contact '*Family Connect*', (T&W Policy is 5 days but as a school we believe it is necessary to make authority aware sooner).
- invite the parents into school for an 'Attendance Concern Meeting' (ACM) after a maximum of 10 days absence, unless other action is planned. This meeting should include a senior member of staff, parent, pupil and the EWO. The aim of this meeting will be to identify and resolve the difficulties which are preventing the pupil from attending school. The parents/carers will be made aware of the legal requirements regarding school attendance,
- Help the pupil's re-integration where a pupil is returning to school after an absence of longer than two weeks. In the event of a pupil returning after a long-term absence then an Individual Reintegration Programme (IRP) will be implemented. The IRP will include all members of the school staff and will be designed to be as supportive of the pupil as possible
- Contact ***Family Connect 01952 385385*** for further guidance on available support.

**In order to ensure the success of this policy every member of the school staff will make attendance a priority and convey to the pupils the importance of their education.**

## **Performance**

It is important to set realistic targets for both attendance and persistent absence; these targets will be set during the Autumn term of each academic year, in consultation with the governing body. The governing body must approve the school target for attendance to be set for the following academic year. The target should be sent to the Group Manager, Admissions, Attendance and School Organisation by the end of the Autumn term at the latest. In compiling an Action Plan, the school will look at those interventions which have been successful as part of the evaluation process.

When evaluating success the school will consider whether or not:

- Attendance has improved
- Persistent absence has reduced

- Punctuality has improved
- Parental response to absences has improved
- Re-integration plans have been successful
- The school has been successful in raising the profile of attendance both within the school, governing body and the local community
- Pupils are fully aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance and the attendance procedures operating within school
- Attendance issues have been included as topics in school assemblies, Personal and Social Education (PHSE) lessons, or as a theme for any other lessons

### **Practice**

The school will recognise the importance of good practice by:

- Keeping and maintaining registers accurately
- Maintaining a consistent approach to marking registers
- Regularly analysing attendance data
- Ensuring prompt follow-up action in cases of non-school attendance
- Liaising closely with the school's NAP/EWO, if appropriate
- Recording (and retaining) carefully, all telephone messages
- A signed copy of any correspondence is retained by the school
- A referral is made to AST (the Attendance Support Team) for intervention

### **Key notes regarding coding of absence as follows**

- Code B should not be used 'for any unsupervised educational activity or where the pupil is at home doing school work'.
- Code F has been withdrawn as the '10 day rule' regarding holidays in term time no longer applies'.
- Any leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head teacher's discretion'. If the leave of absence is unauthorised the regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If parents do not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

### **Ofsted statutory guidance**

- Ofsted guidance makes it clear that 'grey exclusions' are illegal. "Where a pupil is sent home for disciplinary reasons for a part of the school lunchtimes, fixed term exclusion is the only legal method of removal'.
- Informal or unofficial exclusions are illegal, regardless of whether they are carried out with the agreement of parent or carers'.

**This policy is based on a model Telford & Wrekin Council Attendance Support policy and guidance (September 2018), a copy of which can be obtained from the school office.**