

Newburgh
Primary School

Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- › Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- › Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- › Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- › Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- › Acting early to address patterns of absence
- › Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy also refers to the DfE’s guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

This policy is based on the Department for Education’s (DfE’s) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs
- Working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:

- The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
 - Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
 - The link governor for attendance is Rebecca Clifford

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary, and/or authorising the local authority to be able to do so
- Working with the parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents through all available channels

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance

- › Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- › Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- › Building close and productive relationships with parents to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- › Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers
- › Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Karen Turner and can be contacted via 01926 775453 / admin2325@welearn365.com

3.4 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- › Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)
- › Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- › Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- › Working with social workers and family support workers to tackle persistent absence
- › Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is **Paula Taylor** :

Paula Taylor

Education Casework Officer

Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS)

3.5 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office at 9am and 1.15pm each day.

3.6 School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- › Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- › Transfer calls from parents to the pastoral mentor in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- › Make sure their child attends every day on time
- › Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and, and advise when they are expected to return
- › Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- › Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- › Keep to any attendance contracts that they make with the school and/or local authority
- › Seek support, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance, by contacting Asa Hicks, Pastoral Lead at pastoral 2325@welearn365.com

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- › Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance 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, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, 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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- › Whether the absence is authorised or not
- › The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity

- › The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9am and will be kept open until 9.15am The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling or emailing the school admin staff (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where the absence is longer than 5days or if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Parents should send proof of the appointment to the school admin staff (see also section 7).

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- › Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- › After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code
- › Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will make verbal contact with

parents/carers. If the concerns persist, the Headteacher will write to the parents/carers using the appended letter about punctuality, including a copy of the child's registration certificate, and stating the total minutes late over a determined period.

- If there is no improvement, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer.
- In the event of persistent lateness, the school may make a formal referral to WAS.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may make a home visit
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Warwickshire Attendance Service.
- Where appropriate, offer support to the pupil and/or their parents to improve attendance
- Identify whether the pupil needs support from wider partners, as quickly as possible, and make the necessary referrals
- Where support is not appropriate, not successful, or not engaged with: work with the local authority and issue a fixed penalty notice if necessary.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via termly reports. Attendance can also be viewed on eSchools

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings.

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview

- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, considering the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least six weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the school office or on the website here:

https://newburgh.eschools.co.uk/web/application_for_leave_of_absence/184717/cHJldmllld3x8MjAyMy0xMi0wNiAxNjozMjoyOQ%3D%3D

The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- 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
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

If the school issues a penalty notice, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send it a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period

- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- The importance of regular attendance is promoted on our website, in our monthly newsletters and in regular communications with parents.
- Good and improved attendance may be rewarded.
- Promoting good attendance through assemblies
- Pastoral team offer return to school visits for children who may struggle after the summer holidays.
- Ensuring children feel safe, welcome and supported by providing a calm, orderly and safe environment where pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

7. Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

- Build strong relationships with families, listening to and understanding the reasons for absence
- Work in partnerships with families to identify and find supportive routes to improving absence
- Offer a graduated approach- Assess, Plan Do Review- at each stage of intervention
- Facilitate Pastoral support with the clear aim of improving attendance whilst supporting the mental and physical health issues
- Offer wider support through services such as Early Help Pathway, "The right support and the right time."
- Work with the EBSA Pathway to respond to the emotional challenges faced when attending school, ebsa@warwickshire.gov.uk
- Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the school will inform the local authority.
- In very exceptional circumstances with the agreement of the school and the parent the child normally resides with, an agreement may be drawn to use a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs

8. Attendance monitoring

8.1 Monitoring attendance

- The school will monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level, year group and whole school level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort level against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement, and share this with the governing board.

