



Newbottle and Charlton C.E. V.A. Primary School

Every Person Matters, Every Moment Counts

'I can do all this through him that gives me strength'

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ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Adopted by the Governing Body on [Date]:	30 th Nov 2022
Date of review:	Nov 2022
Chair of Governors Signature:	
Date of next review:	Nov 2023



Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary School

Newbottle & Charlton CEVA Primary School seeks to create an environment that reflects our Christian ethos, providing safe, happy and challenging working conditions for all members of the school. This environment is exemplified by our school values and wheel with hope, dignity, wisdom and community at its hub.

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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:

- Promoting 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.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

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- 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 2013](#)

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

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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 Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

School admin staff

School admin staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Arrange phone calls and meetings between headteacher and parents to discuss any attendance issues

Parents/carers

- It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to ensure his/her child attends school regularly and punctually
- Must contact the school without delay to report any absence (ideally by 9am)
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact details
- Adhere to the policy with regard to holiday absence
- Ensure children have a good attitude to learning and attendance

Recording attendance

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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- For pupils of compulsory school age- 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at just after 8:50 and will be kept open until 9:05. The register for the second session will be taken at just after 1:15 and will be kept open until 1:30.

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

The office where possible will record the reason for the late arrival. If a child persistently arrives late, the headteacher will address the issue with parents by means of letters and meetings.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible. Please phone and leave a message or email the school office to explain why your child will be absent and the estimation of the likely length of absence, as well as daily updates on the situation.

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

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.

The normal pattern of absence for sickness would be for consecutive days in a week rather than odd days in different weeks. The aim would be for pupils to achieve a record of attendance with unbroken weeks (i.e., those where the pupil is marked present on all ten sessions); Regular, broken weeks are a cause for concern and will be followed up by the school.

Planned absence

Whilst absences are not encouraged there will be occasion when a request is needed to be made. Additional factors will be considered as to whether the absence will be granted as authorised. This includes current attendance figure, reason of absence, one off occasions and personal circumstance of request.

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. Please contact the school office to inform the school of a medical or dental appointment rather than the class teacher.

We do however 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.

For requests other than medical or dental, formal letters and or emails are expected to be sent to the headteacher which request the time off with reasons for the request. All of these requests will be responded to with a formal letter which details reasons why or why not the absence has been

authorised/unauthorised. This must be made in a timely fashion with at least 2 weeks' notice given.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late (after 8:50):

- 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

Being punctual for school means making sure children are at school and ready to learn. There are many ways to ensure children are on time for school, from making sure their school bags are packed the night before to making sure they get up with plenty of time to eat and get ready. Lost minutes mean lost learning.

Being late doesn't only affect the child, it disrupts other children in the class as well as the teachers trying to teach a lesson.

Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phoning the key contact phone numbers (see Missing in Education section for more details)
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reasons for absence is ascertained

Parents whose child's attendance is below 90%, or who displays a pattern within absence/lateness over a term will be contacted by the school through the appropriate channel depending on the circumstance- phone call, letter or face-to-face meeting with the headteacher.

Reporting to parents

The school reports to parents/carers on their child's attendance record every short term and in the written end- of-year report.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Approval for term-time absence

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

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context

behind the request. The headteacher will need to be satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness- If parents/carers have clearly explained the illness and school receives daily updates on progress and likely return to school. (Please note authorising absences for sickness is at the discretion of the head teacher).
- Medical/dental appointments that cannot be arranged outside of school hours
- 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
- Absence for exceptional family circumstances- e.g. bereavement, serious illness, wedding of close family member or other serious family emergencies.

There are other absences, such as “Approved Sporting Activity” (attendance at a sporting competition – see request for absence protocol for other factors that will determine this authorisation), “Approved Educational Activity” (this would include school entrance exams if cannot be taken at the weekend) or that can be authorised and there are events affecting families, some unforeseen, which necessitate absence from school. Professional discretion will be used in these cases.

Exceptional circumstances do **NOT** include:

- Birthday treats;
- Shopping trips;
- Visits from relatives;
- Attending pop concerts, sporting events and the like

Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Head teachers shall not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

Unauthorised Absences

An unauthorised absence will be recorded in the following circumstances:

- No letter or acceptable explanation is provided by parents or carers – this includes statements such as my child will not be in school today,
- The reason for the absence does not fall into a category of authorised absence;
- The pupil is already on the attendance monitoring system and no evidence has been provided to the school to support the absence.

