



School Attendance Policy

September 2023

Next Planned Review: September 2024
Or sooner should guidance change

Our attendance as a whole school September 2022 – July 2023 was 95.52% (excluding nursery)

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 rapidly as possible. Our attendance team, which includes the Headteacher, our Pastoral Team, Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and our link Governor all play a significant role in supporting parents in getting children to school on time and 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.

The school and nursery seeks and follows guidance on sickness, diseases and medical conditions from the public health agency, specifically referring to the 'guidance on infection control in schools and other childcare settings'. The poster is displayed in the main school office.

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,
- reward good and improved attendance of all pupils (attendance is discussed as a whole school each week during our 'celebration' assembly),
- promote positive staff attitudes to pupils who come in late or who are 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 (Contextual Information Summary - CIS report),
- a specified attendance team meet half termly to scrutinise attendance and impact of intervention (periodically the link Governors for attendance attends);
- 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.
- Deploy attendance incentives such as 'Cool Cat' week where our attendance mascot stays on the entrance gate welcoming children into school.

Absence Procedures

Our expectation is for parents/carers to email: attendance@newdaleschool.org.uk before 8.40am if their child is absent.

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 (this could be sooner depending on circumstance), and consider a referral to the *local authority attendance team* or contact '*Family Connect*', (T&W Policy is 5 days but as a school we believe it is necessary to make authority aware sooner).
- If a child is absent for 10 days, school will initiate the Missing Child In Education Protocol as advised by Telford and Wrekin Council.
- 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, Life Learning 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 (this data is cross referenced with other key data through our CIS report).
- 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

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'.

School Times

The classroom doors are open at 8.35am, registration is taken at 8.40am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in class at this time. Pupils who arrive to school after 9.10am will receive an unauthorised absence.

Appointments

Parents are encouraged to book medical and dental appointments **outside** of school hours. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the school office.

If the appointment is during the day the pupils are expected to attend school before and after the appointment where possible.

Religious Observance

The school will take advice from the attendance team within Telford & Wrekin Council to establish the appropriate number of days absence required for religious festivals. Parent/Carer will be required to complete a request for absence during term time form.

Request for absence during term time

The DfE guidance about holiday in term time makes the following points:

- Each request can only be judged on a case by case basis
- Even in exceptional circumstances it is expected that Headteachers will use their discretion sparingly.
- Headteachers should not apply policies (for example, blanket bans) which might suggest that each application has not been considered on its individual merits

As a general guide any activity, holiday or event that can be arranged during the annual 13 weeks holiday time should not be authorised during the school term. School will confirm in writing our decision whether to authorise any leave in term time or not following any requests for leave in term time. This provides parents/carers with written information about the possible consequences of taking leave that has not been authorised.

Promoting Good Attendance

We reward good attendance in school with the children.

Cool Cat visits children three times a year and classes with the highest attendance receive a reward.

Cool Cat's kittens are given out to classes with the highest attendance each week in KS1 and KS2.



Children with 100% attendance each half term receive a certificate.

This policy is based on a model of the Working Together To Improve School Attendance April 2023.

Miss School -
Miss Out!!

Attendance at Newdale



Missing a few days of school here and there may not seem like a big deal, but research shows that it can have a significant impact on children's learning. At Newdale, our curriculum is sequential and progressive, which means that units consist of learning which build up over time. Due to the amount of knowledge children are expected to know by the end of each year, work missed is understandably hard to catch up on, which can then lead to gaps in children's learning. Friendships can also be affected by persistent absence: it can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates. Here at Newdale, we work closely with parents to ensure that children are in school learning every day, unless there is a genuine reason for an absence.

Learning

Key reasons why it is so important for children to attend school:

- ✓ To learn
- ✓ To have fun
- ✓ To make new friends
- ✓ To experience new things in life
- ✓ To develop awareness of other cultures, religion, ethnicity and gender differences
- ✓ To achieve
- ✓ To gain qualifications
- ✓ To develop new skills
- ✓ To build confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ To have the best possible start in life

Give your child the best start in life - every school day counts!

How we monitor attendance

We monitor attendance on a daily, weekly, termly and yearly basis. Our attendance team work closely with the local Education Welfare Officer to ensure there are high levels of attendance at Newdale. We recognise there can be relationships between poor attendance and behaviour, which we closely monitor.

Attendance	Rating	Action
97-100%		Your child's attendance is at or above the school target. This will help with all aspects of your child's progress and development in school. This will give them a good start in life and supports a positive work ethic.
92-96%		Your child's attendance is below expected. Expect a call from our attendance team to discuss how we can help.
Below 92%		Your child's absence could significantly affect your child's progress and attainment. This will be monitored closely by the attendance team. Expect to be asked to attend an attendance drop-in session.

Something to think about...90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance but in reality, this level of attendance means that your child will miss half a school day each week or 19 days of school during a year - that's nearly 4 school weeks!

How can you help with your child's attendance?

- ✓ Establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so your child is prepared for the school day ahead
- ✓ Make sure your child goes to school regularly and follows the school rules
- ✓ Ensure your child arrives at school on time - not late (many children feel embarrassed when they go into their classroom late)
- ✓ Arrange dental and medical appointments outside school hours when possible
- ✓ Always inform the school if your child is absent due to illness - expect a courtesy phone call to check on your child at the end of the day
- ✓ Take family holidays outside term time
- ✓ Talk to your child about school and take an interest in their school work (including homework)
- ✓ Attend parent evenings
- ✓ Praise and reward your child's achievements at school
- ✓ Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school - staff are there to help and will be supportive

We understand that there may be genuine reasons why your child is absent from school, but where there are not, we encourage all children to attend school every day. Please speak to a member of the office or pastoral team with any questions or concerns regarding attendance.