8.2 Analysing attendance

- The school will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

8.3 Using data to improve attendance

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severed absence, and their families (see section 8.4 below)
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinator, designated safeguarding lead and pupil premium lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

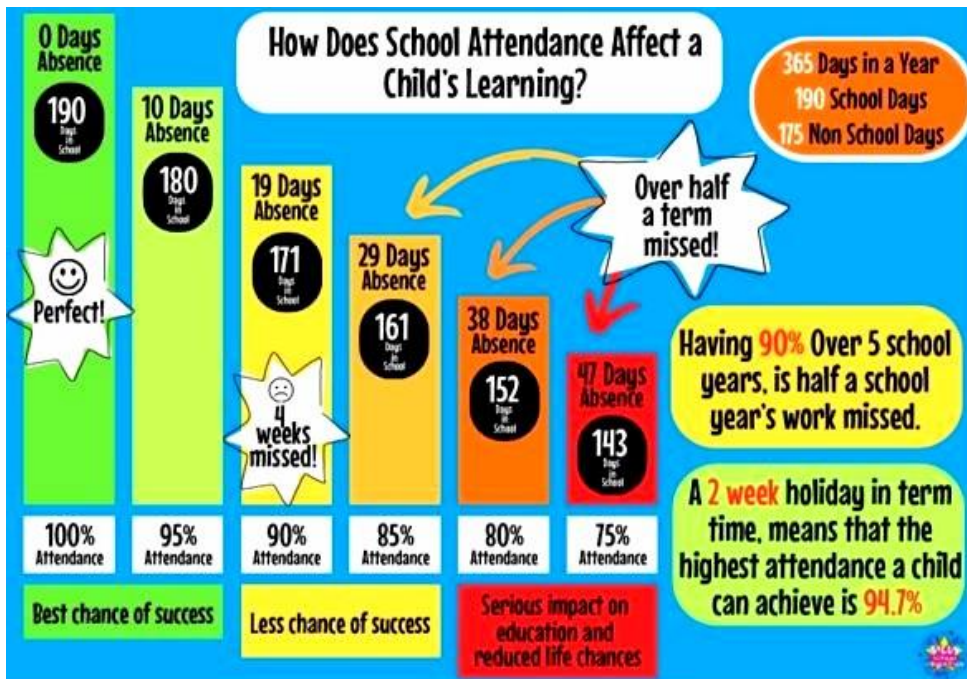
8.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to:
 - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
 - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
 - Explain the help that is available
 - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
 - Review any existing actions or interventions

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance
- families with children who have attendance between 90% – 94% will be closely monitored and support offered if trend continues.
- families with children whose attendance who are between 85% – 89%, will be invited to meet with Pastoral team who will offer support and signposting of services and advice.
- families with children whose attendance is below 84% will be required to meet with the Pastoral team for support and potentially our link attendance officer at the LA.



8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Children Missing From Education

9.1 Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to Warwickshire County Council 's Education and Learning Business Unit at 01926 742036 or via e mail to cme@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk.

9.2 Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

8.3 All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's file

10. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Good Relationships and Behaviour policy

Appendix I: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

/\	Present
L	Arrived within 30 minutes of registers closing.
U	Arrived 30 minutes after registers closing.
V	Educational visit, arranged by school and supervised by school staff.
P	Sporting activity.
W	Work experience
B	Other approved activities – e.g. alternative provision, transition day. This has been organised by the school.
K	Attending a place other than school eg. As part of a pupil's EHCP or re-integration. This has been organised by the Local Authority.
D	Dual registered pupils. Marked as D when not due in school.
M	Medical or dental appointment.
I	Illness, physical and mental health related.
C	Approved leave of absence for exceptional circumstances.
C1	Participating in a regulated performance.
C2	The pupil is on a part-time or reduced timetable, organised for the pupil's best interests e.g. medical reasons. This should not be behaviour based and does not include flexi-schooling.
G	Unauthorised holiday.
N	Absence not known.
O	Absent in other unknown circumstances.
J1	Attending an interview, for work purposes or for admission to another school.
S	Study leave.
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, families with no fixed abode.
R	Religious observance.
E	Suspended from school or permanently excluded.
X	Non-compulsory school aged. E.g. reception settling-in days.
Q	Only to be used when the Local Authority has not yet arranged transport.
Y1	Transport that is normally provided is not yet available.
Y2	Widespread travel disruption. e.g. snow or flooding

Y3	Partial closure of school site.
Y4	Unplanned whole school site closure.
Y5	Pupil is in criminal justice detention.
Y6	To prevent transmission of infection or disease, in accordance with Public Health guidance or law.
Y7	Only for extreme emergency situations when an absence does not fall into the above Y categories. E.g. community service or immigration detention.
Administrative codes	
Z	To be used before a pupil's agreed start date.
#	Planned school closure. E.g. Bank Holiday or Inset Day.