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*"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.*

*But the greatest of these is love."*

**1 Corinthians 13:13**

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

<b>Policy Lead Committee:</b>	Local Academy Committee	<b>In consultation with:</b> Headteacher
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<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Date:</b> 13.5.25
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At Newnham St Peter's C of E Primary School, we believe that pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education and achieve their potential. Regular attendance means that pupils attend school each day (every day that the school is open). The foundation of securing good attendance is that school is a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive environment where all pupils want to be and are keen and ready to learn.

This attendance policy sets out what is expected so that this may be achieved.

## **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:

- Developing and maintaining a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of high attendance.
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support with their attendance and put in effective strategies.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Building strong relationships with families, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance and working with families to remove them.
- Offering incentives and praise for those with good attendance.

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

We believe that attending school regularly (every day that the school is open) is essential in a child receiving the best possible education they can.

## **2. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Making sure their child attends school every day and on time, appropriately dressed, equipped and in a fit state to learn.
- Letting the school know if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available help or support can be offered.
- Letting the school know, by telephoning before 9:00 a.m., on the first day of absence from school, why their child is absent and when they are expected to return.
- Ensuring that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.



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- Seeking permission from school prior to any absence that is not medical.
- Avoiding taking their child on holiday during term-time.
- Notifying school if they intend to remove their child permanently from the school for any reason.
- Providing the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.

## **2.2 The School**

The School is responsible for:

- Making suitable arrangements for the safe, daily reception of children.
- Implementing this attendance policy at school.
- Being consistent in their attendance practices.
- Keeping and mark registers accurately.
- Following up any unexplained absences.
- Notifying parents/carers, termly, of their child's attendance level.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and report it to the Local Academy Committee.
- Notifying the Local Authority (LA) of pupils who have poor attendance, leave school to be educated at home, go missing, are working on a part-time timetable or are excluded.
- Notifying the LA and/or the Department for Education of absence figures for the school and, where necessary, individual pupils.
- Putting formal support in place in the form of a parenting contract or an education supervision order, where necessary.
- Intensifying support through statutory children's social care involvement where there are safeguarding concerns.
- Working with the School Attendance Support Team to carry out termly Targeted Support Meetings, where necessary.
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

## **2.3 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that everybody at school treats attendance as a high priority.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance to staff, pupils and their parents/carers.
- Being available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors.
- Reminding parents, at least annually, of attendance procedures.
- Analysing attendance data on a termly basis.
- Challenging poor attendance and use guidance and support from a range of agencies to hold parents to account in relation to their child's attendance.



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- Overseeing attendance procedures.

## **2.4 Senior Attendance Champions**

Senior Attendance Champions are 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 oversighting 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 supporting to pupils and families.

The designated senior leaders responsible for attendance is the Headteacher and SENDCO, and they can be contacted via 01594516208 or [admin@nspschool.uk](mailto:admin@nspschool.uk).

## **2.4 The School Administrator**

The School Administrator is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance data at the school and individual pupil level
- Reporting concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Ensuring that registers are kept for both sessions of the school day and that the coding and recording is accurate (Statutory).
- Following the school procedures for following up and reporting absence.
- Communicating with the LA to report:
  - Deletions from the register (Statutory)
  - 10+ days continuous unauthorised absence (Statutory)
  - Pupils on part-time timetable
  - Dual registered pupils

## **2.4 The Local Academy Committee**

The Local Academy Committee is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos.
- With the Headteacher, monitoring attendance figures for the whole school, groups and individuals regularly. This should include thorough examination of recent and historic trends.



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- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

## **2.5 The Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the Trust's policies and ethos.
- Setting high expectations of all Trust and school leaders, staff, pupils and parents.
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole Trust on at least a termly basis.
- Identifying and monitoring attendance patterns across the Trust's schools to identify common issues and barriers.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- It also holds the Chief Executive Officer to account for the implementation of this policy

## **2.6 The Chief Executive Officer:**

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across all Severn Federation Academy Trust
- Supporting other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issuing fixed- penalty notices, where necessary.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence.
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to Trustees.