Missing in Education

If a pupil is absent, all schools have a responsibility to contact the parent or carer on the first day of absence and continue to make every effort to locate the pupil. When you have identified the child is not in school, we will follow the procedures below:

Day 1 - Phone call

- A staff member trained to do so, telephones the child's home to seek reasons for the absence and reassurance from a parent or carer that the child is safe at home.
- If there is no answer at the home or on mobile numbers. The school will call back and risk assess after 2 hours
- If the parent/carer answered the call and the child is safely with them the school will ask for reason for absence and record on your school's attendance management system
- If the person answering is not the parent/carer and the school is not reassured that the child is at home or safe then the school's designated lead for child protection should be consulted on a risk assessment and the degree of vulnerability of the child
- If the parent/carer answered the call, but the child is not with them or safe and the parent is concerned. The school to advise the parent to:
 - Contact the local police station to inform them that the child is missing
 - Contact all people and places the child is known to talk to and visit to tell them that the child is missing and ask if they can help to find the child, by providing information which may shed light on the child's whereabouts or actively searching for the child
 - Contact the family GP and Accident and Emergency Centres near where the child lives and goes to school, in case he/she has sustained an injury and been taken in for medical treatment
 - Report back to school if the child is found or remains missing

Day 2 - Follow up phone call

- A subsequent telephone call must be made either from the school landline or preferably a mobile phone.

Day 3 – Write/email parents

- The school will write or email to the parent, asking for contact to be made with the school immediately. Please give the parents/carers 3 working days to make contact and if you are aware that English may not be the parent's first language, copy the letter into a language that may be more accessible.

Day 5/6 - Home visit

- The school will arrange a visit to the home address ensuring that risk assessments are in place
- Once you have completed these checks (or within 10 days, whichever is earlier). If the child has not been seen and the parents or carers have not made contact with either, schools must report the child as missing from education to the local authority. [Tracking children \(and their families\) who have gone missing from education - Schools and education \(northamptonshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/education/tracking-children-and-their-families-who-have-gone-missing-from-education)

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
- 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
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Attendance Monitoring

Newbottle and Charlton CEVA Primary has adopted the following attendance monitoring procedures, to ensure that pupils' attendance meets the expected standard, and effective intervention is provided where pupils' attendance falls below the standard:

The school will:

1. Monitor attendance and absence data on a weekly basis detailing weekly and annual attendance to date at an individual level.
2. Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absence may be a cause for concern (include those at risk of becoming persistent absentees).
3. Analyse attendance data and identify pupils that need additional support with their attendance.
4. Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns
5. Regularly share with parents their child's attendance report (every short term) to support them in understanding if their child is at risk of becoming a persistent or severe absentee.

6. Contact parents whose child's attendance has been identified as a cause for concern this may be through an email, letter or in a face-to-face meeting and look at ways in which they can be supported to ensure that their child attendance improves which could include setting targets.
7. Monitor cause for concern children over a six-week period. Further meetings will be called (which may include the school attendance support office) if targets are not met. Other strategies may be implemented including drawing up a parenting contract and a further four-weeks monitoring will be established.
8. If attendance still remains unacceptably low and/or there is no support/communication from parents, the school will contact the School Attendance Support Team who have the power to prosecute parents for not ensuring their child receives appropriate education at school or otherwise. This referral will be shared with parents through a letter.

School Attendance Support Officer

All schools can gain support from School Attendance Support Team. An officer will be linked to the school and will closely monitor attendance data and will schedule termly meetings to discuss any attendance issues which will include but not be limited to severe or persistent absence. Their aim is to work with schools to improve school attendance.

Legal Sanctions

What is a penalty notice?

A penalty notice (PN) is an alternative to prosecution and requires the parent(s) to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's irregular attendance at school. It is issued per parent, per child.

Who issues them?

In Northamptonshire the Local Authority issues them through the School Attendance Support team following notification from the school. Schools are required to inform the local authority when the following has taken place:

When are they used?

- When a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 6 school week period; (a school day is two sessions -morning and afternoon) or
- When a pupil has a series of unauthorised absences leading to irregular attendance

This includes:

- Any absence marked in the register as unauthorised.
- Persistent late arrival at school after the register has been taken and is recorded as an unauthorised absence.
- An absence in term time which has not been authorised by the head teacher. The Government has directed that head teachers may only grant leave in exceptional circumstances.
- PNs can also be used during the first 5 days of exclusion. Parents are made aware of the consequences by letter when a child is excluded from school.

Please note

If the school refers a period of absence that is longer than 15 consecutive school days, the Local authority team may consider that a penalty notice is not appropriate.

In these instances the matter may proceed to a prosecution. If a parent knows that their child is failing to attend school regularly and there is reasonable justification for not ensuring that their child attends then it is for the parent or carers to prove that reasonable justification.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

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

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Monitoring Arrangements

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

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will

		be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day