## **2.7 Pupils**

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending school every day on time.

## **3. School Procedures**

### **3.1 Attendance register:**

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The school uses SIMS to keep attendance registers to ensure they are as accurate as possible and can be easily analysed and shared with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at the start of each school day and at the start of the afternoon session.

This register will record whether pupils are:



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- Present
- Absent
- Attending an approved educational visit
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

I = Present in the morning

\ = Present in the afternoon

L = Late arrival before the register has closed

C = Leave of absence granted by the school (other authorised absence)

E = Excluded but no alternative provision made H = Authorised holiday

I = Illness

M = Medical or dental appointments R = Religious observance

B = Off-site education activity G = Unauthorised holiday

O = Unauthorised absence

U = Arrived after registration closed N = Reason not yet provided

X = Not required to be in school

T = Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence V = Educational visit or trip

P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity

D = Dual registered - at another educational establishment

Y = Exceptional circumstances (partial and forced closure i.e. severe weather)

Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

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 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.



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Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

### **3.2 School times**

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils. Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The gates are open at 8:30 a.m. and by 8:45 a.m. all children should be in the school to be registered.

The register is taken twice a day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45 a.m. and will be kept open until 9:00 a.m. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:00 p.m. and will be kept open until 1:15 p.m.

If a child arrives after the registration period, they must report to the school office and will be marked as 'Late'. Arrival after 9:00 a.m. is recorded as an unauthorised late mark. Punctuality is also important as lateness impacts on learning not only for the individual, but the class as a whole.

School finishes at 3:15 p.m. Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after-school activity. Please inform the school office as soon as possible if you are going to be late collecting your child for any reason or if there is a change in your child's usual routine.

### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence - for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health - Parents should notify the school office before 9:00 a.m. or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

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.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents 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 will be notified of this in advance.



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### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences. Parents should inform the school administrator to request the leave of absence.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Parents should bring details of appointments (letter from hospital, appointment cards etc.) to the school office at least 24 hours prior to the appointment. Staff will record details of the appointment on your child's record. Parents collecting pupils from school mid-session should, for safety reasons, notify the office on departure and re-arrival. If present at registration no amendment to the register is necessary. If absent at registration the register should be marked with an authorised absence mark. Again, for safety reasons, pupils should report to the office on arrival.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

### **3.4 Longer Absences**

Pupils who have been absent for a long period of time will be positively welcomed back and will be helped to catch up with missed work. Friendship groups will be monitored for a period to ensure that the pupil is happily settled back into school life.

### **3.5 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late after 8:45 a.m. but before the register has closed at 9:00 a.m. will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed at 9:00 a.m. will be marked as unauthorised absent, using the appropriate code.

### **3.6 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

After close of registration registers will be returned to the office and checked.

Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school by 9:00 a.m. a phone call will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return. All telephone messages will be dated and recorded in writing.



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If school have been unable to make contact by telephone, text or email a written communication will be sent on the 3rd day of absence, requesting the reason for absence. If there is still no response the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Where the register shows 5 separate late during or after registration marks over a school term, school will contact parents.

Where the register shows 10 separate late after registration marks over the last 10 weeks the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice. A written warning of this will usually be issued, in the first instance, by the school.

Any concerns about attendance or punctuality will be referred to the headteacher who will, if necessary, contact parents/carers to try to resolve any issues. If these issues cannot be resolved and there is unauthorised absence the matter may be referred ultimately to the Education Welfare Officer.

### **3.7 Part-time timetables**

Where it is in the pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. A part-time timetable will only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any part-time tables will be formally reviewed on a regular basis with the child and parents/carers.

### **3.8 Flexi-Schooling**

Requests for flexi-schooling arrangements are at the discretion of the Headteacher. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

*If Flexi schooling is agreed (Exceptional circumstances)*

The school will work hard to maintain a smooth transition between education at home and education at school so that the child remains happy, supported and challenged.

If it appears that parent/carers are not providing a suitable education as agreed between the school and the parent, the school may ask the parent to take remedial action. If the parent declines to do so or the school is still concerned about the provision of education at home, the school may withdraw its agreement to the flexi schooling arrangement. The child would then be required to attend at school on a full-time basis.

The school will have a formal written agreement with the parents/carers about the flexi schooling arrangements so that expectations and understandings are clear for both parties.

#### *Attendance Requirements*

Before flexi-schooling commences an Attendance Agreement will be completed between the school and the parents/carers stating which school days/ sessions the child will attend and how absences will be monitored and recorded. These days have to remain the same each week, unless there has been a formal meeting to make changes to the Attendance



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Agreement. There will be no flexibility to change these days in the event of a school trip/special event at school.

### *Review & Right to Withdraw*

Flexi Schooling agreements will be reviewed at least each term, or as required. The school retains the right to withdraw a Flexi-schooling agreement at any time. Further information and guidance can be found on the Gloucestershire Council Website:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2090231/svrshir160-lnut1and-desktop-flexi-schooling-info-revised-june-2019.pdf> <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/home-education/>

## **3.9 Reporting to parents**

Parents will receive an attendance report termly. This will be sent out via email and with their child's end of year school report in the summer term. Should parents require a copy of their child's attendance report at any time they need to contact the school office.

## **4. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

Please note to have a week's holiday in school time because the cost is cheaper during term time does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorized to be absent for.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments - as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- 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.



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## **4.2 The Law and Legal sanctions**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational needs they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education by regular attendance at a school.

### **Penalty Notices**

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The Headteacher (or someone authorised by them), local authority or the police can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

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. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent 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. The threshold for issuing a penalty notice is 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. This period of 10 weeks can span different terms or school years and unauthorised sessions missed being consecutive or not.

### **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



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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

## **5. Strategies to support good attendance**

To support our attendance policy we:

- Will treat attendance as a priority;
- Promote good attendance at every opportunity - at parents' evenings, at induction, in newsletters, in worship, on the website, on notice boards etc.
- Always use first day telephone contact;
- Celebrate good and improved attendance;
- Set attendance targets for the school (and for each year group if necessary);
- Keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance level;
- Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
- Notify the Local Academy Committee at every meeting of attendance levels;
- Notify the Trustees at Board of Trustees meetings;
- Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.

### **5.1 Success Criteria**

- We are meeting or exceeding our attendance targets.
- Our attendance is in line with or exceeds that of local comparator schools.
- We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted, LA etc.
- Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.

### **5.2 Monitoring attendance**

The school will:



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- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil 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 the data shared with the Local Academy Committee, comparing it to the National data.

### **5.3 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.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

### **5.4 Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

### **5.5 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/carers of pupils who the school 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.

## **6. Children missing education**

Children Missing Education (CME) refers to 'any child of compulsory school age who is not registered at any formally approved education activity e.g. school, alternative provision, elective home education, and has been out of education provision for at least 4 weeks'.



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CME also includes those children who are missing (family whereabouts unknown) and are usually children who are registered on a school roll/ alternative provision. This might be a child who is not at their last known address and either:

- has not taken up an allocated school place as expected,
- has 10 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or
- left school suddenly and the destination is unknown

## **7. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the head teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Local Academy Committee.

## **8. Links to other policies**

This policy is linked to:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy

## **9. 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:

- The Education Act 1996 Part 6
- The Education Act 2002 Part 3
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 Part 7
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 {and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments}
- The Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 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

**This policy is available on the school website: [newnhamstpetersschool.org.uk](http://newnhamstpetersschool.org.uk).**

**Paper copies are available on request from the School Office**